CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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Nearing the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the United States is involved in two ongoing wars. It faces a significant international terrorist threat, and it is witnessing an escalation of international resistance to its leadership of the global world order. Looking out to 2025, many see the potential for a prolonged period of instability as a result of competing economic models, demographics, the rise of new international actors and the resurgence of old ones, climate change, and the scarcity of resources. Such instability suggests a greater probability of interstate and intrastate conflict. While in the near term the United States remains the single most powerful state, it will act most often as only one of a number of important powers in an increasingly multipolar international system. In such an environment, the U.S. role will logically be more constrained, but its national interests will continue to place a premium on a peaceful world order and its military will continue to be a key factor in sustaining acceptable levels of regional and global stability.[1] The range of stability challenges will stretch the capabilities of any military force structure and require innovative thinking on the part of policymakers and military professionals alike on the appropriate development and use of the military element of power. In light of the economic recession of 2009, this debate will intensify over the next several years as the rising deficit levels force a closer look at defense spending. Some question what appears to be an over reliance by the U.S. Government on military power.[2] Consequently, force structure, and how military forces are best used to advance stability interests, will be key components of this debate. National success will require innovative ways of thinking about the military instruments of power.

The national security or military professional reading the latest security literature may well be confused by the various outlooks expressed by authors discussing the nature of emerging challenges and the security environment. Some argue that U.S. military thinking has lingered too long in the Cold War past and has tried to create a new monolithic threat out of China to justify the retention of large conventional forces.[3] Members of this school of thought believe that the era of conventional warfare is over, and that the threats of the 21st century are only asymmetric or hybrid in nature and require all, or at least a significant part, of the U.S. military capability to be comprised of unconventional and counterinsurgency forces.[4] Others look at the future and conclude that conventional warfare is not only possible, but even likely.[5] These arguments get at the heart of the famous Clausewitzean dictum that: "The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature."[6] Most quote the master without ever considering the "test." For Clausewitz, war was never to be thought of as autonomous but to be understood as an instrument of policy. Consequently, the kinds of war are determined by ". . . the nature of their motives and the situations which give rise to them."[7] In the 21st century, both motives and situations will be abundant and diverse—and this makes determining force structure and doctrine for the future challenging.

This quandary is not new. Clausewitz also understood that war consists of two distinct activities, preparation for war, and conduct of war.[8] Preparation for war consists of ". . . the creation of fighting forces, their raising, armament, equipment, and training."[9] For Clausewitz's purposes in *On War*, he accepted armed and equipped fighting forces as a given, the means by which war is conducted, because he was interested in the conduct of war. In his reasoning, ". . . if the art of war was always to start with raising of armed forces and adapting them to the requirements of the particular case, it would be applicable only to those few instances where the forces available exactly matched the need."[10] Consequently, you always go to war with the forces you have on hand, using the effects that the force is capable of generating although it is rarely the ideal force as adversaries invariably seek asymmetry in force strength, capabilities, techniques, or environments. Yet, the force developer logically must consider the kinds of war the future portends as well as the current fight in order to be best prepared. Both Clausewitz's and the force developer's perspectives are correct. When war comes, you conduct it with the forces and their effects on hand; but the better you can judge the kind of future war, the more effective will be the means at hand. Art, flexibility, and adaptability can bridge the gap—but the smaller the gap, the better. However, while the modification of forces can occur during a long war, it will be at a greater cost of blood and treasure.

From the end of the Vietnam War until 2006, the U.S. advocates of small wars succumbed to the conventional mantra of prepare for the greater risk and adapt to the lesser requirements. The near-simultaneous successful conclusions of the Cold War (the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991) and the Persian Gulf War (August 1990-February 1991) validated this thinking in the minds of a whole generation of military officers. The U.S. experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan have challenged the wisdom of this mantra, with a number of proponents now arguing that future wars will be small and that the forgotten lessons from Vietnam, if now remembered, would have made recent conflicts easier to conduct. For these proponents, the learning curve that accompanied the lesser requirement was too expensive, and many others even perceived this kind of war as the greater challenge. On the other hand, some national security professionals now fear that, at least in the Army, the pendulum may have swung too far toward counterinsurgency at the expense of being prepared for more conventional threats. Of course, this is exactly the rub in preparation for war—what kind of wars will you be confronted with in terms of the motives and situations that give rise to them?

This argument has been recently articulated by referring to the 21st century as being a century characterized by irregular warfare as opposed to traditional warfare. Traditional war is defined as war between nation states or coalitions/alliances of nation-states. "Traditional war typically involves small-scale to large-scale, force-on-force military operations in which adversaries employ a variety of conventional military capabilities against each other in the air, land, maritime, and space physical domains and the information environment (which includes cyberspace)."[11] Irregular warfare is defined as "a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s)."[12] Irregular warfare is typically conducted when "a less powerful adversary seeks to disrupt or negate the military capabilities and advantages of a more powerful, conventionally armed military force, which often represents the nation's established regime."[13] While conceptually useful for distinguishing current conflicts from past ones and for better understanding of nonstate war, irregular warfare concepts

provide no inherent justification for ignoring the lesser probability of and potentially greater risks at stake in traditional war. Both definitions also ignore a wide range of operations that the U.S. military can reasonably expect to conduct in the 21st century—peace operations, peacetime military engagement, and humanitarian operations.

Stuck on the horns of this dilemma, the U.S. Army in particular, and the U.S. military more generally, has modified its force structure and rushed to update its doctrine. Army changes have kept an eye on both the current wars and the challenges that the potential reemergence of conventional conflict present. The resulting modular force structure is reflected in the adoption of the brigade combat team (BCT). The Army also reformed the nearly extinct Peacekeeping Institute as the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) with a mission to "Serve as the U.S. Military's Center of Excellence for Stability and Peace Operations at the strategic and operational levels in order to improve military, civilian agency, international and multinational capabilities and execution."[14] In large part, the Institute helped to reestablish an intellectual balance for the consideration of both conventional and unconventional war. PKSOI elevated the importance of what used to be called "operations other than war," and it renewed the focus on a whole of government approach. Over the same period, the Army began to review its doctrine. Key doctrinal manuals, such as *Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, developed by a specially organized workgroup, also helped to bring a doctrinal counterbalance much needed in the ongoing struggle in Iraq.[15] In 2008, the Army published *FM 3-07, Stability Operations*, which brought these operations into doctrinal perspective with the threats and challenges of the 21st century. It acknowledged the definition of stability operations found in *Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Stability Operations*:

> [Stability operations encompass] various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. . . .[16]

In the face of ongoing operations, the doctrinal pendulum has swung back to the realities of the current strategic environment—but the anxiety that the arc is too great should remain a real concern.

Any comprehensive strategic consideration of the future global environment can make a case for both low intensity and high intensity combat and multiple operational scenarios, particularly if the time horizon is expanded to allow for the rise of regional and global competitors. After all, if the United States only develops a counterinsurgency or stability operations force structure, then state actors can achieve asymmetric advantage with competent conventional forces. Clearly, in force development and operational forces, the United States must pursue a hedging strategy, one that cannot assume either a total low intensity or total high intensity environment. A hedging strategy is particularly useful when confronted with uncertainty or when the consequences of being wrong could be catastrophic.[17] A capabilities-based strategy may be considered a hedging strategy if the capabilities are balanced across multiple potential threats—such as traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive—or across the spectrum of conflict.[18] Given the U.S. global strategic position over the next decade, clearly some form of balanced force is required. Any other approach to force planning would encourage adversaries and other

actors to more aggressively seek asymmetric advantages as world power rebalances in the first quarter of the 21st century. A balanced force may not be ideal for a particular threat or challenge, but it can respond to any, be more rapidly adapted, and make others' consideration of asymmetric strategies more problematic—in strategies, forces, and costs.

In a recent *Army* magazine article, Army Chief of Staff General George W. Casey, Jr., describes such a strategy to deal with what he labels an era of persistent conflict in which state and nonstate actors may use unconventional and conventional operations, or a hybrid of the two.[19] In the latter case, the traditional concept of a linear spectrum of conflict may be better visualized as a multidimensional graphic in which various kinds of war occur simultaneously. U.S. Army *Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations,* envisions this and counteracts the inherent complexity of future conflict by incorporating offensive, defensive, and stability operations across its defined spectrum of conflict, advocating full spectrum operations.[20] (See Figure 1.)

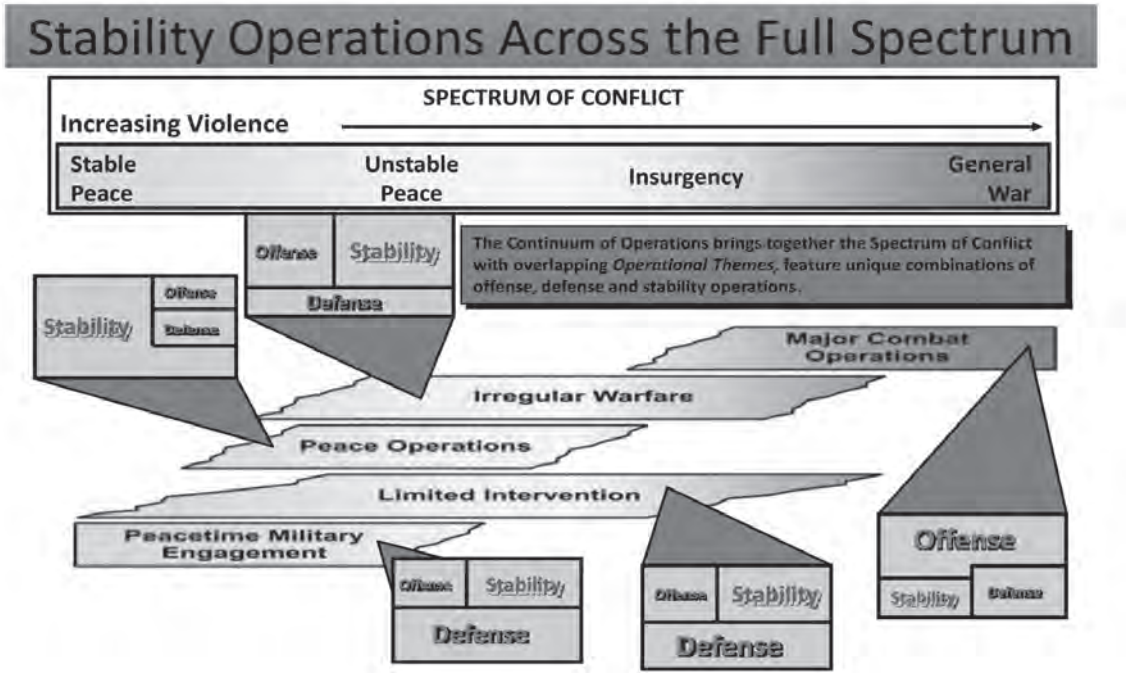

Figure 1. Stability Operations across the Full Spectrum.

The meaning of offensive and defensive operations is reasonably understood within the defense community, but stability operations and full spectrum operations less so. Stability operations are more fully described in FM 3-0 as:

> Stability operations encompass the various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief (JP 3-0). Stability

> operations can be conducted in support of a host-nation or interim government or as part of an occupation when no government exists. Stability operations involve both coercive and constructive military actions. They help to establish a safe and secure environment and facilitate reconciliation among local or regional adversaries. Stability operations can also help establish political, legal, social, and economic institutions and support the transition to legitimate local governance. Stability operations must maintain the initiative by pursing objectives that resolve the causes of instability.[21]

Full spectrum operations are defined as:

> The Army's operational concept: Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. They employ synchronized action—lethal and nonlethal—proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of all variables of the operational environment. Mission command that conveys intent and an appreciation of all aspects of the situation guides the adaptive use of Army forces.[22]

A strategic appraisal of the potential challenges and threats of the 21st century reveals nothing that negates the validity of the spectrum of conflict or full spectrum operations. Such analysis confirms, as FM 3-0 reflects, that stability operations apply across the spectrum of conflict from a stable peace to general war. As guidance, FM 3-0 and the supporting FM 3-07 provide purpose, tasks, processes, and tools that constitute valid doctrine. They answer most questions of how Army capabilities are to be operationally and tactically employed. Yet, large questions remain to be considered. How and when can military force be used without creating anti-Americanism—the question of legitimacy? Who, ourselves or our adversaries, will make best use of the purported revolution in military affairs (RMA)? How should the United States structure the force for the 21st century? How should the U.S. military interrelate with the whole of the U.S. Government and with other governments and actors is another key question? If it is an era of persistent conflict, and one in which insurgency is a major problem, is our counterinsurgency doctrine adequate—what further should we understand about this form of warfare? How does transition to nonmilitary support occur and how do you know when to transition from a military to a civil organizational lead?

In this anthology, students of the U.S. Army War College (USAWC) Class of 2008 offer their perspectives on the use of military power across the spectrum of conflict in the 21st century short of or following general war, and provide insights into the questions outlined above and other larger policy, strategy, and doctrinal issues. Beyond a focus on operations short of general war, these writings share in common a worthwhile idea or set of ideas that can materially contribute to how the U. S. military can best conduct full spectrum operations. Collectively, these papers reveal the innovative thinking, diversity, and depth of thought that is characteristic of the military and civilian agency personnel that comprise each class of the USAWC as they prepare themselves to become senior leaders and to fulfill their role in support of the College's mission "... not to promote war, but to preserve the peace by intelligent and adequate preparation to repel aggression."[23]

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 1

1. National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A World Transformed*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2008, pp. 1-vi-xii, 61-74, 81-88.

2. Thom Shanker, "Top Officer Urges Limit On Mission Of Military," *New York Times*, January 13, 2009.

3. Nick Macfie and Dean Yates, eds., "China Tells U.S. to Drop 'Cold War' Mindset on Military," March 26, 2009, available from *www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE52P1XM20090326*. Even China has picked up this refrain in a response to a Pentagon Report released under the Obama Administration criticizing China's lack of transparency in military spending.

4. Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*, St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004. Hammes' work is one articulation of this argument.

5. United States Joint Forces Command, "The JOE 2008, Joint Operating Environment: Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force," November 21, 2008, available from *www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2008/JOE2008.pdf*.

6. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 88.

7. *Ibid*.

8. *Ibid*., pp. 127-128.

9. *Ibid*., p. 127.

10. *Ibid*., pp. 127-28.

11. *Joint Publication, (JP) 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 2, 2007; w/change 1, March 20, 2009, p. x, available from *www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1.pdf*.

12. *Ibid*., p. GL-8.

13. *Ibid*.

14. U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Homepage, "Mission Brief," available from *https://pksoi.army.mil/PKSOI_Blogs.cfm*. Originally established as the Peacekeeping Institute by Chief of Staff of the Army, General Gordon Sullivan, in 1993, the Institute was nearly disbanded in 2003. In that year it was reinvigorated with new purpose and resources in acceptance of emerging trends in military operations.

15. *Field Manual (FM) 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, December 2006.

16. *Field Manual (FM) 3-07, Stability Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, October 2008, p. vi. See also *Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Joint Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, September 17, 2006; w/change 1, February 13, 2008, p. GL 25, available from *www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf*.

17. Henry C. Bartlett, "Approaches to Force Planning," *Naval War College Review*, No. 38, May-June 1985, pp. 37-48.

18. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report,* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 6, 2006, p. 19, *www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/Report20060203.pdf*.

19. General George W. Casey, Jr., "America's Army In an Era of Persistent Conflict," *Army: 2008-09 Green Book*, Washington, DC: Association of United States Army, October 2008, pp. 19-28.

20. *Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, June 14, 2001. pp. 3-20.

21. *Ibid*., pp. 3-12.

22. *Ibid*., Glossary, p. 7.

23. U.S. Army War College Homepage, Registrar's Office, *AY 09 Resident and AY 10 [USAWC Curriculum] Catalog,* available from *www.carlisle.army.mil/students/registrar/pdf/catalogue.pdf*.