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**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**BROKEN MIRRORS: TRACING ISSUES IN BUILDING
PARTNER CAPACITY**

by

Christopher B. Odom

June 2016

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Leo Blanken
Jonathan Lipow

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BROKEN MIRRORS: TRACING ISSUES IN BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Recent U.S. military engagements in fragile states have focused on building security institutions that match Western military and police models. These operations, however, have highlighted the need to reevaluate how we build host-nation security institutions from the ground up in conflict areas with varying social, religious, and ethnic concentrations. The interaction between the environment, doctrine, and technology (EDT) provided by U.S. government agencies has complicated the issue by locking the host-nation's success to ongoing U.S. support. This research uses process-tracing to examine EDT factors in two case studies: U.S. advisory missions in Vietnam from 1954–1965, and in Afghanistan from 2001 to the present. These cases are used to analyze past and current U.S. efforts aimed at building a partner's capacity to secure their own sovereign territory. Because the current U.S. model for fighting internal threats maintains a military structured for fighting external threats, a foreign partner's security structure will likely collapse without continuing U.S. advisory presence and materiel support.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APPP	Afghan Public Protection Program
ASF	Afghan Security Forces
AUP	Afghan Uniformed Police
BPC	Building Partner Capacity
CG	Civil Guard
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan
DDR	Disarmament, Demilitarization, and Reintegration
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DOS	U.S. Department of State
EDT	Environment, Doctrine, Technology
FEC	French Expeditionary Corps
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FSF	Foreign Security Forces
GCC	Geographic Combatant Commander
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GPF	General Purpose Forces
ISIS	Islamic State
LOAC	Law of Armed Conflict
MAAG	Military Advisory Assistance Group
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSA	Non-State Actor
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan
OMC-A	Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan

QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RAF	Regionally Aligned Forces
SDC	Self Defense Corps
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TSCP	Theater Strategic Cooperation Plans
U.S.	United States
USSOF	United States Special Operations Forces
VSO	Village Stability Operations

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I. CAPACITY TO BUILD PARTNERS

Nearly fifteen years of sustained combat operations since 9/11 have resulted in the security transition from U.S. combat forces in Iraq and Afghanistan to U.S.-trained host-nation forces. The current struggle between Iraqi security forces and the Islamic State (ISIS) has raised questions over the Iraqi military's ability to defeat ISIS. Similar fears for the Afghanistan government's survival exist as the Taliban postures to regain territory after the massive reduction of NATO combat troops at the end of 2014. While most research focuses on decisions made in regards to combat operations, less attention has been paid to decisions affecting security transition between U.S. forces and host-nation forces. The U.S. spent billions of dollars and many lives training, equipping, and preparing Iraqis and Afghans to defend their own countries, yet an effective model of transitioning authority to partner security forces still remains to be produced. The U.S.-trained Iraqi military crumbled in the face of an ISIS incursion across the Syrian border and the ability of the Afghan Ministry of Defense to defeat the Taliban insurgency is in serious doubt. These two cases point to a recurring pattern: the U.S. military's development of Foreign Security Forces (FSF) revolves around mirror-imaging foreign security institutions based on U.S. organization and cultural models without considering local political and social realities in a given environment.

A. PURPOSE

Recent U.S. military engagements in fragile or failed states have focused on building security institutions along the organizational framework of western military and police models. Failure in these operations seems to underscore the need to reevaluate how we build host nation security institutions from the ground up in conflict areas with varying social, religious, and ethnic concentrations. This research uses current literature and available case studies in building partner capacity (BPC) and counterinsurgency in order to analyze the effectiveness of current military doctrine. BPC is an umbrella term over various programs ranging from security cooperation, security assistance, foreign internal defense (FID) and security force assistance (SFA) to name a few. The purpose of

this research is to focus on U.S. military methods for building security forces during conflict to identify common features employed when building such forces and analyze their effectiveness. This will assist U.S. policy makers and military strategists in identifying adaptive ways to build security forces capable of meeting their most likely threats.

Modern operational environments tend to position the military in a dual mission. The military's primary mission is protecting itself through offensive/defensive operations aimed at defeating the enemy. The second mission is training FSF to legitimize an adequate monopoly of violence great enough to keep an acceptable level of security within their respective state.¹ The post-9/11 conflict environment highlights the problem of ungoverned or poorly governed spaces in which non-state actors (NSAs) can operate relatively unhindered. FSF assist U.S. and coalition partners in the current fight against NSAs with an ultimate goal of securing their own nation and relieving U.S. and coalition force presence. However, the post-Cold War environment increasingly comprises failed states with force diffused to a competition of violence between factions, tribes, militias and/or terrorists. Competition between these elements presents a significant issue for a U.S. military caught between two missions: offensive combat operations against enemy combatants and building the capacity of friendly elements to formalize traditional and professionalized security force institutions.

SFA is currently paired with transition doctrine in the U.S. Army's push to learn from mistakes made in Afghanistan and Iraq. Previous policies evoking the statement, "you broke it, you own it"² underscore how some U.S. policy makers view the responsibility of re-building a country's government after the U.S. actively contributes to overthrowing it, such as Iraq and Afghanistan. The results find the military bogged down in a counterinsurgency fight after short-lived initial success leading to slow responses in

¹ Robert W. Jackman, *Power without Forces: The Political Capacity of Nation-States* University of Michigan Press, 2010), 209, 109–114.

² Also known as the "Pottery Barn rule." Then secretary of state Colin Powell argued to President George W. Bush that an Iraq invasion would dominate his foreign policy and he would "be responsible for 25 million people in Iraq." Walter LaFeber, "The Rise and Fall of Colin Powell and the Powell Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* 124, no. 1 (2009), 87.

re-establishing public services, especially security. The solution to prolonged military involvement became partly the establishment of security institutions aimed at securing the populace from within and facilitating the responsible exit of foreign military combat troops. However, as the U.S. soon found after leaving Iraq in 2011, the hard-fought security gains achieved through a military surge, gave way to an onslaught of ISIS terrorists easily running through U.S.-equipped and trained Iraqi military and police formations. Certainly, U.S. doctrine for building partner capacity requires more thought and analysis.

Examining environments and doctrine alone may miss another crucial aspect that has played an ever-increasing role in warfare: technology. As the information age continues to affect all aspects of human interaction, all levels of war need to adapt old notions of warfare in order to address new exploitations and diffusions of combat materiel and tactics. The manner in which the U.S. military equips its partners to secure its territory tends to be planned and analyzed poorly prior to execution. The U.S. way of war tends to favor mass recruitment and equipping of indigenous personnel to control vast areas of land predicated on an extremely outdated conventional concept of fighting war. War has changed and technology is a driver for both NSAs and nation states. Recent U.S. trends employing technologies must be considered when analyzing FSF effectiveness.

Analyzing these three aspects - *environment*, *doctrine*, and *technology* - and their impact on U.S. methods of building FSF capacity is important for current and future U.S. strategic objectives. Considering the first of these, U.S. operational environments often involve weak national institutions attempting to consolidate power from traditionally held local power bases. Second, SFA's primary function is to build capacity and capability into a FSF; however, a misapplication of doctrine by U.S. service members impedes creating viable foreign security institutions. Finally, the technology so readily available to U.S. combat troops is a double-edged sword when building new militaries from the ground up. How does this conventional mindset persist in different environments? What drives current SFA efforts toward conventional solutions? What technology is feasible, practical and enduring for partner nations? The existing literature is essentially

bifurcated between arguments concerning external drivers of security institutions, and internal characteristics that facilitate or inhibit such institutions; in the next section, I explore this literature, and show our current understanding on these complex topics.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Warfare has evolved throughout history to maximize a group's efficient use of its resources against other groups. The formation of the nation-state focused warfare between two sovereign entities, though not excluding conflict between sub-national entities and states. The centralization of nation-states coupled with the industrial revolution increased the need for standing professional armies as the complexity of warfare increased.³ After the Second World War, the U.S. and Soviet Union focused their militaries to deter total war, rather than risk an escalation to nuclear war threatening global existence. Emerging countries in Africa and Asia fought and won independence from colonial powers, which then set the stage for the west (U.S. and Western Europe) and the east (Soviet Union and China) to compete for ideological patronage by these former colonies. A distinctive characteristic of this shift is that war would compete within states among its people, opposed to directly between the nation-states. The focus shifted from building a nation-state's deterrent capability against external competitors to supporting allies against internal adversaries in the form of guerrillas, insurgents, or other NSAs. The latter increases the need to understand the social construct of a society to compete for the support of the population. This distinction gains importance for military personnel implementing strategy against both *external* and *internal* factors. We will now look at each of these factors in turn to better understand the challenges of SFA.

The premise of realism is that each nation would act in its own self-interest in accordance with its own security environment. A state surrounded by enemies, e.g., Israel, may have more incentive to rapidly enhance its military technology faster than one isolated from external threats, e.g., Costa Rica. In addition, neorealism contends that in a competitive and anarchic international system, countries will emulate "best practices"

³ Bengt Abrahamsson, *Military Professionalization and Political Power* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1972), 163, 21.

that optimize their use of limited resources. In sum, this “externalist” tradition emphasizes that forces will be matched rationally against the relevant threats the state faces (even, perhaps threats within its borders).⁴ Others have questioned the rationality of using external examples, or models, to emulate “best practices.” DiMaggio and Powell explain, “When organizational technologies are poorly understood, when goals are ambiguous, or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty, organizations may model themselves on other organizations.”⁵ Modeling, as DiMaggio and Powell use it, is how organizations deal with uncertainty. In the realm of international politics, Farrell focuses on norm transplantation, which is the implementation of international norms into new national constructs.⁶ Farrell examines the international norms of military professionals and their preference for conventional warfare and civilian authority over the military.⁷ These preferences for conventional warfare and civilian authority can be forced on weaker states from external actors requiring the transformation of the weaker state’s internal dynamics. The focus on external arguments then turns to examining how internal environments react to these external pressures.

“Internal” arguments focus on the attributes of the host polity and society – noting that the institutions and culture of the nation may determine the types of doctrine, military technology, and force structure the nation might adopt. Barry Posen emphasizes two important factors nations consider when choosing military doctrine; means and the manner those means are employed.⁸ Military choices for doctrine and technology may have a-rational drivers. Military isomorphism, for example, contends that actors may emulate techniques that are not appropriate (serve little rational function) because such techniques bestow some aura of power or professionalism. Under such “security imaginary,” security environments are not objectively determined, but interpreted

⁴ Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1st ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).

⁵ Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, “The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields,” in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, eds. Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 69.

⁶ Theo Farrell, “Transnational Norms and Military Development: Constructing Ireland’s Professional Army,” *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 1 (2001), 65.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸ Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (London: Cornell University Press, 1984), 244, 13.

through self-imposed identities and their interactions with the environment.⁹ These arguments focus on what drives the nation and its forces to choose specific techniques or technology to seek or value. Second, mismatches between military forms and local culture will retard or forestall successful adoption. Theo Farrell adds that Western militaries are ingrained in their organizational structure, culture, and methods, which they have invested time and effort, making operational change difficult.¹⁰ Emily Goldman's work on the diffusion of military techniques provides a useful framework for informing the problem. She defines military diffusion as the process of elites employing new technologies, processes and methods into their state's institutions and practices.¹¹ Military diffusion is not solely concerned with advanced weaponry, but with the processing of new information to alter its security institution. Her work emphasizes the degree to which military technologies, doctrine, and structures fit or misfit with target nations.

Conversely, countries less developed than their western contemporaries often find security roles delegated to groups uncontrolled by centralized authority. Ahram argues the internal and external threat environment heavily influences the "devolution of security" from centralized state authorities to paramilitary groups.¹² Matt Dearing analyzes the varying degree of violence promulgated by paramilitaries against communities they reside during Afghanistan's state formation period beginning after the U.S.-led overthrow of the Taliban in 2001.¹³ Dearing examines the relationships between paramilitaries and their patron/s, local governance structure, incentives, and how all relate with one another to determine why some paramilitaries are more violent than others. He

⁹ Joellen Pretorius, "The Security Imaginary: Explaining Military Isomorphism," *Security Dialogue* 39, no. 1 (2008), 99–120.

¹⁰ Theo Farrell, "Introduction: Military Adaptation in War," in *Military Adaptation in Afghanistan*, eds. Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga and James A. Russell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 1–23.

¹¹ Emily O. Goldman, "Cultural Foundations of Military Diffusion," *Review of International Studies* 32, no. 01 (2006), 69.

¹² Ariel I. Ahram, *Proxy Warriors: The Rise and Fall of State-Sponsored Militias*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 4–5.

¹³ Matthew P. Dearing, "The Dogs of War: Paramilitary Groups and State Formation in Afghanistan" (Ph.D. diss, Naval Postgraduate School), 6.

concludes that paramilitary group behavior is most dependent on its relationship with local communities in which they reside. The patron/client relationship (paramilitaries as the client and individual or organization sponsor as patron) which places community oversight on paramilitary actions are more likely to lead to protective rather than predatory behavior.¹⁴ Bridging the local polity with the paramilitary force requires a certain degree of trust not commonly in large supply during times of state formation, especially after long periods of internal conflict. However, as Henk suggests, shared values and behaviors that tie common understanding about mutual rights and responsibilities rests strongest in the smallest and most proximate groups.¹⁵

We can now turn from theoretical treatments to existing policy and doctrine applications. United States doctrine on training FSF contains a myriad of terms aimed to merge the various agencies of government into a unified effort. BPC is an umbrella term first presented in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) aiming to bridge the gap between the various executive departments with authority over assisting FSF.¹⁶ The term highlights the government's goal to strengthen security institutions in failed or weak states intended to strengthen national security interests.¹⁷ However, as the congressional research service notes, "neither the policy nor academic communities have explored in great detail whether or not Building Partner Capacity works to achieve U.S. strategic objectives."¹⁸ In the 2010 QDR, the Obama administration backed its predecessor in placing SFA as an increasingly critical element of security cooperation under BPC.¹⁹ According to the recently released *Field Manual for Security Cooperation*, FM 3-22, "For over 100 years, providing advisors or training assistance to partner security forces

¹⁴ Ibid., 286.

¹⁵ Dan Henk, "Human Security: Relevance and Implications," *Parameters* (Summer, 2005), 9 December 2015, 101.

¹⁶ Kathleen J. McInnis and Nathan J. Lucas, *What is "Building Partner Capacity?" Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2015).

¹⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁸ Ibid., 1.

¹⁹ Ibid., 7.

has been the rule, not the exception for the Army.”²⁰ However, the manner in which they train partner security forces has changed. Regionally aligned forces (RAF) provide geographic combatant commanders (GCC) with a tailorable force up to a Joint Task Force headquarters (Modular Brigade) to shape the security environment in accordance with the GCC theater security cooperation plan. RAFs aim to enhance the cultural, language, geographic and military knowledge of its Service Members to deploy adaptable trainers with “local” knowledge of the host nation partner they intend to train. Additionally, with this new arrangement, SFA is embedded into the possible mission sets RAFs will execute, to include training military, paramilitary, police, intelligence, and other forces.²¹

A similar mission set, usually performed by United States Special Operations Forces (USSOF), FID, mirrors SFA, but is distinguishable by doctrine. FID encompasses both civilian and military institutions working with a foreign government aimed to protect against internal subversive and terrorist threats. SFA is solely concerned with training FSF, not only for internal threats, but for external threats with the ability to join a multinational coalition.²² The development of security forces is not only touted as an Army global imperative for the last century, but the hallmark for working towards transitioning combat troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Recent revisions in the U.S. Army’s FM 3-07 *Stability* have placed emphasis on SFA that enables the military to transition from post-conflict. An entire chapter is dedicated to emphasizing the necessity, urgency, and complexity of conducting transition. Transition can occur at all levels of war, at different phases of an operation, and can occur more than once. For purposes of this paper, “transitions include transferring authority and control to other military forces, civilian agencies and organizations, and the host nation.”²³ Establishing Civil Security, which may include SFA aims to create “a safe, secure, and stable environment...key to

²⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-22: Army Support to Security Cooperation*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, June 21, 2013), V.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1–10.

²² *Ibid.*, 1–11.

²³ U.S. Department of the Army. *Field Manual 3-07: Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, June 2, 2014), 2–4.

obtaining local support for military operations” and necessary for transitioning authority.²⁴ This doctrinal framework continues to establish the idea of professionalism and international human rights principles as key requirements for FSF prior to executing a transition of U.S. forces to an advisory role. Yet, ideals of professionalism in failed states require more than promotion from Western forces, and set the tone for complicated relationships as “professionalized” training commences. Doctrine is vague in its definition of these terms, and provides little to force planners conducting full spectrum operations in fragile states.

RAND published a thorough accounting of security partnerships in Iraq and Afghanistan.²⁵ RAND recommended several actions for both U.S. and NATO Special Operations Forces (SOF) to implement in future partner capacity building missions. First, SOF needs to balance their operations between building partner capacity and combat. Second, building capacity focused on combat proficiency ignores sustainment and support activities required to equip, regenerate, and maintain FSF. Technological advances and economic sustainment were both severely lacking to support the level of training coalition SOF conducted with Afghan security forces (ASF). However, the study says little about the force structure implemented by coalition forces at the national level, effecting host nation internal security. The amount of coalition support, especially in regards to logistics, is a primary source for slow host nation improvement over time. Nothing in the study assessed the feasibility of Western, U.S.-style military structure with historical foreign security models.

Moving beyond isolating one aspect involved in the outcome of building partner capacity, the interaction of multiple factors applies for this research. One factor alone is not adequate in explaining how so much effort and resources applied to strengthening partner security repeatedly falls short. Nor is it adequate to assume that all situations the U.S. intends to build partner capacity require theoretically based solutions. However,

²⁴ Ibid., 1–2.

²⁵ Austin Long et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond: Challenges and Best Practices from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Colombia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2015).

tracing the factors believed to affect U.S. efforts in building partner capacity contributes to understanding its value in the present context.

C. RESEARCH GOAL

The goal of this research is to trace the causal effects of the environment, doctrine, and technology on U.S. efforts to build appropriate forces as a prerequisite to meeting U.S. strategic objectives. The research intends to explain how each factor; environment, doctrine, and technology (EDT) directly influence the nature, and outcome of assisting FSF development and show how the three factors interact with each other during execution. Using the cases of the Vietnam War and Operation Enduring Freedom, this thesis will trace how and why the U.S. military has been unsuccessful at building partner capacity in FSF. The U.S. bureaucratic construct fails to adapt to a changed battlefield, with adversaries no longer adhering to the laws of armed conflict (LOAC), which likewise strain U.S. efforts to fight effectively against an enemy bent on defeating western militaries through attrition by exploiting their weaknesses, which Western militaries are unwilling to adapt.

D. METHODOLOGY

The methodological technique utilized in this project is process-tracing of key variables in chosen case studies. Beach and Pedersen define theory-building process tracing as a procedure “to detect a plausible hypothetical causal mechanism whereby X is linked with Y.”²⁶ George and Bennett further argue that “because these observations must be linked in particular ways to constitute an explanation of the case...process-tracing...is frequently valuable in theory development.”²⁷ The interaction between the operational environment, military doctrine, and the technology employed in the case studies examined (Vietnam and Afghanistan) creates the framework for analysis of the casual mechanism between U.S. structured FSF and failure to successfully transition security

²⁶ Derek Beach and Rasmus Brun Pederson, *Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 16.

²⁷ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 207–209.

responsibility to FSF ownership. Vietnam and Afghanistan were chosen because, in both cases, a small U.S. advisory presence to build host-nation security institutions resulted in greater U.S. military intervention. This study argues the three factors, EDT, interact with each other in a manner that becomes counterproductive over time resulting from failures in adapting operational initiatives to operational realities. Previous studies focus on how these variables affect U.S. military effectiveness; this work adds to the field of study on military effectiveness by looking at the effectiveness of partner security forces as they emulate U.S. security models. By tracing out the dynamics of these factors, insights into building FSF can be generated that will guide future research and policy.

1. Environmental Factors

A weak state is weak in part because it lacks the bureaucratic institutions normally associated with distributing resources from the government to its people. The strength or weakness of the security institution will determine how FSF respond to threats externally and internally. The development of weak states, or lack thereof, can lead to a further deterioration of internal security if incentives exist to keep power diffused rather than building appropriate bureaucratic institutions necessary to manage the country's resources. Reno studies the impact of what he calls the "shadow state" in his study of warlord politics in African countries.²⁸ The shadow state involves patron networks established by rulers to receive support externally, and in turn uses that support to manage internal patronage networks to tie potential adversaries to their rule. Bueno de Mesquita argues these non-democratic governments lack incentives for developing public security.²⁹ These works highlight the difficulty and complexity of establishing legitimate security institutions in a failed or fractured state—the task may not only involve the inherent challenge of funding and training forces, but it may also face multiple layers of strategic actors who benefit from the task failing.

²⁸ William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 227, 2.

²⁹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003).

In both cases, I will trace how the chief executive manages sovereign power, and how this power affects government institutions aimed at securing its population. Legitimate power incentivizes cooperation among members of society to act as the chief executive directs. However, political and social friction can lead to competition among local rulers. If security is among the primary concerns of rulers, how do they fail to interpret adequate security responses to growing internal problems? How does external patronage affect internal processes of organizing security institutions?

2. Doctrinal Factors

U.S. military doctrine in contested environments seems to fit the hypothesis that the U.S. way of war has changed little over the last century, though the threats emerging during this time have changed. After the First World War, a desire to codify principles in the military emerged, due to perceived lack of scientific methods of conducting war, leading to the mass stalemate experienced along the Western Front. These principles developed by the War department in 1921 created the first formal list of the “Principles of War.”³⁰ These principles, to include offensive, mass, and economy of force, helped to engrain the “conventional” style of combat preferred by Western militaries for several generations leading to Vietnam. Adhering to set rules of war dilutes critical thinking and provides a false assumption that responses using “principled” solutions are sound. Adamsky argues, “American mental formations favor procedural knowledge, which focuses on how to get things done, in contrast to descriptions of the way things are.”³¹ Mass, conventional units with large logistics supply chains swarm the operational area and establish semi-permanent operating bases from which to project coercive force. This gradual build-up eventually leads the U.S. military to establish FSF in an identical U.S. image, imparting the techniques, which have served the U.S. military since WWII. Brooks evaluates doctrine as it relates across all levels of war, and how they mutually

³⁰ Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973), 212–213.

³¹ Dima Adamsky, *The Culture of Military Innovation: The Impact of Cultural Factors on the Revolution in Military Affairs in Russia, the US, and Israel* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 231.

support one another, creating integration: a primary element in military effectiveness.³² The U.S. doctrine of employing force results from several factors including military organizational design and military institutional culture. Krepinevich argues that Special Forces originally deployed to Vietnam to conduct unconventional warfare (UW) rather than counterinsurgency (COIN), because UW operations, opposed to COIN operations, supported conventional operations.³³ This mindset focused efforts on building guerilla forces over defeating insurgents. Recent developments over the last half century, such as employing a highly professionalized force create a U.S. tendency to export its security design to other states, regardless of their environment. Brooks argues, “a responsive military is one that adjusts its operational doctrine and tactics to exploit its adversary’s weaknesses and its own strengths.”³⁴ However, Posen states, “changing doctrines takes time; it disorients a military organization.”³⁵ Exploring the history and culture of doctrine used throughout the case studies will help analyze the effectiveness of the doctrine imposed by the U.S. military on the partner nation.

I intend to study how the initial strategic objectives of U.S. advisors affected the doctrine employed by both U.S. combat personnel and U.S. advisors. Furthermore, do the doctrines vary between the two cases, and why/why not? How do security forces interpret their operational environment? Were aspects of professionalism altered to account for social differences in each case?

3. Technological Capabilities

After WWII, the U.S. competed with the Soviet Union for military technological dominance, in a global battle to maintain and increase their respective spheres of influence. During 1945–1965, the arms race produced the accompanying technological expertise and bureaucratic organization required to acquire, coordinate and supervise its

³² Risa Brooks and Elizabeth A. Stanley, *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 252, 10.

³³ Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 275, 103.

³⁴ Brooks and Stanley, *Creating Military Power*, 252, 11.

³⁵ Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine*, 244, 30.

production across varying academic and professional fields of study.³⁶ After the Soviet Union's collapse ended the Cold War, a revolution in military affairs aimed to exploit technology "that could destroy the enemy with pinpoint accuracy from great distances while minimizing the exposure to U.S. forces to enemy fire."³⁷ The U.S. military dominance in the First Gulf War from its technological hegemony set the course in the 1990s for increased reliance on precision guidance weapon systems and less Service Members to employ it on the battlefield. A nation harnesses its materiel quality and the skill of its military members, including their motivations, to help increase its own effectiveness.³⁸ However, the harnessing of technological dominance in war is not the sole indicator of effectiveness where it predicts victory or defeat. As Van Creveld notes, "the conduct of war against an intelligent opponent differs from the management of a large-scale technological system" underlying the difference between military effectiveness and efficiency.³⁹

Culminating with Donald Rumsfeld's Military Transformation model of smaller, highly specialized and equipped forces leading the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11, underscores the importance in analyzing how technology influences BPC in failed/failing states. Underdeveloped nations possess fewer advanced means to wage war, therefore have fewer personnel with adequate education required to employ advanced means. Economists use the term "absorptive capacity" referring to the process of transforming aid (input) received to useful programs (output) to reduce poverty.⁴⁰ U.S. vulnerabilities fighting insurgencies highlight the need to relook U.S. military reliance on technology to strike a balance between necessity and appropriateness. In prolonged wars involving counterinsurgencies, Korb and Ogden argue, "the United States' impressive

³⁶ William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 387, 368–369.

³⁷ Benjamin Buley, *The New American Way of War* (New York: Routledge, 2007). 94.

³⁸ Brooks and Stanley, *Creating Military Power*, 252, 10.

³⁹ Martin L. Van Creveld, *Technology and War: From 2000 B.C. to the Present* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 320, 318.

⁴⁰ Jagdish Bhagwati, "Banned Aid: Why International Assistance Does Not Alleviate Poverty," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 1 (2010), 124.

technology cannot substitute for soldiers.”⁴¹ The technology we provide FSF must also account for a partner’s absorptive capacity. The planner/searcher argument adequately frames the utility of foreign aid, which argues that planners tend to follow “blueprints” on aid programs, whereas searches employ solutions based on local realities.⁴² Local realities are discovered through prerequisite partnerships built between the providers and the recipients of aid, but must work beyond this simple generalization. This sentiment is echoed by a report analyzing U.S. foreign assistance, which states partnership “reflect relationships...among peers, where priorities are mutual, effort is mutual, and accountability is mutual.”⁴³

Examining the relationship between reliance of combat systems while building partner capacity immediately brings forward two questions. What kind of capabilities can we expect to export to foreign security partners and how do these systems affect these security forces within their operational environment? Does too much reliance on external support hinder development of FSF or create dependency?

4. Framing the Factors in the Casual Mechanism

This study attempts to study the interrelated factors involved when the U.S. attempts to build partner capacity in a fragile environment. The U.S. military hopes to build security forces to achieve strategic objectives to prevent prolonged interventions in foreign nations. The failures in the post-Cold War era is due to the interaction of factors including the ignorance of operational environments, inappropriate doctrine and an over-reliance on technological materiel, that is then modeled to build FSF ill-suited for its environment and adversary. Beach and Pederson state, “mechanismic understandings of causality is the dynamic, interactive influence of causes on outcomes and in particular how causal forces are transmitted through the series of interlocking parts of a causal

⁴¹ Lawrence J. Korb, Peter Ogden and Frederick W. Kagan, “The Army You have [with Reply],” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 6 (2006), 153–157.

⁴² William Easterly, “Planners versus Searchers in Foreign Aid,” *Asian Development Review* 23, no. 2 (2006), 1–35.

⁴³ Carol Adelman et al., *Foreign Assistance: What Works and what Doesn’t with Recommendations for Future Improvements* (Prepared for the HELP Commission, March 12, 2007), 36.

mechanism to contribute to producing an outcome.”⁴⁴ The framework for the following case studies follows the pattern of environment, doctrine, and technology. These factors interact with one another to create partnerships that mimic the U.S. military. The case studies for this research examine the U.S. Advisory mission in Vietnam prior to massive military mobilization in 1965 and the U.S. advisory mission in Afghanistan from 2001 to the present. Using the framework in these case studies allows testing of the hypothesis that the U.S. exports its brand of security regardless of the operational environment, which affects the doctrine taught to FSF and an overreliance on technology with little analysis to its utility to produce security. These practices harm U.S. strategic goals to build lasting host nation security aimed to prevent large U.S. military intervention over extended periods in order to conduct internal security operations for the host nation.

⁴⁴ Beach and Pederson, *Process-Tracing Methods*, 25.

II. CASE STUDY: VIETNAM ADVISORY YEARS: 1954–1964

Vietnam plays a pivotal role in U.S. military history. The Viet Cong insurgency inside South Vietnam, and the U.S. military's inability to combat against it, brought military, civilian, and academic leaders alike to spend the post-Vietnam years contemplating what went wrong. The overwhelming buildup of U.S. forces in 1965, led to the U.S. intervening in a conflict -in a major way- it never intended to involve itself with. BPC was not an official policy term during the advisory years; however, it is exactly what the U.S. strategy aimed to accomplish during that time. U.S. advisors sent to Vietnam provided materiel and advisory support to a developing South Vietnamese army, in an environment fractured by its war of independence from French colonial rule, and struggling to build national identity. Theories have proliferated to present day on causes leading to U.S. withdrawal in 1973, and the subsequent fall of South Vietnam in 1975. The focus of this case study is the advisory effort that failed to prevent U.S. intervention in 1965.

This chapter will establish the background of U.S. presence in Vietnam, followed by discussion on EDT factors. The case will show how these factors create the casual mechanism in building FSF in a mirror image of U.S. security models, inadequate for internal security. Each factor is discussed separately and chronologically within each factor. Finally, a conclusion draws on the interaction between EDT factors as it relates to the case study.

A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After World War II, the French attempted to regain their influence in Vietnam where they had colonial ties dating back to the later 19th century. Vietnamese nationalists, called the Viet Minh, opposed Japanese and French occupation with aims of unifying Vietnam as one country. After the Japanese surrender and subsequent Chinese withdrawal, France fought a strengthening Viet Minh force up until the calamitous defeat of French forces at Dien Bien Phu at the hands of the nationalists. The following Geneva agreement partitioned the country at the 17th Parallel, separating the Viet Minh-controlled

north from the French supported government led by Emperor Bao Dai in the south.⁴⁵ Fearing the spread of communism across Southeast Asia if the Viet Minh took control of the entire country, the Eisenhower administration committed financial support to French advisory efforts. The U.S. intended to re-establish the Vietnamese Army through the Military Advisory Assistance Group (MAAG).⁴⁶ By 1965, three U.S. presidents managed the efforts to build a viable security institution to stabilize the south and deter aggression by the north. However, because of the lack of historical and social understanding in Vietnamese affairs, a slow adapting doctrine to deal with COIN, and a military and police structure built on Western ideals, U.S. intervention plunged its military and people into the most controversial war to date.

B. ENVIRONMENT

In 1954, the United States had just ended the Korean War the previous year in stalemate prior to the French requesting assistance in training the Vietnamese Army. Senior U.S. officials, including President Eisenhower, were skeptical over the program's ability to produce a viable deterrent threat for Indochina. The threat of nuclear weapons was used to deter Chinese aggression; however, it was unlikely the U.S. would truly consider massive retaliation if North Vietnam decided to invade the south. Viet Minh supporters and competing sects, including the more powerful Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao sects controlled pockets of South Vietnam's rural areas. These sects contained their own security forces financed through the French. Finally, the Binh Xuyen, an enterprise bankrolling profits from running casinos, brothels, and opium dens, controlled the Saigon police.⁴⁷ These groups did not hold official positions within Emperor Bao Dai's government, but received patronage by lining the pockets of Bao Dai, continuing the legacy of French influence. Rising through the ranks of Vietnamese government, Ngo Dinh Diem became the Prime Minister at Emperor Bao Dai's request, attributed more to

⁴⁵ Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941–1960*, Vol. 91–1 (Washington, DC: Center of Military History: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., 1983), 391, 221.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁴⁷ Mark Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954–1965* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 416, 41.

the lack of alternative options than a desire to have Diem fill the vacancy.⁴⁸ Diem was an avowed Catholic whom Bao Dai chose to face the communist threat from the north. The competing sections of power, as well as a formidable Viet Minh presence in the countryside persuaded U.S. Secretary of State John Dulles to support U.S. military efforts to rebuild a national Vietnamese Army in support of Diem's government. As the U.S. contemplated the level and depth of U.S. support in building the Vietnamese Army, Diem attempted to consolidate power using bribery and force to neutralize opposition from competing sects, and exert his control over the national army.

Prior to accepting Bao Dai's request to be Prime Minister, Diem required complete control over civilian and military affairs.⁴⁹ Early in 1955, the Diem government used the Army to reoccupy former Viet Minh strongholds designed as regroupment zones by the Geneva convention. Diem and U.S. advisors understood the importance of filling the vacuum and established accelerated programs to incorporate civil affairs and psychological operations into Vietnamese occupation plans. Though these operations were successful, they failed to make enduring effects on the population where the Viet Minh had successfully left behind an underground cadre for future subversion against Diem's government.⁵⁰

Complicating future issues with Viet Minh supporters living covertly in South Vietnamese villages were the poor administrative capabilities at all levels of the Diem government. Diem's ruling qualities followed the "Personalist" philosophy of striking balance between individual, society, and state needs.⁵¹ His authoritarian methods stemmed from his view that democracy was slow to implement reforms and unable to thwart subversion. Most village administrators were holdovers from the French colonial era, carrying over bad habits, like laziness or corruption from colonial subjugation to outside authority. Diem's previous exile in 1950 stymied creation of close confidants, leading the way for him to draw on close familial ties to occupy key government

⁴⁸ Spector, *Advice and Support*, 224.

⁴⁹ Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, 33.

⁵⁰ Spector, *Advice and Support*, 243.

⁵¹ Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, 36.

positions.⁵² After winning a referendum in October 1955, Diem became head of state deposing Bao Dai and declaring Vietnam a republic.⁵³ Diem's strict grip on political power from the national level down to individual villages ensured his control over the country's political power structure, but created both domestic and foreign opponents.

The Eisenhower administration viewed Diem as an avid anti-communist nationalist; however, concerns over the lack of democratic progress in South Vietnam began surfacing among civilian leaders. Diem rejected initial reforms proposed by U.S. advisors, because he refused to centralize security and intelligence services.⁵⁴ Keeping the armed services decentralized within the government dislodged potential opponents to Diem's government from consolidating enough power to commit a coup. U.S. officials failed to understand that Diem persistently ensured his rule continued. Keeping family members and close confidants in key governmental positions and bureaucrats from consolidating police and military power kept Diem in power. An unintended consequence was the poor development of security forces, upsetting its effective management.

By 1963, Diem had successfully consolidated power, thwarting military coups attempts, marginalizing opponents, and strengthening programs aimed to provide rural communities the resources needed to fight communist subversion and extend Saigon's reach to the Hamlets. A seemingly innocent protest in May 1963 would change the fate of Diem and South Vietnam as a whole. A law passed by the Diem regime banned the flying of flags in public; however, the law came after an event where South Vietnamese Catholics had waved flags of the Roman Catholic Church, thereby giving the perception of a governmental bias towards other religions. Buddhists, who comprised a large portion of the country, responded with open defiance to the law, waving Buddhist flags during a holiday celebration in Hue. Local security responses lead to violent clashes leaving nine Buddhists dead, and conflicting reports on how and why the deaths occurred, though it was apparent that South Vietnamese Soldiers had fired into the protesting crowd.

⁵² Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, 71.

⁵³ William Rosenau, *U.S. Internal Security Assistance to South Vietnam: Insurgency, Subversion and Public Order* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 145, 32.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 40–41.

Buddhist leader, Tri Quang, subsequently led protests throughout the summer with increasing calls for liberalization of the South Vietnamese government and the removal of Diem. Under pressure from U.S. State Department personnel, Diem made concessions to appease Buddhist complaints, much to his loathing. Concessions of any amount did not placate the opponents who wished to see a regime change. U.S. ambassadors up to this time pushed Diem toward liberalizing more of his government as Diem pushed back, continually citing cultural differences between U.S. democracy and the social fabric wielding control in South Vietnam. Ideology was not a source of power over the people in Vietnam, but strong leadership and military power.⁵⁵

Viewing the current unrest as an opportunity for regime change, a military coup ousted Diem from power. Assassinated by his men, mild chaos ensued over the next several months as loyalties were tested, resulting in another military coup between military generals in January 1964. By this time, U.S. President Lyndon Johnson had taken office following President John F. Kennedy's assassination three weeks following Diem's demise. Johnson now faced a situation where little public support existed for military actions in Vietnam, coupled with a pending presidential election to remain in office at the end of the year. A second coup in South Vietnam in almost as many months prompted the administration to send Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Maxwell Taylor to ascertain the ground situation inside Vietnam.⁵⁶ They found the Vietnamese Army facing more desertions, and the Viet Cong gaining ground as they increased their attacks in the rural areas. McNamara advised a slight increase in support to bolster South Vietnam's budget, which Johnson approved.

In August 1964, the USS *Maddox* was attacked off the coast of North Vietnam in international waters. Two nights later, a second attack on the *Maddox* and another accompanying ship, the USS *Turner Joy*, prompted a swift and nearly unanimous decision by Congress, granting the President authority to take necessary action, as he

⁵⁵ Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, 58.

⁵⁶ U. S. G. Sharp, *Strategy for Defeat: Vietnam in Retrospect* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 324, 30.

deemed adequate to protect U.S. interests in Southeast Asia.⁵⁷ Attacks by the Viet Cong would increase, killing five Americans at Bien Hoa air base and two Americans during a U.S. housing attack in Saigon.⁵⁸ The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was the authority that led to a new phase of the war in 1965, when introduction of conventional combat troops commenced combat operations against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regular army units.

C. DOCTRINE

The structure of the military created a point of contention between Western advisors and their Vietnamese counterparts. As the American advisory role gradually replaced the French, plans capped South Vietnam's military at 100,000 soldiers due to budget availability, as well as U.S./French advisor dependence on the French Expeditionary Corps (FEC) to provide the bulk of security deterrence. American civilian authority viewed the Vietnamese requirement for internal security, where the Vietnamese regarded them as an instrument defending against external aggression, particularly from the North.⁵⁹ The American view stemmed from the belief that the FEC would handle any external aggression. Complicating the civilian view was the implementation of their desired end state by U.S. military advisors who were in charge of bringing policy to action. Lieutenant General John O'Daniel, the MAAG commander through the end of 1955, desired to build the Vietnamese Army using "American methods and concepts," which included building "training facilities, a command and general staff college, an amphibious training center and a specialist training center."⁶⁰ In addition, Vietnamese officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) would attend training schools in the U.S. After the French completely cut ties to Vietnam, the FEC no longer served the deterrent option against North Vietnam. O'Daniel organized Vietnamese battalions into divisions to consolidate training efforts and improve their external threat capabilities. Diem did not favor O'Daniel's method because he felt many battalions at the time were spread out in

⁵⁷ Sharp, *Strategy for Defeat.*, 45–46.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 48–55.

⁵⁹ Spector, *Advice and Support*, 263.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 222.

the rural villages aimed at combating subversive activities launched by holdovers of the Viet Minh. General O'Daniel believed that by consolidating battalions into four field divisions, six light divisions, and 13 territorial regiments for regional security, the Army would be able to meet both internal and external threats.⁶¹ His confidence in the concept of regional regiments opposing internal threats allowed him and his successors to continue conventional planning for an external invasion from North Vietnam. This is apparent in his replacement, General Sam Williams, who viewed strategy through a Korean War lens. Williams viewed COIN operations more suitable for local militias than armies, with Diem making strides to implement such a strategy.

Striking the balance between internal and external threats, Diem utilized stationary militias to guard villages called the self-defense corps (SDC), while establishing militias more mobile to protect entire districts, named the civil guard (CG).⁶² These forces were initially a cost effective way to fill the gaps between the Army battalions, and free them to consolidate against a North Vietnamese Army invasion; the more traditional military role. President Eisenhower advocated the development of foreign internal security forces in countries like Vietnam, facing severe subversive communist threats. However, unlike his military commanders in the MAAG, his policy directives focused solely on internal security through police and paramilitary actions.⁶³ Michigan State University police mentors, contracted by the U.S. government, provided training to the CG, because the Eisenhower administration's international police assistance program lacked enough trained and qualified officials within the International Cooperation Agency in charge of the effort. Therefore, contracting this requirement left university social scientists tasked with improving "badly led, ill-equipped, and poorly trained internal security units."⁶⁴ Controversy over the CG's equipping and mandate between Diem and the Michigan State advisors exemplified the American style of thinking at odds with Vietnamese culture. Diem wanted the CG under the authority of the

⁶¹ Ibid., 263.

⁶² Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, 70.

⁶³ Rosenau, *U.S. Internal Security Assistance to South Vietnam*, 18.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 4–6.

military in order to replace ineffective leaders as quickly and efficiently as possible, and to have the ability to arm the units with appropriate weapons such as automatic rifles and mortars. The Michigan State advisors viewed the CG as a police force, advocating for the use of batons and pistols over military style automatic weapons. The advisors viewed the police as they viewed American policing, as apolitical and meant to protect and serve against criminals.⁶⁵ They failed to understand that the police served to protect Diem's regime, not the people. The clash over police roles bled into other aspects meant to improve internal security.

Training further magnified the peculiar differences between U.S. and Vietnamese interoperability. The language barrier between U.S. advisors and their Vietnamese counterparts played a debilitating role. The limited personnel available to MAAG prevented adequate attention overseeing actual training, instead spending time translating manuals from English to Vietnamese. The average number of U.S. advisors with Vietnamese language training from 1956–1959 was 12.⁶⁶ Program costs prevented any chance of improving this statistic, especially due to the size of the MAAG compared to budgetary requirements across the Army. Language deficiency was the symptom of broader educational gaps for U.S. Officers assigned to MAAG, which further lacked trained officers in Vietnamese cultural and history prior to their assignment. Additionally, the advisory group leaned heavily on one year, unaccompanied tours without family members. Optimism replaced objective assessments, arguably because of the small advisory footprint, and potential fears that scrutiny would befall the advisor if no improvements materialized during each tour.⁶⁷ Not much different from the problems faced in modern, rotational military deployments, whether for combat or training, it degrades the relationships between the advisor and the advised. Vietnamese officers learned quickly how to deal with their American counterparts, where U.S. advisors spent the first few months learning all the particulars about their assigned duties and that of their counterpart.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 98.

⁶⁶ Spector, *Advice and Support*, 286.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 295.

The election of President Kennedy brought a new theory of international relations in dealing with the Third World. Kennedy was a proponent of modernization theory, stressing the most important method for countering communist subversive threats in the Third World was to empower state institutions. Protecting these institutions, while representing the state, was a responsibility of local police and paramilitary forces, for which Kennedy believed U.S Army Special Forces (SF) as the appropriate organization to train and advise.⁶⁸ Opponents within the military viewed SF as contrary to the Army's primary goal of fighting conventional, division based war. SF established in 1952, were authorized as part of the Army's Psychological Warfare component, but required championing by President Kennedy ten years later forcing the Army leadership to embrace them into the UW and COIN role.⁶⁹ Kennedy rejected Eisenhower's massive retaliation policy, believing smaller, limited war theory as a more palpable option to influence the Third World, and embraced the SF ability to work with guerrilla fighters. However, the concept of COIN meant to pacify rural areas and bring them under friendly government control. UW was on the opposite of the special warfare spectrum aimed at organizing, training, and equipping guerrilla fighters against the government or occupying regime. The UW methods SF used were now the activities SF would try to defend against itself and South Vietnam.

D. TECHNOLOGY

The prevailing theme from the time the U.S. took control building the South Vietnamese Army was to transport U.S. military institutions and training methodologies and implement them into building South Vietnam's security. Not surprisingly, the United States stuck to the Pacific War doctrine, recently tested against Japan and revalidated in Korea. Immediately upon the French withdrawal of military forces from Vietnam after the U.S. officially supported Diem over Emperor Bao Dai's insistence for regime change by French surrogates, the South Vietnamese Army faced its first crisis; logistics. Under the French, the Vietnamese Army design placed them in support of the FEC giving them

⁶⁸ Rosenau, *U.S. Internal Security Assistance to South Vietnam*, 77.

⁶⁹ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 102.

almost no organic sustainment capability.⁷⁰ Exacerbating the issue was the abundance of equipment supplied since 1950 through U.S. materiel assistance exceeding the capacity of the Vietnamese Army. The internal threats from opposing sects and the Binh Xuyen coupled with the external threat of invasion from the North made Diem and his Generals hesitant to reduce the amount of “unnecessary” equipment to ease the logistics burden.⁷¹ The immediate response to handle the situation was to deploy U.S. logistics personnel to Vietnam in order to train the Vietnamese on American supply management techniques.

General O’Daniel, the first MAAG Commander, intended to tailor the divisions to meet the environment in Vietnam. Though he wanted to maintain doctrinal principals of military organization around the division concept, he opted to lighten the load of Vietnamese divisions, equipping them with more light machine guns and a comparable amount of mortar systems as U.S. divisions maintained.⁷² Reliance on firepower, especially field artillery would be the lynchpin the South Vietnamese Army would pivot towards to compensate for manpower shortages and budget constraints that was outmatched by the north. General Williams intended to continue O’Daniel’s vision of countering both the internal subversive threat, while deterring Northern aggression. However, he found that the Diem regime placed inadequate divisional and regional commanders in positions higher than their capability allowed. Most did not understand how to plan or implement indirect fires and were solely occupying their command billets because of their close ties to President Diem. Diem complicated the issue by pushing his plan to reorganize the O’Daniel concept to accommodate “larger and more heavily armed...U.S.-type formations.”⁷³ Desiring to maintain current troop levels while increasing the combat support and sustainment capabilities, seven infantry divisions of 10,450 men took the place of the light and field divisions. Vehicles introduced a way to bring logistics forward to lighter armed foot soldiers operating at the front in the jungles and mountains. Diem spent large amounts of money to improve road systems in the

⁷⁰ Spector, *Advice and Support*, 258–259.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 264.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 296.

densely vegetated Central Highlands in order to facilitate mobility. However, as the situation in the late 1950s played out, the subversion that was once at the forefront of Diem's main concern as a threat against his government intensified, turning his attention to outfitting the CG and SDC to meet that threat.

American and Vietnamese officials once believed that conventional army formations could defeat both external and internal threats. The fact that too few South Vietnamese existed to protect the thousands of villages spread across South Vietnam led to a Vietnamese plan to bolster the new CG aimed at taking the static position of defense in these rural areas. Diem's plan called for heavy armament including tanks and helicopters, which unsurprisingly incensed American advisors, including General Williams. The original plan devised by the advisory group called for a modest arming of 10,000 men with M1 carbines and Browning automatic rifles; Second World War era weapons, but nonetheless still effective for local security. The difference between the American and Vietnamese plans underscored the issue of building partner capacity between a superpower and budding nation-state. Not until suspicions about Diem's motivation for requesting such extravagant weapon systems for a local defense force, Williams learned a Vietnamese General devised the plan opting to simply copy the military table of organization and equipment of a U.S. armored division for convenience.⁷⁴ Williams protested CG training by police advisors rather than military advisors, and was able to move the CG to the Defense Ministry in 1960.⁷⁵ Interagency fighting over the role of the CG affected their ability to receive resources and equipment, as officials prioritized the military forces to receive aid. U.S. military aid did not provide funds for the CG or SDC prior to 1962, and through 1965, received only 20% of military aid provided for the internal security of South Vietnam.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid., 324.

⁷⁵ R. W. Komer, *Bureaucracy does its Thing: Institutional Constraints on U.S.-GVN Performance in Vietnam* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1972), 44.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 44.

E. CONCLUSION

After the United States took over responsibility for aiding the development of the South Vietnamese government from the French in 1955, U.S. efforts were already disadvantaged. Viet Minh holdovers south of the 17th Parallel, coupled with a vast rural population disconnected from a fledgling government in Saigon in 1954, helped sow the seeds for insurgency three years later. Diem became a strong advocate against communism, but simultaneously motivated to sustain his rule. Focusing efforts to centralize power included placing his supporters in positions of authority, and ensuring the country's military, paramilitary, and police forces were decentralized in order to prevent opponents from consolidating power against him. The oppression of varying political, religious and social sects worried U.S. officials who pushed increasing democratic reforms on Diem, but were unwilling to use financial and materiel aid as leverage.

The MAAG took logical steps to bolster South Vietnam's military force structure to deter another Korean like experience, fresh in the minds of senior military advisors sent to Vietnam. The U.S. experience in Korea focused its efforts in building a conventional deterrent to external aggression from the north, and as the subversion increased internally from Viet Minh supporters, police and paramilitary units were created to secure the rural populace. Funding these efforts were disjointed between the various departments of bureaucracy created to manage varying parts of the overall security reform taken by the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s. Insistence to strengthen conventional military units led the MAAG to equipping and organizing South Vietnam's Army into divisional structures using U.S. weapons gladly accepted by South Vietnamese counterparts. The equipping of the military carried over to police and paramilitary forces, such as the SDC and CG, as Diem placed them under military control against MSU police trainers' advice, who advocated their placement under provincial, administrative authority.

The Kennedy administration changed the source of support to counterinsurgent forces, insisting the military use U.S. Special Forces to train paramilitary and militia forces. Though Kennedy believed he was placing more emphasis on internal threats to

South Vietnam, it is clear that Eisenhower was equally concerned with subversive threats during his push for international police training to prevent communist influence in the Third World. What is attributable to both administrations is how their pacification policies to prevent communist aggression in Vietnam took a back seat to the conventional military effort.⁷⁷ The fractured environment leftover from the French-Indochina War, Diem's authoritative policies, and the U.S. strategic policy to bolster South Vietnam against further communist influence led to U.S. military intervention. The advisory period took the form of materiel and technical support, which drew from the conventional experience and resources used during the Second World War and Korea. As the insurgency grew, the advisory group grew with it, and the continued mirror imaging of its security forces. After the Diem and Kennedy assassinations in 1963, the path to complete U.S. intervention took shape as the South Vietnam security situation worsened and it became apparent that South Vietnam's military would ultimately fail.

⁷⁷ Komer, *Bureaucracy does its Thing*, xi.

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III. AFGHANISTAN: 2001–PRESENT

George W. Bush came to office in 2000 on a foreign policy platform advocating against nation-building with little direction toward combating worldwide terror organizations.⁷⁸ The Bush administration's attention to counterterrorism quickly changed after the 9/11 attacks, leading a new era of conflict, with many old practices resurrected due to a lack of understanding of new strategies to combat the global reach of terrorist organizations. Nearly 15 years later, U.S. forces remain in Afghanistan, providing advisory support to the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) as they fight off the Taliban's attempts to reclaim territory.

Tracing the dynamics of Afghanistan's environment, U.S. doctrine, and technology will show how the small U.S. military footprint evolved since its intervention in Afghanistan. Unlike Vietnam, Afghanistan resulted from a terrorist attack on U.S. soil planned from within Afghanistan. U.S. military intervention led to a nation-building effort, followed by a COIN mission, to what today is a train, advise, and assist mission. The FSF built by the U.S. remains the same; an ANSF built in the image of the U.S. military. After establishing the historical context for the case, each factor will be discussed as it relates to building ANSF. Each factor will be discussed chronologically, followed by a conclusion showing how the factors create the casual mechanism for the U.S. military building mirror-image FSF inadequate for its operational environment.

A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Afghanistan has long been known for its diverse tribal culture and difficult terrain, used over centuries to deflect foreign conquest. In 2001, the Taliban controlled most of the internationally recognized territory of Afghanistan, with a firm grip on the south. Predominantly comprised of Pashtuns, the Taliban came to power in the mid-1990s after a bloody civil war with competing tribal factions, mostly in the North and West of the country. The regime used sharia law to quell opposition and enforce strict Islamist ideology against territory it controlled.

⁷⁸Dominic Tierney, "The Backlash against Nation-Building," *Prism* 5, no. 3 (2015), 21

Introduction of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and USSOF on the ground in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks presented a new look into how the U.S. waged war on its enemies. Small teams of highly specialized Soldiers, with the backing of superior U.S. airpower and a coalition of tribal militias were able to oust the Taliban regime in short order. However, the failure to close off the escape route to Pakistan ensured the Taliban's opportunity for consolidation and a future insurgency to challenge the new Afghan government. The U.S./NATO coalition aimed to establish a new comprehensive Afghan government able to stabilize the region and deny Al-Qaeda with a safe haven to plan future terrorist plots. Pakistan agreed to assist U.S. efforts against the Taliban, however accommodating these requests proved difficult, owing much to Pakistan's internal Taliban influence inside their country. The Waziristan region in Northwest Pakistan was easily accessible for the Afghan Taliban, and would be their refuge for escaping the slow grip of the U.S. security net aimed to catch Al Qaeda and Taliban remnants by December 2001.⁷⁹

The quick reaction of U.S. forces operating side by side with the Northern Alliance could be deemed solely a retributive response to attacks planned and carried out by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, supported and protected by the Taliban regime. Rebuilding the Afghan government was not considered a priority until December 2001; two months after the U.S. assault began. Initially, President Bush focused the U.S. response to disrupting Al Qaeda's base in Afghanistan and attacking the Taliban regime, only to have this narrowed strategy broadened through the rapid military victory and subsequent administration officials outlining nation-building plans for Afghanistan.⁸⁰

B. ENVIRONMENT

The initial UN resolution passed during the Bonn Conference in December 2001 established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). This force secured Kabul

⁷⁹ Joseph J. Collins, "Initial Planning and Execution in Afghanistan and Iraq," in *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, eds. Richard D. Hooker Jr. and Joseph J. Collins (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2015), 25

⁸⁰ James A. Russell, "Into the Great Wadi," in *Military Adaptation in Afghanistan*, eds. Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga and James A. Russell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 60.

and trained Afghan Security Forces, but restricted the force from operating outside the capital.⁸¹ From 2002 to 2005, the relative peace secured by the U.S. and its allies was more a testament to the Taliban taking time in Pakistan to regroup its personnel and raise money for a resurgence in Afghanistan than U.S. efforts in building the governance, security and economy. Hamid Karzai took charge of the new Afghan government, which used the Loya Jirga system to unite tribal leaders from across the country assembled like a legislative body to establish new laws. Though the Loya Jirga was able to pass a new constitution based off an earlier form of government prior to the Soviet and Civil Wars, it lacked the ability to project its legitimacy outside of Kabul.⁸²

Karzai co-opted warlords to support his interim government, mainly through appointments to varying leadership roles inside his government. Three decades of war left all institutions barely functioning, if at all. Additionally, the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan had destroyed almost every aspect of Afghan society. Literacy was among the lowest in the world and poverty was rampant with influential land owners, and militia warlords wielding the power in a fractured state. Labeling the environment as a “limited access order” society, Grissom describes how the isolated geography in Afghanistan has limited human interaction with vast parts of the country responsible for a decentralized power structure.⁸³ These fractures ran along tribal separations overlaid, and dictated, by one of the most robust topographies in the world, missing only a large body of water within its land locked borders. The Pashtun dominated southern region had long influenced politics in Afghanistan with more fractured tribes, comprising of Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmens and more Pashtuns residing in the north.⁸⁴ Rural areas, particularly in the Pashtun south were skeptical of Kabul governments, and had learned to distrust power structures emanating from the capital. A newly constituted government that had

⁸¹ Thomas X. Hammes, “Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq,” in *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, eds. Richard D. Hooker Jr. and Joseph J. Collins (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2015), 278.

⁸² Collins, “Initial Planning and Execution in Afghanistan and Iraq,” 26

⁸³ Adam Grissom, “Shoulder-to-Shoulder Fighting Different Wars: NATO Advisors and Military Adaptation in the Afghan National Army, 2001–2011,” in *Military Adaptation in Afghanistan*, eds. Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga and James A. Russell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 273–274.

⁸⁴ Olivier Neola, “Building Security Institutions: Lessons Learned in Afghanistan,” *Focus Strategique*, no. 38 (July-August, 2012), 8.

just overthrown the existing order with the help of a foreign military, needed to immediately provide basic security and extend its reach from Kabul to the outlying regions.

The establishment of centralized government completely ignored realities on the ground, in favor of what the intervening authority, in this case the U.S. government, projected was in the best interests of Afghanistan. The warlords controlling regional areas were deemed inadequate for modernizing the state; therefore, central authority brought perceived order and legitimacy. Afghan opponents to centralized authority, like the one granted in Karzai's constitution in 2004, felt they had a bad history of neglecting regions outside of Kabul.⁸⁵

Over the next 6 years, the inability of the central Kabul government to extend security to remote districts, provide essential services, like health care, and prevent the Taliban from staging an effective insurgency from neighboring Pakistan delegitimized Karzai and his government. Corruption played a strong role in the central government's ineffective use of its ministries to ensure policy worked down to outlying districts. The lack of security left wide open seams for the Taliban to reestablish networks in southern and western Afghanistan. Helmand Province served as key terrain for its poppy production. The opium trade not only funded the Taliban, it helped corrupt officials at all levels of the newly constituted government.⁸⁶

As NATO and Afghan partners slowly increased its ability to project authority outside the capital, the Taliban were building shadow governments to fill the void left in adjudicating disputes after the Taliban's overthrow four years earlier. The Taliban received training from Al Qaeda operatives with experience fighting the U.S. in Iraq, in employing improvised explosive devices against coalition forces.⁸⁷ Violence continued over the next three years, targeting anyone not supporting the Taliban including coalition,

⁸⁵ Thomas Barfield, "Afghan Paradoxes," in *Afghan Endgames: Strategy and Policy Choices for America's Longest War*, eds. Hy S. Rothstein and John Arquilla (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012), 53.

⁸⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, Second ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 246, 225.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 227.

Afghan, and even non-governmental organization officials. The slow response from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and NATO, coupled with a lack of manpower, failed to seize the initiative to build local institutions of authority. Though elections were successful in 2004, subsequent elections threatened by Taliban propaganda decreased public participation further alienating the Karzai government.

After the U.S. surge in Afghanistan in 2009, a renewed effort began to link villages, through their districts and provinces to the national government. Village leaders were viewed as key for establishing partnerships between coalition and Afghan forces to win back rural territory that had been severely neglected by continuous coalition and GIROA presence up to 2009. Gaining access to villages was seen as a necessary step to bring GIROA representation to the people. After eight years of attempting to work from a national level to secure Afghanistan, the coalition was now turning to build partnerships from the ground up. The problems with implementing this strategy was the volume of locations involved. Of the 401 districts in Afghanistan, 94 designated “key terrain districts” and 44 labeled “areas of interest” proved an enormous effort that was met with a response of an increase from 300 to 1,000 U.S. government civilians from the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Departments of State, Justice and Agriculture.⁸⁸ Some of these civilians worked in District Support Teams (DSTs) aimed at advising Afghan officials implement development projects and manage formal links to the village or community level. Though bold and aggressive, the initiatives presented through the surge to develop local governance sought to drastically alter historical administrative capacity. Furthermore, Afghanistan’s own sub-national governance policy mimicked the U.S ambitions for local governance to include “Justice...street lighting, recreational facilities, social protection, private sector development and health and nutrition,” among others, proving to be overly ambitious, and equally ridiculous.⁸⁹ The unwarranted goals to build governance and development are an example of the misunderstanding of how a complex environment adapts due to external influence.

⁸⁸ Frances Z. Brown, *The U.S. Surge and Afghan Local Governance* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2012), 3–4.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 4–5.

C. DOCTRINE

The Bush Administration was split between the Department of State (DOS) and Department of Defense (DOD) on just how large the military presence should be after the Taliban was overthrown. Officials from DOD were advocating for an international peacekeeping force in Kabul, and DOS wanted to extend the peacekeeping force to several other population centers across the country with potential U.S. troop involvement. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld led the charge for a much smaller force aimed at hunting down remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters. A small footprint strategy initially sought to capitalize on momentum gained by routing the Taliban from power, and implementing an interim government, with the backing of a new Afghan military.⁹⁰ Building the Afghan military would not only legitimize the new government, but secure the second objective of U.S. strategy, which was to prevent Al Qaeda from using any part of Afghanistan as a safe haven. Building the military was placed on hold, initially, to deal with the militias that SF and CIA teams had worked with since hitting the ground in October 2001. The U.S. led coalition decided to disband the militias and integrate them into a professionalized army. Professionalizing the military was viewed as a logical step for rebuilding a U.S. friendly Afghan nation. From 2002–2009, training of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) comprised of training the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP), while building the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) at the national level.

Coalition partners separated responsibilities of Security Sector Reform (SSR), placing different countries in charge of different elements of the security institution. The U.S. directed ANA efforts, Germany directed the ANP, Great Britain led counternarcotic efforts, Italy took charge of justice reforms, and Japan took charge of disarmament, demilitarization, and reintegration (DDR) of the militias, primarily former members of the Northern Alliance.⁹¹ The U.S. initially placed SF units in charge of training Afghan Kandaks, the base Afghan military unit modeled after U.S. infantry battalions. Though

⁹⁰ Seth G. Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 343.

⁹¹ Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel and Olga Oliker, *Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan: Identifying Lessons for Future Efforts* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2011), 21.

U.S. Central Command began assessing how their piece of SSR would unfold in February 2002, SF did not commence training the Army until May.⁹² As the violence reduced, and plans for the ANA became more formalized, training the new Afghan military became a U.S. conventional force responsibility. Major General Karl Eikenberry took command of the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan (OMC-A) in October 2002 and implemented plans to create the Army from the top down. Training efforts by SF to this point had been decentralized across the country, and in Eikenberry's view, neglected the supporting functions of a national military including "a recruiting force, trainers, living facilities, equipment, and any form of logistics or personnel support."⁹³ Aiding this view was the desire by some in both the conventional and special operations communities to remove SF from the training mission in order to continue counterterrorism operations against recently ousted Taliban and Al Qaeda affiliates.⁹⁴ SF, specially trained to train foreign militaries, would no longer play a role in building the ANA. Instead, a U.S. infantry BDE under the name Task Force Phoenix, would take over the training along with individuals provided by the Marine Corps, National Guard, and coalition partners. An ad hoc organization replaced the ad hoc nature SF originally set out to meet the U.S. mandate in building the national army.

From 2002–2005, the establishment of the ANSF hit many obstacles, requiring adjustments by the U.S. led coalition as it moved along. A training academy established in Kabul comprised of U.S. trainers conducting initial training for all new recruits. Recruits faced learning impediments due to high levels of illiteracy. Even though many were former members of Northern Alliance militias, they were new to formalized military organization. Planning and maintenance skills suffered as U.S. Soldiers barely had enough recruits to fill the needed combat troop positions. By the summer of 2003, the U.S. and Afghan Interim Government decided to halt current training, and start fresh, building the MOD from the top down.⁹⁵ At this point, the number of U.S. personnel

⁹² Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq," in *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, 280.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁹⁴ Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, *Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan*, 25.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

available to conduct the training in Afghanistan was severely limited by the plans to invade Iraq. By 2005, as Taliban activity increased, the output of Afghan Kandaks increased, but were limited by the failure to increase the trainers available. National Guard were filling the rolls of training, usually formed ad hoc stateside, provided limited training on advisory roles, before deploying to Afghanistan to train the ANA. U.S. trainers constantly adjusted ANA training, attempting to strike a balance between quality and quantity. The amount of time required to build efficient, quality troops was clearly unsustainable as the pace yielded too few troops available for combat. Additionally, deserters, attrition, and the end of initial enlistment periods affected Afghan troop levels. As the Taliban insurgency increased, the combat strain on Afghan Soldiers increased.

Assigned to an operational Kandak once initial training was complete, Afghans in certain areas of operation would spend the next three years on the front lines, while their coalition advisors spent as few as four months before rotating with another coalition unit. This affected both unit morale on the Afghan side, and credibility and continuity on the advisor side. Embedded training teams provided Kandaks with U.S. advisors from initial training through operational deployment. The advisor teams, built in an ad hoc manner, placed advisor teams together in theater, neglecting them opportunities to build unit cohesion during pre-deployment training. Many advisors deployed as individual augmenters had little to no experience or training in advising FSF.

In July 2005, OMC-A was renamed the Office of Security Cooperation-Afghanistan, and took control of ANA and ANP training, then renamed again less than a year later to Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) to incorporate the MOD and MOI.⁹⁶ The German approach focused training ANP officers and NCOs, but not patrolmen. Contractors helped fill the gap, employing DynCorp trainers to ANP units in the field, as well as MOI in Kabul to improve professionalism and accountability.⁹⁷ TF Phoenix had similarly employed contractors in Kabul in 2003 to address professionalizing the MOD officials in Kabul. Prior to the military taking over training for the ANP, the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law

⁹⁶ Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq," 283.

⁹⁷ Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, *Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan*, 36.

Enforcement Affairs took the lead, but suffered from manning and budgetary shortfalls leaving the ANP well short of projected strengths planned for 2005. Additionally, placing the ANA and ANP training under one command streamlined coordination and implementation of reforms previously thwarted by interagency, bureaucratic problems.

Between 2005 and 2007, the resurgent Taliban presence prompted the coalition to rapidly increase efforts in supporting ANA training and capabilities. Quality was sacrificed for quantity, as the training Academy in Kabul cut initial training from a 14 to 10 week course, increasing the number of Afghan soldiers produced a year to catch up to allotted end strengths. The ANA end strength of 70,000 established in December 2002 did not change until 2008, when it increased to 86,000 in February, then again to 134,000 in August.⁹⁸ The rapid increase in end strength totals focused CSTC-A trainers on fielding infantry units to meet the goal, sacrificing enabling and sustainment units. This ensured that U.S. support would be closely linked to the success of the ANA against a steadily growing insurgency in the south and east. Fires, intelligence, logistics, and survivability were heavily supported through U.S. and coalition units to make up for the lack of internal Afghan capability. The need to have Afghans at the front of the fight against a growing insurgency was seen as the most important aspect of military operations, rather than building a military that could meet all elements of combat power. By mid-2009, NATO established the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), with contributors from 37 nations to assist the U.S. mission in building additional security forces, with the commander of CSTC-A simultaneously commanding NTM-A.⁹⁹

U.S. forces gradually increased its footprint throughout 2008 into 2009. Since 2002, U.S. conventional forces were primarily operating in the east, a coalition led by Canada and Great Britain operated in the south and west, and USSOF operated over the entire country hunting Taliban and Al Qaeda wherever they could find them. However, as the insurgency grew in the south, the U.S. footprint increased to fill holes in between Kandahar and Helmand Province to the west. In March 2009, General Stanley McChrystal, newly appointed as ISAF commander responsible for administering the

⁹⁸ Ibid., 56.

⁹⁹ Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq," 285.

recently approved surge by President Obama in his first year of office, ridiculed efforts in Afghanistan to date because of its lack of focus on the population. A former commander of Joint Special Operations Command, and veteran of Iraq, he saw the population as the center of gravity largely ignored to this point. In McChrystal's vision, the focus on building a conventional Afghan Army should not be the only initiative sought by the U.S. to fight the insurgency. Critics contend McChrystal went too far in his attempts to prevent civilian casualties, taking initiative out of the hands of the military and creating an environment easily exploited by the Taliban.¹⁰⁰ Regardless, the additional troops approved for his plan was handed to General Petraeus, his successor, who emphasized the need to balance securing the population and hunting the enemy.

The ANA and ANP's lack of success in rural Afghanistan, led the U.S., in coordination with the MOI, to create the Afghan Public Protection Program (APPP) in Wardak province in March 2009.¹⁰¹ Later in June, USSOF continued to explore local defense in different provinces, looking to take the Sons of Iraq model to Afghanistan. Using local powerbrokers, willing to aid special operations in fighting against the insurgents, U.S. SOF would provide materiel and training for locally backed fighters to defend themselves, rather than look for protection from a coalition and Afghan military unable to hold ground across the country. USSOF named it the Local Defense Initiative (LDI), but did not seek MOI approval as was the case for the APPP. Renaming the USSOF role to Village Stability Operations (VSO) was meant to ease concerns emanating from the U.S. embassy and MOI about these local forces turning into militias. VSO was meant to be a robust initiative, not only to build local security, but to improve governance and economic activity, thought to be underlying causes for insurgent strongholds in less developed, rural pockets, where the insurgent support base was thought to live. MOI took control of local security forces as VSO educated coalition and

¹⁰⁰ Hy S. Rothstein, "America's Longest War," in *Afghan Endgames: Strategy and Policy Choices for America's Longest War*, eds. Hy S. Rothstein and John Arquilla (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012), 65–67.

¹⁰¹ Austin Long et al., *Locals Rule: Historical Lessons for Creating Local Defense Forces for Afghanistan and Beyond* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012), 179.

Afghan leaders alike, and by August 2010, President Karzai authorized the Afghan Local Police (ALP).¹⁰²

The initial mandate for the ALP differed from the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) in that they were a fraction of AUP salaries, because ALP was part-time. Recruited from their home villages, ALP served in a defensive manner, protecting against Taliban intimidation and influence. Selected and approved for training by the village elders in a village, USSOF trained ALP for 2–3 weeks in basic patrolling and policing techniques, even though they were never given arrest authority, but trained to work with their local ANP counterparts to exchange detainees to ANP authoritative control. Rule of law was stressed throughout training to ensure the ALP would not revert back to retributive techniques that had been associated with Afghan militias during the previous three decades. Uniforms were provided to the ALP to both distinguish them as an official security force and to legitimize the district, provincial, and even national government for providing the means for the village to protect itself.

Tactically, the ALP served as intelligence sensors for USSOF and partnered Afghan forces. A district AUP Deputy Chief of Police was directed as District ALP Commander for whom all village ALP commanders answered. As more villages requested their own ALP programs, USSOF turned to area control of multiple programs at one time. In late 2012, Arghandab District in Kandahar Province alone had 30 villages with nearly 400 ALP members, advised by one Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha.¹⁰³ Conveniently located outside Kandahar City, Arghandab faced fewer challenges than remote outposts severed by poor roads and increasingly rugged terrain, complicating logistics pushes and ALP salary payments delivered in cash. The ALP often emulated their AUP counterparts, building checkpoints as static defensive locations, where ALP would congregate. Though trained to patrol their villages day and night with issued Ak-47s, it was common to find all members of the ALP sleeping, eating, or just sitting around their makeshift checkpoint. ALP checkpoints were built using materials

¹⁰² Ibid., 180.

¹⁰³ The author was a SFODA team leader for Arghandab District from October 2012–April 2013.

acquired from USSOF teams and normally located checkpoints at the village ALP Commander's home inside the village, rather than more tactically sufficient locations.

President Obama's decision to surge troops in 2009, caused a ripple effect in how transition occurred. Effects based transition was permitted within this period for some situations, like Arghandab, but in most cases were forced to turn to time-based effects. Meeting the U.S. policy objective for an end of the U.S. combat role by 2014 altered measures of progress in order to "transition" rather than "abandon" partner forces. As fewer units deployed beginning in 2013, to replace what was on the ground, consolidation of ANSF to compliment the reduction of U.S. partnered forces were necessary. Operations planned and led by Afghan officers increased, as the U.S. increasingly took a partnered stance further away from actions on the objective. USSOF teams transitioned to tactical over watch (TOW) of ALP districts, moving to larger coalition bases and reducing the amount of face-to-face engagements during combat rotations. This posture forced U.S. partners to ensure Afghan partners that U.S. support would continue on a more limited basis, and that the systems emplaced to support security forces, such as the ALP, would have to be used moving forward. The ALP had relied on the District ALP Commander for sustainment, and he up through the provincial ANP structure to the national level MOI continuing the formalized bottom-up, top-down strategy envisioned by President Obama's surge at the beginning of 2009.

D. TECHNOLOGY

Initially, the decision to equip new ANSF with Warsaw Pact weapon systems including the Ak-47 rifle and PKM machine guns necessitated a viable source. Donor supplies from neighboring countries, weapons acquired from DDR of former militias, and former Taliban stockpiles provided initial sources. The serviceability and quality of many of these weapons were miserable contributing to poor effectiveness and low morale. During the surge in 2009, the U.S. began to equip the Afghans with Western weapons, such as the M-16, which requires much more care and maintenance than the AK-47 rifle. According to a *Washington Post* article, pressure from former Afghan defense minister Abdul Rahim Wardak influenced this decision as he "argued to Pentagon officials and

members of Congress that American weapons would make his army appear more professional.”¹⁰⁴ Wardak did not stop with American rifles, calling for the U.S. to arm his military with F-16 fighter jets and M-1 tanks; tools of conventional warfare aimed at deterring neighboring armies, as opposed to effective tools to combat a raging insurgency.

Other U.S. and coalition practices adapted by the Afghans should have been ignored. Once large conventional forces entered Afghanistan for combat operations or as part of the advisory effort to build ANSF, large bases were built to support and sustain these forces. Kandahar and Bagram Airfields were two main hubs of coalition support serving the eastern and southern regions, and in 2008, expansion of Camp Bastion in Helmand Province significantly increased the capacity to house U.S. troops leading the surge in 2009.¹⁰⁵ Afghan partners readily accepting U.S. supplied headquarters to build static positions away from the populations they meant to protect. Copying these inadequate dispositions for COIN operations continued the alienation between ANSF and the populous. When Afghan units deployed to remote areas, they lacked internal sustainment capabilities, such as lift assets to carry resupply to these isolated areas, and depended heavily on coalition support to extend the capability.

Funding the military will continue to drive operations the U.S. military conduct. Plans for the troop surge were met with plans to build an ANSF force totaling 300,000 personnel. Projected costs, just to sustain the level advocated by Washington would be \$4.1 billion a year, which at the time was over double the annual Afghan government revenue.¹⁰⁶ Additional to concerns over sustaining ANSF financially, coalition advisors had to account for the manner in which they transitioned ANSF to independent operations. This had residual effects, in that the highly technologically based coalition advisors, especially USSOF advisors, had to wean partnered Afghans from supporting platforms that would no longer exist after the combat mission ended in 2014. Unmanned

¹⁰⁴ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, “Afghan Security Force’s Rapid Expansion Comes at a Cost as Readiness Lags,” *Washington Post*, October 20, 2012.

¹⁰⁵ The author was a member of a unit responsible for helping build the infrastructure in southern Afghanistan in 2008–2009 prior to the increase of U.S. forces there, and draws from personal experience.

¹⁰⁶ Chandrasekaran, “Afghan Security Force’s Rapid Expansion.”

Ariel Vehicles (UAVs) used for ISR would be drastically reduced in theater, as well as fire support platforms used by coalition advisors during the beginning of the surge. Understanding the need for the Afghans to maintain momentum as surge forces drew down, advisors created avenues for the Afghans to manage and collect internal intelligence with their own assets, much that would be face to face, rather than using technical capabilities that would no longer be available.¹⁰⁷

E. CONCLUSION

The U.S. intervention was a response to an attack on American soil, planned by Al Qaeda from its safe haven in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. A single terrorist act killed thousands of U.S. citizens and struck symbols of U.S. military and financial power, thrusting the U.S. into its longest war. Prior to examining the true history and societal structure in Afghanistan, the Bush Administration made the undeniably simple choice to attack Al Qaeda and the Taliban regime seeking retribution. Successfully accomplishing initial objectives, and with minimal efforts and assets, the Bush Administration was emboldened by the prospect that so much could be accomplished by so little in such a short time. The prolonged military intervention that followed failed to maintain the initiative. Instead of keeping limited objectives concrete with the dismantling of the Taliban regime and disruption of a global terrorist network, a costly nation-building struggle commenced. The same strategy President Bush campaigned he would avoid just over a year earlier.

Afghanistan is a perfect example of a failed state. A civil war between the Taliban, controlling most of the country and the Northern Alliance had been waged since the collapse of the Soviet Union over a decade earlier. Ethnic diversity, religious extremism, and unclear regional alliances make Afghanistan one of the most socially diverse countries on Earth. Couple this with its landlocked borders and physical diversity ranging from barren dessert to frigid, mountainous terrain, Afghanistan is one of the most inhospitable countries a military can operate. Underlying the inadequacy of the U.S. to comprehend the resources it was about to expend attempting to modernize such a remote

¹⁰⁷ Long et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships*, 74.

location is the fact that the Soviets provided a partial glimpse at the result of intervention 11 years prior to the U.S. attempt.

U.S. military doctrine is prefaced by the belief and culture that its force is capable of any mission. A track record in conventional warfare backs up the claim, but when this type of war comes to locations like Afghanistan, it fails to adjust in a timely manner. U.S. military members will always fight as they are trained, and train as they fight. The attrition based warfare again took over strategy, as SOF units were pulled from any training or development of ANSF in favor of kill and capture missions aimed at Al Qaeda and Taliban leadership. In its vacuum conventional forces were used to train former militia members, unable to read and write in most cases, to become professional soldiers. U.S./NATO created cumbersome command relationships as the coalition figured out the interaction of varying countries, with varying national caveats, while planning and executing combat operations and SFA operations. Another war took U.S. focus away from Afghanistan only to “surge” military and government civilians back into the environment after the insurgency increased over a four-year period attempting a last ditch effort before U.S. policy mandated U.S. combat ending in Afghanistan.

Finally, the sustainment capabilities, which plagued Afghan dependence on U.S. coalition support, continue to anchor U.S. technical expertise to ANSF effectiveness. Financial support will continue to be subsidized by sponsors or donors in order to maintain and build ANSF personnel, equipment, and supply. Once again, the U.S. military has anchored itself to a force of its own creation that cannot survive without consistent inputs of materiel support into its security institution.

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IV. THE FUTURE OF BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY

Analyzing the factors of EDT in the above case studies has helped to underline the problems the U.S. currently has in building partner capacity. The first step in understanding a problem is to establish that a problem exists. The U.S. is currently expanding its assistance to Iraqi Security Forces in its fight against ISIS. Building Partner Capacity including the security institutions around the globe will remain a priority in U.S. government foreign policy in the immediate future. Failing to adjust patterns in building the wrong security required for different operational environments will continue to impede U.S. foreign policy goals and continue to waste valuable resources unnecessarily. This chapter will discuss the findings examined in EDT factors for each case study followed by recommendations for SFA policy and further research to test the theory built in this study.

A. FINDINGS

U.S. interventions around the world after the Second World War have sought to build capacity of viable partners who can share the burden in global security. The competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War led to proxy wars around the Third World in a competition between political ideologies. Since the end of the Cold War, the old proxy wars turned to security assistance operations in weakened states, ranging from ensuring humanitarian aid delivery to hungry Somalians to fighting the Global War on Terror after 9/11. The impacts of these security assistance efforts have not always reached an acceptable outcome, which leads to questions over the manner that U.S. provides aid to partners, in particular, military aid. Focusing on the military aid mission provided to build the capacity of FSF has been the focus, because, “these activities are increasingly enshrined in doctrine,” as Reveron states.¹⁰⁸ The COIN doctrine revised during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars in 2006 is a testament to rethinking

¹⁰⁸ Derek S. Reveron, *Exporting Security: International Engagement, Security Cooperation, and the Changing Face of the U.S. Military* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 205, 105.

doctrine, however it still fails to alter strategy aimed to secure areas governed by weak power structures.

In both cases, initial strategies evolved into wide spread military intervention, then into a locked commitment fighting insurgencies over years. Additionally, the FSF built from U.S. efforts severely lacked institutional strength to operate in the image the U.S. military has spent over a century building for itself. The interaction of the social and political dynamics, and the repeated failure of U.S. officials, both military and civilian, to empathize with those dynamics support the theory that the U.S. will default to ignoring realities on the ground, and apply the known U.S. model even when it does not effectively increase the capabilities of host nation security. The lack of U.S. enablers to comprehend their environment further deteriorates in weak states after it is determined that partnered forces are not proceeding at the pace desired by policy makers and military strategists, choosing to apply U.S. military force. This represents a “new normal” that pits the large, bureaucratic institutions of U.S. government and the doctrine it is accustomed to following to environments that are ill suited for such activity. The lack of resources and institutional knowledge creates a gap between local institutional expectations and U.S. performance expectations. The hope in filling this gap is through materiel, military aid and accompanying military expertise, leading to a massive equipping effort. The belief that improving the armament and mobility of partner security forces as paramount, echoes Weigley’s argument that military strategy reverts to historic conceptions of destroying enemy forces; strategy at odds with “limited war.”¹⁰⁹ Analyzing how the U.S. and Government of Vietnam acted during the Vietnam War, R.W. Komer pins blame on institutional factors of both governments applying solutions designed for different threats than the ones they faced.¹¹⁰ However, there is no evidence that the issues found to contribute to failures in Vietnam have adequately been addressed, leaving us with another example of similar shortcomings in Afghanistan.

This research proposes the argument that current methods in building partner capacity in failed states are inadequate due to the interaction of environmental, doctrinal

¹⁰⁹ Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 466.

¹¹⁰ Komer, *Bureaucracy does its Thing*, ix.

and technological factors. EDT theory proposes that a failure to apply local realities into a new doctrine for unconventional conflicts leads to U.S. mirror imaging its security structure inappropriately to partner forces. Without a strong foundation, no strategy can win if the people are not committed to execute reforms aimed at securing themselves. The U.S. repeatedly attempts to motivate foreign audiences to meet this requirement through military materiel and advisor assistance with varying results. Further research is required to test the EDT theory. In both cases, U.S. conventional forces deployed to train FSF, and conduct offensive operations against adversarial forces. However, conventional forces exist to win the nation's wars through offensive operations, rather than build partner capacity. Building FSF for internal security was required in South Vietnam and Afghanistan. Special Forces are specially trained and selected soldiers able to conduct FID. The reality that SF did not deploy to South Vietnam to conduct COIN until 1961 is a testament to inappropriate doctrine applied. Likewise, the introduction of conventional forces to take over training of ANSF, and place SF on terrorist hunting missions after the Taliban regime was defeated, echoed the U.S. military's consistent preference for attrition based, offensive operations.

Professionalizing FSF is more than training tactics and handing out rifles, tanks and uniforms. Bengt Abrahamsson defines the military profession "as a corps of specialized experts in the management of violence."¹¹¹ Military professionals are expected to study, learn, and employ a common standard of tactics and doctrine with the materiel provided by their governing state. Additionally, ethical standards and codes of conduct help members relate to the organization's purpose and build cohesion, so the many of its parts function as a whole to win the nation's wars. This broadly summarizes the U.S. concept of military organization and culture. The U.S. has a long history of attrition based warfare, where technological advances in weaponry and mastery of battlefield tactics helps shape our notions on how to wage war. The Second World War was a testament to U.S. industrial might and collective national will built since the U.S. founding. The Cold War that followed brought about new threats of subversion and limited war theory. Weaker actors with less materiel at their disposal challenged colonial

¹¹¹ Abrahamsson, *Military Professionalization*, 163, 19.

powers of authority with their own nationalist fervor, seeking to maximize their ability to innovate and exploit weaknesses of greater military powers through maneuver. Edward Luttwak theorized that militaries, which approached war through attrition are more focused on inward processes and perfecting the parts of its organization.¹¹² This inward focus neglects the external environment, which is the strength of insurgents who must adhere to maneuver over attrition to survive, because they are outgunned and overmatched technologically.

The means of war have become less and less important for the survival of non-state actors. Their ability to find sanctuary and exploit territorial seams is a weakness Western militaries have repeatedly fallen prey to, and are now highlighted as models for future NSAs bent on challenging attrition based militaries. Weakened states are susceptible to exploitation by NSAs in areas where they cannot project security. Institutions are necessary for states to manage the people, materiel, and resources comprising their security apparatus, including police and military. This internal security threat appears to be the environment of choice for U.S. military intervention, when the option is chosen. Arguments vary over how the U.S., or if the U.S. should respond to these weakened states when U.S. strategic interests are at risk. The argument for building local security institutions is an argument that has been put forward due to recent engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq failing to reach definitive and positive results. However, as both case studies show, the U.S. military's attempt to build local forces, the CG/SDC in Vietnam and ALP in Afghanistan, are inappropriately implemented and managed by U.S. military officers. The military bureaucracy has not changed its organizational and cultural understandings of the American way of war since the Second World War. This prevents a wide enough audience in the military hierarchy to understand the need to apply varying solutions to varying environments. Introducing U.S. conventional brigade units or creating ad hoc organizations from the national guard to train FSF in the U.S. image are likely to fail where ideas of nationalism vary broadly across a diverse population.

¹¹² Hy S. Rothstein, *Afghanistan and the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare* (Annapolis, MD: Naval institute press, 2006), 2.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are plausible conclusions I have derived from inductive analysis of the case studies presented. Further research is required to test the validity of these findings. As of this writing, nearly 10,000 U.S. military personnel are involved with the advise and assist mission in Afghanistan, Operation Resolute Hope. Regardless how the security situation unfolds as Afghans continue to control their own security, it is strongly apparent that without U.S. advisors and financial support, ANSF will collapse. Further research on EDT need to test the factors discussed against a broader range of U.S. interventions in the post-Cold War era. The theory should work to explain other cases where U.S. trained security forces modeled inappropriately for their environment. Additionally, local security institutions and programs supported by the U.S. military such as the Sons of Iraq and VSO could provide substance to EDT theory. The continued use of Afghan Local Police in Afghanistan, and how they evolve over time may provide further insights to effective means of securing local populations.

Few arguments will declare the need for the U.S. government to reframe its nation-building strategy in failed states, however the train, advise and assist methods should be relooked under the BPC umbrella. The natural tendency of the military enterprise when tasked to assist foreign militaries is to teach what the advisor knows. However, as this research has pointed out, the knowledge passed to FSF is not adequate for fighting insurgencies. Common characteristics between Vietnam and Afghanistan were the introduction of advisors who knew little about their operational environment. When the need to build a partner's capacity arises, the U.S. military needs to have personnel qualified to work in the type of environments these missions have trended to take place since the Second World War. These environments have fractured populations along political, cultural or ethnic lines, and decentralizing power bases. The military should not attempt to take General Purpose Forces (GPF) trained, organized and equipped for conventional warfare to take on this mission. Fractured environments in failing states require individuals who can adapt to their environment rather than working to change the environment to match its capability. GPF are built for, and should remain ready to defend the nation against adversarial armies. USSOF are specially selected and

trained forces capable of working in fluid environments of fragile states and are adept in building and maintaining relationships. However, USSOF is not an easy button, and their size limits the effective employment of a sole Special Operations Task Force in the number of theaters requiring a USSOF capable partnership. This generates the need to redefine what stability is and the components required to establish it in failed states. Future research examining militia style security institutions in Africa could provide another set of case studies with fractured social environments with poor national institutional capacity.

The long-term effort of building secure environments in failed states should always assume to need an extensive timeline for the differences between members of its society to negotiate terms of cooperation. GPF require a large footprint to sustain its forces, which provides a target rich environment to adversaries against development of state institutions. USSOF can provide the smaller footprint that can blend into environments and implement plans for external support to decrease their vulnerability. Failed states tend to be within range of neighboring, permissive states where additional assets, such as air bases may be used for the insertion of quick reaction forces. Where this isn't possible, such as Afghanistan, basing should be kept at the very minimum required to maintain adequate coverage. Any location where forces could not receive such support shouldn't be options for GPF or USSOF.

Doctrine is a mechanism for which all elements inside an organization can maintain standards required to achieve combined success among the organization's parts. Large bureaucratic organizations like the U.S. military are designs created over centuries of combat experience. Doctrinal change is not required to deal with NSA threats in failing states, but recognition of what military doctrine is capable and incapable of doing will increase its effectiveness by preventing its misapplication in environments it was never intended to go. The U.S. military is capable of working in failed states, but the political appetite has soured over sustained combat in theaters overseas. Popular support dissents when military intervention extends beyond progress. Vietnam was of little concern to U.S. citizens when the MAAG was advising Diem and his regime. After the introduction of ground combat forces took over media headlines a decade later, and U.S.

casualties filled headlines, the citizenry paid attention and eventually turned unpopular. The U.S. currently recognizes similar dissatisfaction with the prolonged effort in Afghanistan, however support currently exists in the USSOF centric manner President Obama is dealing with ISIS. As the situation progresses in Iraq, the partnership between USSOF and the Peshmerga in northern Iraq can provide a current case study to test new doctrine in USSOF centric footprints. The amount of time, resources, and effort the U.S. continues to provide Iraq with combating ISIS will continue to affect U.S. domestic support, as well as Iraqi support for continued U.S. intervention. These external and internal environmental considerations could observe the impact on the doctrine implemented by the U.S. dependent on the success of future military operations, such as reclaiming lost territory inside Iraq from ISIS.

Technology imposes heavy demands upon partners. Equipping unproven fighters with complex armaments requiring layers of additional support, e.g., mechanics, armorers, engineers, and other skilled talent, will need external support to survive. U.S. officials responsible for decisions on equipping partners must consider the sustainment requirement, as well as other implications of U.S. military aid. One implication is the manipulation of foreign partners who will exploit the situation to empower their own position. Diem rejected U.S. advisors for suggesting he implement democratic reforms to his government, but accepted the U.S. partnership as the means to equip his military and police forces. The U.S. has a poor record of accomplishment in assessing the needs of security partners, often acting gullible to the requests of officials who have ulterior motives of security, such as Wardak in Afghanistan believing Western materiel makes Afghan forces appear more professional. Materiel should be organic and locally procured. USSOF are and should continue training in innovative techniques using resources available to the environment to equip partner forces. At the very least, the U.S. requires a rigid examination of how it distributes military aid in failing states. Shipping containers full of armaments provided to groups who have never used the materiel will only lead to a continuous cycle of U.S. dependency and stall internal innovation. Analysis on the effects of U.S. military aid to countries across the globe are required. Statistical

analysis testing the relative security levels in countries receiving the most military financial and materiel aid to increase FSF effectiveness might provide this insight.

The interaction between the environment, doctrine, and technology used in failing states must always drive a tailored response aimed to address issues of a particular operational environment. Predictable responses will thwart the innovation of the people we intend to support, and eventually lead to a security apparatus that is standing on external foundations of U.S. support, rather than the stronger foundations of internal resourcing and collective cooperation. Every effort facilitating cooperation at the most local level possible to achieve populous support can increase effectiveness. This option may require the U.S. to pass on intervention, opting for partners to look through their own mirror.

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