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GLOBAL STRATEGIC TASK FORCE: A STRATEGIC
RENAISSANCE

by

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Preface □

I am grateful for the opportunity to accomplish this research. This topic fascinated me because it attempts to look forward and discover how developing trends in the present will influence our operational success in the future. This type of prescriptive analysis is not designed to predict the future, but rather, to give food for thought to that diminishing breed, the strategic thinker. It is a think piece based on trends throughout the world and the lessons learned from Title 10 Wargames.

I would like to thank Col Howey and Dr. Werrell from the Air Research Institute at the College of Aerospace Doctrine Research and Education, without whom this research would not be possible. Additionally, I need to thank Lt Col Scott Lewis for his patience and guidance through out the research process. I truly enjoyed this project.

Abstract □

The overwhelming advantage in technology, training and tactical capability we relied upon during the conflicts of the last decade will not equate to decisive operational success in the future. The evolution and proliferation of long range and high precision weapons will threaten our interests and forces globally. Even more significant is the commitment by our potential adversaries to challenge us at the strategic level by attacking our forces and critical infrastructure around the world and in space. Three key factors are presently converging to drastically change future warfare, rapidly improving technology, enormous changes in the domestic and global political environment, and the evolution of our military to a rapidly deployable expeditionary force. To effectively counter the inevitable future strategic threats and maintain our dominant military advantage, we must replace the tactical perspective that currently dominates Joint Doctrine and recapitalize the strategic initiative within our operational art.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Victory smiles on those who anticipate the changes in the character of war, not upon those who wait to adapt themselves after the changes occur.

-Giulio Douhet

The two most perplexing threats facing our military today are an asymmetric attack from a technically competent enemy and major war in more than one theater. While the National Military Strategy recognizes the peril and likelihood of these future threats, the tactically myopic perspective of the Joint Staff leaves it unable to develop an effective counter to these threats. For example, the CJCS recently removed reference to joint Halt Phase operations Joint Strategic Review in order to emphasize the accelerated deployment of ground troops.¹ Rooted in the surface-centric tactical thinking of the last five decades, Joint Doctrine seeks to protect our forces against asymmetric attacks by shooting down a small fraction of incoming missiles, dispersing surface forces and dispensing protective gear. To fight two near simultaneous major theater wars we will simply “pitch a perfect game” of global transportation to move forces from one theater to another.² In short, Joint Doctrine is fixated on applying tactical solutions to military problems that are strategic in nature.

Not only are these hollow tactical rationalizations designed to fulfill national requirements with only words, but even more seriously, they greatly increases the risk to

our forces and our operational success by ceding the initiative and operational tempo to the enemy. To counter these types of threats effectively we must revive our strategic ethos and develop the ability to effectively strike enemy centers of gravity without directly confronting the brunt of their destructive power. The first step towards this renaissance of strategic thought is the integration of our global mobility, space and information, and long range attack resources into a single strategic joint force that can better support Joint Force Commanders by executing truly strategic operations. The Global Strike Task Force (GSTF) provides a foundation for maintaining the decisive strategic advantage of our military forces in a global environment that will combine long range, high speed, and very accurate weapons with an uncertain and rapidly changing political landscape.

Purpose

A renaissance is typically the result of dominant trends of the present colliding with environmental changes that will significantly affect the future. In our case, a key set of trends in the U.S. military will collide with radical changes in our global environment to precipitate a renaissance of strategic thought for U.S. joint forces. In their book *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War*, distinguished military historians Eliot Cohen and John Gooch astutely observe that the militaries of modern democracies fail because they do not anticipate changes on the battlefield, learn to fight in new environments, or adapt to the changing nature of war.³ It is particularly difficult for a phenomenally successful military, like our own, to look beyond the horizon and see the inevitable changes that must occur in our force structure and strategy to maintain our decisive military advantage. The purpose of this paper is to argue for the GSTF by

anticipating the strategic changes in our global environment and emphasizing the need for a strategic revival in U.S. forces and thinking.

GSTF is an architecture to control strategic mobility, space and information, and long range attack resources at the global level. To demonstrate the need for this capability, we must first look forward and acknowledge how developing trends in military operations and the uncertainties of domestic and global politics form the need for a resurgence of strategic capability. Next, we discuss the domination of tactical thinking within the Joint Staff and the critical need for strategic leverage to successfully counter future threats. The final section emphasizes how GSTF represents a strategic revolution for the U.S. military, which ensures a decisive advantage over our potential adversaries.

Background

A background survey of U.S. strategic operations from WWII forward reveals three key points. First, the U.S. aggregates decisive strategic power under a single command structure directly controlled by the NCA. Second, the U.S. military has continuously distanced itself from conventional strategic operations since WWII. Finally, Title 10 wargames conducted by each service clearly highlight the need for a powerful conventional strategic force to counter likely future threats.

Consolidation of Strategic Power

To avoid bloody attrition warfare of WWI, military strategists like Douhet, Trenchard and Mitchell envisioned a strategy of bombing the national centers of gravity to defeat an opposing nation without having to frontally attack its armed forces. The results of mass strategic bombardment in Europe during WWII are inconclusive, but the

advent of the atom bomb offered the promise of overwhelming strategic attack, if at a terrible cost. The introduction of the B-29 into the Pacific Theater at the end of WWII defined how our nation would control such powerful strategic assets in the future. The Department of War specifically allocated the B-29 for the strategic bombardment of Japan. In addition, they explicitly refused both MacArthur and Nimitz control of these resources at any level. Instead, they moved the control of targeting and operations of the 20th under the direct supervision of Commander of Army Air Forces, General Hap Arnold, in Washington D.C. to ensure our NCA directly controlled the strategic effects of this unique weapons system.⁴ From the late 1940s on, the development of strategic forces proceeded on a course similar to that of the 20th AF in WWII.

Following the precedent of the 20th Air Force, assets with truly strategic capability tended to move from the operational control of regional commanders to a more specialized and centralized command structure tied very closely to our national decision makers. For example, nuclear bombers and ICBMs under the Strategic Air Command (now STRATCOM), strategic airlift under the Military Air Transportation Service (now TRANSCOM) and national satellite resources to the National Reconnaissance Office (inevitably SPACECOM). Historically, our national policy places the ownership and operational control of strategic assets in a functional command structure that has a global perspective and answers directly to the NCA.

Tactical Emphasis

One consequence of this segmented strategic structure is that military strategist began to view conventional and strategic wars as distinct entities. The political decision not to strategically engage the Chinese in Korea or North Vietnam until the end of that

war reinforced this separation of tactical and strategic warfare. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the thought of nuclear war became less likely, and the emphasis of our Joint Doctrine turned almost exclusively tactical. For the past decade, the U.S. military participated in relatively small scale and highly constrained conflicts or operations other than war while practicing for a strategic war we knew we would never fight. The result is an emphasis on regional tactical warfare for the majority of our military with a small portion dedicated to strategic nuclear deterrence. Desert Storm may well be the last regional war we will fight in which our enemy cannot strike at us effectively with conventional strategic weapons and WMD⁵. The range, speed and precision of modern conventional weapons coupled with improved munitions and WMD is introducing a strategic threat to regional conventional warfare for which we are ill prepared. Adding to this disruptive shift in military strategy is the fact that we may have to fight in more than one of these conflicts simultaneously.

Glimpse of the Future

Many believe that wargaming provides the most comprehensive view of war in the future. Through multiple scenarios and variable enemy and friendly force structures, we catch a glimpse of how future wars will be fought and, more importantly, how to be successful as a joint force. Three of the most recent and prestigious wargames, Global Engagement IV in 1999, Global Engagement V in 2000 and Navy Global 2000 focused on major theater wars in approximately 2010. These games make clear that as our enemies become more technologically competent, our reliance on Low Density/High Demand (LD/HD) or strategic assets increases considerably. Also, our operational risk is dramatically increased if we are engaged in more than one theater simultaneously.⁶

Between STRATCOM, TRANSCOM, and SPACECOM we have globally oriented functional commands, yet they support regional commanders with little coordination or synchronization. In all games there was a perceived need to coordinate the activities of strategic assets in a way that best utilized them at the global rather than regional level of war. These games show conclusively that revolutionary changes in military capability and an uncertain political environment will force us to fight better at the strategic level in the future.

Notes

¹ Inside the Pentagon, “Shelton Excises ‘Halt Phase’ From Near-Final Joint Strategic Review,” February 22, 2001, 1-3.

² Lt Cmdr Quintanilla, USTRANSCOM, “Getting To The Fight,” Air Command and Staff College Briefing, 5 February, 2001.

³ Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1990) 59-133.

⁴ Edward Jablonski, *Airwar*, (Garden City, NY, Doubleday, 1979) 159-162.

⁵ Benjamin S. Lambeth, “CONTROL OF THE AIR The Future of Air Dominance and Offensive Strike” (Santa Monica, CA, RAND) 16 November, 1999, 4.

⁶ After Action Report, Global Engagement IV, 3 March 2000; US Navy Global Wargame Executive Summary Outbrief, 6 Sept 2000, After Action Report, Global Engagement V, October 2001.

Chapter 2

Key Trends

To comprehend how changes in the future global and military environment will shape U.S. forces, we must first appreciate the context in which these changes will occur. The following key trends provide that contextual framework. The tectonic political shifts of the past decade extensively altered the U.S. military structure and strategy. Instead of global war with the Soviet Union, we found ourselves fighting with diverse coalitions against regional despots under considerable political constraints. From Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Northern Watch, and Allied Force three distinct strategic trends underlying this analysis emerge. Joint forces will increasingly rely on Low Density/High Demand aerospace resources to mass effects. We will mature into a joint force that can deploy and position forces rapidly to deter or halt enemy movement. Additionally, it is highly probable that we will have to employ a growing number of strategic assets in more than one theater dynamically.

Silver Bullets

LD/HD assets have a disproportionately high amount of mission impact in the modern battlespace and are consistently in high demand. As our military leverages the rapidly improving capabilities of increasingly expensive LD/HD aerospace platforms, the number of available assets will decrease as a function of cost. For example we bought

only 21 B-2 Bombers and approximately 120 C-17 aircraft, this represents an approximate numerical reduction of 85% and 60% respectively from the previous generation aircraft. Over 90% of secure communications during Desert Storm was via a few dedicated satellites and nationally controlled space platforms accomplished similar

Table 1 LD/HD Usage During Allied Force

Asset	Inventory	Allied Force	Percent
E8-C JSTARS	2	2	100
EC-130H	7	4	57
B-2	21	10	48
F-117	54	24	44
RC-135	14	5	36

Source: The Strained U.S. Military: Evidence from Allied Force, Goure and Lewis proportion of surveillance imagery.¹ We are already reliant on LD/HD assets; improvements in communications, information and aerospace platforms will make us more so in the future. The high operations tempo and reduction in force size combine to over task our small pool of strategic assets in terms of system maintenance, training and personnel deployment.² It is imperative to implement a practical plan of control and management for LD/HD resources, we cannot mass the effects of or maximize the utility of these systems globally or, more importantly, even guarantee their consistent availability to regional CINCs.

Strategic Agility

Joint Vision 2020 emphasizes speed, synchronization, and agility in positioning forces and massing effects to gain a decisive advantage. This strategic agility is the driving force behind the current force restructuring in the Air Force and particularly the Army. Through Dominant Maneuver, Precision Effects, Full Spectrum Protection and

Focused Logistics, the military plans to rapidly halt an adversary before they can achieve critical objectives.³ Under these developmental conditions, the importance of LD/HD assets will grow at an accelerated rate. Only with very fast, long range and precise intelligence collection and strategic conventional attack will Joint Force Commanders be able to immediately shape the battlespace while minimizing the initial risk to U.S. forces. Future deployment will be faster, but it will still take regional commanders weeks to mass counter offensive forces on the battlefield, even if access is unhindered. Maximization of our effectiveness as a joint force requires a complementary LD/HD employment plan, otherwise the rapid deployment of U.S. forces will simply rush additional targets into the effective range of our enemy's long-range precision weapons.

Multi-Theater Commitment

The final major assumption in this analysis is that we as a military will be engaged in more than one theater at once in the future. While the two major theater war scenario is the extreme example of this supposition; it is much more likely we will be engaged in a



Figure 1 Current Major U.S. Force Deployments

major theater war and one or two other smaller contingencies or some other similar combination. One need only look at history since World War II to see that America is never committed to only a single theater of operation. More importantly, the theater with the hot war may not be the highest priority to our National Command Authority. While we fought in Korea and Vietnam, we maintained an even larger presence in Europe to counter the Soviet threat. In the future, our significantly smaller military may have to shift forces from a conflict in one region to immediately fight in another. Even more probable is the scenario in which LD/HD assets like the Airborne Laser, currently budgeted for only one theater, will have to move dynamically between theaters depending on the situation. In either event, it is likely that our military success will depend on maximizing the utility of the very capable but numerically small platforms dynamically at the global level.

Notes

¹ Col Vautrinot USSPACECOM, Space Operations, Air Command and Staff College Briefing, 7 Feb 2001.

² The Joint Staff, Global Military Force Policy, Washington D.C., 20 June 00.

³ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision 2020, Washington D.C., June 00.

Chapter 3

Future Global Environment

A confluence of advancing technology, global political instability and evolving military doctrine will drive the need for a robust strategic conventional capability in the future. The immense changes currently taking place in each of these areas will extensively shape our National Security Strategy and the military operations that support it. To understand the context of future military operations, we must first realize that the rapid development of revolutionary military technologies is a double-edged sword that will both enhance our capabilities and threaten our operational success. In addition, it is critical to appreciate how the transformation of the post cold-war international political environment will affect our access and allies in every region of the world. Finally, we must contemplate how advanced technology and the global political environment will dovetail with U.S. military doctrine and concept of operations in the future.

Technological Evolution

Rapidly advancing technology is truly the unpredictable catalyst in the future of our military operations. Dramatic improvements in range, speed, precision and stealth will augment quantum advances in space and information operations for our enemies and friendly forces alike. The first reason we should explore missions like GSTF is the simple fact that the technology is available and improving exponentially. However,

technological capability by itself is not going to win wars; the methodology we employ to effectively use scientific advances is as important as the technology itself. Advancing technology and new capabilities will change the strategic perspective and reduce the globe to a single theater of operations.

The technology to quickly mass precision effects over strategic distances is on the developmental horizon. Conventional ICBMs, hypersonic missiles, National Aerospace Vehicle and information operations are examples of truly global aerospace resources currently progressing towards operational weapons systems. The idea of delivering mass effects through long-range conventional weapons is viable due to the next generation of sensing and logic in the warheads they will carry. Brilliant weapons with GPS guidance and high-resolution sensors that detect, identify and select targets will be the norm, not the exception. The problem is that we will not be the only nation that possess these types of weapons, for nations like China and Iraq are spending a great deal of weapons for an effective strategic capability. They will likely mix weapons in varying combinations to degrade defenses and improve lethality. For example, radio wave burst payloads might precede a missile attack that features numerous decoys among the real warheads.¹ The result would be a serious degradation of electronic systems, those defenses that could recover would face a large number of incoming targets that could overwhelm them. In short, we will have to effectively project power quickly from standoff distances and defend against similar capability.

Technology itself is not decisive; it is the effective integration of new technology into strategy and doctrine that is revolutionary. Successful militaries analyze and anticipate the effect of evolving technology and effectively combine it with their strategy,

doctrine, and tactics. Prior to World War II, both the French and the Germans developed mobile wireless radios that could be carried on moving vehicles. The French essentially ignored the potential of wireless communication, while the Germans incorporated it into their equipment and their Blitzkrieg strategy with decisive effect.² Our enemy's fondest hope is that we continue to balkanize our strategic assets and dilute their capability by chopping them ad hoc to different regional CINCs. It is not our ability to deliver sustained strategic effects from long range in the future that is at issue, rather, it is our ability to deliver these effects within the context of a strategy that makes them truly decisive.

The key to incorporating technology into military strategy is the ability to effectively anticipate fundamental changes in military operations. Advanced weapons systems will not only redefine the world as a single area of operation, they will also precipitate an unprecedented dichotomy of capabilities within our armed forces. The advent of a numerically small but very capable force of long range UAVs, conventional ballistic missiles, hypersonic aerospace platforms and radically improved ISR will shrink the world into a single area of operation. Within this global domain we will be able to continuously monitor and rapidly strike our adversaries with weapons systems that greatly reduce the risk to our people. Our leadership will have the ability to project power almost instantly in support of regional forces or as an independent political action.

If next generation conventional strategic weapons will profoundly affect our vision of global military operations, they represent a military and political epiphany for our adversaries. Our enemies are currently developing long-range attack technologies and

concepts that parallel our own. With precision, stealth, information and WMD, they will threaten our people, equipment and military infrastructure. Their objectives will not be to defeat our military head on, but rather to inflict casualties, deny geographic access and disrupt our information networks. In a recent release from the Chinese Army War College, military analysts espouse a strategy of “War Under High-Technology Conditions.” Their plan is disrupt our information flow and strike at our forces in theater with a combination of stealth and precision missiles and aircraft. Developing Chinese doctrine emphasizes a very rapid and destructive campaign to paralyze us through information attack and heavy casualties.³ Our intelligence confirms their development of stealth aircraft, cruise missiles, and anti-satellite weapons. In addition, the Chinese Army is restructuring a significant portion of the People’s Liberation Army into rapid reaction type divisions. We must carefully re-evaluate the strategic nature of war in the future if our enemies have access to advanced technology weapons systems. CONUS command and support centers historically regarded as secure will be vulnerable to conventional, WMD or information attack from distant enemies. Mobility and information infrastructure around the world would also be

Table 2 Chinese Military Technological Emphasis

Chinese Peoples Liberation Army Developmental Priorities

- Information Operations and Warfare
- Air and Missile Technology
- Precision Guided Munitions
- Defensive Weapon Technology
- Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Technology
- Military Space Technology

Source: Joint Forces Quarterly

prime targets for opposition forces. Fundamentally, technology will allow our adversaries to rapidly project power and force us to defend our assets on a global level.

Political Environment

While technology will be the impetus of fundamental military change over the next few decades, the political environment will be the context in which it operates. The political setting in both the United States and the international community is one of uncertainty as the world continues to search for continuity and stability in the post-Cold War era. It would be ludicrous to make specific predictions about the political environment twenty years from now; however there are three key trends currently forming expected to continue well into the future. In general, the U.S. will maintain a much smaller military with reduced overseas forward basing. As a result, we as a military and a country will be more dependent on allies and coalitions to carry out military operations. Finally, we will face a radically different threat in the international environment from nations, organizations, and individuals.

On the home front, three factors dominate the thinking of our political leadership: cost, risk and capability. The reduction in size of our military to a little over half its 1990 level clearly indicates that we will continue to work under an atmosphere of significant budgetary constraint for the foreseeable future. A limited allocation of fiscal resources will drive all services to analyze their force structure and doctrine and to prioritize limited funds for critical mission capabilities. In addition, recent military campaigns in the Persian Gulf and Yugoslavia solidified the political expectation that the military conduct operations with minimal risk to our forces, our allies and all noncombatants. While

constraining the military fiscally and limiting it politically, our leadership expects dramatically improved military capability. The standard of speed and precision set in the conflicts of the last decade place immense pressure on the military, especially the Air Force, to perform with little margin for error. In brief, our political leadership expects a smaller military to conduct very precise operations with minimal risk of unnecessary death or collateral damage.

Political changes abroad parallel the changes in our own country. In the aftermath of a bipolar world with a less clear threat, the U.S. is less likely to act unilaterally in its national interests and more dependent upon allies and coalitions for access and political legitimacy. If we are to fight as an expeditionary force, we will depend on our allies and formal coalitions for support. Without even considering regional politics, our steady pull back from overseas bases throughout the last decade has dramatically reduced our access to key areas of the world. The reduction in large airfields, ports, and pre-positioned equipment globally is a crucial constraint in our ability to project power globally. Additional restrictions based on regional politics threaten our access even more. For example, the closure of key airbases in Spain combined with political restrictions on flying combat missions from NATO allies like France during the Operation Allied Force restricted U.S. forces to launching attacks from bases in Northern Italy, Germany, and Great Britain.⁴ Quite simply, we are dependent upon the access, support and consent of our regional allies to carry out global military operations. The decrease in worldwide U.S. basing coupled with regional political uncertainty will jeopardize our global freedom of action and strategic agility for the next few decades.

In addition to military and global political changes, we will face drastically different types of adversaries and threats. The mitigating factor for asymmetric attack by our enemies before was that they were only able to inflict relatively minor damage over short distances. The proliferation of WMD and effective delivery devices will threaten our nation at home and abroad. According to a RAND airbase defense study, all forces within a 2,500 mile radius of the battle area will be under a high risk of attack from ballistic and cruise missiles, stealth aircraft and special operations forces during major regional conflicts a decade from now.⁵ A recent study by the Navy concluded that its large aircraft carriers, arguably one of the best-defended military assets in the world, had a “Low” probability of defeating a cruise missile attack.⁶ If our aircraft carriers are at significant risk, imagine the threat to ground airbases, ports, and lightly defended ships. The calculus of long-range precision weapons attack is familiar to us; even with very good defenses, some weapons will get through and cause a significant damage and casualties. Our future adversaries will initially be able to strike at our forces within the theater of operations if we do not destroy their capacity first.

Doctrinal Evolution

The evolution of highly capable global aerospace forces will profoundly influence the way our political leadership and military commanders view war. Political leaders will expect decisive effects with minimal risk forcing military commanders to grudgingly evolve Joint Doctrine beyond our current surface-centric theater view of warfare. More importantly, the development and effective employment of future LD/HD assets will precipitate the first legitimate step away from surface-centric attrition based warfare.

Both the Quadrennial Defense Review and the National Security Strategy assume our forces will fight in small to medium sized coalition conflicts for the foreseeable future. Implicit to these types of operations are a high level of political restriction on strategy and employment. The Air War Over Serbia (AWOS) serves as an outstanding example of the political constraint inherent to limited coalition operations. Not only did President Clinton renounce the use of ground forces in Kosovo, he also forbid the wholesale destruction of the Serbian economic infrastructure. Yet, he expected airpower to influence the Serbian leadership enough to withdraw its forces from Kosovo. The future political expectation is that the military can influence adversaries with precise effects while limiting damage and death on both sides.

From the AWOS example, we see that our political leadership expects dominant effects delivered with pinpoint accuracy. More importantly, however, is the implied dictum of very limited U.S. casualties. The low observability and high all weather precision of the B-2 made it the air weapon of choice in the AWOS where it dropped roughly half of all precision munitions and attacked the highest risk targets. F-117 aircraft attacked heavily defended targets inside Serbia while intense surface defenses forced conventional fighter aircraft over Kosovo to bomb from altitudes above 15,000 ft.⁷ Joint Doctrine should recognize that the unique capability and low vulnerability of LD/HD assets will make them preeminent in future conflicts for both military and political considerations.

The introduction of very expensive and extremely capable global assets into a U.S. force structure that has changed little since WWII sets the stage for technological upheaval. On the one hand, conventional forces that must mobilize and deploy before

they fight will still dominate in terms of numbers and thinking. On the other, the revolutionary capabilities of LD/HD weapons coupled with their decreased vulnerability will make them the first choice of our political leadership and our enemies. The two major effects of this rapidly advancing technology will be the movement from the Time Phased Force Deployment Document (TPFDD) based offensive operations to a global Rapid Halt strategy and the necessity of dealing with enemy LD/HD weapon systems.

Since WWII, our concept of conventional war focused on how quickly we can move conventional forces into theater. In both Europe during the Cold War and in Korea today, our operational strategy is to defend until sufficient build up of forces allows us to counter attack. I refer to this concept as the TPFDD based offensive, which features the dominance of surface centric warfare with an enemy that can do little to stop our force deployment. The problem is that this strategy requires a large, and expensive, overseas presence to avoid the months required to build up our conventional offensive capability. Desert Shield took approximately six months to mobilize and deploy ground forces into the Persian Gulf region for the counter offensive that liberated Kuwait. Had the Iraqi leadership decided to invade eastern Saudi Arabia immediately after seizing Kuwait, we could have done little to stop them. If you consider the likelihood that we may have to fight in areas with no forward based forces, like Taiwan, or that we could be engaged in two regional conflicts at once, the TPFDD based offensive is a precarious strategy indeed. As previously mentioned, it is also probable that future adversaries will challenge our military and political access to potential areas of conflict. An article by Chinese War College authors refers to this reliance on transportation and information

infrastructure as the soft underbelly that should be continuously exploited through very fast Chinese military operations coupled with infrastructure and information attack.⁸

To combat the declining overseas presences and transportation infrastructure as well as adaptation of our enemies to our way of war, the Joint Staff developed the concept of Rapid Halt. Instead of fighting defensively for weeks or months while building forces, we would respond very quickly (hours or days) to threats with a lighter and more lethal force. The strategic objective is to get enough forces into place to rapidly halt an enemy before they take any key objectives. In doing so, we can force the conflict to a quick resolution or set our follow on forces up for a much quicker and less costly counter offensive.

At the opposite end of the operational spectrum, the failure to effectively incorporate LD/HD assets into an integrated global military strategy invites joint operational confusion and disaster. In the fast developing wars of the future, we can ill afford the confusion and lack of doctrinal consideration exemplified by unclear operational and tactical control of B-52s in Vietnam and B-2s in the AWOS. If we rely on strategic aerospace power to help us halt a rapidly advancing enemy, it's doctrinal integration must be more than an afterthought of Joint planning staffs maniacally focused on tactical surface warfare.

The challenge of devising a strategy that integrates global LD/HD assets effectively with our existing conventional forces is indeed daunting. The benefit, however, is revolutionary step away from the TPFDD based warfare paradigm. While our enemies still rely on massing armor, infantry and artillery for a conventional war of attrition, we will immediately strike those targets that best promote our national grand strategy. As

our global surveillance and attack capabilities improve in the coming decades, an enemy massing forces will be more of a target than a threat. Not only will we attack the conventional forces of our adversaries, but we will also simultaneously strike at the political, economic and information infrastructures that the leadership relies on for control. Should a full-scale ground offensive be necessary, the devastating advantage of LD/HD effects will decisively shape the battlespace in favor of our surface forces. A coherent and pragmatic strategy that integrates the range, speed and precision of LD/HD effects with our conventional land, sea and air forces at the global level is the next major step in the evolution of modern warfare.

Notes

¹ Michael Smith, "Britain Develops Shell to Disable Electronics", *London Daily Times*, 27 Dec 00.

² Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1990) 59-133.

³ Robert Karniol, "Power To The People", *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 12 July 2000.

⁴ Headquarters United States Air Force, *The Air War Over Serbia: Allied Aerospace Power in Operation Allied Force*, Washington D.C., 25 Apr 2000, 31.

⁵ John Stillion and David T. Orletsky, *Airbase Vulnerability* (Washington D.C.: RAND) 54-56.

⁶ D. Ian Hopper, "Navy Ships Vulnerable to Cruise Missile Attack," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 12 Jul 2000.

⁷ Daniel Goure' and Jeffery Lewis, "The Strained U. S. Military: Evidence from Operation Allied Force," *National Security Strategy Quarterly*, Winter 2000, 25.

⁸ Robert Karniol, "Power To The People", *Jane's Defense Weekly*, 12 July 2000, 16-26.

Chapter 4

Dark Ages: Strategic Neglect

While JV 2020 serves as a blueprint for our future military, it fails to tell us exactly how we will transition to the desired structure. JV 2020 clearly advocates a future force that can maneuver and fight at the strategic level. However, this document's primary assumption that strategic success will result from the movement of tactical forces into theater with greater speed seems dubious at best. According to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, there is a "Strategy-Force Structure mismatch" impeding the development of the JV 2020 force.¹ Our force structure is the result of our concept of war and doctrine, so the real problem is a strategy-philosophy mismatch. While we are revamping our force structure towards dominant maneuver and precision engagement at the global level, our joint thinking and doctrine remains transfixed on classical surface warfare. In addition, the tactical perspective of Joint Doctrine is responsible for the neglect of strategic thinking in almost every segment of the military. By isolating strategic operations as a autonomous mission, the ascendancy of tactical dogma throughout Joint Doctrine is responsible for an alarming absence of cohesion between strategic and tactical combat operations.

Tactical Ethos

The force structure of our future military is currently receiving a lot of attention and money. For example, the Army is transitioning to much lighter brigades and the Air Force is adapting to the Air Expeditionary Force concept. However, Joint Doctrine and Vision still largely ignore the repercussions of the next generation of weapons technology, strategy, and tactics for our forces and those of our potential adversaries. For example, Joint Pub 1 concludes that the limiting factors for Joint Campaigns at the theater level are logistics and transportation. By Joint Doctrine definition, strategic agility is the ability to move the equivalent of Oklahoma City's population to Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm (irregardless of the fact that it took six months).² The clear assumption is that we always intend to mass surface forces to mount a counter offensive to win the strategic battle. The direct attack on strategic centers of gravity is simply one of eight capabilities that support surface operations. In essence, Joint Doctrine applies a Napoleonic view of warfare to a strategic environment. That is, "strategic agility" becomes the simple movement of tactical formations rapidly over global distances. This is an incredibly dangerous way of thinking in a future battlespace that will feature the dominance of a few very capable weapons systems on both sides of a conflict. In that environment, the force that employs strategic resources the best will gain a decisive military advantage.

Strategic Abandonment

There is a giant rift forming between the tactical surface oriented thinking that currently dominates our Joint Doctrine and Vision and the undeniable strategic effects of long-range high precision weapons and information warfare. Joint military campaigns of

the past decade suggest that political necessity and unacceptable risk to our own forces may force us to bring military power to bear without defeating an adversary's forces at a tactical level. We are focused on simply playing the military game at hand and fighting the enemy as we have for the past fifty years instead of changing the game and going straight to the heart of the matter.³ The solution to asymmetric warfare and multi-theater conflict does not lie in additional conventional forces, but in our ability to influence the political and military efficacy of our enemy quickly, decisively and with limited vulnerability to our own interests. This is the soul of strategic thought and we have not emphasized it since the 1950's.

Notes

¹ Congressional testimony.

² Joint Pub 1, Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States, 10 Jan 1995, 23.

³ Carl H. Builder, "Keeping the Strategic Flame," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Winter 1996-1997.

Chapter 5

Strategic Renaissance: Global Strategic Task Force

The central point of this paper is that centralized planning and employment of LD/HD assets at the global level is critical to a future winning strategic methodology. We use GSTF as an illustrative example of this concept, not a rigid form of solution for the future. According to Joint Doctrine, GSTF would be a *mission* that plans and executes the global operations of strategic aerospace assets. To better understand this mission, we should look at the domain of GSTF, the objective of such an organization, a conceptual view and an operational view of this type of global operation. At present, the domain GSTF would represent a small subset of all U.S. aerospace operations. However, we expect the number of GSTF assets and their importance to grow exponentially over the next 20-50 years.

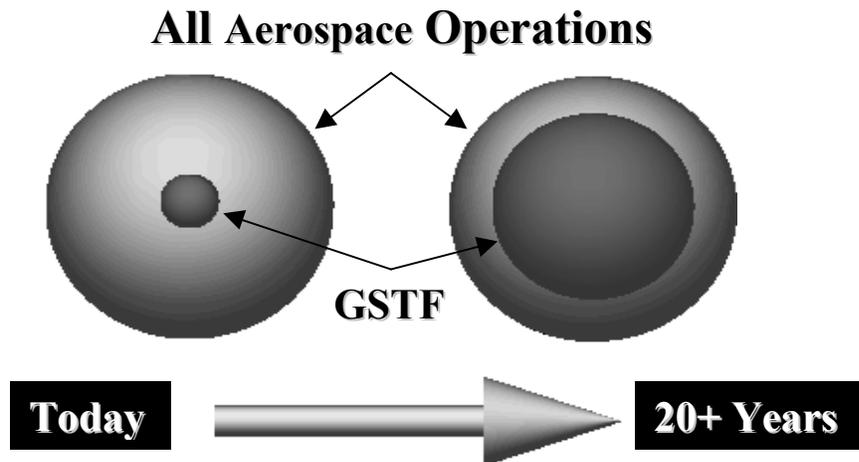


Figure 2 Conceptual View of GSTF Evolution within Aerospace Operations

The objective of GSTF is to ensure that all regional CINCs have immediate access to the LD/HD assets they need for operational success. Unlike the current forced sharing scheme for national reconnaissance platforms, this mission would ensure the rapid transition of important aerospace assets to the Unified Commander. Because of the increased speed, range and lethality of future aerospace weapons systems, this allocation process must be dynamic in nature. Assets may transition regional areas within hours or attack targets in two different regions during a single mission. In addition to the global planning and execution of LD/HD allocation, the GSTF command infrastructure would account for LD/HD assets globally and advise the National Command Authority on multi-theater allocation of key strategic aerospace capability if necessary. For example, the use of the only two operational JSTARS platforms over Kosovo and their critical need for overdue depot maintenance would obviously effect the PACOM CINCs warfighting plans in Korea had war broken out there.¹ In fact, the exchange of these LD/HD assets is little more than an informal agreement between regional CINCs. One must wonder how effective this allocation system would be if the two CINCs failed to reach agreement? At least one retired Air Force four-star general believes that the “CINCs will never reach agreement!” There is no organization within the Office of the Secretary of Defense or the Joint Staff dedicated to the global use of aerospace power who could referee such a disagreement. In addition, the J-3 Operations Staff may not be equipped to make such a recommendation over the wishes of a Unified Commander in Chief.² A GSTF type organization could help avoid this situation by advising the NCA on the status and ramifications of LD/HD use on a global level.

Conceptual View

The conceptual view of GSTF takes on the form of a complex mathematical problem, that is, how to maximize the effects generated by a finite number of globally capable aerospace assets given a set of permanent and situational constraints that impact aerospace operations. The relative measure of effect from a particular mission is a function of the priority assigned to the region by the National Command Authority (NCA) and the importance of the target as defined by the regional commander. Permanent constraints within this type of problem include a limited number of aerospace resources, the performance attributes of those assets, and basing options. Situational constraints are factors that change regularly like the political rules of engagement, threat, target location, target type, munitions, weather, and maintenance. With this input, an algorithm would seek maximum effects based on the current constraint set. Planning staffs and decision-makers ultimately perform a “sanity check” on a model solution and refine it before implementation. The goal of this planning is the timely delivery of the best combination of effects to regional commanders based on national priority and regional situation.

Operational View

General Link best describes the operational perspective of GSTF as “the ability to influence with limited vulnerability.”³ An ideal example involves operating global aerospace assets from permanent and secure bases outside of enemy theater weapons range as Stillion and Orletsky outline in their RAND Airbase Vulnerability study. From these bases, the military could launch immediate precision attacks from fighter, bomber and ballistic aerospace platforms in one or more areas simultaneously. Optimal

geographic placement would allow overlapping coverage of most areas of the world and improve the massing of effects in a region. In addition, these bases could serve as major operating bases for the deployment and support of forces in the region.⁴ Another key advantage of this type of infrastructure is its reduced vulnerability; low-tech threats are out of range and more capable systems have long distances to travel allowing more time for detection and defense. By reinforcing select bases and striking adversaries from more than one base at a time, this infrastructure would provide a very capable, flexible and secure option for strategic aerospace operations in the future.

Key Component of Expeditionary Force

It is important to note that Global Strategic Task Force is not a panacea for all military operations, rather it is a strategy designed to maximize U.S. military strengths while minimizing the threat from our enemies. GSTF operations augment and strengthen the capabilities of the Expeditionary Air Force allowing commanders to customize improvements to the speed and effectiveness of our Air Expeditionary Forces globally. These operations should be an important piece of a developing a joint force that can strike quickly and effectively fight in more than one theater at the same time. It is unlikely these type of operations will be singularly decisive, but they will prove invaluable to regional commanders facing limited support infrastructures and sophisticated asymmetric threats. The GSTF mission ultimately gives the Joint Force Commander the ability to shape the battlespace and control tempo very quickly with a reduced risk to U.S. forces. It is the first step towards true strategic agility.

Notes

¹Daniel Goure' and Jeffery Lewis, "The Strained U. S. Military: Evidence from Operation Allied Force," *National Security Strategy Quarterly*, Winter 2000, 21.

² Anonymous four-star general (USAF, Retired), discussion with CADRE research team, Maxwell AFB, AL, 24 August 2000.

³ Interview with General Link, College of Air Doctrine Research and Education Jan 2000.

⁴ John Stillion and David T. Orletsky, *Airbase Vulnerability* (Washington D.C.: RAND), 62-66.

Chapter 6

Decisive Advantage

GSTF provides a decisive military advantage in the form of a strategically oriented command that can complement deployed friendly regional forces or influence adversaries rapidly without a massive build-up of forces in the area. For both planning and execution, GSTF provides a sound future architecture in which we can assimilate the next generation of rapidly developing LD/HD weapons systems. As weapons like Space Based Infra Red Satellites, sub-orbital aircraft, UAVs, hypersonic missiles, and information warfare systems assimilate into our future military, GSTF offers the fundamental structure and strategy for using them to quickly attaining decision and aerospace superiority over our enemies.

Integrated Global Command

According to General Charles Horner, JFACC during Desert Storm, “Future warfare depends upon our ability to rapidly gain information and act on it.” To gain rapid operational superiority GSTF relies on the fast response and flexibility of centralized command. While this is a dramatic departure from how we currently control many strategic assets, it is the only way to truly realize the potential of our evolving technology and ensure the success of our rapid deployment doctrine. By scattering strategic assets throughout different services and regional commanders, we weaken our

overall global capabilities. This weakness will become problematic as our adversaries become technologically proficient and our own forces intensify their reliance on LD/HD systems.

Rapid Influence

The second decisive advantage of GSTF operations is the ability to influence our enemies without the deployment of conventional forces. This allows us to shape the battlespace before follow-on forces arrive improving our chances of success and lowering the operational risk to our in-theater forces. GSTF is a coordinated strategy that can immediately attack foes anywhere in the world. We need this critical capability if we are to successfully fight in more than one region simultaneously or if we are to effectively fight in regions with restricted access. In its simplest form, GSTF is the ability to project power from our base of LD/HD assets providing the Joint Force Commander a very fast and flexible capability to lead or augment U.S. military operations.

Supporting Architecture

Most importantly, GSTF offers an architecture in which strategic assets of the future can use to effectively accomplish of national military strategy. Instead of the ad hoc planning and LD/HD weapons organization we have now, GSTF would provide the structure and context for the continued development of new strategic weapons systems. Scientists, engineers and program managers could better understand the need and function of LD/HD weapons because there is a strategy in place for their global use. In addition, this is the best architecture to integrate the disruptive power of information and space operations into our joint plans and operations. The higher purpose of the GSTF design is to take our technological and information superiority and use them in a

strategically decisive way. It is through this architecture that we can achieve new operational tenets outlined in JV 2020.

Chapter 7

Recommendation

Obviously, the need to integrate the operations of strategic resources at the global level is an important issue. The Secretary of Defense's Global Force Mobility Policy (GFMP) is a first attempt to monitor the use of our nations LD/HD assets, but it does not support Joint Force Commanders with strategic operations.¹ While we no longer "chop" certain LD/HD assets to regional CINCs indefinitely, we have no set command structure to plan, execute and monitor the global use of these items. Based on the radical changes coming in our military and the world, my recommendation is to designate a command authority to plan and execute GSTF, develop the high level strategy and doctrine necessary to integrate GSTF into regional operations and start the implementation of integrated global strategic aerospace operations into Joint Doctrine immediately.

Designate Command Authority

The exact placement of the GSTF command authority is not explicit in law or doctrine, however, one logical choice would be the ACC Commander acting as the Joint Forces Command Air Component Commander. The first of his primary responsibilities would be to identify key resources from the Space Command, Strategic Command, and Transportation Command for dynamic strategic allocation to regional Joint Force Commanders. In this capacity, he would expedite the decision making process by

directly advising the NCA on LD/HD global issues and directly support regional or functional CINCs through the employment of strategic forces. This type of command structure would not only enhance the speed and flexibility of combined strategic operations, it would also clarify the responsibilities and control of our nations LD/HD resources. The first step towards optimizing the use of our national resources is to integrate the planning, training and execution of these forces under a single command structure.

Strategy and Doctrine

In addition to advising the NCA and supporting joint forces globally, a joint strategic force command must plan and train with regional CINCs to ensure a high level of doctrinal synthesis and integration of strategic and conventional forces. To make strategic forces a decisive part of our military operations, they must function cohesively with deployed conventional forces and within potential coalitions. The ability to strike or effect any target in the enemy's domain within minutes is a strong deterrent, but a doctrine and strategy that integrates devastating strategic capability with dominant conventional forces is nothing short of a revolution in warfighting. The most important responsibility of a GSTF Commander in the future will be to devise a sound strategy and supporting doctrine that efficiently advises our civilian leadership, integrates strategic and conventional operations, and rapidly masses effects for the supported Joint Force Commander.

Start Now

If we are to keep a strategic edge over our adversaries, we must begin the move towards integrated strategic execution and thought now. An immediate start would allow

adequate time to develop a functional structure for the dynamic global use of LD/HD resources. Sufficient lead-time is critical to regaining the strategic initiative in our doctrine and establishing the infrastructure and capabilities of LD/HD weapons systems we will need in the future. Every day we wait, we incur a debt of risk that our soldiers and our nation will pay at the hands of nations already developing credible strategic weapon capability. The sooner we start, the quicker we get a good initial vector and get on glide path towards developing the strategic punch we need to decisively win the wars of the future.

Notes

¹ The Joint Staff, *Report to Congress on the Global Military Force Policy*, Washington D.C., 1999, 12.

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