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**ASSESSING U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
COMMAND'S MISSIONS AND ROLES**

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND  
CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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JUNE 29, 2006



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**ASSESSING U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND'S  
MISSIONS AND ROLES**

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES  
SUBCOMMITTEE,

*Washington, DC, Thursday, June 29, 2006.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:31 a.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James Saxton (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JIM SAXTON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW JERSEY, CHAIRMAN, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE**

Mr. SAXTON. Good morning.

I have an opening statement that I am going to ask be put in the record.

The purpose of today's hearing is to update ourselves on the activities and capabilities of the Special Operations Command.

As the threat changes, our capabilities have to change as well. And one of the agile parts of our national security system is Special Operations Command (SOCOM), and the agility never ceases to amaze me and how we identify threats and change our tactics and procedures to meet those threats. SOCOM has been very good at that over the years.

So we thought we would get together this outside panel to give us a current look at how SOCOM activities are perceived, experts who are not necessarily still or have been part of Special Operations Command.

With us today are General Wayne Downing, Chairman, Combating Terrorism Center, U.S. Military Academy at West Point. I would especially like to thank General Downing for being with us today as a former commander of SOCOM. I am sure your testimony will be particularly enlightening.

And also, Michael Vickers, director of strategic studies, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; and Max Boot, senior fellow of the National Security Studies Council on Foreign Relations. We look forward to hearing from you.

But before we do that let me ask my friend and companion here, Marty Meehan, for any comments he may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Saxton can be found in the Appendix on page 33.]

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MASSACHUSETTS, RANKING MEMBER, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE**

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to join you in welcoming the witnesses today and associate myself with the chairman's remarks and provide a few of my own for emphasis.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, I am keenly interested in our national security posture and philosophical approach to the Global War on Terror. Much of our work since 9/11 has been focused on the business of providing the best possible resources available.

I would like to believe that this focus and the work of this committee has contributed to SOCOM's current capability, yet with the beginning of our 5th year in this struggle I have grown increasingly pessimistic about our overall philosophy.

As the conflict continues to grow in duration, I am faced with the prospect that we might not be applying military resources in the most prudent and effective manner.

As a nation, are we overly focused on the area of our operation in Iraq and Afghanistan? Do we overly favor the option of direct action at the expense of unconventional military techniques?

Have we failed to accurately interpret the nature of this conflict? Does it call for a counterterrorism or counterinsurgency strategy? In essence, are we properly expanding the use of forces? These are just a few of the questions that have been put before this committee that are of concern.

General Downing, you find yourself in fine company today. You are flanked by two of the great writers in the field of military theory. Yet because of your own experiences, you are obviously uniquely qualified to present testimony.

And I am impressed with your experience not only in uniform but your experience since then on the staff of the National Security Council (NSC) and as an independent critic of SOCOM and Secretary Rumsfeld, and your present role, obviously, at West Point.

So I hope the panelists can share their candid assessment of this and help us help the department to improve. And you know, I think this country deserves nothing less than that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you very much.

General Downing, why don't you lead off and tell us what you think?

**STATEMENT OF GEN. WAYNE A. DOWNING (RET.), CHAIRMAN, COMBATING TERRORISM CENTER, U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT**

General DOWNING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you and members for allowing me to come back in here. I don't get to come to these hearings very much anymore, and, unlike some military guys, we were always treated very well up here. So my experiences coming both here and to the other body were always generally very positive experiences, because we were created, as you know, by the Congress, and we were certainly well taken care of here. I see that continuing.

I am reminded that I have been retired for 10 years, and the capability of U.S. Special Operations Command, which I left 10 years ago, is exceedingly greater than it was in 1996. And certainly, their performance in this struggle over the last almost 5 years has really allowed them to develop and to hone their skill.

I am also reminded that I left Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) 15 years ago, and the JSOC capability is so far beyond what we had when we went out into the desert during the first Gulf War.

The performance of the units has been outstanding, primarily focused in Afghanistan and Iraq. You are well aware of this. I think one of the things that we have got to remember is that this great performance has not come without cost to the command. We have got cost in materiel, aircraft, vehicles, weapons, radios.

I think we ought to also remember that over 1,000 special operators have been killed or wounded since we started, a percentage and a rate which far exceeds that of the conventional forces. I think that is to be understood.

The number of killed in action, I really don't know what that number is, except I certainly know it is north of 100 and perhaps even closer to 200.

That is very troubling to me because it takes so long to train these special operators to make them effective. It takes about 18 months to get a special forces soldier through all of his training, his language training, and get him out to the field.

It takes about the same kind of thing for a combat controller or for an Air Force para-rescue guy. Some of these crew members, for the 160th and for AFSOC take over a year to get them trained to go to the field.

When you go to the special mission units, both the Army and the Navy special mission units, it takes 10 years to 15 years to get the kind of experience that you need to replace those. So we have a big gap that unfortunately—of money and resources—cannot fill.

While we have done an outstanding job in our current operations, we must prepare for the future fight. I think we have got to possibly remind ourselves that this is not a war that we are involved with. It is more on the order of a global counterinsurgency campaign.

The objective is to drain the swamp, not kill all the alligators in the swamp. In some cases, we end up killing the alligators and they are replaced almost as fast as we can kill them or capture them.

And so what we have got to look at is we have got to look at getting after causes of this insurgency. And this reminds us all that this is not a military struggle. This is a political, it is an economic, and it is a social struggle.

The military has a role to play, but it is just a role. I would offer to you that the military cannot win this struggle, but they could lose it.

And one of the things that I have seen over the last five years is the great difficulty in bringing the power of the United States government to bear on these problems. And this is tied up in our interagency process. There is a lot of competition. We have a lot of

inability to bring this team together. And I think we really have to get after that.

I think we have also got to remind ourselves that this struggle is more than global manhunting. It is more than the direct action piece. It is more than combat, foreign internal defense and unconventional warfare.

These are necessary activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, but they are not enough. I think sometimes we get mesmerized because of the skill and the daring of our special operators that do these jobs, and I think sometimes people think that that is all that is involved in the special operations forces' contribution to the struggle. It is not.

We have got to get after the future base area. We have got to get after developing friends and allies and proxies. Because when you fight an insurgency, the best people to do this are the host country. They are not American forces.

And that is one thing that special operations do, is they are a tremendous force multiplier, where, you know, 10 special forces soldiers can leverage 500 or maybe even 1,000 of the other.

We are, I believe, expanding our Human Intelligence (HUMINT) operations, and I think this is totally appropriate because intelligence is so important in a counterinsurgency operation.

I see great progress between the Pentagon and the intelligence community on flexible detailing of special operators into places like the CIA, where they can be used for Title 50 authorities rather than Title 10; very effective to get out and accomplish the job.

U.S. SOCOM has been given a very, very difficult task. General Brown has been tasked with Unified Command Plan (UCP) 2004 with being the synchronizer and the coordinator of this term Global War on Terror. And this is very, very difficult for him, because what he has been asked to do is counterculture.

He has been asked to do things which, in the past, have been the purview of the joint staff. There has certainly been resentment in the geographical combatant commanders about his new roles and his ability to get out and synchronize and coordinate.

Tampa, Florida, is a long way from Washington, D.C. Believe me, I remember that from my days here. And it is very, very difficult to think that you are going to synchronize and coordinate the Department of Defense's (DOD's) effort in this struggle and do it from Tampa, Florida, because where things get done and where things happen is in this town.

So General Brown has been given a very, very tough mission. I think there is recognition of how tough it is in the Pentagon. I think they are trying to help them, but I don't think we should delude ourselves that all these barriers that inhibit him have gone away.

There is also a lot of overlap. Some overlap is always good, but you have got to question yourself how much overlap and how much duplication of effort is there going on between things like the Center for Special Operations down in Tampa, JSOC at Fort Bragg, the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) up here in Washington and the Joint Staff. There is a lot of effort going on, and some rationalization probably ought to be applied to that.

I think SOCOM needs a command element in D.C. If I could change the world, I would move the whole command up here. But that is very difficult, because real estate is at such a premium.

But of course, this flies in the face of what is the role of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the services. And many of them see that as a threat to what they do if you move SOCOM up here.

But yet for SOCOM to be given this mission of synchronize and coordinate, they have to be up here. So we have a dilemma here, and in my mind it is not solved.

I would like to see more special operations forces flag officers in the global combatant commands and in the joint task forces, because they have very unique capabilities.

I would also like to see more conventional units assigned to the joint special operations task forces. We have always been able to handle that. It is certainly a talent of our commanders that they enable this to happen.

The fourth point I would like to make is on JSOC. One of the recommendations that myself and Mike Vickers made along with Bill Garrison in November when we did a quick look at this subject for Secretary Rumsfeld was we recommended that he enhance JSOC to a three-star command.

We also recommended he be given four deputy commanders—two major generals and two brigadier generals—which would give that command the ability to field five joint special operations task forces.

Right now, there are just three of them, and all three of those commanders have never been in the same room together because of their operations tempo (optempo). At least one of them has always been gone, and the only time they see each other together is on video teleconferences.

I also recommended that JSOC report directly to the secretary of defense. Now, that was rejected. I understand why. But the thought was while SOCOM is going through this very, very difficult transition period to these new missions that they have been given, my feeling was that the JSOC could operate much faster and much more efficiently if you took out a command layer—in other words, let them go direct to the SECDEF.

It would allow them to be very, very flexible, because one of the things that we found is that the staff processes in the Joint Chief of Staff (JCS), in Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and in the interagency impede operations. The national command authority wants fast, responsive, flexible and innovative solutions to their problems in this Global War on Terror, but their staff system produces exactly the opposite.

Things that should take days take weeks. Things that should take weeks take months. And some of the decisions that have to be made have to be made in hours, absolutely in hours.

The other thing that I think command should look at, and that is lowering this wall between black and white SOF. That has always been a problem between the special mission units and the rest of special operations. I would judge that since the war those walls are higher than they were in 2001.

There is some reasons for it, but one of the reasons that we proposed the five joint special operations task forces is that we would like to see the black and the white operate together under one commander. You can still have walls for security, but I just think we could get a better application of resources if we did that.

The last point I would like to make is that there has been some great practices that have come out of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and we need to benchmark those practices not only for the rest of special operations but for the entire military. These are the joint interagency task forces.

I think General McCrystal's work in this area has just been exemplary, how he has brought all of these different elements of the United States government together, and they brought them together and they work very, very effectively together.

This operation against Zarqawi is the epitome of it. That goes on not only in Iraq but it also goes on in Afghanistan. They have done that very, very well.

Counternetwork operations task force—been developed. They work well. Transient screening facilities have worked well, and also joint reconnaissance task force have worked very well. Some very, very good things going on.

Gentlemen, I obviously don't have the answer to a lot of the detailed questions. Members of the command can give you that. Certainly, General Brown can.

I am very proud of these soldiers, sailors, airmen and now these Marines, and I think you should be too. They are doing a hell of a job.

Thank you.

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you very much, General Downing.

We are going to hear from Mike Vickers next, and then we will go over to Mr. Boot, and then we will have some questions.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL G. VICKERS, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC STUDIES, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND BUDGETARY ASSESSMENTS**

Mr. VICKERS. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to share my views with you on the missions and roles of the United States Special Operations Command.

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review produced a number of important decisions with respect to Special Operations Forces operational capabilities, capacity and posture, a number of which were recommended by General Downing, Bill Garrison and myself in the report that General Downing mentioned.

These capability and capacity expansions are absolutely essential. About 80 percent of our current force is tied up in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and the basic intent over the longer term is not only to redeploy these forces but to have a more intense city-state effort for the Global War on Terror (GWOT) until this necessitated the SOF expansion.

SOF will really be the main DOD instrument, not necessarily the main U.S. Government instrument in all cases, but main DOD instrument in the longer term Global War on Terror.

A number of special operations units were increased by one-third. Special forces battalions, ranger companies, classified special mission unit squadrons, psychological operations (PSYOPs) and civil affairs both in the active duty and Reserve component.

A Marine Special Operations Command was stood up that will contribute to the foreign internal defense area as well as the direct action and special reconnaissance area. And investments were made in new capabilities in tagging, tracking, locating terrorists, in covered air mobility and in persistent air surveillance with the UAV squadron for Air Force Special Operations Command.

These are all very, very good initiatives. I want to highlight, however, that while SOCOM is doing a very good job in facilitating this expansion with its new 18X program to attract additional special forces talent directly from civilian life, and increasing the institutional base, increasing the throughput of the special forces school, which has essentially doubled in the past couple of years.

Retention is really critical, and incentives to retain the force that we have will be vital to its expansion as well as its continued quality.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, the planning capacity of the Department of Defense for the Global War on Terror has been significantly bolstered. As General Downing mentioned, SOCOM has stood up the Center for Special Operations.

The Theater Special Operations Command has been significantly augmented to make them far more capable of 24/7 long duration operations. And the command and staff elements of JSOC have likewise been strengthened for long duration operation.

SOCOM has produced GWOT-related concept plans and operations plans, the 7,500 series, which were first rate. The Defense Department is currently in the process of identifying the resources needed to implement these plans.

Mr. SAXTON. Let me just interrupt just for a minute, just so everybody—here is the game plan. We have got a 15-minute vote, a 2-minute vote, and another 15-minute vote, so we can be here for another 10 minutes before we have to leave, and then we will be gone for about 20 minutes.

Mr. VICKERS. Okay.

As General Downing noted, SOCOM has experienced some difficulty in fulfilling its role as the lead combatant command in two areas, in top-level integration and interagency planning process and in control of global SOF forces or other forces that may be placed under their command.

As General Downing noted, the GWOT is an intelligence and special-operations-intensive war. SOCOM has made great strides in the intelligence arena since 9/11. Two advanced special operations training level three courses have been stood up, and they are producing a couple hundred graduates a year, which significantly expand our HUMINT capability.

Making full use of authorities in the GWOT both in intelligence and operations, as General Downing noted, is critical, particularly the flexible detailing and exploitation of the CIA's Title 50 authority.

Further, integrating our partners since this indirect approach and leveraging proxies and surrogates will be central to our oper-

ation through a global counterterrorism network and with appropriate communications is also vital.

On the legislative side, given the importance of seasoned operators—and one of the things of the GWOT is it is very kind to 40-year-olds where some of the direct action missions weren't. It has placed a premium on the intelligence side.

One of the things we might look at is providing SOF additional relief from the provisions of section 517 of Title 10 of the U.S. Code which limits the number of E8 and E9 soldiers in the force.

The special mission units have received waivers in this area, but it is time to look at expanding this to white SOF as well, given the increasing role those senior soldiers are playing.

Unconventional warfare is a vital GWOT instrument against both state and non-state actors, and SOCOM has made very good strides of late in this area to develop a global unconventional warfare plan. It needs to be properly resourced, however.

The section 1208 authority which grants SOF the authority to conduct paramilitary operations or fund irregular forces needs to be expanded several fold over the program years to several hundred million dollars a year, up from its current level of \$25 million or so.

I fully concur with what General Downing said about black and white integration of SOF in the field under a single commander. It does seem like, in some cases, we are doing better in the field, but the general direction is not good.

With that, I will conclude my statement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Vickers can be found in the Appendix on page 38.]

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you very much.

Mr. BOOT.

**STATEMENT OF MAX BOOT, SENIOR FELLOW FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

Mr. BOOT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to the members of the subcommittee for inviting me to testify along with two men I hold in such high regard as Wayne Downing and Mike Vickers.

I would like to begin by noting, as have my fellow analysts, that SOCOM is, in many ways, a very impressive organization. But I think it is also a very limited organization, and certainly not the organization that is going to win the Global War on Terror for us.

In fact, SOCOM, I would suggest, as Congressman Meehan suggested in his opening statement, has become very focused on direct action, on rappelling out of helicopters, kicking down doors, taking out bad guys.

Now, we need to do that, and that strategy can obviously pay off with some major dividends, as when we capture Saddam Hussein or kill Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

But I think we have seen in the aftermath of those major operations the limitations of that manhunter model of counterterrorism or counterinsurgency, because what we are still stuck with in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere are very large, very decentralized insurgencies which are not going anywhere even if you take out a handful of the top leaders.

Making real progress against Islamist terrorism is going to require accomplishing much more difficult and much less glamorous tasks such as establishing security, furthering economic and political development, and spreading the right information to win hearts and minds among the uncommitted Muslim masses.

Above all, it will require working with indigenous allies who must carry the bulk of the burden in this type of conflict. In other words, it will require more emphasis not on direct action but on unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, PSYOPS, civil affairs, all of those other specialties which have been getting short-changed by SOCOM.

There is certainly a sense among the Army special forces community, among the Green Berets, that what they do is less appreciated and less valued, and less emphasis is put on it than it should be, in favor of these sexier Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)-style raids in which SOCOM has become so proficient.

I got an e-mail a few weeks ago from one recently retired special forces colonel who wrote to me the current problem of SOCOM is that it is unbalanced. Most of the leadership and planning staff have come from the direct action (D.A.) side. They have no understanding of unconventional warfare (U.W.)

Another more senior retired special forces officer e-mailed to me to complain of the total USSOCOM preoccupation with rating SOF orientation on special operations and absolutely none on low-intensity conflict.

And similar concerns have shown up in print, for example, in Sean Naylor's article in *Armed Forces Journal*, "More Than Door-Kickers," which quoted yet another retired special forces officer who warned that if we spend the rest of our lives capturing and killing terrorists at the expense of those special forces missions that are more important, gaining access to the local population, training indigenous forces, providing expertise and expanding capacity, then we are doomed to failure.

When I hear such complaints coming from so many special forces veterans for whom I have such high respect, I take them very seriously. And obviously, the committee does as well, and I am glad to hear that.

The question, of course, you are confronted with is well, what do you do about this. Is it possible to change SOCOM's orientation? I think given the way it is currently constituted, given its emphasis on kicking down doors, given where the bulk of its leadership has come from, I think it is very hard to have major changes within the current structure of SOCOM.

For this reason, there is growing interest within U.S. Army special forces circles about creating a new joint unconventional warfare command within SOCOM which would basically be a U.W. equivalent to the Joint Special Operations Command which encompasses units like Delta Force and Seal Team 6, and focuses on direct action missions.

An unconventional warfare command could bring together Army special forces, civil affairs and PSYOPs by essentially expanding the role of the Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg. That strikes me as a pretty good idea.

But I would also urge the committee to think outside of the current bureaucratic boundaries and think about possibly removing the unconventional warfare mission from SOCOM altogether.

I would like to conclude my testimony with a very brief synopsis of an old idea for how this could be accomplished, by essentially resurrecting the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which was created in 1942 to gather intelligence as well as to conduct low-intensity warfare behind enemy lines in occupied Europe and Asia.

OSS was disbanded after World War II and, as you know, both the Green Berets and the CIA trace their lineage to this august ancestor. My proposal was to recreate OSS by bringing together under one roof not only Army special forces, civil affairs and PSYOPs, but also the CIA's paramilitary special activities division.

This could be a joint civil military agency under the combined oversight of the secretary of defense and the director of national intelligence, like the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) or National Security Agency (NSA). It could bring together in one place all of the key skill sets needed to wage the softer side of the war on terrorism.

Like SOCOM, it would have access to military personnel and assets, but like the CIA special activities division, its operations would contain a higher degree of covertness, flexibility and deniability than those carried out by the uniform military.

One of the key advantages of an OSS redux is that it might be able to enhance our understanding of the societies in which terrorists operate. Such knowledge can be acquired in one of two ways, either by long-term immersion in foreign societies or by simply recruiting from the societies in which we fight.

OSS II could facilitate both approaches in the first place by modifying the military's frenetic personnel rotation policies which make it almost impossible to acquire true area expertise, and in the second place by modifying our overly restrictive citizenship requirements, which currently limit military service to citizens or green card holders.

The Green Berets recruited non-citizens in the 1950's when the Lodge Act allowed the enlistment of Eastern Europeans. Something similar should be tried today to recruit from Muslim societies around the world, starting with Muslim immigrant populations within the United States.

I bet there would be plenty of high-quality recruits who would be willing to serve in return for one of the world's most precious commodities, U.S. citizenship. It might even make sense to stand up an entire brigade or even a division of foreign fighters led by American officers and Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs). Call it the Freedom Legion.

OSS II would be a natural repository for such an outfit, considering the success the original OSS had in running indigenous forces such as the Burmese tribesmen who battled the Japanese in World War II.

It is also possible that OSS could be a prime repository of nation-building expertise within the U.S. Government, which is a capacity that we desperately need to develop and for which we have paid a high price in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Nation-building is an important part of counterinsurgency, because you have to provide a viable government to compete with the guerilla shadow government. This is not something we have done a very good job of doing. And again, this OSS-type agency could be tasked with developing a core of personnel who are skilled in those areas.

Now, I realize the creation of a new OSS is a radical notion and it needs a good deal more study and discussion and debate. But if we are to be successful in the long war, we need to think outside of the traditional bureaucratic boxes, because the U.S. Government, as currently set up, and that includes SOCOM, simply is not adequately configured for the tasks ahead.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Boot can be found in the Appendix on page 43.]

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Boot. That was a very stimulating and enlightening set of thoughts.

We are going to go ahead and vote, and we have probably got about 5 minutes left in this vote, and that will give us time to get there, and we will be back in about 20 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. SAXTON. General Downing, while I was gone, I thought about talking with Bill Young about moving SOCOM headquarters to Washington. I decided otherwise. [Laughter.]

I had a few minutes to think about the testimony that we heard, and it is very encouraging testimony in this respect.

Military and political leaders have always known that the threat constantly changes, and therefore our capabilities to meet the threat have to constantly change as well. It goes without saying. It is a very basic principle.

And in the case of the Global War on Terror, that is as true today as it has ever been. And we found out that we had some weaknesses in the 1980's, and in 1987 we took some steps to try to change to face that threat.

We found out the threat changed again in the—maybe it didn't change again, but it manifested itself in the early 1990's, and we recognized that the conventional force was less capable of dealing with it and the Special Operations Command was more capable of dealing with it.

And recently, as I flew from Balad to Baghdad, after hearing briefings about the oil flow, the electricity, and on that helicopter flight, I looked down at Iraqis with hoes and rakes and picks, and no tractors, I recognized that there was not only work to be done in the oil sector and in the electrical sector, utility sector, but in the agricultural sector as well.

And when we got back to Baghdad and had a chance to talk with the U.S. ambassador, I realized as I sat in, I don't know, over 100 degrees of heat and watched them elect their first speaker, and was introduced to some number of their parliamentarians, I recognized that the State Department had a lot of work to do.

And I came back to this country and talked to General Vines, who had just come back, and I said how are we doing. He said, well, the military was doing okay. But he said in the other sectors, we are not doing as well—not doing very well, maybe he said.

Actually, he was more graphic than that. He said some things, though, that led me to believe that the way that we are meeting the threat today in Iraq, even though we have tried to change to meet it better, is not very good.

One of the changes that we recognized is that people who were there on the ground before me, before I was, before I had these thoughts that I just expressed to you, we recognized that there was a need for better coordination among agencies and gave General Brown the job of synchronizing the activities involved in the Global War on Terror.

So we are trying to make the changes that are necessary to better enable us to meet the threat and solve the problems of the Global War on Terror. And so within that context, all of your testimony is very welcome, and your ideas are very, very welcome.

And we want to help make that happen, of course, in conjunction with the people who are currently in SOCOM, and the military leadership at the Pentagon as well.

Let me just ask this. If you had a blank sheet of paper—no, let's start where we are now. If you had your wish list, what are the three or four things in order to meet this threat that you would do differently?

Mr. Boot, you testified last. Why don't you take a stab at that first?

Mr. BOOT. Well, I think the big thing upon which there is wide agreement is the need to have better human intelligence, better knowledge of foreign cultures and languages and societies. The question upon which it is very difficult to find an answer is how do you achieve that.

I mean, we all talk about let's do more language training, let's do more of this and that, but is that really going to achieve the goals that we need to achieve?

And I think the problem is that given the current bureaucratic structures it is very, very hard to do that. Structures such as the personnel rotation policies, where even in specialized units like the Army Special Forces, you have officers who have to rotate in and out for various career development reasons, where they have to spend a little time in the field, a little time in staff jobs, schools, et cetera, et cetera.

And it makes it very hard to maintain that kind of very deep knowledge of one specific area where you might wind up operating, and the same problem exists in the State Department, in the CIA and elsewhere in the government, because all of our personnel policies, which I think are really in some ways at the root of the problem here, are designed for rotation and to create well-rounded individuals, essentially, well-rounded officers, well-rounded State Department officers, well-rounded CIA officers.

And that is a commendable goal, and we need those well-rounded people, but what it means is that we don't really have the people who are the world's living top experts on places like Waziristan or Anbar Province or wherever our forces may be operating.

And I think what we need to do is basically create exceptions within our current system. We need to carve out some people who are not going to be generalists, some people who are not going to be rotating, some people who are not going to be on the fast track

to the top, but who can stay in one place or one area for decades at a time and gain the kind of knowledge that the Brits—and the Brits did this so well in the 19th century, when they had people like T.E. Lawrence and Richard Francis Burton, and Gertrude Bell and others who were these kind of eccentric characters but who were incredible repositories of information on the very areas of the world where the British Empire was operating.

And we need those same kind of people, too. They exist, and there are Americans who fit these categories, and I meet them whenever I go around the world.

No matter how terrible the place, you always find American expats who are living there, except they are usually working as aid workers, or journalists or some other capacity in the private sector. They are not working for the U.S. Government. And we need to harness those kinds of people for the U.S. Government.

And so my idea for creating an OSS is just one thought I threw out there, and perhaps a clumsy one, for how do you kind of create this carve-out, this set-aside, from the cookie-cutter personnel policies that govern most of the military and most of the other government agencies, so you can create this kind of true expertise that we can draw upon and build the kind of personal relationships we really need in order to pacify some of these troubled areas that give rise to terrorism.

Mr. SAXTON. General Downing.

General DOWNING. I would say, and it re-emphasizes something I said in my opening remarks, we need an interagency process that works. I don't know, Mr. Chairman, if you can legislate something like that. But certainly, the executive branch has to come up with it. It doesn't work here.

It works better in the field, but it always does, because when you get out in the field you have people trying to solve their own problems and realizing they have to work together.

One of the things that is just killing us, beyond the Washington problem, is when you get to the field the other parts of the United States government are not there. In other words, you don't have the kind of expertise from the State Department that you need throughout the area.

I was in Al Anbar Province, I guess, five times in the last couple of years, and they had a Political Advisor (POLAD) out there, a foreign service officer, that had been out there almost two years. I think he was on his third or fourth Marine commander.

And this guy knew that province inside and out. I mean, he knew every tribe. He knew the leaders. He knew how things fit together. But you know, he is kind of a one man. Where are the rest of the 18 provinces? You know, how are they covered? There is a few of those.

You see the same thing out in Afghanistan. I was in Oruzgan Province in February, talked to the province reconstruction team, asked them—you know, they have had some FBI people. They were doing well. Asked them what they needed, and the head of the province reconstruction team, female Military Police (M.P.) officer who was a Russian foreign area officer specialist, very impressive woman, said the thing they really needed were their two Department of Agriculture people who left last summer.

And I said, why? They said because they really added value to what they were trying to do, and the Afghans trusted them, and they were really making some headway. I said, well, why did they leave? They left because the Department of Agriculture didn't have enough money to go ahead and extend their contracts.

So we have got to bring the interagency into the fight. I think there is a lot of duplication of effort between the Center for Special Operations (CSO), the National Counter-Proliferation Center (NCPC) and JSOC. I really think that we probably need to either move the CSO to JSOC or move it to the CTC. I think we would get more out of it.

My JSOC comment about the SECDEF, I think that would do it. And then these five JSODAs that bring black and white together is the way I would go. During your vote, two of us talked. We talked with some subject matter experts here in the room.

There is also another good case to do OSS II, as Max presents, or as Mike and I have talked about some kind of a JTF, but something that brings this together, that gets this direct action world and this UW/FID world and all the HUMINT operations tied together so they support each other.

A lot of distrust there, and we are not getting optimal results.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Vickers.

Mr. VICKERS. I think we are on a pretty good path right now for this long war. I think there are a couple shortfalls that if I could be king for a day I would work on resolving. The big one is really how the U.S. Government implements GWOT strategy and integrates elements of national power.

The NCTC is really more of a roles assigner and monitoring organization, to create integrated effects between agency, military, war of ideas, financial interdiction.

We really don't have that kind of thing either globally in Washington. And as General Downing said, there is a lot of duplication, but we really don't have the national level, other than setting broad strategic policy, that is actually monitoring global operations and integrating them.

So I think we have a ways to go on U.S. Government organization, interagency organization. I would underscore several of the things General Downing said in that area.

Related to that is still some work in organizational capabilities. I think DOD is well on its way. They need to do a better job in languages and a few things, but made big strides in the past few years.

And if we continue on this path and resource it—and SOCOM will require significantly more resources to implement this plan. It will probably require another 50 percent increase in their budget or so over the program period. But they are well on their way.

I think the CIA is well on its way toward transforming from a Cold War force to a GWOT force. Now, they have got a very young workforce right now, and that is a problem, because you have to season these folks.

I think that is less true in the other areas of the government in terms of war of ideas or in terms of an expeditionary foreign service. We have a ways to go in that area and creating the capabilities that we will need to do the fight.

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you.

Mr. Larsen, feel free to jump in here at any time. But I just want to advance one set of ideas based on something that happened very recently.

Yesterday, General Eikenberry was here, and in his testimony he talked about the reorganization or re-emergence of the Taliban. So there continue to be security issues, and our Operational Detachment Alpha (ODAs) seem to be doing a pretty good job leveraging indigenous forces against the Taliban. So we are working that angle.

When he was asked what is your biggest need in Afghanistan, he said \$50 million for roads. And so we pursued that, and it once again emphasized to me the need for interagency cooperation and international cooperation.

So General Eikenberry turned to the State Department representative who was there and said tell the congressman how we are doing with the international effort. So the U.S. agency called the State Department is now working an international set of issues trying to get together \$50 million to build that big loop that we need and other things.

And then we got to talking about what else do you need. He said well, we need more activities about people who can make it profitable for Afghans to grow something besides poppies. And so there is a need for that kind of expertise as well.

And of course, to know more about all of that and the indigenous problems, we need intel. And so both in Iraq and Afghanistan we see that our military guys are there doing what they are trained to do, doing a good job, and have identified different sets of needs in the two countries, but a variety of different kinds of needs that we are not geared to meet, effectively, at least.

So with that, let me just go to Mr. Larsen.

Mr. LARSEN. Sure, and really bouncing off of that statement, I think a very general assessment—and obviously we can get into details—a general assessment is the PRTs tend to be working better in Afghanistan, generally, than they are in Iraq. And this is a fundamental critique that General McCaffrey brought back from his recent trips to both countries as well.

And I was wondering if, maybe starting with you, General Downing, you can help us, perhaps with focus a little bit on our subject matter today, but can you help us understand why there is a general difference between, again, the relative success of the PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq?

General DOWNING. Sir, I would say it is directly related to the security situation. I think in Afghanistan we are able to put them out. They are able to, you know, depending upon local conditions, travel. But I think generally in Afghanistan the security situation is better.

Some of the places in Iraq are just too dangerous to put them out. And of course, we made a decision to live out of bases, which means we get concentrated, and we are also, when we are in those bases, completely cut off from contact with the Iraqi people.

That, added to our sunglasses, our body armor and our helmets, kind of create, you know, a formidable presence that oftentimes

isn't conducive to getting the people-to-people kind of relationships. I think it is directly related to security.

Mr. LARSEN. Yes.

Mr. VICKERS, Mr. BOOT, anything to add?

Mr. VICKERS. I would agree totally. And the security situation is a function of the unsettled politics. The Afghan people were weary of 25 years of war. The political process worked really well after Kabul fell and installing a government right away, and so you had better initial conditions.

Now, there have been, you know, some resurgence of the Taliban, but it is still a very, very different situation than Iraq, where lots of things are still unsettled. And so expecting, you know, sort of the PRTs to be the savior, you know, it is going to take time for that to work.

The Iraqis are going to have to establish some measure of security, and then we will be able to work on the development side.

Mr. BOOT. I will just pick up on the points that were just made. I think absolutely we need more security right now in Iraq, before you can have more development, and I think more security will probably require more troops, at least in a place like Baghdad where I think there is a real security crisis going on right now.

But to pick up on a point that General Downing made, which I completely agree, because I was struck by this as I traveled around Afghanistan and Iraq in the last few months, is the extent to which we are walling ourselves off from the indigenous population on these giant bases, where you go to places like our logistics support area, Anaconda, up near Balad, or Camp Victory at Baghdad. I am sure you have all been to these places. They are gigantic, tens of thousands of people, and you could just as easily be at Fort Hood, Texas. There is almost no way of knowing that you are actually in a foreign country.

And most of the personnel we have in those countries spend most of their time on those bases where I think anybody like Mike Vickers or General Downing who has been engaged out in the field will tell you you have got to be out in the field.

You have got to be interacting with the civilian population in order to have success in a counterinsurgency. And very few of our forces do that, for a variety of logistical and force protection reasons.

So much of our effort basically is going to sustain these giant bases, not necessarily to actually fight and win the counterinsurgency, which is the reason why those bases are there in the first place.

And I think, just to pick up on another point that was briefly mentioned in terms of the interagency process, I think one of the real gaps that we are missing is an agency that specifically focuses on nation-building, because you see what we had to do in the case of Iraq.

And a lot of the reason why we have the current problems in Iraq is we didn't have an institution that would come in and run a place like Iraq. The Administration created the ORHA from scratch two months before the invasion in 2003 and then created CPA from scratch in the middle of the war.

And neither of those organizations functioned very well, and we don't have this natural repository within the government of skill in nation-building.

A lot of it falls to the military because they are the guys on the spot, but they are not trained in it, and they often don't want to do it. They have to do it, but they wish there would be somebody who could come in with the skill set to do that.

And the skills do exist in places like the Department of Agriculture and State and Treasury, and in the civilian sector and various other places. But there is no organization that knits those skills together so that in peace time, so we are ready when a war breaks out or when a country disintegrates to come in and run these things.

And I think that is one of the big organizational gaps that we have to fill.

Mr. LARSEN. So working backwards from that, or maybe getting more particulars, especially with the subject of this particular hearing, in Iraq what role does SOF play, say, in Iraq to get us to that point where there can be something more like an Afghanistan PRT team on the ground as opposed to what we are doing right now?

General DOWNING. Well, of course, you have got the one special operations force which is doing the manhunt, direct action stuff. We all know about them, and they get, you know, the majority of the press and the publicity.

The other part of special operations, though, are actually working and training with the indigenous battalions, generally the special battalions, special police commandos, Iraqi special forces.

And then there is a significant endeavor with our regular special operations forces on human intelligence operations, which have been quite successful, which have benefitted not only the U.S. forces but have also benefitted the Iraqi forces.

In my judgment, those are exactly the kind of activities that we want them to do. In other words, we want to get more into the unconventional warfare and more into the foreign internal defense missions, and I think they are doing that.

While I don't have the details of this, I understand that there are frictions on the ground between the special operations forces and the conventional units, the conventional units wanting the special operations guys to live and act and behave more like they do.

And that has always been a problem. We used to have a problem in Vietnam with that, although we keep the special forces teams very separate. A lot of conventional commanders didn't like their lack of haircuts or, you know, maybe the way they wore their knives and their weapons. These are small things.

We had this problem in Haiti when we went down there in 1994, but these little irritants sometimes impede operations. I can remember in Afghanistan—and we have got several Afghanistan veterans here; special forces tell these stories better than I can—that, you know, they pretty much went indigenous, grew their hair and their beards and everything.

You know, after a few months some of these guys with their hair growth looked like hajis. I mean, you couldn't tell them from another haji. But they showed up back at an American base camp,

and the first thing a conventional commander told them was to get cleaned up.

Well, they weren't doing that just because they wanted to look different. They were doing that because it fit in with the people that they were working with, and you don't want to stand out. And so they were doing the kind of things that you do in an unconventional warfare mission. These are the kind of things that really bite us.

But I think they are doing what we want them to do in Iraq. The problem is that there is not enough of them. And you know, that is probably the only U.S. troops I would like to see more of.

I don't know what Max meant about more troops for security. I don't want to see another American soldier go to Iraq, not that I am worried about casualties and these kind of things—of course, I am. I think the key to Iraq, and the key to every country that we are involved in this struggle with, is the host country.

And I think what we have got to do, and what we have done very successfully, is build the host country forces. Now, in Iraq, of course, we have got to build a civilian ministry that is going to run those.

That is where the effort—I don't want to see any more U.S. forces go in there, because I think the U.S. forces are marginally effective. I mean, they are great. They are doing great things. But their presence inflames the Iraqis. There is just no other way to say it. You know?

In general, a U.S. patrol going through a street angers them, and I think we need to get more Iraqis on the street.

Mr. LARSEN. You know, we may have an opportunity to talk to special operations folks and chat with them about their experience in some of these conflicts.

Mr. Vickers.

Mr. VICKERS. Well, I would strongly add my concurrence to that last point about Iraq strategy going forward. And we have shared this testimony with some high-level consumers recently.

On special forces, I agree with everything General Downing said. The one piece that we might add: The biggest bang for the buck we are getting with SOF in Iraq right now is with the direct action forces, the manhunting and JSOC, with the special forces working with the special units, the Iraqi special operations brigade and the special police counterpart, and then the intelligence stuff that General Downing mentioned.

And it is hard to do better than we are doing that stuff right now. There is probably 4.5 special forces companies there, or a little more than—about two-thirds of our effort, that there is this friction with the conventional forces.

They are probably not being as optimally utilized in some of these badland areas where they might work with the Iraqis to bring some security where development could go.

One way to resolve that potentially is to give them an area of operation, give them an area in Iraq and say you know, senior SOF commander, this is your area, and as General Downing suggested, you may have some conventional forces in support of you, but give them a little more freedom of action.

And again, that is just a thought. You know, I don't want to tell commanders over there how to do their business. And so it is one way, you know, potentially, we might get a little mileage out of a portion of the force.

But Iraq is going to be a protracted conflict, and it is going to be won by the locals, as General Downing said.

Mr. LARSEN. Can I just continue?

And just to clarify, Mr. Vickers, that is your personal assessment on that.

Mr. VICKERS. Yes, that is my personal assessment.

Mr. LARSEN. Okay.

The next question I have sort of gets beyond Iraq and Afghanistan and has to get us thinking about other places. Of course, a lot of our attention is focused on Iraq and Afghanistan, and certainly that is what we read about. But there are other places: Djibouti, Horn of Africa, the Sahel, Philippines.

Two things: What are your personal assessments about how special forces are doing there in the tasks that we have asked them to do?

And second, that begs the question, where are we going to engage down the road? I will just ask it generally and—

General DOWNING. Well, you hit the areas. And, Mr. Congressman, you are obviously very well informed on that. And we are seeing right now what is happening in Somalia, because, you know, that kind of answers part of your question. There is stuff that is going on now that we have tried to mount operations against and we have not.

It is not the military's particular job. It is another government agency that has to. But of course, the military has to perform that. In my opening comments, I said we need to get ready for the future war, and that is exactly what I was talking about.

There are just very few precious assets left to go around the rest of the world, but yet this is where the new fight is, and this is where we have got to go to develop these proxies, these partners.

But once again, this is going to have to be done under a broader umbrella than the military, and you are really talking about, in these countries, the country teams, headed by the country teams under which those military elements will be working.

And so they have got to have a comprehensive political, social, economic program that is going to fight these insurgencies. One of the things that is very troubling is in many of these countries they are going to have to undergo profound political change within those countries if we are to dry up the causes that people are joining this insurgency.

I mean, you know, you can just look at where these people are coming from, and when you interrogate these people, these are not poor, ignorant peasants. These, in many cases, are well-educated, middle-class, wealthy and psychologically stable. These are not psychopaths.

They are electing to join this movement because they are disenfranchised citizens of whatever states they come from. And so this has to be addressed if we are going to make progress. And of course, that is like watching paint dry. It is going to take a long time.

But that is what we have got to get ginned up for if we are going to be successful.

Mr. BOOT. If I could just—I think there is a big distinction between the kind of conflicts you mentioned in your second question and what you were talking about in the first one, which was really Iraq and Afghanistan, because I think when you look at places like the Horn of Africa or Northern Africa or the Pankisi Gorge, or the Philippines, or all these other places, those, to my mind, those are really SOF wars.

Those are the places where you are going to have special forces on the front lines. And I think they are doing a tremendous job of these kinds of foreign internal defense and unconventional warfare missions, very small units operating very low profile, and basically trying to manage these situations, so we don't wind up in a situation like Iraq, where you have 130,000 troops occupying the country.

Your ideal of counterinsurgency is the opposite. In fact, what we did in El Salvador in the 1980's, when you had 55 special forces advisers, and you can argue that they achieved more than 500,000 troops did in Vietnam. I mean, in some ways, that is the ideal if you can achieve it.

But Afghanistan and especially Iraq are in a somewhat different category, because we didn't pursue the kind of low-intensity strategy, and probably for good reasons. I am not sure the low-intensity strategy would have necessarily worked in Iraq.

But so we go in there, we destroy their existing government, we disband their existing army and security structure, and then you can't say okay, then we are going to send 55 special forces trainers to recreate the army and the police forces in Iraq and restore order. That is not going to work.

You need a bigger presence. And in general, I am very much in sympathy with the outlook of General Downing and Mike Vickers, as I understand it, basically, which is more is less, and concentrate on the special forces, don't have a big conventional footprint.

I think a lot of what we do with the conventional footprint is counterproductive. A lot of it is basically a self-licking ice cream cone, where the resources are going to sustain the bases that we operate instead of actually fighting the insurgency, as I suggested earlier.

But nevertheless, I think that when we come in and totally take over a country with over 100,000 troops, we do have some responsibility to restore law and order.

And I think in the case of Baghdad, for example, right now, where we have three combat battalions operating within Baghdad, fewer than 10,000 troops, that is just not going to be enough, given the rate at which it takes to stand up Iraqi army and security forces which will be able to go into the fight.

So I think you can't have 100 percent hard and fast principles that you abide by in every single case. I think 99 times out of 100, you do want to go the low-intensity route. You do want to favor special forces. You do want to put them on the front lines and keep conventional forces as far back as possible.

But when you have invaded a country and taken it over, I think that is a different set of circumstances, where you have to deal with that situation as it develops.

Mr. SAXTON. Let me—go ahead, I am sorry.

Mr. VICKERS. Just quickly on the—I think the future of the long war or Global War on Terror will predominantly be persistent operations in countries with which the U.S. is not at war, leveraging locals.

And so as we redeploy forces and take on this additional capacity that the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and the program budget decisions will create, we will probably have somewhere on the order of 80 ODAs to 90 ODAs deployed in 20 priority countries, and they may change, but they will span continents, and then 40 or so other countries.

And so the key will be to have a distributed global presence where we are working with lots of locals to suppress this global insurgency down to very low levels.

And so if we are successful—and, you know, we may not always be successful—rather than sort of what is the next hot spot, it will really be how are we driving this global threat down to lower levels across regions, South Asia, Central Asia, Trans-Caucases, Sub-Saharan Africa, et cetera.

Mr. SAXTON. Let me change the subject slightly. The Administration and Congress jointly made the decision over the last several years to increase the number of folks in SOCOM. And in so doing, when this idea first came up, the first question that we had—I can remember asking it the first time out in Coronado—how do we do this?

And the answer was painstakingly carefully, because we have got to have a quality of person and a quality training program that gets us to where we need to be. We are in the process of this expansion. My question is how is it working.

General DOWNING. I will take a first crack at it. I think it is working unevenly, by different elements, which you would expect it would. I think the special forces that started this X-ray program which takes people in off the street—and which we haven't done since the 1970's. And I think we have got over 300 of these now in the force, of these men, and I understand that they are performing extremely well. So that has worked very, very well.

The Sea Air Land (SEALs), I mean, traditionally—and it has not changed, to my knowledge, very much since 9/11—about 22 percent, 23 percent of the enlisted men and about 78 percent of the officers make it through Basic Underwater/Demolition Training (BUDs). I mean, that has historically been the rate, and they have tried everything you can think of to try to get that rate up.

Mr. SAXTON. Have the number of trainers in BUDs increased?

General DOWNING. I can't answer that, Mr. Chairman. I know somebody from the command could, so that has been difficult. The air crews, they have been able to do that. They have been able to keep that up. I think that they are going to have enough crews to be able to man the additional aircraft that you funded.

The Rangers, you know, basically, those are entry-level soldiers that come in and get screened and go. I know one of the things that we recommended in our report to the SECDEF was they add an-

other two Ranger battalions. They would be helpful for the force structure, for the actual fighting now.

But the main reason we recommended they add about 1,000 more Rangers to the force structure is the Rangers become the prime source of candidates after 3 years or 4 years in the Rangers to go in to regular Army special forces and into the Delta force.

And so what it does is it gives you a better pool to draw from, or it gives you a larger pool, so that you could build those forces. Once again, it takes time.

The Delta force is probably 70 percent Rangers who have come out of either a Ranger special forces track or directly from a Ranger regiment to Delta.

Mr. SAXTON. How does the Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC) look to you?

General DOWNING. I understand that the MARSOC is building well, and I have not talked with Denny Hejlik for, oh, probably six months, but you know, my take is that that is going well.

And I am not involved in any of the, of course, visceral issues that were attendant to bringing the MARSOC on, but I think the MARSOC is a good idea, and I think SOCOM is going to be able to make good use of those Marines.

Mr. SAXTON. This expansion program to me seems to be very important, but as was said to me when the subject was new to me, certainly you do it very carefully.

Do you have any comments to make, Mr. Boot, Mr. Vickers?

Mr. VICKERS. Yes. I would just underscore a couple of points there, that you need a multifaceted approach to this.

One is things that aren't obvious at first light, like the Rangers, in addition to their very valuable operational role, really being seed corn for the rest of the force, and so if you can grow that portion, then you can potentially grow the others, and having these things in balance.

The 18X program was a very good initiative. That is how I came into the force in the 1970's. They didn't call it that—or early 1970's, but it is the same basic idea. And so you are able to attract some characters that you might not get into the Army other ways.

The retention and incentive programs to retain the force we have—and some of the initiatives that General Downing talked about, and one that I did—one on the officer side, that you see that if this is main effort and our main war, that SOF officers then can compete for Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) positions and senior level commands will help with retention and motivation.

And then the senior enlisted programs, which we are starting to make some progress on as well.

So really, attention to all this, and going about it reasonably gradually, which I think the department is on that path. Where we have gotten in trouble before, like in Vietnam, where we have done rapid expansions in shorter periods of time, quality goes down.

They don't look like they are headed on that reckless a path right now. But this is a daunting problem; same thing with expanding the CIA. I mean, it is just very, very hard to do without sacrificing quality.

Mr. BOOT. I think one of the dangers involved here is that you may further put even greater emphasis on direct action as a result

of this expansion than even exists today within SOCOM, because, hard as it is to train men to become Seals or Delta Force or some of these other elite special mission units, I think it is even harder to train long-term type of cultural skills and abilities that you need for special forces.

And in fact, I was talking to somebody in the audience here earlier, and he was saying well, you know, you can train commandos, but in terms of special forces you really have to educate them.

It is not training. It is a long-term process of educating and seasoning them in the field, where the skills are not—I mean, you can quantify these basic military skills of the Seals in the underwater demolition course or, you know, shoot houses or whatever. I mean, you know what the standards are.

But it is much more difficult to quantify the standards that you need for people in special forces, because a lot of what you need is basically the ability to manipulate people, to interact with foreigners, all these kinds of skills which are very hard to put a hard and fast rule on and say that, you know, we have reached this standard, and we are going to have that standard, and we have X number of people at that standard.

It is very hard to do, and so I think there is a real danger that as you expand out, what you are going to expand is the number of basic people who are skilled, you know, shooters and paratroopers and all the rest of it, but not necessarily the skills that I think in some ways are the most important in the war on terrorism with the softer side of the cultural knowledge and the intelligence and all the rest of it.

And I think one way to counteract some of that is, as I suggested before, the absolute imperative to recruit foreigners, to not limit our recruiting to people who are American citizens or green card holders.

I mean, I was talking to General Downing during the break, and he was recounting how under the Lodge Act in the 1950's, I mean, you had entire A-teams who spoke nothing but Czech or Hungarian or some other language from Eastern Europe.

I mean, wouldn't it be pretty amazing if we had entire A-teams today where the members spoke nothing but Arabic or Pashto? I mean, these are exactly the kind of skills that we need. And it is very, very difficult to get it by taking kind of white-bread Americans and training them up to infiltrate these foreign societies.

I mean, you can do some of that, and we need to do some of that, but much more so we need to recruit from within those societies so that we are not just getting these kind of direct action skills, but we are also getting the kind of cultural and softer side skills that I think are ultimately going to be more important.

Mr. SAXTON. Interesting idea.

Mr. Vickers, we are now going to go to Mr. Kline.

Mr. VICKERS. If I can just add one point on that, there is also a reciprocal relationship that is important on the UW direct action side as well, that with the exception of the surgical special mission units, some of the commando stuff tends to be a young man's game.

And you know, at some point the body just can't carry the 150 pounds anymore, you know, and so you reach your mid 30's and you can't keep up as well. That is not true for Unconventional War-

fare (UW)/Foreign Internal Defense (FID), and for intelligence collection missions, which are dominant missions to the GWOT.

And so part of the challenge here is also to retain, if I may say it as well, some of the old geezers, the 40-year-olds, who perform extremely valuable things but can't necessarily do the knife-in-the-teeth stuff anymore. You know, they have passed that point.

And they will help us a lot with the GWOT, and we need to have a personnel system that lets us do that.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Kline.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. I apologize for being a little tardy coming back after the votes, so I missed a little bit of the discussion, and I caught the tail end of the answer to Mr. Larsen's question. I will try not to be too duplicative, whatever that word is.

We have had some pretty interesting recommendations from Mr. Boot concerning perhaps a new organization and recruiting only foreign language speakers. And that is interesting. I am not sure if I buy onto the idea of bringing people into our Special Operations Command who speak only Arabic. But it is an interesting notion.

I did notice, Mr. Vickers, that you recommended that we in Congress look at section 517, which is limiting the numbers of E8s and E9s.

In that vein, could you give us, you know, an example like that—it is open to any of you—of some specifics where you see a problem, perhaps because of the expansion or for any other reason, where we ought to be looking at making a change to make the Special Operations Command work better?

Mr. VICKERS. Yes. It really gets into the idea of can you be a specialist longer. And the special mission units have more exemptions and deal with this better, so, for example, you know, as you move up the ranks you have to have broader and broader command.

And so typically, an E8—or certainly when you get to E9, even in the special mission units, you need to move out and take on broader command. But they are able to use E8s as snipers or small unit team leaders that is very, very different from the rest of the Army. And it is a very, very valuable thing to capture all that experience.

That then descends as you move down into the other elements of the special operations community, that you lose the ability to have operators as E9s, for example.

Mr. KLINE. Right. No, I understand. I understand your recommendation on 517. What I am asking is do you have other recommendations.

Mr. VICKERS. In this area on personnel, or—

Mr. KLINE. Or anything. You came to us with a recommendation, I thought—I wrote it down as one—that we ought to look at section 517, which currently limits the numbers of E8s and E9s, and we ought to look at changing that.

Mr. VICKERS. Yes.

Mr. KLINE. I agree with you. I think that is great. Now what I am asking is—

Mr. VICKERS. I got it.

Mr. KLINE [continuing]. Do you have another one?

Mr. VICKERS. Yes. Another one is section 1208, which is the unconventional warfare or paramilitary funding that allows SOF to work with the regulars. We had a big problem in 2001 in Operation Enduring Freedom with this. Congress addressed this a couple of years back.

As we move into an expanded definition of unconventional warfare, rather than applying it against state sponsors of terrorism, but applying it globally against transnational actors, where you use surrogates to try to attack al Qaeda, the resources are likely to go up beyond the current level.

SOCOM is working on plans in this area. I encourage you to look at them and look at the resourcing requirements, which is, I think, well above the current levels. But that is about all I would say on it right now.

Mr. KLINE. Okay.

General, did you have any thoughts?

General DOWNING. No, I think SOCOM also has some recommendations for you, if they have not given them to you already, on some reforms they would like to see in their acquisition system allowing them to do some things faster, and perhaps not get caught up in that DOD acquisition bureaucracy.

Mr. KLINE. Wouldn't that be splendid?

General DOWNING. That would.

Mr. KLINE. Not just for SOCOM.

General DOWNING. Maybe they could be the cutting edge of it, to get it started.

Mr. KLINE. And just a comment I would like to make, because we have been talking about, particularly Mr. Boot, about the softer perhaps part of SOF, and the special forces role of training and working with indigenous personnel, and just a comment.

The last couple of trips that I have taken to Iraq, we had the chance to talk to our Green Berets who were training the Iraqi—it used to be called the Iraqi counterterrorism force. They have changed the names because a couple of weeks have passed, so you have got to do that—and just doing a terrific job in that training.

And by the way, the Iraqis, in our Special Operations Command's judgment and in our own, looking at it, we are doing a very good job. That is kind of a cross.

That is not bringing them, Mr. Boot, into our Special Operations Command, but it is certainly working with people who speak Arabic and are able better to work with the local population. But again, that is in Iraq. And perhaps we ought to look at things like that elsewhere.

And then finally, General McCrystal—thank goodness they are doing some kicking down doors and tracking and following. I still think that is an important part of what we are doing. And the killing of Zarqawi and many other things, classified and not, that they are doing are still very impressive, a very important part of this war.

And I don't mean that to be argumentative with Mr. Boot, because I think it is important that we do the other aspect as well. And I am sorry that I missed the discussion with Mr. Larsen about what we are doing in Africa, because that seems to me to be very ripe for that very kind of work right now.

And perhaps if we had a lot of time, I would like to talk about what has been going on in Somalia and Mogadishu and certain things that have not gone well there. But I won't.

I will yield back.

Mr. BOOT. Can I just briefly—

Mr. KLINE. Oh, sure.

Mr. BOOT. Is it okay if I respond very briefly?

Mr. KLINE. Oh, yes.

Mr. BOOT. Because, I mean, I completely agree with you. I don't mean to say that we shouldn't be kicking down doors or we shouldn't be killing Zarqawi. Obviously, that is a good thing and a vital thing. I am just saying it is not enough.

I mean, it is a necessary part of the war on terrorism, but there is a lot more that we have to do. And it is the other parts that I think we are not as far advanced as we are, because, in terms of the special mission units, they are the best in the world.

They are tremendous professionals at what they do, and there is a little bit of room for improvement in terms of how they coordinate with other forces, but they are very, very good. But what I am suggesting is there is more room for improvement on the other side.

And just to clarify, I wasn't suggesting that we should be recruiting people who only speak Arabic. Obviously, people who are going to be in the U.S. armed forces or interact with them have to have a basic command of English as well.

What I was just suggesting was that we need to recruit native speakers of Arabic, people who will be bilingual, but it is very hard to become bilingual, truly, if you start off growing up here and trying to learn a foreign language through the school system.

You have a much better chance of really having that native level ability if you are, in fact, a native and you can speak both English and your native language.

Mr. KLINE. I am glad that you clarified that, because I very clearly heard you say a couple of times spoke only Arabic, and so I am—

Mr. BOOT. No, what I was referring to was General—

Mr. KLINE. Arabic as well as English.

Mr. BOOT. Right. No, I mean, what General Downing was talking about was, I think, if I understood him correctly, was under the Lodge Act, when we were bringing Eastern Europeans in the 1950's into the special forces, and you had units where their level of proficiency in a language like Czech was high enough that they could converse among themselves in Czech.

It wasn't that they didn't know English. This was the language they could converse in among themselves.

Just a final point, if I could very briefly make, about following up on the point that Mike made about retention, which I agree is very important.

And I think one of the paradoxes or one of the kind of screwy situations we have gotten ourselves into here is why do the Special Operations Forces have such a hard time retaining their most skilled and better operators.

And it is because they are being recruited by private security contractors at very high rates of pay. And who is paying those pri-

vate security contractors? It is the U.S. Government. Ultimately those people are being paid out the same pot of money.

And so basically, the U.S. Government is competing against itself for the services of the people that it trained and paid for many decades in the Special Operations Forces, and we are basically giving these contracts to Dyncorp or others to recruit those people out of the special force, and then we have to give more incentives to keep those people in the special forces.

So I don't know what the solution is, but to an outsider it seems like a somewhat screwy situation.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you.

Mr. VICKERS. May I add one point on the use of foreigners? Another approach as well, which—I was trained by early Lodge Act guys, but when I worked for the Central Intelligence Agency, we were—I can't say too much about this, but we were able to use foreign SOF a lot.

We established relationships with—who had, you know, exquisite cultural knowledge and language that we could never match and skills, and then we could direct for strategic purposes. And that is a very, very valuable asset for the U.S. Government, and something that we can do more of down the road.

Mr. SAXTON. Let me just add a thought to this foreign language line of conversation that we have been having. I would go at least two steps further. It has also been mentioned here today as a next step to understand that we need people who understand local customs. A pretty simple concept.

And to go one step further, I think we need to understand that people in different parts of the world think a whole lot differently than we do.

And tell you how little experience that I had, the first time I went to Iraq back in 2003 or 2004, whatever it was, we went to visit a school, and while we were in the school—it was actually Congressional Delegation (CODEL) Hunter. And while we were in the school, the teachers were being just as nice as they could be.

And as we were getting ready to leave, they said, you Americans are here to help, right? Yes, ma'am. The teacher gave me a list of things they needed in the school. And I didn't think a lot about it at the time. I took it back to Ambassador Bremer and gave it to him. I have no idea whatever happened to the list or whether it got fulfilled or not.

But here is the conclusion that I drew. The Iraqi people lived for 35 years having to make one of two decisions—that is it—basic decisions: Be nice and cooperate with Saddam and be treated well and have your list fulfilled, or not cooperate with Saddam and be punished for it.

Those are the decisions that those folks had to make for 35 years. So we as Americans sit in our culture, with our way of thinking, trying to be creative about all kinds of things, and go do our own thing, and make thousands of decisions over some period of time, and the Iraqi people had two decisions they had to make: Be happy and cooperative with Saddam, or not.

And so the use of indigenous forces, however we decide to structure the process to get there, is absolutely vital to our effort. And

we need to give some more thought to how we interface with indigenous folks.

Anyway, we are going to have another series of votes here in a few minutes. We want to thank you for being with us today.

And I am sure that when I ask you if you will be willing to interface with us on an individual basis as we go forward and try to figure out answers to the problems that we face as to how we change our way of doing business, I am sure that, as you are all shaking your head yes, you will be there to help us.

Thank you very much. We appreciate you being here today.

[Whereupon, at 12:31 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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**A P P E N D I X**

JUNE 29, 2006

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**PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD**

JUNE 29, 2006

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**Statement of Chairman Jim Saxton  
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and  
Capabilities**

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**Subcommittee Hearing on Assessing United States Special Operations  
Command's Missions and Roles**

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**June 29, 2006**

The Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities meets today to assess United States Special Operations Command's (SOCOM) missions and roles. As SOCOM plays a central role in the Global War on Terror (GWOT), ensuring SOCOM is successful is one of our highest priorities.

SOCOM was created in 1987 to address a shortcoming in the military's ability to conduct joint, special operations – a shortcoming that was tragically evident in the failed attempt in 1980 to rescue American hostages held in Iran. Since its activation, SOCOM has consistently proven its ability to successfully conduct a wide range of special operations, from foreign internal defense missions during times of peace to counterterrorist direct action missions during times of conflict.

The attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup> marked the beginning of the GWOT and demonstrated that we face a new threat, one of asymmetrical attacks conducted by dispersed networks of violent extremists. The current threat has global reach and could result in not only devastating attacks but also catastrophic destruction should these extremists successfully achieve their goal of obtaining weapons of mass destruction. For almost five years now, SOCOM has been leading the way in the war on terrorism: defeating the Taliban and eliminating a terrorist safe haven in Afghanistan; removing a truly vicious Iraqi dictator and combating the terrorists who seek to destabilize the new, democratic Iraq; working with partner nations such as Jordan and the Philippines to improve their national security and enhance their counterterrorism operations; and assisting nations throughout the world to ensure that terrorists cannot find hospitable environments for their networks and activities.

The war against terrorism, however, is a long war and is truly a “global” war on terrorism, one that is not limited to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Department of Defense and SOCOM have recognized this new threat and the type of warfare it requires and are taking measures to adapt to this new environment, such as the transformational decisions discussed in the

Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) released in February. As a committee, we must remain focused on the strategic objectives in this war and must ensure that SOCOM is properly positioned to achieve strategic success against an agile and adaptive foe, and to safeguard our nation and our allies from the threat of terrorists and violent extremism.

The subcommittee's goal today is to get a fresh perspective on SOCOM from a panel of outside, objective experts. To better meet the demands of the GWOT, SOCOM has steadily been adapting through personnel growth, the activation of the Marine Special Operations Command, the enhancement of organic intelligence capabilities, the realignment of Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations forces, and its designation as lead combatant command in the war on terrorism. In light of these ongoing changes, we must consider whether the QDR recommendations are achievable, whether SOCOM's organizational changes are appropriate, whether SOCOM's enhanced intelligence capability is sufficient, and whether SOCOM has focused too much on direct action capability at the expense of unconventional warfare capability that could prove more decisive in achieving strategic success in the GWOT.

We have an excellent panel before us today:

**General (Retired) Wayne A. Downing**  
Chairman, Combating Terrorism Center  
U.S. Military Academy at West Point

I would especially like to thank General Downing for being with us today. As a former commander of SOCOM, I am sure your testimony will be particularly enlightening.

**Michael G. Vickers**  
Director of Strategic Studies  
Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

**Max Boot**  
Senior Fellow for National Security Studies  
Council on Foreign Relations

We look forward to all of your insights, especially regarding SOCOM's role in achieving strategic success in the GWOT and your suggestions of possible reorganization to better focus on unconventional warfare.

Before we proceed, I yield to my friend Marty Meehan, the Ranking Member of the subcommittee for any opening remarks he would like to make. Mr. Meehan?

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Thank you, Mr. Meehan. Gentlemen, again our welcome. General Downing, you may proceed with your opening statement.

**SOCOM'S MISSIONS AND ROLES**

**TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL G. VICKERS**

**DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC STUDIES**

**CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND BUDGETARY ASSESSMENTS**

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL  
THREATS AND CAPABILITIES**

**June 29, 2006**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today, and to share my views with you on missions and roles of United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM). I request that my prepared statement be made part of the record.

### **Current Status of SOCOM**

#### **Implementation of the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review**

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) produced a number of important decisions with respect to Special Operations Forces (SOF) operational capabilities, capacity, and posture. The number of active duty Special Forces (SF) battalions, which are essential for low visibility persistent presence, low-level intelligence collection, building the capacity of partners, and conducting unconventional warfare, will be increased by 33 percent. The 18X program, which allows qualified recruits to enlist for SF directly from civilian life, has been a great success, not only in helping to fill SF ranks and facilitate SOF expansion, but also in attracting talent into SF which otherwise might not be available to the military. Throughput of SF soldiers graduating from the SF School has more than doubled in the past two years.

The number of Special Mission Unit (SMU) squadrons will be increased by one-third, which will further their transition from a reactive to a proactive counterterrorism posture, and significantly enhance their manhunting and clandestine operations capabilities. A fourth company will be stood up within each Ranger Battalion, increasing Ranger operational capacity by one-third. A Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC) is also being stood up. The MARSOC will add capacity to SOCOM in the foreign internal defense (FID) mission area, through its Foreign Military Training Unit (FMTU), and in direct action/special reconnaissance mission area, through its two special operations battalions. Psychological Operations (PSYOP) and Civil Affairs (CA) capacity are also to be increased by one-third. DoD's investment in tagging, tracking and locating (TTL) capabilities will be increased substantially. New investments will also be made in clandestine air mobility to insert and extract forces in and from denied areas and politically sensitive environments, and in persistent airborne surveillance through the establishment of an Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) squadron.

SOCOM's budget has nearly doubled since 9/11, and the command's budget is expected to grow by more than 50 percent over the current program period. QDR decisions with respect to SOF are resourced within the FY 2007 budget. Resourcing decisions for POM 08-13 are in process.

#### **SOCOM as Supported Command**

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the planning capacity of the Department of Defense for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) has been significantly bolstered. SOCOM has been designated as the supported command to plan, synchronize, and, when directed, execute GWOT strategy and operations. SOCOM has stood up the

Center for Special Operations (CSO) to fulfill its GWOT planning responsibilities. The Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) – the special operations component of the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) -- have received significant augmentation to make them more capable of 24/7, long-duration GWOT operations. The command and staff elements of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) have likewise been strengthened for long-duration operations.

SOCOM has produced several GWOT-related CONPLANS and OPLANS (the 7500 series), which are first-rate. The Department of Defense is currently in the process of identifying the resources needed to implement these plans, and is adapting its force planning construct to reflect the GWOT as a steady-state, long-duration war. SOCOM, however, has experienced some difficulty in fulfilling its role as the lead combatant command in the GWOT in two areas: top-level integration in the interagency planning process, and control of global SOF forces.

### **A Look Ahead at SOCOM**

#### **Irregular Warfare Capability**

SOCOM is currently participating in the development of a multi-service concept for irregular warfare (IW). Irregular warfare capabilities and capacities are being increased across several SOF mission areas -- unconventional warfare, counterterrorism and foreign internal defense. A program to develop IW strategists within SOF is also being developed.

#### **SOCOM's Increasing Intelligence Capability and Capacity**

The GWOT is an intelligence and special operations-intensive war. SOF has made significant strides in the intelligence arena since the 9/11 attacks. Two Advanced Special Operations Training Level III courses have been stood up, producing more than 200 graduates a year with advanced human intelligence (HUMINT) training. Additionally, SOF operators now regularly attend the CIA's Field Tradecraft Course, which provides the highest level of clandestine operations training in the U.S. Government. Units dedicated to intelligence missions and advanced force operations are being established across SOF.

Making full use of special authorities to wage the GWOT is essential. The future GWOT battleground will principally occur in states with which the United States is not at war, and our primary approach will be an indirect and clandestine one. There is probably no more important single action the U.S. Government can take to improve strategy and operations in the GWOT than this. This would entail integrating CIA capabilities with those of Black and White SOF. It would also entail regularly leveraging the CIA's Title 50 authority for SOF operations through the flexible detailing of SOF personnel to the Agency. This can begin with JSOC, which currently enjoys the closest relationship with the Agency, and then be extended to the Special Forces and SEALs.

Moving toward a true National Clandestine Service (NCS) is an essential GWOT reform. Our experience in the early Cold War shows clearly the disadvantages of maintaining separate clandestine services. DoD personnel, particularly those from SOF, should play a much larger role in the NCS. This should include the ability to compete for Chief of Station (COS) positions.

Given the importance of seasoned operators to the intelligence mission, SOF should receive relief from the provisions of Section 517, Title 10, U.S. Code, which limits the number of senior enlisted personnel (E-8 and E-9) in the force.

### **Unconventional Warfare versus Direct Action**

An indirect approach, which leverages the capabilities of surrogates and partners, will be central to the GWOT. Unconventional warfare (UW) is a vital GWOT instrument against both state and non-state actors. SOCOM has made great strides of late in developing a global unconventional warfare campaign plan. It needs to be properly resourced, however. Section 1208 authority, which enables SOF to conduct paramilitary operations, needs to be expanded several fold, to several hundred million dollars per annum.

The establishment of three-star, global UW command within SOCOM should be considered. Such a command could do for the global execution of UW (against both state and trans-national actors) what JSOC does in the area of counterterrorism and counterproliferation operations. It could be stood up by converting SF Command from a force provider to an operational command. A SOF UW command would complement, not supplant, the CIA. It would also provide a promotion pathway to the top for UW operators. The establishment of a UW command could, however, tie up scarce SOF human capital in additional headquarters, and duplicate the functions of the CSO.

### **Black versus White SOF**

SOCOM's emphasis since 9/11 has been to make white SOF more gray, and black SOF more black. It is imperative, however, that white and black SOF be integrated fully from a strategic perspective. Accordingly, there should be a single SOF commander in theater who controls both black and white forces.

## **SOCOM and the GWOT**

### **GWOT Execution**

The 7500 series of plans implements the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism. As noted above, however, the resources needed to fully execute these plans are still being identified and validated. Limited interagency and combatant command authorities continue to circumscribe SOCOM's effectiveness in the GWOT.

**SOF and CA/PSYOP**

SOCOM continues to have proponentcy for DoD CA and PSYOP forces, and command responsibility for active CA and PSYOP forces. CA and PSYOP remain essential capabilities for several SOCOM mission areas (i.e., UW and FID). SOCOM's role in the strategic communication fight remains circumscribed by DoD's limited role in this area, with the Department of State assigned the role of lead agency for public diplomacy, and CIA as the lead agency for covert influence.

**SOF and the Global War**

SOF forces are heavily committed to OIF and OEF. As such, there is little additional capacity at present for the broader GWOT. The QDR-mandated capacity expansion will rectify this situation, and make possible a more intensive, steady-state GWOT effort in the years ahead.

STATEMENT OF  
MAX BOOT  
SENIOR FELLOW IN NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES,  
THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS<sup>1</sup>  
BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS, AND CAPABILITIES  
JUNE 29, 2006

Chairman Saxton, Congressman Meehan, members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for inviting me here today to discuss the future of the U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the war on terror, along with two men for whom I have great admiration—Wayne Downing and Mike Vickers. I will begin by suggesting what kind of force we need to defeat our Islamist enemies, then review the deficiencies of our current force structure, and finally conclude with a suggestion for how a major organizational overhaul—the resurrection of the Office of Strategic Services--could address some of these shortcomings.

My starting point is the assumption that in the years ahead key competencies for the U.S. armed forces will be knowledge of foreign languages and cultures, skill at counterinsurgency warfare, and the ability to work with a wide range of foreign allies, ranging from advanced NATO militaries and constabularies to primitive militias in places like Afghanistan and Somalia. All of these needs are dictated by the nature of the global war being waged on the U.S. and our allies by Al Qaeda and various other Islamist terrorist groups. Our enemies in this struggle cannot be defeated with conventional military force. Indeed, there is a distinct danger that indiscriminate application of violence will only create more enemies in the future. To defeat this Islamist insurgency we must be able not only to track down and capture or kill hard-core terrorists but also to carry out civil affairs and information operations to win the "hearts and minds" of the great mass of uncommitted Muslims. We are very good at eliminating top terrorists, once they have been found (witness Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's death); less good at finding them (Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri are still at large); and less skilled still at changing the conditions that breed terrorism in the first place (look at the continuing violence in Iraq and Afghanistan).

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<sup>1</sup> Max Boot is the author of *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (Basic Books, 2002) and the forthcoming *War Made New: Technology, Warfare, and the Course of History, 1500 to Today* (Gotham Books, October 2006), as well as the *Foreign Affairs* article (March/April 2005), "The Struggle to Transform the Military." Full biography attached.

**Focus on Counterinsurgency**

We are paying the price for this skills-deficit in places like Iraq where it has been difficult for a conventionally focused Army and Marine Corps—to say nothing of the Navy and Air Force—to pivot to counterinsurgency operations. There is widespread concern, including within the armed forces, that a predilection for “kinetic” solutions has made the situation in parts of Iraq worse, not better. In this regard, I was stuck by an op-ed published recently in the Baltimore Sun (“Military Must Share the Blame,” June 20, 2006) by a Marine officer named Erik Swabb who served in Fallujah in 2004-2005. He writes that prior to deployment, “We did not understand certain dynamics at play, such as the notion that excessive force protection alienates the populace, reduces intelligence and, therefore, makes one less secure. We knew how to raid a house but not how to build local relationships and learn where insurgents were hiding. We did not know these crucial aspects of counterinsurgency because we had never received training about them.”

Keep in mind that Swabb went to Iraq more than year into the guerrilla war, and that he served in the Marine Corps, which has traditionally placed more emphasis on “small war” skills than have the other services. And yet, by his own testimony, he did not understand the most basic tenets of counterinsurgency warfare—especially the fundamental paradox that too much aggression can be counterproductive, and that a “softer” approach can actually produce better results.

The armed services, in particular the Army and Marine Corps, are now doing a better job of training for such missions--but not good enough. That is why General George Casey Jr. felt compelled to set up his own counterinsurgency school in Iraq for newly arriving officers, a job that should have been done before they shipped off to war. Clearly there is a need for more training focused on this critical subject, as there is for more language training. Anything this Committee could do to further prod the armed forces in this direction would be extremely useful. The Quadrennial Defense Review made the right noises about the need to focus on stability operations, language training, and related areas, but the defense budget remains overwhelmingly focused on conventional programs. Much more needs to be done to turn the rhetoric about irregular warfare into reality.

No one suggests that we go too far in the opposite direction and focus our military exclusively on waging “small wars.” There is still a need to be able to fight large, conventional conflicts against potential adversaries like China and North Korea, if only to prevent them from happening in the first place. And while the regular armed forces must gain greater competence in counterinsurgency and related disciplines, they should not become the main focus of most soldiers, sailors, airmen, or marines.

The bulk of this task should fall to specialists—the men and women who will be on the front lines of the war on terror for decades to come. They must be experts in such fields as ethnography, linguistics, geography, history, economics, politics, policing, public relations, public administration, diplomacy, low-intensity conflict, and human intelligence collection and analysis—preferably at the same time. Merely to state the list is to make obvious our shortcomings in all of these areas. We do not have nearly enough Gertrude Bells, T.E. Lawrences, Charles “Chinese” Gordons, or Richard Francis Burtons, to name only a few of the area experts from the heyday of the British Empire who immersed themselves in foreign cultures in order to advance Whitehall’s interests across the globe.

### **Experts Needed**

Such learned men and women can be invaluable “force multipliers.” Consider the case of Colonel Robert Warburton, who spoke fluent Persian and Pashto and spent 18 years (1879-1897) as the political officer in the Northwest Frontier province of what is today Pakistan. He kept this volatile region (now a Taliban and al Qaeda stronghold) quiet through his personal influence. “In an area where every male was habitually armed at all times,” historian Byron Farwell wrote in *Queen Victoria’s Little Wars*, “he went about with only a walking stick.” Within a month of his retirement, the area was swept by an Islamic fundamentalist revolt that took thousands of British soldiers to put down. I daresay we would have more luck pacifying the Northwest Frontier—now a key task for our forces in Afghanistan—if we had more Warburtons of our own.

Unfortunately the personnel system employed not only by the armed forces but also by State Department, CIA, and other government agencies makes it practically impossible to develop such expertise. Diplomats, soldiers, and spies alike are shuffled from post to post with dizzying rapidity. The average army officer spends an average of only 18 months at each assignment over the course of a 25-year career. The army rotates units out of Afghanistan and Iraq every year, the Marines every six to seven months. The State Department and the CIA move their employees just as often, if not more so. So just when our people on the spot start to figure out what’s going on in these complex cultures, that’s when it’s time for them to go home and for novices to replace them.

The logic behind this system is that soldiers and other government employees are supposed to be nearly interchangeable cogs in a giant machine—a tank driver ought to be able to drive an M-1 whether in Alabama or Anbar. But cultural knowledge cannot be so easily taught or transferred. In tribal societies, influence is entirely personal; the relationships cultivated by one soldier, spy, or diplomat cannot easily be passed along to a successor.

Our personnel system further places a premium on moving officers from slot to slot—from line commands to staff jobs and schools, from

combat to garrison duty—in order to develop a corps of generalists from which eventually the senior leaders of the services will be selected. There is a lot to be said for this system, but there must also be a way for some experts to opt out of the endless rotations—to stay for years, even decades, in one job or one place and thereby gain the kind of specialized expertise that we so desperately need in the war on terrorism.

### **SOCOM's Shortcomings**

In theory, the place where much of the expertise which I have previously described ought to reside, at least as far as the armed forces go, is the U.S. Special Operations Command. SOCOM has been designated the lead combat component in the war on terror for this very reason. In practice, however, SOCOM falls far short of what we need. It is overly focused on what is known in the trade as Direct Action—on rappelling out of helicopters, kicking down doors, and capturing or killing bad guys. This strategy can occasionally pay off, as with the capture of Saddam Hussein and the killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, but the aftermath of these celebrated accomplishments shows the limitations of the “manhunter” model of counterinsurgency. In both cases, the immobilization of major enemy leaders proved to be only temporary setbacks for a large-scale, decentralized terrorist movement. Making real progress, whether in Iraq or other locales, will require accomplishing much more difficult, less glamorous tasks such as establishing security, furthering economic and political development, and spreading the right information to win over the populace.

Above all, it will require working with indigenous allies who must necessarily carry the bulk of the burden in this type of conflict. Native recruits have been key to America's most successful counterinsurgencies, whether the Apache scouts who helped track down the renegade chief Geronimo in 1886 or the Macabebe Scouts who helped capture Philippine rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo in 1901. Reliance on these native helpers is necessary because few if any outsiders can be expected to match guerrillas' knowledge of local topography and society. Nor is it likely that the U.S. will ever be able to send enough soldiers overseas to win a major insurgency on their own; our resources are sufficiently limited that it will always be necessary to rely in great part on locally recruited soldiers and constables when waging an insurgency or counterinsurgency.

In the modern Special Operations lexicon, such tasks fall under the rubric of “unconventional warfare” (i.e., helping indigenous allies to carry out guerrilla operations, psy-ops, intelligence-gathering, and related activities) and “foreign internal defense” (helping friendly governments defeat guerrillas and bandits), and they are two of the primary missions of the Army Special Forces, popularly known as the Green Berets, who are supposed to work closely with psychological operations and civil affairs specialists. But there is widespread concern within Army SF

circles that their "softer", but no less vital, missions are being shortchanged by SOCOM in favor of sexier SWAT-style raids.

One recently retired SF colonel wrote to me a few weeks ago: "The current problem with SOCOM is that it is unbalanced. Most of the leadership and planning staff have come from the DA [Direct Action] side. They have no understanding of UW [Unconventional Warfare]. To the degree that they are starting to develop an appreciation for it, it is only as an enabler for DA operations. In other words, they want to cherry pick techniques developed to wage unconventional war and use them to support conventional commando operations."

Another more senior, retired SF officer emailed to complain of the "total USSOCOM preoccupation with raiding--SOF orientation on Special Operations and absolutely none on Low Intensity Conflict. OSD-SOLIC [Office of the Secretary of Defense, Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict] only has fulfilled 1/2 of its charter. Low Intensity Conflict died around 1990-91."

Similar concerns have been aired in print—for instance in Sean Naylor's Armed Forces Journal article, "More Than Door Kickers" (March 2006), which quoted yet another retired SF officer (Lieutenant Colonel Mark Haselton), complaining, "My concern is that all we're focused on is direct action, to the absolute exclusion of all other things.... If we spend the rest of our lives 'capturing and killing' terrorists at the expense of those SF missions that are more important—gaining access to the local population, training indigenous forces, providing expertise and expanding capacity—we're doomed to failure."

When I hear such complaints coming from so many "snake eaters" for whom I have such high respect, I take them seriously, and I think the members of this Committee should too. SOCOM has created the best commando forces in the world, but it will take more than commandos to win the war on terror.

#### **An Unconventional Warfare Command?**

The question is, what to do about this? Is it possible to get SOCOM to refocus more on Unconventional Warfare and less on Direct Action? Probably not. Already SOCOM has transferred most of its psy-ops and civil affairs capabilities—areas of scant interest to most Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, or Delta Force operatives—to the regular army. And, as Naylor noted, of the eight top flag officers at SOCOM's headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida, not one spent his career in Special Forces. (General Bryan "Doug" Brown, the SOCOM commander, once served on an A-Team as an enlisted man many decades ago, but his specialty as an officer has been special operations aviation.) The institutional culture of SOCOM is so firmly fixed in favor of "kicking down doors"—and so much of its funding is directed for such purposes—that it is doubtful that any amount of outside pressure, even from this

Committee, will change the dominant mindset very much, especially when the Office of the Secretary of Defense remains so fixated on such missions.

For this reason there is growing interest within the U.S. Army SF community in creating a new Joint Unconventional Warfare Command within SOCOM—a UW equivalent to the Joint Special Operations Command which encompasses units like Delta Force (a.k.a. 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta) and Seal Team Six (a.k.a. Naval Special Warfare Development Group, or DevGru), and focuses on Direct Action missions. An Unconventional Warfare Command could bring together Army Special Forces, civil-affairs, and psy-ops by essentially expanding the role of the Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. According to a paper commissioned by the Army Special Operations Command Futures Center, this new command “could fight the GWOT [Global War on Terror] by organizing, training, equipping and/or leading indigenous assets to conduct subversion, sabotage and intelligence activities directed against groups practicing terrorism or against nation-states supporting terrorism directed against U.S. interests throughout the world.”

This strikes me as a good idea, but I would also urge the Committee to consider going further and removing the Unconventional Warfare mission from SOCOM altogether. I would like to conclude my testimony with a bold idea for how this could be accomplished: by resurrecting the Office of Strategic Services that was created in 1942 to gather and analyze intelligence as well as to conduct low-intensity warfare behind enemy lines in occupied Europe and Asia.

### **OSS Redux**

OSS was disbanded after World War II; both the Green Berets and the CIA trace their lineage to this august ancestor. My proposal is to re-create OSS by bringing together under one roof not only Army SF, civil-affairs, and psy-ops but also the CIA's paramilitary Special Activities Division, which has always been a bit of a bureaucratic orphan at Langley (and which is staffed largely by Special Operations veterans). This could be a joint civil-military agency under the combined oversight of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence, like the Defense Intelligence Agency or the National Security Agency. It would bring together in one place all of the key skill sets needed to wage the softer side of the war on terror. Like SOCOM, it would have access to military personnel and assets; but like the CIA's Special Activities Division, its operations would contain a higher degree of “covertness,” flexibility, and “deniability” than those carried out by the uniformed military.

One of the key advantages of OSS II is that it would be able to employ indigenous personnel on a much larger scale than is practicable today. There is currently a legal prohibition on recruiting into the U.S.

armed forces anyone who is not an American citizen or permanent resident (Green Card holder). The CIA also looks askance upon non-American officers (as opposed to agents). These are considered "security risks." But the greater risk is that we will lose the war on terror because we don't have enough understanding of the societies in which terrorists operate. Such knowledge can be acquired in one of two ways: either by long-term immersion in foreign societies or by simply recruiting from the societies in which we fight. OSS II could facilitate both approaches, in the first place by junking the military's overly restrictive personnel rotation policies, and in the second place by junking its overly restrictive citizenship requirements.

The Green Berets recruited non-citizens in the 1950s when the Lodge Act allowed the enlistment of Eastern Europeans who were considered vital for operations behind the Iron Curtain. Something similar should be tried today to recruit from Muslim societies around the world, starting with the Middle Eastern immigrant community right here in the U.S. (The most reliable recruits would probably be ethnic or religious minorities within Muslim societies—Egyptian Copts, Moroccan Jews, Lebanese Druze, Iranian Azeris, Saudi Shiites, Iraqi and Iranian Kurds, etc.—just as the U.S. has previously made use of minorities such as the Philippine Macabebes and the Vietnamese Montagnards.) I bet there would be plenty of high-quality recruits who would be willing to serve in return for one of the world's most precious commodities—U.S. citizenship.

It might even make sense to create an entire brigade or even a division of foreign fighters led by American officers and NCOs. Call it the Freedom Legion, in homage to the French Foreign Legion. Such units have been successfully raised by every great power in history. Think, for example, of the Gurkhas who still serve in large numbers, and with considerable distinction, in the British and Indian armies. Some Americans may recoil from the idea of enlisting "mercenaries" but these men and women would be a lot more useful and a lot more disciplined than most of the "security contractors" we employ en masse today in places like Iraq. More specialized indigenous units could be formed specifically to work in areas like Somalia, Syria, North Korea, and Iran, where there is either no effective local government or the government is hostile to the U.S. OSS II would be a natural repository for such outfits, considering the success of the original OSS in running indigenous forces such as the Kachin tribesmen who battled the Japanese in Burma.

It would be a bit more of a stretch to designate OSS II as the primary repository of nation-building expertise within the U.S. government, but given the unwillingness of other agencies, civil or military, to fill this yawning gap, this might be the most convenient expedient. The new OSS could cultivate a corps of experts, civil and military, coming from both government and the private sector, who would be skilled in the difficult task of rebuilding stateless or war-torn societies in cooperation with other federal departments, international agencies, American allies, and non-governmental organizations. These skills are

closely related to those needed for counterinsurgency, because the most effective way to counter any insurgency is not to kill a bunch of guerrillas but to create an effective government that can provide for the needs of the people better than can the guerrillas' shadow government. We have paid a heavy price in Iraq for not having such a nation-building (or, more accurately, state-building) capacity on tap; Jay Garner's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance and Jerry Bremer's Coalition Provisional Authority were last-minute expedients that could not possibly have succeeded because they did not spend nearly enough time preparing for the daunting task of running a country of 25 million people.

I realize that the creation of a new OSS is a radical notion that could not be implemented tomorrow. It would require the most sweeping legislation since the 1987 Nunn-Cohen Amendment that created SOCOM in the first place. Obviously such a step needs a good deal more study and discussion. But if we are to be successful in the Long War, we need to think outside of the traditional bureaucratic boxes, because the U.S. government as currently set up—and that most assuredly includes SOCOM—simply is not adequately configured for the tasks ahead. Given the potential threat posed by our enemies—a threat of which we were reminded by news of an Al Qaeda plot to release poison gas on the New York subway—that could turn out to be a very dangerous deficiency.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

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His last book, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (Basic Books) was selected as one of the best books of 2002 by The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times and The Christian Science Monitor. It also won the 2003 General Wallace M. Greene Jr. Award, given annually by the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation for the best nonfiction book pertaining to Marine Corps history. He is now completing his next book, *War Made New: Technology, Warfare, and the Course of History, 1500 to Today*, which will be published in October 2006 by Gotham Books, an imprint of Penguin (USA).

Boot is a frequent public speaker and guest on radio and television news programs, both at home and abroad. He has lectured at many military institutions, including the Army and Navy War Colleges, the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare School, the Army Command and General Staff College, Marine Corps University, West Point, and the Naval Academy. He is a member of the U.S. Joint Forces Command Transformation Advisory Group.

Before joining the Council in October 2002, Boot spent eight years as a writer and editor at *The Wall Street Journal*, the last five years as editorial features editor. From 1992 to 1994 he was an editor and writer at The Christian Science Monitor.

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