Quick Look

Principles of War Seminar
Change, Security, Stability and Reconstruction
December 6, 2004

Overview

On Monday, November 22, 2004, the Office Force Transformation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Department of the Navy conducted the seventh seminar in the Principles of War Seminar Series.[1]

The guest speaker was General James L. Jones, former Marine Corps Commandant and currently serving as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and Commander of the United States European Command. He spoke on change and the role security, stability, and reconstruction plays in the larger theme of the principles of warfare. A summary of his comments follows.

Change

Today we are at the epicenter of several very historical changes, therefore it is vital we get things right. We have only a limited amount of time to do this, as world events are not slowing down. It also is critically important to reorganize our military forces and other national capabilities in such a way to deal with the realities of the future. Gen Jones characterized the changes we are experiencing as tectonics, "the shifting plates of two vastly different cultures."

Gen Jones asked the questions, "What do we want to be in fifty years, both nationally and internationally? What do we have to do to get there? Do we still want to be free, to be the leader of the world, an example for other countries to emulate, a nation of influence?" He answered the questions with the warning that there is no guarantee that in fifty years the U.S. will be what we want it to be.

The tremendous legacy of World War II was our nation's coming out party. We were a bit hesitant at first. But by the end of the twentieth century, we were playing the role as the world's sole superpower. Now in the first years of the new millennium, not far removed from the last century, we have to figure out what we have to do to get to where we want to be in fifty years.

Capabilities of U.S. Forces

The all-volunteer force created in the 1970s caused the biggest change to our nation's military. It allowed us to achieve all the things we've achieved since then. Leadership and management of that force is important; so too is using technology.

An infantry battalion of the twenty-first century can do three- to four-times more than one of the twentieth century. Today we can replace an infantry regiment with a battalion by harnessing technology,

[1] For additional information on the Principles of War Seminar Series, see: http://www.jhuapl.edu/POW/index.htm

manpower, brainpower, and operational concepts.

The fourth pillar of transformation is how to buy the things we need, the rules that guide us, in other words, the business end of transformation. This area needs considerable attention and improvement.

Transformation has given us the capability to decrease the size of the force 37 to 40 percent, primarily due to our ability to harness technology. We have been converting manpower funds into paying for the technologies needed to sustain this smaller more capable force.

Pre- and Post-Combat Operations

Because pre- and post-conflict operations are manpower intensive, and because we are doing more of them than we had in the past, there are no real force structure savings. There also is a long-standing pattern that says pre- and post-conflict operations are not short-term. In order to best support these types of operations, the military will need to make significant cultural changes within its institution. This will take time; it will be a generational process.

The post-conflict phase of an operation demands that we change the way we approach the operation in the first phase. In order to do this properly and most efficiently, we must fuse all the elements of our national power in a coordinated way.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we fought classic, traditional wars. After the conflict phase ended, we rolled into the reconstruction phase. It was a long-term process. It was very hard to predict when or how one phase of an operation would end or blend into the next.

For example, after fourteen years of engagement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, next year the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO) will turn over responsibility for operations to the European Union. Gen Jones anticipates that operations in Bosnia- Herzegovina will continue for seven to eight more years.

Differing Views

There are drastically different paradigms between the way European nations look at contingency operations and the way the U.S. looks at them. U.S. personnel serving at European Command headquarters come from the military as well as from government agencies, including specialists in economics, law enforcement, trade, and energy, representing all the instruments of national power and influence. European Command has a 91-nation area of operations. The various agencies represented at European Command help us to understand better our allies and friends and conduct engagement throughout the theater.

The U.S. is criticized for not doing security, stability, and reconstruction very well. On the other hand, European countries do these well. If we talk with our European allies and friends about killing Osama bin Laden or Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, it turns them off because this is against their culture. They are more attuned to doing the kinds of things they

are doing in the Balkans and Afghanistan. A large number of our European allies build their forces around being able to perform security, stability, and reconstruction missions, not around combat requirements; their orientation is to do peace operations.

Engagement Before or After Wars Start

From Gen Jones' perspective, the biggest area needing attention, for both European nations and the United States, is what we do with our military forces and other elements of power during pre-conflict periods. We should observe how we use our forces in periods of non-conflict to insure we are putting them in the right places and doing the right things with them. Their proper use during pre-conflict periods could deter and even prevent conflict. We need to conduct forward engagement on as large and wide a scale as possible, with as many nations as possible.

NATO is transitioning from a static, linear force to one of expeditionary power projection. The biggest hurdle in doing this is cultural – as Europeans tend to think that they should let something bad happen first, before responding with force. If we engage during pre-crisis situations, we can deter and prevent a crisis form occurring. Furthermore, engagement on the front-end is a lot less expensive than having to fight in the long run. There is a ten-to-one cost difference between proactive engagement, versus reaction to crises once they occur.

The U.S. has been proactive in Africa by expeditionary, global basing. We must convince our allies and friends of the value in this; it will help bridge the trans-Atlantic link.

We need to work with other countries and cultures, and help our allies and friends shape and construct their forces with the right capabilities. Things such as multi-national logistics or intelligence units don't really exist in NATO; each nation provides their own logistics and intelligence support. We must help them change this. Logistic elements equate to approximately 30% of the forces from each nation's contribution to an operation; this is a large number that impacts the number of operational forces deployed.

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, al Qaeda and the Taliban are just a footnote. Insurgents could not mount an effective campaign prior to or during the recent national election; and they will not be able to mount any significant threat in the future. The Afghan National Army now is approximately 15,000 men strong, and is respected and admired widely by the Afghan people. They will fight, but we must help make them good soldiers. There are problems in Afghanistan, such as drugs and narcotics, and there are challenges determining how and when to solve them. What we need to do with warlords is to get them on the peaceful side of things. These types of things are problems of governance.

Start Memorizing the Map of Africa

It is imperative to understand that the Middle East is not the only part of the

world in which we will be focused. Gen Jones advised, "We all should start memorizing the map of Africa." We will be involved there. The question is, will we go in during Phase zero or Phase four. Unfortunately we are largely reactive. Almost on schedule we seem to go back to the same places, the U.S. to Liberia (and Haiti) and the French to the Ivory Coast. By doing things this way, we keep putting a band-aid on an arterial wound. It is time to proactively help African nations before crises start, before militant radical Islam sets in and spreads, before bad things happen. Why can't we do more to help the Economic Community Of West African States or the African Union? Why can't we get American industry to help with jobs and education, to fight adverse trends, provide opportunity, and offer hope? Why should we wait for countries like Nigeria to go under because of the north–south split between Christians and Muslims before we do something? We have to get involved and be aware of the consequences of failing to act!

The future of our military's deployments, especially for naval forces, will not be not along the northern littorals of the Mediterranean Sea. Rather, it will be in the western littorals of Africa, where nations are fighting piracy on the high seas, fighting for control of natural resources, and committing genocide. We can make a difference there. We can deter future conflict, prevent the spread of human trafficking, stop the spread of militant radical Islam, etc.

Europeans finally are coming to a collective realization that they cannot turn away and wait for bad things to happen before acting themselves. The reason is simple – global events are affecting them, the bombings in Morocco, Istanbul, Holland, etc.

How do you make the world more secure? Increased involvement in Africa would be a big step that would pay huge dividends in the long run. For example, the Pan Sahel region across Sub-Saharan Africa is bigger than the entire United States. The countries themselves do not really know what is going on there. Not only do we need to know what is going on there, but we must know how to fight and win there, equating our overwhelming warfighting superiority with the resolve to become involved early on with security, stability, and reconstruction. The real challenge is to make a difference ahead of time so that we do not have to fight later on. This cannot be the province of the military alone. There must be channels of collaboration across society, representing all the different elements of national power. This kind of approach is important at the unified command level, especially to European Command, a command encompassing 91 different nations from Norway to Russia and Israel to South Africa.

As a side note, Gen Jones commented that the name "European" Command dismisses an entire continent and should be changed to reflect the totality of the continents and countries within the command's area of responsibility.

Overlapping Borders Between Combatant Commands

Seams between the borders and responsibilities of the combatant commands must be blurry and soft, for

example between and among Central Command, Pacific Command, and European Command, as well as with Special Operations Command and other functional commands. Asymmetric threats are playing the seams; they are not conducting frontal attacks. In order to neutralize these threats and bring hope to struggling democracies, we will need to work with the conventional forces from many different countries, help some countries build their own special operations capabilities, and collaborate with various governmental and civilian agencies.

Changing Face of U.S. Forces in Europe

The kind of transformation we are talking about with regards to United States forces within Europe is to make them strategically more efficient. In the future, the U.S. will not have mass numbers of forces living in the United Kingdom, Italy, and Germany. When we finish our transformation, we will be strategically much more effective. We will be using all our forces in more places simultaneously. We will not be sitting on our backpacks in Western Europe waiting for bad things to happen first somewhere else. Rather, we will be working actively to prevent them from approaching. This is not about doing less, but about doing much more.

Today, the Navy-Marine Corps team is used in the West African littorals, Army forces in Africa and Eastern Europe, and Air Forces in Eastern Europe, Turkey, and South Africa. Special Operations Forces train various forces in small unit tactics and counterinsurgency skills. The interaction of all of these forces is critical to track the threat and to be strategically postured to deal with it. NATO matters. North Africa matters. The Caucasus matter.

We must be active and proactive. We must think strategically, nationally, and internationally. U.S. leadership linked to NATO transformation is critical. The Europeans expect us to lead. We will be successful in working together with our European allies and friends. There is much to be done.

Question and Answer Session

Training and Education of Our Forces

The psyche of our military must change; it must understand what it takes to solve conflict in the twenty-first century. We grew up thinking the application of sheer, classic military power was enough. But this new era is much different from the past. We must share our learning with others, and be prepared to learn from them as well. We must aggressively reach out and offer help to young leaders in friendly and developing countries. We must train ourselves and offer them training on the importance of understanding culture, problem solving, negotiations, sensitivity training, and language training. We need to include training in engagement and involvement in our schools.

The first ten years of an officer's life should be devoted to learning the skills of his specialty. By the time he reaches command and staff college level, he must learn strategy involving other services, other countries, and other societies. We need to develop the strategic thinking capabilities of our

people early in their careers. We plan operational and tactical things well. However, at the point of assessing our ability to think and act strategically, there is a tremendous drop-off in terms of quality and capabilities. Language training must start at the beginning of an officer's career, and must be expanded greatly once they reach Command and Staff College level.

Relations with European Countries

We can be good role models for the rest of the Alliance. Culturally, we are one and the same with most of the Alliance. We must train to face the difficult, universal and international threats of today, not the ones from the past we want to face.

There is a gradual convergence between the U.S. and Europe. Within NATO, the more the politicians disagree, the more the militaries get along.

NATO was not helpful in driving the Taliban from power or in dealing a crushing blow to al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The U.S. dealt with European countries bi-laterally in the combat phase of operations in Afghanistan.

Today, NATO is involved heavily in Afghanistan, as every nation in NATO is represented there. NATO nations have expressed their will to assume increased responsibility for operations in Afghanistan by manning Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). NATO has resourced operational missions for PRTs in Kabul and is taking over responsibility for more PRTs to conduct security, stability, and reconstruction around the country. The Taliban and al Qaeda are nuisances and will not resurge.

Early Involvement

We have to get involved in either Phase zero or Phase four, our choice.

There is an instinctive nature among soldiers to avoid getting shot. But if you can help someone, it is in our nature to help.

A well-trained soldier is a good peacemaker, but the reverse is not necessarily true. Gen Jones is not convinced that organizing and training peacekeepers is the way to go. If you have peacekeeping forces, you need a situation for which to allow them to do good things. A soldier instinctively wants to do good things.

Ethnic hatred is the most fearsome thing to be afraid of, among the most difficult things to overcome.

Post-conflict security, stability and reconstruction efforts are long-term; they should be planned as generational efforts. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, 104 out of 120 persons indicted as war criminals have been accounted for, being either apprehended and tried or killed. In order to increase their chances for success and speed-up the timelines, forces conducting security, stability, and reconstruction operations must first decapitate the heads of the enemy forces and government, either by bringing them to justice, killing, or otherwise neutralizing them. Cultural transformation within war-torn societies takes time; chances are that it will take

until the next generation to set in and become accepted.

After almost a decade of NATO involvement, it seems that the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina finally are changing their behavior for the good. In Kosovo on the other hand, after five-years of NATO involvement, it is still acceptable to ethnically cleanse based on ethnic hatreds.

Relationships Between Combatant Commanders

Supported and supporting relationships continuously evolve. Geographic combatant commanders know in detail what is going on in their areas of operation. Functional combatant commanders have specific capabilities. Collegiality and lack of firm dividing lines are important.

Issue Separating U.S. and Europe

Disagreement at the political levels with various NATO countries is not an indictment on us as Americans. The disagreement is over one thing, Iraq. Iraq is THE issue.

CETO Conclusions

General Jones's insights into the importance of Africa in this new century and the need for engagement coincide exactly with CETO's Flashpoints for Future Conflicts assessment. Additionally, his comments concerning language training, as well as cultural awareness are timely. The Marine Corps Combat Development Command is looking closely into how best to train and educate the force for the long-term in terms of language and cultural awareness programs. His comparison of the differences between American and European cultures and his emphasis on the importance of close and increased relations between the nations on both sides of the Atlantic is most important for us to understand. The U.S. must be able to leverage both differences and similarities to the collective advantage of America and Europe in pursuing peace and prosperity for all nations around the globe.