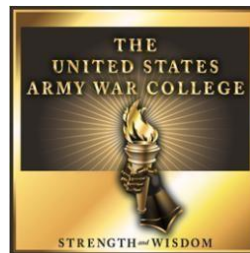


Regionally Aligned Forces and the DIME: A Risk Assessment

by

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United States Army War College
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Abstract

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In recent years, a general consensus has developed that employing the instruments of power effectively requires close cooperation between all the parts of government that wield the instruments of national power; Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic. In particular, the Department of State (DoS) must be fully integrated with the Department of Defense (DoD). Historically, close cooperation between the DoS and the DoD has presented a challenge as the two organizations have culturally been at odds. In short, the DoD prepares for crises, the DoS aims to avoid them. However, if we look at these goals as two sides of the same coin, it would seem that they are actually ideally suited to work together. The concept of Regionally Aligned Forces presents this opportunity.

Regionally Aligned Forces and the DIME: A Risk Assessment

According to Admiral Michael G. Mullen, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at present the instruments of national power; Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME) are out of balance.¹ The military is by far the most robust element and as a consequence is being called upon to execute many tasks that are not within its core competency. This presents the country with significant risk. As Robert J. Art, Professor of International Relations at Brandeis University says in his writing, “The Fungibility of Force”:

Using military power correctly does not ensure that a state will protect all of its interests, but using it incorrectly would put a great burden on these other instruments and could make it impossible for a state to achieve its goals. Decisions about whether and how to use military power may therefore be the most fateful a state makes.²

In recent years, a general consensus has developed that employing the instruments of power effectively requires close cooperation between all the parts of government that wield the instruments of national power. As Admiral Mullen stated in 2009, “There is no question that we need a whole-of-government approach to solving modern problems, and we need to reallocate roles and resources in a way that places our military as an equal among many in government- as an enabler, a true partner.”³

In particular, the Department of State (DoS) must be fully integrated with the Department of Defense (DoD). Historically, close cooperation between the DoS and the DoD has presented a challenge as the two entities have culturally been somewhat at odds. They both seek to advance national interests, but “. . . while DoD primarily plans and occasionally executes activity in response to extraordinary circumstances, State plans daily activities aimed at shaping outcomes over time; DoD prepares for crises, DoS aims to avoid them.”⁴ However, if we look at these goals as two sides of the same

coin, it would seem that they are actually ideally suited to work together. The concept of Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) presents this opportunity.

According to Brigadier General (BG) Kimberly Field, former Deputy Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy, DA G3-5-7, and her co-authors, James Learmont and Jason Charland, the development of RAF is a key element of the future Army strategy for employment of Strategic Landpower.⁵ In short, the RAF concept aligns Brigade Combat Teams with Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) in order to provide them with the forces they need to ensure that the United States (U.S.) military presence is seen around the globe. General Raymond Odierno, the Chief of Staff of the Army, proposed the RAF concept for U.S. Army forces in 2012. It will not be fully implemented until around 2017.⁶ The first geographic alignment to Africa Command (AFRICOM) was completed in 2013, with many more executed in 2014 in multiple GCCs. Since the U.S. plans to base almost all U.S. military forces in the Continental United States (CONUS) by 2020 for the first time in decades,⁷ new strategic approaches will be needed to ensure that operational needs around the world can be met.

BG Field and her co-authors, in reviewing the reception of the RAF concept by the Army, points out that as the idea has been rolled out, there have been questions raised in a variety of forums as to whether RAF is the best concept for meeting future requirements in light of budget cuts and the unpredictable nature of our future engagements. Additionally some commentators questioned whether the RAF is simply a means of preserving force structure or is actually a valid operational concept.⁸ Implementation of the RAF concept will take some time and the benefits may not be readily apparent. This paper will seek to examine risk using a framework devised by Dr.

Paul K. Davis, senior principal researcher at the RAND Corporation.⁹ First, this paper will review the four elements of national power, then discuss the RAF concept in more detail. Finally this paper will make recommendations for risk mitigation.

Instruments of National Power

A review of the instruments of national power is provided in order to illustrate what is meant by describing the instruments as being “out of balance.”

Diplomatic

Diplomacy is defined by Robert J. Art as, “The striking of compromises by states with differing perspectives and clashing interests.”¹⁰ Since its establishment in September 1789, the DoS has exercised primary responsibility for the diplomatic affairs of the U.S. According to Foreign Service Officer Anton Smith, up until World War I the primary focus of the DoS was assisting in the peaceful acquisition of additional territory such as the Louisiana Purchase from France and the Northwest territories from Great Britain, and was ultimately, “Aimed at expanding trade opportunities and opening markets to the growing array of American goods.”¹¹ While the DoS was very successful in this earlier period, its role was not so visible to the public. This changed after the two world wars as it truly became one of the recognized instruments of U.S. national power.

After 1945, the role and effectiveness of the DoS increased significantly under Secretary George Marshall. Embassies mushroomed in number and size, U.S. diplomacy was instrumental in rebuilding Western Europe and in establishing the United Nations (UN) . . . along with the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) to stabilize and promote economic development and ensure orderly currency exchange. This period reflects the apex of State’s influence as the nation’s premier instrument of foreign policy.¹²

The DoS continued to play a key role during the Cold War period when executing the “policies of containment and détente, which helped check the Soviet Union and then led

to its slow demise.”¹³ Also during this period other foreign policy organizations were established to assist the DoS, including the United States Agency for International Development and the United States Information Agency (USIA).

While the DoS has always been engaged around the world, in the early 2000s Secretary of State Colin Powell made efforts to “transform the DoS into a more expeditionary instrument of national power.”¹⁴ As part of this transformation, “[T]his goal is being met by expansion of exchange postings to DoD and its commands and the establishment of the Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization, which foresees close coordination with the military in post-conflict environments . . .”¹⁵ Recent efforts to incorporate representatives from this office and from country teams around the world is providing the necessary input from the diplomatic element to begin rebalancing the DIME. According to Anton Smith, the DoS currently has approximately 57,000 employees, almost all of whom are employed in diplomatic efforts around the world at all times.¹⁶ This is a small number in comparison to the over one million uniformed members of the Armed services so considered collaboration is key.

Informational

This element of national power refers to strategic communication. In today’s highly connected world it is even more important. As Frank Jones, Principal Director for Strategy, Plans and Resources in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense says,

Diplomacy in a wired world is far different in its conduct than it was even a few decades ago. This is because of the capacity of the global media to transmit information and images throughout the world with astonishing speed but also because the nature of communication today is transnational, domestic audiences cannot be isolated from foreign ones. We live in an increasingly connected world.¹⁷

Despite general agreement that our increasingly connected world requires a cohesive communications approach, the U.S. has really not established a single entity responsible for this element and that may explain some of the imbalance. In *Information as Power*, Colonel Jeryl Ludowese says, “This ‘instrument of statecraft’ embraces diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, international broadcasting, political communication, democracy building, and open military information operations.”¹⁸ This broad definition may explain why it has been difficult to fix a single entity as the responsible party for this element.

Before and during the Cold War, USIA was the agency with primary responsibility for the information element. As Ludowese says, “Throughout the Cold War, public diplomacy initiatives and international broadcasting helped contain and defeat communism, promote democracy, explain American foreign policy, and expose foreign audiences around the world to American values. The USIA purpose merged countering negative propaganda with “presenting a favorable image of the United States.”¹⁹ The U.S. was cultivating what Joseph Nye calls “soft power”--obtaining our goals by attracting others to our culture, policies and political ideals,²⁰ rather than coercing or buying them.²¹

However, post-Cold War, USIA budgets were slashed and the agency merged with the DoS, where it lost much of its organizational identity and arguably some of its effectiveness.²² Despite the possible loss of identity for USIA as a separate entity, it is still true that much of the expertise in strategic communications lies in the DoS. As Ludowese states, “The Department of State is well-positioned to harmonize the interagency effort, having worked closely with the other players that comprise the

strategic communication team”²³ Whichever agency, existing or new, is designated to lead the information efforts of the national strategy, there are steps that must be taken. As Ludowese concludes,

At the top of the list is a Presidential directive assigning roles and missions to the interagency to synchronize all components of strategic communication and provide a foundation for new legislation to coordinate, conduct and fund the effort. Strategic communication cuts across the lines of operation in the Washington bureaucracy. If we are to unite public diplomacy, public affairs, international broadcasting and information operations under a single information strategy, it will take Presidential guidance to do it.²⁴

Until this directive is issued, the mission currently resides with the DoS.

It is extremely important that all elements of the United States government understand the capability and impact of this vital element of national power and work together to communicate in a synchronized manner. This understanding is critical to the implementation of this strategy. Strategic communication must be included in all plans and activities of the agencies of our government. We must leverage the advantages of our technology and creativity to develop a proactive and responsive communication capability to set conditions favorable to our interests. We must also be aware of the culture, customs, language and philosophy of affected populations and our enemies, to more effectively counter extremism, encourage democracy, freedom, and economic prosperity abroad.²⁵

Clear delineation of responsibility for this element of the DIME will be key to rebalancing efforts.

Military

The military has enjoyed significant prestige and admiration over the last two decades. It has also become the instrument of choice in the exercise of national power. As David Anderson points out in *Military Review* magazine, “. . . only rarely has the U.S. employed all its components of national power in a synchronized, synergistic way when trying to influence other nations. Consequently, its actions have created voids that the military must fill.”²⁶ In addition, after thirteen years of war and massive expenditures on

the military it is easy to see how the military has become our go to solution. As then Senator Joe Biden stated in 2008, “. . . the increasing dominance of the military in our foreign policy may inadvertently limit our options--when the military is the most readily available option, it is more likely to be used, whether or not it is the best choice.”²⁷

Going forward the U.S. is considering more focus on the employment of “smart power”--defined by the Center for Strategic and International Studies as “an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions of all levels to expand American influence and establish legitimacy of American action.”²⁸ In a period of declining budgets--something that happens after every major conflict, the DoD tends to revise its planning strategies. Shortly after the end of the Cold War, Dr. Paul Davis recommended that defense planners should move away from the traditional requirements based planning model and move to one that is focused on capabilities. In the current environment this is even more important as the forces we have must be more adaptable than ever.²⁹

Economic

Dr. Ellen Frost, of the Institute for National Strategic Studies, defines economic power, “. . . as the ability to control or influence the behavior of others through the deliberate and politically motivated use of economic assets.”³⁰ Economic power is increasingly recognized as critical to U.S. success in international affairs. As Patrick DeSouza of the Council on Foreign Relations notes in his book, *Economic Strategy and National Security*, “There is, however, a growing realization that in the twenty-first century, economic relations and economic policy tools will play a more central role in defining and preserving the peace than traditional military or diplomatic efforts.”³¹ The world economy is more intertwined than ever before. As Jeffrey Shafer, former member

of the Council of Economic Advisors, states, “U.S. financial linkages with the rest of the world have proliferated and grown stronger over recent decades. These ties raise issues of economic security to a level of foreign policy concern formerly reserved for defense issues.”³²

In spite of this truth, there is still a tendency for both the public and politicians to view economic matters as the purview of specialists rather than an instrument which should be considered in all actions taken by the U.S. As Shafer goes on to say:

This is unmistakable evidence of the failure of those who see the vital economic security interests at stake in the financial area to make their case. Too often, financial issues are treated as reserved for market specialists, an attitude that fuels public and congressional indifference or distrust. Defense issues are also treated largely as reserved for specialists; however, by contrast, the public and Congress accord deference to policymakers over these issues because of their traditional importance to U.S. sovereign interests.³³

In recent decades, the most commonly used method for imposition of economic pressure has been sanctions. It is the first thing the U.S. does in almost any situation, yet there is little evidence that it works. In fact, as David Anderson states in *Military Review*, “. . . sanctions usually cause the parties in conflict to harden their positions, and, by adding to the misery already imposed on people whose government the U.S. is attempting to influence, they portray the U.S. in a bad light.”³⁴ With regard to employment of economic power, Shafer also states, “A generation ago, we learned the fundamental lesson that military forces should not be given an objective they cannot achieve. We need to learn that important lesson now with respect to international financial policymaking.”³⁵

Review of the history of the instruments of the DIME leads to the conclusion that cooperation is key to keeping them in balance. For the government the method for

executing that cooperation can be summed up by the word *interagency*. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, interagency is defined as, “Involving or representing two or more agencies, especially government agencies.”³⁶ More informally this is recognized as descriptive of full cooperation across multiple agencies in the government. As Admiral Mullen said in 2009, “I learned the critical value of a great Ambassador and a great Country Team, a team that is inclusive of so many of our Federal agencies--and in that teamwork, the possibilities, were, and are, endless.”³⁷ Strengthening the interagency capabilities for cooperation and understanding of the skills each party can bring to the table can insure that any time the U.S. decides to wield the instruments of national power that there is a comprehensive approach displaying unity of effort towards achievement of a common objective, protection of U.S. interests. A possible means for achieving more teamwork between DoD and the interagency is execution of the RAF concept.

RAF Background

In 2012, the Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) established a new strategic direction for the DoD. One significant change was rebalance to the Asia Pacific Region-- along with continued support to the Middle East and other friends and allies around the globe.³⁸ The DSG also outlined ten primary missions for the services, of which the following four are most relevant to the RAF:

1. **Deter and defeat aggression** – Maintain capability to deter and defeat any potential adversary. American presence around the globe both reassures our allies and deters our adversaries by reminding the world that the U.S. can project power wherever it is needed.

2. **Provide a stabilizing presence** – Execute rotational deployments and training exercises to build partner capacity and capability. American presence reaffirms

our commitments to our friends and allies and helps to maintain a stable global commons.

3. Conduct stability and counterinsurgency operations – Post conflict conduct limited counterinsurgency and stability operations. Development of habitual relationships with countries around the globe enhances U.S. ability to conduct these types of operations when necessary.

4. Conduct humanitarian, disaster relief, and other operations – Utilize rapid deployment capabilities to respond to a range of situations in the U.S. and other countries. Habitual relationships developed and tested in times of relative calm can be key to successful execution of missions in times of emergency.

While the missions have been clearly laid out, the services are granted significant discretion in determining how to achieve them. As Field, Learmont, and Charland concludes:

These new requirements are compelling the Joint Force and the Army toward superior agility: expanded expeditionary capabilities; precise lethality; enhanced cultural awareness and people savvy; as well as a better ability to integrate with special operations forces and other agencies. Importantly, the concept of partnering with other countries and building the capacity of others is both inherent and explicit in this new paradigm.³⁹

For the Army, the RAF concept is a means to leverage a smaller force for mission accomplishment. It is intended to provide GCCs with access to any forces they may require to execute operations. It also gives them a base group of forces that are aligned with their geographic region for training and exercises so that relationships and capacities can be built before the forces must be employed on a large scale. These forces “. . . conduct operational missions, bilateral and multilateral military exercises, and theater security cooperation activities. RAF specifically address those requirements that are enduring in nature for the combatant commander, from “set-the-theater” to the most likely contingencies.”⁴⁰

Another reason the RAF is attractive to the Army is because it has gained a great deal of operational experience over the last decade plus of war. That operational experience can be invaluable in future operations but it will be challenging to keep soldiers both engaged and inspired by their deployments unless they are continually given opportunities to be tested. The deployments associated with Security Force Assistance and partner capacity building will provide mission command opportunities that will both challenge and inspire young Army leaders.

The RAF concept is designed not only to improve military interaction and partner capacity building in other countries, but also to develop relationships with other U.S. Government organizations, intergovernmental and international organizations that will inevitably be partners in future missions. According to Field, Learmont and Charland, the RAF concept, “. . . is essential to the U.S. defense strategy and represents the Army’s commitment to provide culturally attuned, scalable, mission-prepared capabilities in a changing strategic environment characterized by combinations of nontraditional and traditional threats.”⁴¹ For units above Brigade level (corps and division) alignment for the RAF will be habitual.⁴² However, the geographic alignment of forces will occur annually for brigades and enabler units. These units will typically complete training in a Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) at an Army Combat Training Center for collective certification on maneuver training before they start operations in a given geographic area.

According to Colonel Paul Calvert of the National Training Center, “The newly implemented Decisive Action Training Environment presents that complex environment where the core competencies of combined arms maneuver and wide area security must

constantly be balanced by agile commanders through the execution of mission command.”⁴³ They may also undergo additional training requested by the combatant commander.⁴⁴ This is already paying off for the first brigade to be aligned for this type of mission, the 2-1ID Airborne Brigade Combat Team. They conducted multiple missions for AFRICOM in 2013-14, and “Already in the first year of regionally aligned forces execution, the Army has realized numerous efficiencies by being able to identify when to send squads rather than platoons. This agility will only increase over time.”⁴⁵

The basic premise is that regionally aligned forces will have opportunities to engage with their counterparts from other nations during training and exercise opportunities. These interactions before conflicts occur will build relationships that will be invaluable when any type of operational requirement occurs, whether it is armed conflict or humanitarian assistance. According to Field, Learmont and Charland, “Strategically, it offers the United States both influence in and access to host nations through enhanced trust and understanding facilitated by enduring engagements.”⁴⁶ Two current components of the RAF that predate the concept by a couple of decades are the State Partnership Program, which pairs National Guard units with regional partners, and the Reserve Engagement Cells program which conducts training exercises around the world.⁴⁷ According to Major General Patrick Donahue, “During a visit to Botswana, he said that while his active-duty Soldiers were given a cordial welcome, when the North Carolina Guard showed up, “They were treated like rock stars. It’s all about those established personal relationships, plus, the Guard has that resident expertise.”⁴⁸ Should the RAF concept be implemented fully, it is expected to attain similar benefits on a grander scale.

Risk Analysis

Dr. Paul K. Davis of the Rand Corporation has written for decades on the challenges of defense planning. The challenge, particularly at this point, is to plan effectively in the face of uncertainty as our budgets and likely our force structure are growing smaller. Back in 1994 when the Army was in a similar situation, Davis said that the U.S. “should discard the traditional focus on one or a few sharply defined scenarios in favor of a many-scenario approach . . . that puts a premium on assuring future strategic and operational adaptiveness.”⁴⁹ In 2008 he offered a framework suitable for risk analysis of the RAF concept. The framework is shown in Figure 1. This framework uses three axes related to objectives, time frame and geography. As Davis says with regard to DoD, “Ideally, it could plan to do everything, everywhere, always. Realistically, of course, this is impossible, and choices must be made.”⁵⁰

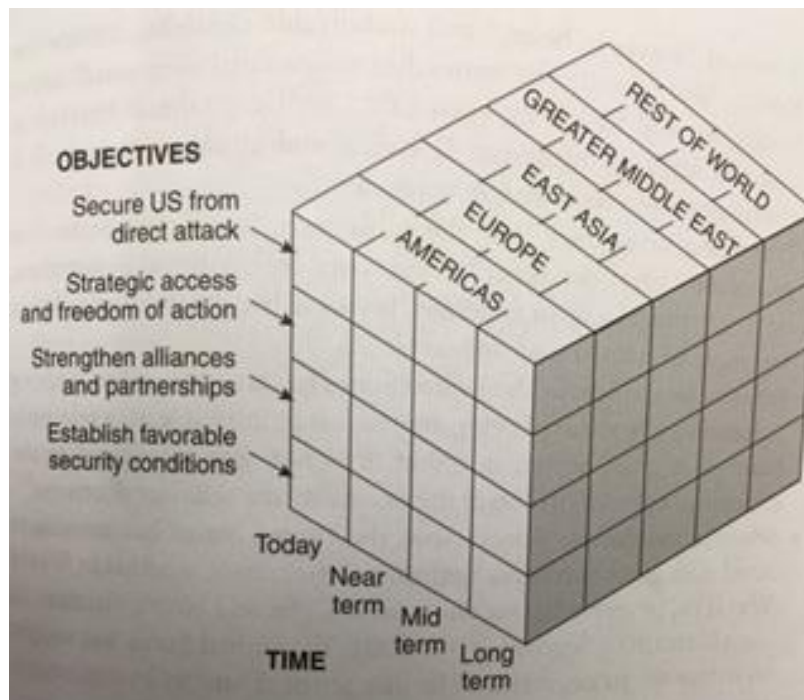


Figure 1. DoD's enduring decision space⁵¹

Davis discusses several actions the U.S. has historically taken to reduce strategic risk. Several of them are relevant to this risk analysis:

- Military power – Historically the U.S. has invested heavily in military power in order to support any and all foreign policy goals.⁵² The challenge now is to determine which types of military power and what force size best situates us for future conflict.
- A mix of “forces in being” and mobilizable capabilities – The U.S. has sought to balance our overall requirements for military forces between active forces and somewhat prepared reserve forces that can be brought into the fight pretty quickly.⁵³ Cost constraints will be a major factor in this mix. It may be necessary to put more forces into the reserve and concentrate on the active Army being able to hold the line until reserve forces can be brought to bear.
- Allies, alliances and international agreements – The U.S. has cultivated friends and allies around the world and sought to build their capacities for both self- defense and cooperation in U.S. military actions. The U.S. has also remained engaged with declared and potential enemies in an effort to provide warning for developing confrontations.⁵⁴ Cultivating friends and allies in becoming increasingly important as the U.S. realizes it cannot do everything, everywhere, and that our partners must do more for themselves.
- Forward engagement – Since the 1940s the U.S. has had substantial forces forward deployed around the world to stabilize some regions and to facilitate execution of operations if necessary.⁵⁵ The U.S. is now moving towards making a tradeoff between permanently forward deployed forces and development of partner capacity.

The discussion of strategic risk leads to consideration of operational risk. These are the risks associated with trying to achieve strategic objectives.⁵⁶ As Davis says, “Here the classic question for force planners who must decide on the size and character of future forces is: ‘How much is enough?’”⁵⁷ Historically decisions on the size of the force were based on assumptions that we would need to fight only a set number of wars at the same time, and that detailed operational planning scenarios were the best guide to what forces would be required. When we look at the risk assessment model proposed it is clear that priorities can be discerned from the model. For example securing the U.S.

from direct attack is the top priority in terms of time, objectives, and geography. In order to do that, we may need to make trade-offs which establish favorable security conditions and strengthen alliances and partnerships for the “rest of world,” If the RAF is to execute this trade-off strategy, it presents risks which require mitigation.

Risks

In analyzing the four missions that RAF is most likely to support, Steve Griffin, a former Civil-Military officer in the U.S. Army, highlights three major risks: (1) Reduced readiness, (2) Uneven distribution of resources, (3) Insufficient enabler forces.⁵⁸ The greatest risk is that the U.S. cannot maintain readiness while constantly executing missions. As Field, Learmont, and Charland have concluded, “Balancing readiness for the most likely and most dangerous courses of action has never been more difficult.”⁵⁹ A key component of readiness, collective training, will suffer the most from the employment of smaller units for security cooperation or building partner capacity missions. The geographic alignment may provide very effective forces with a high state of readiness for a given region. However, as Steve Griffin states, “The drawback to such specific training is that regionally aligned Combined-arms Maneuver (CAM) / Counterinsurgency (COIN) units essentially become extra-specialized, which is a plus for effectiveness but an obvious drawback for flexibility.”⁶⁰ If regionally aligned units from one geographic combatant command are pulled to augment another geographic command due to an expanding conflict like IRAQI FREEDOM, then regionally aligned forces may not be available in a given region when needed and the time spent cultivating relationships may be wasted.⁶¹ Using materiel for real world missions will also mean a greater requirement for reset and modernization of existing equipment, potentially further degrading readiness.

The second major risk is that the Army will revert to a tiered unit system where some units get everything they need and others are left with only the leftovers.⁶² This was very common pre-911, but consistent rotations into Central Command over the last decade have allowed the Army to maintain a high level of readiness over a broader spectrum of units, to include the reserve components. The Army must consider how to avoid letting this valuable operational experience be degraded over time.

The third major risk is insufficient enabler units. Sustainment, fires, combat aviation, battlefield surveillance, civil affairs, engineers, military police, and others are pooled resources for the Army to provide maximum flexibility.⁶³ As Griffin points out, “While combat brigades can be regionally aligned without running out of units to cover the spectrum of demand, support and functional brigades would have to operate on a rotational basis, thus forfeiting the benefits offered by habitual relationships.”⁶⁴ Interestingly, these types of units are often the ones that are most valuable for regional missions as they can provide services to the local population that are very popular with both the local governments and their communities.⁶⁵

Recommendations

To mitigate the three major areas of risk, several actions must be taken. First, to maintain readiness, all units must be evaluated in a DATE before deployment as a RAF. They will then be ready for CAM operations globally since they are essentially similar regardless of the terrain in which they are fought.⁶⁶ COIN operations on the other hand, are very sensitive to cultural and environmental awareness which is part of the RAF.⁶⁷ Ensuring that Global Response Forces are prepared for initial requirements for CAM operations, there is time for regionally aligned forces to prepare for the follow on COIN mission which often follows.⁶⁸

Second, to address the limited number of enabler units there are two possible risk mitigation strategies. First, enabler units can be deployed in small pieces in support of missions just like the combat forces. If this happens, the focus needs to be on the leadership opportunities these support missions provide rather than on a perceived loss of control of forces commanders would prefer to have under their direct control. Second, forces can be restructured to include more of these types of units and make them organic to corps and divisions.⁶⁹ This option would reflect a recognition of the value and demand for these types of units.

Third, in order to keep the focus on mission readiness and avoid a tiered system, the GCCs should push for establishment of pre-positioned sets of equipment appropriate for their region. The RAF forces would fall in on this equipment, which would be maintained at a high level of readiness.⁷⁰ Again, for the smaller missions associated with most RAF requirements, the focus should be development of junior leaders and exercise of the concept of “mission command” to maximize the experience and adaptability of the fighting force.

Conclusion

A largely CONUS based Army will be a significant change for soldiers who have been used to a series of extended deployments and very challenging work. RAF will present opportunities for shorter, but still challenging missions that can help to retain some of the skills that have been gained in the last decade. The discussion about RAF and its risks is not really about whether we will continue to have forces deployed around the globe. Even without the RAF concept,

. . . after the drawdown in Afghanistan, on any given day the Army will typically have at least 100,000 soldiers forward deployed. Land forces will continue to be the most engaged and employed of the Joint team, and

through constant engagement and assessing the effectiveness of activities on the ground among humans, will be well positioned to continue to evolve direct and indirect options for the use of the military instrument for policymakers.⁷¹

The question then becomes how we can employ the most effective approach to maintaining training and readiness for our soldiers while all these deployments are going on. According to Field, Learmont and Charland, “For soldiers, RAF means real-world missions in exciting places. For policymakers and strategists, RAF means a more agile, responsive, integrated Army.”⁷²

The military has been the default instrument of national power employed for the last two decades. While it has been arguably successful at most tasks, the way in which we employ military power must change. It cannot be the default method of engagement for every challenge we face and when it is employed it must be considered in context.

...our confrontations and conflicts must be understood as intertwined political and military events, and only in this way can they be resolved. As such, it is no longer practical for the politicians and diplomats to expect the military to solve the problem by force, nor is it practical for the military to plan and execute a purely military campaign, or in many cases take tactical action, without placing it within the political context, with both politician and the military adjusting context and plan accordingly throughout the operation as the situation evolves.⁷³

In moving towards this goal of a more holistic approach, the RAF concept has great potential. The benefits of this strategy outweigh the risks as the U.S. seeks to balance the employment of all of the instruments of national power to achieve its objectives.

Endnotes

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