

Strategy Research Project

The Human Dimension: Domain or Warfighting Function?

by

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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Abstract

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The Army faces a significant challenge – how to best apply strategic landpower? The Army’s Irregular Warfare Fusion Center posits that strategic landpower should “shape conditions in the operational environment that influence unified action partners and deter adversaries in order to provide our country with an unsurpassed capability across the range of military operations.” Is the way ahead to define a new domain of conflict? On the other hand, is the Army better served to look inward and identify an organizational change to distribute skills across its forces to influence and shape the environment, to realign the staff to define/plan/assess the effects, or possibly create a new warfighting function to achieve the effects of influencing and shaping operations?

The Human Dimension: Domain or Warfighting Function?

...failing to understand the human dimension of conflict is too costly in lives, resources, and political will for the Nation to bear.

—LTG Michael T. Flynn et al.¹

With major operations concluded in Iraq and the military preparing to drawdown in Afghanistan, Congress is taking steps to reign in federal spending and slow the escalation of debt. The Department of Defense (DOD) must weigh the risks of reducing capacity or capability to achieve these reductions. Reductions to either capacity (*e.g., measured by end strength or force structure*) or capability (*e.g., measured by weapons systems, modernization efforts, infrastructure, etc.*) greatly affect the readiness of the force and increase the operational risk to the Army as the primary force provider of strategic landpower to the nation in a complex, uncertain operational environment.²

The operational environment encompasses physical domains of conflict that Joint Forces conduct operations. The five domains include land, air, maritime, space, and cyber. The land domain includes “the land area of the Earth’s surface ending at the high water mark...[and] shares the Earth’s surface with the maritime domain.”³ The air domain includes “the atmosphere, beginning at the Earth’s surface, extending to the altitude where its effects upon operations become negligible.”⁴ The maritime domain includes “the oceans, seas, bays, estuaries, islands, coastal areas and the airspace above these, including the littorals.”⁵ The space domain “has unique characteristics that impact military operations. Characteristics of space include: no geographical boundaries, orbital mechanics, environmental considerations, and Electromagnetic Spectrum Dependency.”⁶ Lastly, the cyber domain consists of “interdependent networks of information technology infrastructures and resident data, including the internet,

telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers.”⁷

The Army, the major provider of landpower, operates primarily in the land domain. Army doctrine defines landpower as “the ability—by threat, force, or occupation—to promptly gain, sustain, and exploit control over land, resources, and people.”⁸ The Army further defines landpower with the following elements critical to human interaction in the operating environment:

- Impose the Nation’s will on an enemy, by force if necessary;
- Engage to influence, shape, prevent, and deter in an operational environment;
- Establish and maintain a stable environment that sets the conditions for political and economic development;
- Address the consequences of catastrophic events—both natural and man-made—to restore infrastructure and reestablish basic civil services;
- Support and provide a base from which joint forces can influence and dominate the air and maritime domains of an operational environment.⁹

Within this definition of landpower, the activities of influence, shape, and set conditions define the essential tasks for interacting with humans on the land domain. While the future operating environment is likely to be volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA), the presence of humans remains the one certainty. Humans exist and act predominantly on the land domain where land forces principally conduct operations and engage with civilian populations, groups, or governments.¹⁰

Recently, the leadership of the Army, Marine Corps, and Special Operations Forces emphasized the need to focus efforts to shape, manage, and influence human actions in all phases of operations. This led to the formation of the Strategic Landpower

Task Force – a collaborative effort across the three components to understand and consider “the human objective in the formulation of strategy, operational plans and tactical actions.”¹¹ Armed conflict and tensions between factions will continue to persist in the VUCA environment, but this environment also offers the United States and its allies many opportunities to establish relationships and to shape and influence the behaviors of the populations, groups, or governments.¹²

According to the Strategic Landpower Task Force, the future environment will distinguish itself with human-centric activities:

...the increasing ability of non-state actors to destabilize entire regions and challenge national forces; the complexity of rules of engagement that constrain one side and enable the other to operate with near impunity “amongst the people”; and, importantly, the increasing pace and mutability of human interactions across boundaries, through virtual connectivity, to form, act, dissolve, and re-form in pursuit of hostile purposes.¹³

The future operating environment will require land forces to operate with a greater understanding of human aspects, behaviors, and motivations. Future success requires “unprecedented levels of trust, confidence, and understanding – conditions that can’t be surged.”¹⁴ Hence, the task force’s claim to establish a new domain in addition to land, air, maritime, space and cyber – the Human Domain.

SOCOM 2020 defines the human domain as the “totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior in a population-centric conflict...the Human Domain is about developing understanding of, and nurturing influence among, critical populaces.”¹⁵ However, this concept is diverting intellectual energy and valuable resources from the core mission of applying strategic landpower.¹⁶ The Army must focus its efforts on building partnerships, exploiting the advantage, and shaping the environment using existing warfighting functions: Mission Command,

Movement and Maneuver, Intelligence, Fires, Sustainment, and Protection.¹⁷ However, gaps exist amongst these warfighting functions for clear delineation of responsibilities for influencing and shaping operations. Consequently, this author recommends considering a seventh warfighting function vice the creation of a new domain.

Thus, the Army faces a significant challenge – how to best apply strategic landpower? The Army’s Irregular Warfare Fusion Center posits that strategic landpower should “shape conditions in the operational environment that influence unified action partners and deter adversaries in order to provide our country with an unsurpassed capability across the range of military operations.”¹⁸ Is the way ahead to define a new domain of conflict? On the other hand, is the Army better served to look inward and identify an organizational change to distribute skills across its forces to influence and shape the environment, to realign the staff to define/plan/assess the effects, or possibly create a new warfighting function to achieve the effects of influencing and shaping operations?

The Human Dimension

The human dimension includes the human factors of “physical, cultural, psychological, and behavioral attributes of an individual or group that influence perceptions, understanding, and interactions.”¹⁹ The human dimension synthesizes these factors into behaviors, relationships, and other engagement dynamics that vary from environment to environment.²⁰ The future operating environment will require land forces to operate on the land domain with a greater understanding of human aspects, behaviors, and motivations.

Human behavior has been a key component of outcomes of conflict since the earliest encounter between men. Friendly forces participation in conflict is relatively

predictable: soldiers maneuver on the ground; pilots fly aircraft in the air; sailors navigate vessels at sea; and computer programmers operate systems or manage code in space and cyber. However, the effects these actions have on civilian populations, groups, or governments, along with their subsequent reactions, are largely unpredictable and are dependent on a number of factors that comprise the human dimension.

The Strategic Landpower Task Force white paper identifies “winning the clash of wills” as its central theme and essential to strategic success. The task force uses Clausewitz’s premise for its definition of armed conflict, or war, as the “clash of interests between or among organized groups, each attempting to impose their will on the opposition.”²¹ Clausewitz described this will, or resolve, as a necessary component to achieving the ends in war, as part of his trinity – the will of the people, the will of the commander and his army, and the will of the government.²² Each of these potential centers of gravity possesses a human dynamic that provides the determination to pursue specific interests. To avoid conflict and maintain stability, the United States must assess the motivations of each potential center of gravity and establish the mission sets to influence behaviors and shape the environment.

To accomplish its directed missions, a joint force commander develops a campaign plan that phases, or sequences, the events and objectives to achieve the desired end state. While each campaign is unique, phasing allows the staff to meet the commander’s intent and establish conditions to determine success in sequencing the plan.²³ These phases span the band of conflict from peace to war and employ any

number of the range of military operations, including military engagement and deterrence to major operations.²⁴

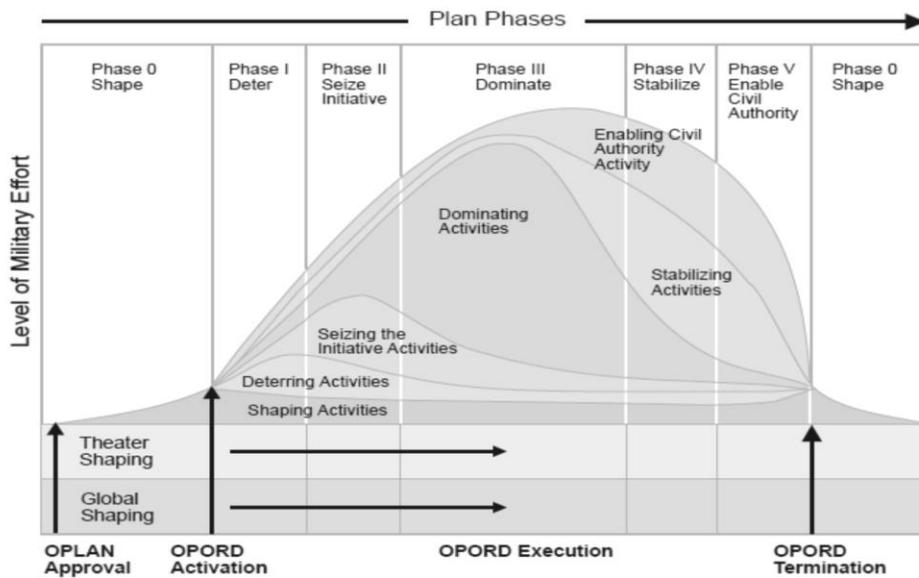


Figure 1: Notional Operation Plan Phases²⁵

The U.S. Army War College Campaign Planning Handbook describes these phases in detail, but the analysis and recommendations in this paper will focus on steady-state activities and Phase 0. Steady-state activities include “ongoing operations, military engagement, security cooperation, deterrence, and other shaping or preventive activities.”²⁶ The operation plan phases include:

- *Phase 0 - Shape*: ...shaping perceptions and influencing the behavior of both adversaries and allies, developing allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and coalition operations, improving information exchange and intelligence sharing, and providing US forces with peacetime and contingency access...;
- *Phase I - Deter*: ...deter undesirable adversary action by demonstrating the capabilities and resolve of the joint force. Though many actions in the deter phase build on security-cooperation activities from Phase 0, deterrence differs from the shape phase in that it is principally preparatory actions that support or facilitate the execution of subsequent phases of the operation/campaign...;

- *Phase II - Seize the Initiative*: ...seize the initiative in combat and noncombat situations through the application of appropriate joint-force capabilities...;
- *Phase III – Dominate*: ...establishing control of the operational environment...;
- *Phase IV - Stabilize the Environment*: ...required when there is no fully-functional, legitimate, civil-governing authority present...;
- *Phase V - Enable Civil Authority*: ...joint force support to legitimate civil governance in theater.²⁷

While Phase 0 shaping and influencing operations are more successful in avoiding conflict, these operations should continue to be pursued as conditions allow during each campaign phase to find resolution. To improve the likelihood of success of shaping operations in Phase 0 and to avoid conflict from occurring, joint forces and their partner forces must get “left of bang,” referred to as the employment of options to shape the environment prior to the eruption of violence.²⁸ Therefore, commanders must ensure their actions in Phase 0 target the root causes for potential conflict and build the relationships necessary to deter conflict. These missions include military training and exercises with our allies as part of a security cooperation plan, as well as humanitarian assistance/disaster relief missions. Further, building partner capacity for internal defense and regional rotation of forces send clear signals that influence behavior and shape the environment.

The long-term investment of Phase 0 operations requires patience and a determined commitment to resolution, but the benefits outweigh the costs. As indicated in Figure 1, Phase 0 requires a minimum level of military effort and resources as compared to the increasing resource heavy options in Phases I thru V, but these activities do require a temporal investment. Further, these non-lethal engagement

activities support Sun Tzu's philosophy, "to subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."²⁹ Moreover, these activities complement the other instruments of national power and support the whole of government approach.

To shape or deter, the Army can either use a show of force as a threat to influence or deter aggression, or it can conduct influencing and shaping operations to achieve effects. However, in order to be considered a threat, the Army must be able to employ a credible force, an option currently at risk in the current fiscal environment. Following every major conflict in our nation's short history, the government has sought to pay down its war debt as rapidly as possible.³⁰ As the nation emerges from the current period of war and reduces the size of its standing army, the other instruments of national power will need to supplement the influencing and shaping operations for a unified action to demonstrate credibility.

National Instruments of Power to Exert Power and Influence

If armed conflict does occur, "it is already too late to begin the process of learning about the population and its politics."³¹ Clausewitz acknowledges alternative means to winning wars when he stated, "...governments and commanders have always tried to find ways of avoiding a decisive battle and of reaching their goal by other means or of quietly abandoning it."³² The nation has many options available to shape and influence the behaviors of populations, groups, or governments.

In the current fiscal environment, the nation cannot afford another war; however, many global points of friction currently exist where the United States must employ its national instruments of power to shape the environment and influence actors to avoid conflict and resolve issues. In the ongoing efforts to protect national interests and to achieve greater effects through shaping the future environment, joint forces must seek

to support whole of government solutions and identify opportunities and comprehensive strategies to integrate the interagency.³³ Diplomacy efforts seek to influence groups and governments; information efforts seek to influence populations and groups; and economic efforts seek to influence populations and governments.

To develop a synchronized theater campaign strategy and security cooperation plan, the combatant commanders (CCDR) must plan and exercise “for full spectrum contingencies to support U.S. diplomatic and development efforts and help mitigate and contain the human and economic impact of crises.”³⁴ This comprehensive approach to integrating the national instruments of power enables the CCDR to synchronize the “directed steady-state activities (*actual*) and contingency (*potential*) operations and activities.”³⁵ The use of hard power seeks objectives through coercion, often with military force, while the use of soft power seeks objectives primarily through persuasion.³⁶ The types of power are often aligned with the national instruments of power: hard power with military and soft power with diplomacy, information, and economic. In the future operating environment, hard and soft power will become more difficult to differentiate, especially as Phase 0 operations will increasingly employ influencing activities without the use of force with the goal to persuade or deter conflict.

However, the United States must avoid the pitfall of becoming so arrogant to believe that every population, group, or government it seeks to influence would adopt our interests, values, and democratic beliefs as their new set of common beliefs. The whole of government approach should employ our interests and values, but we should expect the free will of the populations to adapt the principles of democracy to their

respective cultures. The results will vary, but if democratic ideals and values prevail, the shaping and influence operations have achieved success.³⁷

Existing Warfighting Functions and Lessons Learned

The Strategic Landpower Task Force asserts the likelihood of increased human interaction with land forces in the future operating environment. Land forces, both general purpose forces and special operation forces, conduct operations to shape conditions to preserve security and influence the activities of actors in a region. In peacetime, land forces conduct peacekeeping and stability operations, provide security assistance, and build partner capacities to deter the possibility of armed conflict. In war, the same land forces must conduct military operations against or with the same populations and groups on the land domain with whom they have worked so hard to develop relationships.³⁸ These steady-state activities and operations span across the warfighting functions, but gaps exist.

“The Army fights and wins the Nation’s wars.”³⁹ The principal way the Army applies landpower is through combined arms maneuver, establishing an opportunity to be successful in Phase 0 operations by gaining “physical, temporal, and psychological advantages” in the operating environment.⁴⁰ However, the Army’s existing warfighting functions focus primarily on major combat operations and do not provide the Army the dedicated warfighting function to define success in influencing and shaping operations.

The Army’s exhaustive list of required capabilities within the warfighting functions provide limited acknowledgement of the critical activities required to influence and shape environments. Mission command, while in spirit enables subordinate leaders to conduct any operation within the limit of the commander’s intent, has only one capability identified that directly addresses influencing of human behavior.⁴¹ Intelligence broadly

discusses the collection of data and information, but it primarily addresses these requirements to support combat operations. Similarly, the other warfighting functions contain capabilities to define success in major combat operations, but not in full spectrum operations where forces may find themselves conducting influencing and shaping operations in steady-state activities or Phase 0. These gaps require the consideration of a new warfighting function, one that specifically identifies capabilities for success in influencing and shaping operations.

To improve its understanding of the human dimension in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army deployed ad hoc Human Terrain Teams to work with units on the ground and provide assessments to unit commanders of the social, political, and cultural dynamics in their operating environment. The analysis and assessments often comprised of three components: human terrain analysis, human geography analysis, and socio-cultural analysis. These assessments provided a picture of the humans interacting in the environment, identified the geographic features affecting both their behavior and joint force operations, and summarized the social interactions, relationships, and culture.⁴²

Lessons learned from the last ten years of combat operations suggest a growing reliance on analytics to understand the environment, but commanders must not rely solely on these reports when employing forces to influence or exercise control in the increasingly VUCA environments.⁴³ The development of metrics is challenging and often measures the wrong things. Two types of metrics exist to measure military activities: measure of performance (MoP) and measure of effectiveness (MoE).

MoPs examine discrete actions (*e.g., the number of partner exercises conducted or the number of engagements with local populations*). MoEs provide a subjective

evaluation of the success towards achieving the desired end states (*e.g., the government's will to engage in war or the population's confidence in its nation's security forces*). MoP assessment is usually easier as it measures and assesses action; MoE assessment is typically more challenging as it measures the strategic effects on the environment. MoEs essentially attempt to measure the unpredictability of human behavior as an outcome of influence activities and shaping operations of the environment. In other words, while MoPs and MoEs provide quality indicators of operational success, commanders must use caution when interpreting the results of these assessments due to the margins of error of the data and the complexity of the operating environment.

Cross Domain Synergy

To protect U.S. national security interests and values, the January 2012 Department of Defense (DOD) Strategic Guidance provides an overview of the anticipated security environment and directs the missions for the Joint Force to prepare.⁴⁴ The guidance focuses on establishing and strengthening relationships with partners and allies, as well as increasing the “networks of cooperation with emerging partners...to ensure collective capability and capacity for securing common interests.”⁴⁵ The complex efforts to build these relationships will take time; a necessary investment to influence and shape the environment in order to promote security, prosperity, and stability.

The defense guidance represents a strategic rebalance of military capability to the Asia-Pacific. The 2012 Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC) interprets the guidance as a shift towards Air-Sea Battle (*the application of airpower and seapower*), with the intent to “improve integration of air, land, naval, space, and cyberspace forces

to provide combatant commanders the capabilities needed to deter and, if necessary, defeat an adversary employing sophisticated anti-access/area-denial capabilities.”⁴⁶

Strategist Colin Gray cautions military planners to remember the importance of landpower, for “even if a war is dominated by the ebb and flow of combat at sea and in the air, still the whole object of the exercise is to influence the behavior of an enemy who needs to be controlled where he lives, on land.”⁴⁷

Keeping with the Army’s definition of landpower, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) states the Joint Force must “provide the ability to seize, retain and exploit the initiative” across all domains – land, air, maritime, space and cyber.⁴⁸ The future operating environment will require missions to span multiple domains to achieve the strategic and operational end states. Building on the CJCS’s guidance to exercise mission command and to capitalize on the initiative more quickly than the adversary, senior leaders must conduct operational design, construct the operational approach, and provide their initial intent; empowering subordinates to develop mission sets from that intent necessary to achieve success in the steady-state activities and Phase 0.⁴⁹

The JOAC identifies the need to “leverage cross-domain synergy...to establish superiority in some combination of domains that will provide the freedom of action required by the mission.”⁵⁰ Dr. Steven Metz reminds readers that both physical and psychological dimensions exist in conflict and across domains:

The physical dimension allows an army, navy, and air force to compel enemies and noncombatants to act in a specific way. By contrast, effects in the psychological dimension are indirect, leading both enemies and noncombatants to choose to act in a specific way, either by fear of what will happen to them if they do not or the promise of reward if they do.⁵¹

This synergy exploits the capabilities of the joint force – “airpower to defeat anti-ship weapons, naval power to neutralize air defenses, ground forces to neutralize land-

based threats to air and naval forces, [and] cyber operations to defeat space systems.”⁵² The combined effects of cross-domain capabilities with standoff technologies, precision weapons, land forces, and cyber defenses not only serve as a deterrence option, but if necessary, also compel the enemy to cease military operations – thus defeating the will to conduct hostile activity.

The Strategic Landpower Task Force acknowledges the critical role of airpower and seapower have in deterring/engaging/and gaining access to increasingly difficult areas due to an adversary’s anti-access/area-denial capabilities; however, the Task Force emphasizes the requirement to apply landpower ultimately to achieve U.S. national interests.⁵³ Maintaining and expanding operational access enables the entry of land forces into hostile territory. Initially, the land forces should continue to support and exploit the influence and shaping operations of Phase 0; however, should conditions on the ground deteriorate and evolve into hostilities, the land forces may engage in limited-objective attacks, such as raids to eliminate land-based threats to friendly air and naval forces, to seizing a lodgment for a sustained land campaign.⁵⁴

Recommendations

Numerous options exist for the Army’s senior leaders to achieve greater success in preventing, shaping, and influencing the human dimension within the future operating environment. However, when considering the feasibility and acceptability of these options, the reality of decreased budgets and limited joint service advocates restrain the number of attainable alternatives. This research considers three possible options: the increased interdependence of general purpose forces and special operations forces; the establishing of a dedicated staff function to synchronize effects; and the creation of a seventh warfighting function.

General Purpose Forces and Special Operations Forces Interdependence

First, the interdependence of general purpose forces and special operations forces presents the first opportunity to expand capabilities and to increase opportunities in steady-state activities and Phase 0 operations. As force structure and service end strength continue to decrease, the integration of capabilities becomes even more critical. Special operations forces deploy with a smaller footprint; the general purpose forces must adopt that deployment model for success in Phase 0 operations.

The available number of forces must be optimally balanced to address the range of military operations, with a focus on steady-state activities and Phase 0. The *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014* highlights the challenges of the fiscal environment and the requirement to reduce the size of the force structure while maintaining and balancing readiness.⁵⁵ Further, the strategic guidance emphasizes the need to continue efforts to build partnerships and strengthen alliances across three strategic pillars: “protect the homeland”, “build security globally,” and “project power and win decisively.”⁵⁶ Steady-state activities and Phase 0 operations will prove critical to the success of the first two pillars and will require greater interdependence of general purpose forces and special operations forces as force structure decreases and risk increases.

In addition to the *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014*, previous defense reports highlighted the significance of the interdependence of general purpose forces and special operations forces. The *2009 Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report* highlighted the need to “equip the joint force with capabilities, doctrine, organization, training, leadership, and operating concepts needed to make it as proficient in irregular warfare as it is in general purpose warfare.”⁵⁷ The report noted that as the 2006

Quadrennial Defense Review had also recommended, general purpose forces “will continue to support and play a leading role in stability operations and counterinsurgency, and a greater role in foreign internal defense.”⁵⁸

The training environment must reflect the uncertain and complex environment and subordinate leaders must take prudent risk through innovative and creative planning. Given multiple training scenarios, senior leaders can establish the trust with subordinates necessary to be versatile, adaptable, and agile.⁵⁹ Lessons learned from the Special Forces community could prove useful in enhancing training, as they regularly operate in uncertain and complex environments in small teams that are flexible, adaptive, and innovative.⁶⁰ The Special Forces subculture provides insights into long-term changes in the Army’s structure and culture required to empower subordinate leaders and allow for greater autonomy.

The application of lethal and non-lethal capabilities by general purpose forces will increasingly find new opportunities to integrate with special operations missions.⁶¹ While a primary capability of the special operations community, general purpose forces must develop procedures and increase proficiency in shaping and influencing operations. The Army’s regionally aligned forces concept takes an initial step towards this effort. Increased culture, language, geography, and social-political training of an assigned region will prepare soldiers for the long-term commitment to establishing relationships necessary to achieve success in shaping and influencing operations. These relationships materialize from the collaborative efforts of the general purpose forces and special operations forces, as well as interagency partners, as part of a “deeper, longer-term strategy that takes many years to develop, cannot be grown after a crisis and

relies heavily on human intelligence networks, the training of indigenous forces and close collaboration with civilian diplomats and development workers.”⁶²

These steady-state activities will span the campaign phases, but will mostly occur in the shape and deter phases. Together, general purpose forces and special operations forces will conduct train and advise missions as part of security cooperation, participate in partnership capacity exercises, as well as deploy in support of stability operations, counterinsurgency operations, and irregular warfare operations. The mix and organization of forces will depend on the security of operating environment; however, the doctrine and training to synchronize operations must adapt to achieve successful shaping and influencing outcomes.⁶³

Seventh Warfighting Function

Much debate continues whether a new domain – the human domain – should be created, or whether the Army should create a new warfighting function – the seventh warfighting function. Given the current fiscal environment, the likelihood of gaining consensus across the military Service staffs for the human domain grows exceedingly smaller as resources become scarcer. However, the protection of Service budgets should not be the basis for discounting the significance of addressing a doctrinal solution for influencing and shaping operations.

When considering domains, one should consider them as a physical battle-space through which to conduct operations to achieve effects. The shaping and influencing of the human dimension is critical, but the effects can be achieved without creating a new domain. The operations required to address the human dimension would span all of the existing domains. As previously discussed, the cross-domain synergies allow

commanders to plan and conduct operations across the domains to achieve the desired effects on the will of populations, groups, or governments.

This paper agrees that the human domain should not be established, but not because of the looming fiscal constraints. Instead, this paper recommends the creation of the seventh warfighting function, in other words, a set of focused tasks and capabilities to achieve effects in shaping the environment. The Army's current warfighting functions focus significantly on combat functions, whereas the seventh warfighting function would focus on "all of the tasks and systems that military units would need to do or have to influence people, taking into account the "socio-economic, cognitive, and physical aspects of human activity."⁶⁴

The Army recently released a proposed concept for a new warfighting function – Engagement. Recognizing the capability gaps in the existing warfighting functions required to achieve success in influencing and shaping operations, the Army's concept proposal for engagement provides an opportunity for further review to develop enduring solutions:

The engagement warfighting function will institutionalize into Army doctrine, training, education, and leader development, the capabilities and skills necessary to work with host nations, regional partners, and indigenous populations in a culturally attuned manner that allows bridging language barriers, opening lines of communication and connections with key political and military leaders in a way that is both immediate and lasting.⁶⁵

This seventh warfighting function would require changes to doctrine. This function would need to leverage the advances made in the interdependence of general purpose forces and special operations forces. While the general purpose forces train on full spectrum operations, adjustments to training programs must be made to hone the skills for military and civilian engagement for success in Phase 0. The changes to training must

include enhanced modules for culture, language, values, ethnic groups, regional actors, geography, history, and government. While the regional aligned force concept will help focus the training for the force, caution must be exercised to avoid the trap of specializing training too narrowly for units and soldiers in order to maintain flexibility to deploy units to respond to crisis outside of their assigned regions.

The training environment must reflect the uncertain and complex environment and provide units opportunities to engage with a variety of actors. Given multiple training scenarios, units and Soldiers can adapt quickly to soft power skills required for influencing and shaping operations. Including special operations forces in the training, both as participants and trainers, will enhance the training and provide another opportunity to share lessons learned as they regularly operate in uncertain and complex environments in small teams that are flexible, adaptive, and innovative.⁶⁶ The special operations forces history provides insights into the effectiveness that a seventh warfighting function brings to the Army and the relatively small footprint required to achieve effects.

Changes for incorporating a new warfighting function will require senior leadership support to facilitate the change into the organization. Much of the training packages and infrastructure necessary to support the increased competency can leverage the lessons learned and school solutions from the human terrain teams. Moreover, the Army can look to award skill identifiers for various levels of training and within specialties to encourage and motivate performance.

Dedicated Coordinating Staff

With the significant focus and importance placed on influencing and shaping operations in the future operating environment, coupled with the concept of creating a

new warfighting function, the final recommendation of this analytical paper establishes a dedicated coordinating staff. This staff would assume responsibility for planning the military engagement operations necessary to accomplish the influencing and shaping operations. Along with the new staff, a separate staff planning annex would be required to incorporate the planning and coordination requirements for influencing, shaping, and deterrence activities. Additionally, the staff would develop the criteria for metrics, coordinate the data collection plan, and assess the performance and effectiveness in achieving desired end states.

The Army is currently developing proposals to modify the corps and division headquarters staffs to include an “Engagement Cell.” This staff would likely assume responsibility for coordination, synchronizing and communicating with the other staff functions all operations associated with influencing and shaping operations. While the naming convention and manning construct requires further analysis, the initial military specialties, for both officer and enlisted positions, includes: Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Civil Military Operations, and Combat Arms. While the initial construct for the staff provides a critical organization capability necessary for coordinating influencing and shaping operations, the design excludes other key specialties that would increase the effectiveness of these operations, such as Military Information Support Operations or Foreign Area Officer.

This staff would monitor the integration of general purpose forces with special operation forces to conduct military engagement and security cooperation missions. Further, the staff would provide cultural advice and assessments necessary to support influencing operations. The staff would coordinate with the interagency to synchronize

and de-conflict shaping operations to maintain consistent information campaigns and engagement strategies. Additionally, the staff would coordinate with the joint and multi-national forces to synchronize activities throughout the operating environment to maximize effects.

The creation of the dedicated staff offers a voice to champion ongoing steady-state activities, Phase 0 operations, and other shaping efforts. It demonstrates the Army's commitment to achieving effects prior to an environment's escalation to conflict. Continuing to integrate the function and responsibility under other staffs diminishes the significance of influencing and shaping operations and achieving the effects in the human dimension. This staff will promote the significance of the operations and provide the necessary capacity for coordinating and conducting joint, interagency, international, and multi-national operations.

Conclusion

A key task for defense in the *National Security Strategy* is to “to prevent and deter threats against the United States, its interests, and our allies and partners.”⁶⁷ The Army continues to struggle with the way ahead to “shape conditions in the operational environment that influence unified action partners and deter adversaries in order to provide our country with an unsurpassed capability across the range of military operations.”⁶⁸ The fiscal environment limits the options and immediately excludes any solution that requires increases to force structure. The most likely way ahead remains the integration of the capabilities of general purpose forces and special operations forces through increased interdependence of skills, enhanced cultural training, and updated doctrine. Moreover, by leveraging the cross-domain synergy, the combined effects of capabilities with standoff technologies, precision weapons, land forces, and

cyber defenses deter and compel the enemy – influencing the human dimension of the operating environment.

This expansion of capabilities increases the likelihood of success in steady-state activities and Phase 0 operations and through the range of military operations where the Army engages in population-centric environments.⁶⁹ The Chief of Staff of the Army commented recently of the need to adapt our capabilities and “...evolve as an institution, even as we remain focused on our primary task – to fight and win our nation's wars.”⁷⁰ As the Secretary of the Army stated recently that the Army “...will continue to be, a critical part of the Joint Force because land power remains the politically decisive form of warfare and is essential to America's national security strategy. No major conflict has ever been won without ‘boots on the ground’.”⁷¹ The application of strategic landpower will shape the environment and develop the long-term relationships necessary to influence the outcome of events...conducting operations within the human dimension.

Endnotes

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