

**Regarding NATO:  
An Examination Of The Alliance's Role In The  
Global War On Terrorism**

**A Monograph**

**by**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### REGARDING NATO: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ALLIANCE'S ROLE IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

By Major Geoffrey A. Catlett, United States Army, 64 pages.

Since September 11, 2001, the United States has struggled to define a strategy for waging the Global War on Terrorism. From a military perspective, clearly the Bush administration wished to prosecute the war as a series of offensive campaigns, fought far from the shores of the homeland, and designed to deny 'safe havens' for terrorist networks abroad. In pursuing this policy the administration eschewed 'entangling alliances', preferring to establish coalitions of utility based on the immediate operational needs of a specific campaign. After periods of initial success in Afghanistan and Iraq, generally defined as rapid and decisive combat operations, each campaign has degenerated into protracted counterinsurgencies, with no foreseeable end. U.S. resources are being stretched to the breaking point and potential allies have shown a marked reluctance to join the fight after the initiation of hostilities.

In this monograph we examine the current and potential *military* roles of NATO in the Global War on Terrorism, and advocate a stronger, revitalized partnership between the U.S. and the Alliance. The U.S. clearly requires strong allies if it is to achieve its stated policy goals of establishing stable, secure, and democratic states where none existed before. Since the end of the Cold War NATO itself has been under a process of transformation, seeking to redefine itself in the absence of expansionist socialism. In addition to its rapid expansion into Eastern Europe—a necessary step to fill the vacuum left after the collapse of communism—the Alliance is moving rapidly towards establishing itself a major factor in international security and stability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With a revamped command and control architecture, as well as smaller, more professional and deployable, and technologically interoperable forces, NATO is poised to take on the same global challenges facing the U.S. The Alliance is essentially a strong, valuable, and as yet underutilized partner, in the Global War on Terrorism.

In order to suggest a stronger partnership, this monograph seeks to establish that the U.S. and NATO share a common understanding of the threat in today's security environment. Each recognizes that instability far from home, in failed or rogue states, threatens their security through the proliferation of terrorist networks. In addition, we examine the military strategies and capabilities each has developed in order to meet this threat and defeat it. In a case study of operations in Afghanistan, we establish the necessary conditions for a strong partnership between the U.S. and NATO in the Global War on Terrorism. Finally, we recommend some measures for developing a closer and more productive relationship. In essence a true revitalization of NATO, reinvigorated through U.S. participation and leadership, reestablishing the Alliance as a bulk work against instability and tyranny in an era of profound uncertainty.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## Background

Since the end of the Cold War NATO has struggled to find a new identity. Its seminal *raison d'être* of deterrence collapsed with the Berlin Wall in the early 1990's and successive NATO summits have wrestled with the Alliance's agenda for transformation. Its efforts to redefine itself were of mixed results and the Kosovo campaign in 1999 did little to clarify its way forward. It needed to change in order to stay relevant--that much was clear. The fact that this identity crisis was coupled with a vast expansion program to the East only exacerbated NATO's crisis of purpose.<sup>1</sup> The events of September 11, 2001 (9/11), accelerated this on-going process of redefinition and helped NATO to find focus and purpose when many scholars were writing the organization's obituary.<sup>2</sup> The Alliance is reorganizing itself at every level. Today we find NATO deeply involved in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)--its troops patrol the streets and environs of Kabul as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and its ships secure the waterways of the Mediterranean through Operation *Active Endeavor*. In terms of operational flexibility, it is currently on course to establish a corps-level rapid reaction force by October 2006--the NATO Response Force (NRF)--with a projected capability of deploying anywhere in the world within 30 days, self-sustaining for 90 days, and fully interoperable with their technology heavy U.S. counterparts. Its command and control architecture is being

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<sup>1</sup>Perhaps the foremost scholar in this area is Jeffrey Simon, a Senior Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University. Dr. Simon has written extensively on the ramifications of NATO expansion into Eastern Europe. A central thesis of his work supports NATO expansion as a means towards stabilization and democratization of burgeoning new members such as Poland, the Czech republic, and Slovenia. However this process has a reciprocal destabilizing effect of causing Russia to mistrust the West's motives and distance itself from NATO. See Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004) and Jeffrey Simon, *NATO and the Czech & Slovak Republic* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004).

<sup>2</sup>Those predicting NATO's demise come from both sides of the Atlantic. For European negativism, see Charles-Phillipe David and Jacques Levesque, eds., *The Future of NATO: Enlargement, Russia, and European Security* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); for U.S. doom and gloom, see Ted Allen Carpenter, *NATO Enters the 21st Century* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).

overhauled in order to make it more responsive to crisis decision-making and also interoperable with a U.S Joint Task Force level headquarters. In essence, NATO has quietly and effectively redefined itself, charting a course to become a major factor in international security and stability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

What is still unclear at this juncture is how NATO and the U.S. will define their relationship over the coming years. While members of the same alliance, the U.S. has loudly and caustically struck out on its own, refusing to compromise on any of its foreign policy objectives, recognizing only immediate utility as a lens through which to see the Alliance.<sup>3</sup> In invading both Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. marginalized NATO and demanded coalitions on its own terms, dictating to allies the roles each would play in the conflict. The U.S. has chosen a path of disengagement from NATO, turning a blind-eye to the Alliance's transformation agenda and its growing capabilities. The approaching failure of this position seems clear by virtue of one simple fact: complex and difficult post-conflict operations have forced the U.S. to request from NATO vast amounts of troops, funds, and resources.

## **Thesis and Methodology**

The purpose of this monograph is to suggest that the nature of the GWOT may require a strong U.S. partnership with NATO in order to achieve the Bush administration's desired

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<sup>3</sup>An analysis of the now infamous clique of neo-conservatives in the Bush administration is far beyond the limited means of this monograph. Suffice it to say, while much more than simply a foreign policy position, neoconservatism has a unique understanding of America's current position in the world. Irving Kristol, one of the movement's founding voices, states: "Behind all this is a fact: the incredible military superiority of the United States vis-à-vis the nations of the rest of the world, in any imaginable combination. Suddenly, after two decades during which "imperial decline" and "imperial overstretch" were the academic and journalistic watchwords, the United States emerged as uniquely powerful. The "magic" of compound interest over half a century had its effect on our military budget, as did the cumulative scientific and technological research of our armed forces. With power comes responsibilities, whether sought or not, whether welcome or not. And it is a fact that if you have the kind of power we now have, either you will find opportunities to use it, or the world will discover them for you." Irving Kristol, "The Neoconservative Persuasion: What it was, and what it is," *The Weekly Standard*, (August 23, 2003). Available at URL <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/003/000tzmlw.asp>



endstate: a stable, secure and democratic world, free from the ravages of terrorism.<sup>4</sup> While there are many avenues of approach for combating terrorism, to include diplomatic, economic, social, and legal initiatives, for the purposes of this monograph we will confine ourselves to its *military* aspects. It is necessary to make a distinction here in the use of the term military. Obviously there is a wide spectrum of potential operations implied in this term. Traditionally, military responses to terrorism have been limited to a small range of operations, generally confined to ‘surgical air strikes’ and special operations. Military, for our purposes, refers to the use of conventional forces in an interventionist role. We will argue that in this use of the term military, the GWOT is fundamentally about wars of regime change. In this sense combat operations are not decisive, but only of a shaping effect upon the ultimate outcome of any particular campaign. What is decisive, as Frederick Kagan writes, is understanding the nature of the conflict: “the true center of gravity in a war of regime change lies not in the destruction of the old system, but in the creation of the new one”.<sup>5</sup> Historically this has proven a delicate operation. Its enduring success seems ultimately to be tied to the concept of *legitimacy*. Not simply in terms of recognition by indigenous, regional, or U.S. audiences that the operation is morally acceptable, but more concretely that the operation be given some sort of sanction by a recognized international body or institution. U.S. foreign policy is often frustrated through the failure of the United Nations, with its many regional powers seeking to curb U.S. global interests, in supporting its initiatives. It has sought and failed to achieve legitimacy through temporary coalitions. As we shall argue then, this quality of bestowing legitimacy, critical to long-term success, may also be present in a strong, long-standing alliance such as NATO. The world supports far more instability than the U.S. alone is capable of containing. One method for containing that instability is participation in, and indeed leadership of, a robust alliance such as NATO.

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<sup>4</sup>*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), 1-2.

<sup>5</sup>Frederick W. Kagan, “War and Aftermath,” *Policy Review*, No. 120 (August, 2003): 6.

In order to suggest just such an approach, we must first establish whether there is an acceptable congruity in how both NATO and the U.S. view their fundamental security threats. The first step then involves asking the question “who are we fighting in the GWOT?” It has been a source of much criticism that our traditional allies, in particular those in Europe, diverge with the U.S. on what constitutes the threat in the GWOT and the method for prosecuting it. Consequently then, these critics maintain, it is a fault line in perception that requires the U.S. to reserve the right ‘to go it alone’ if required: the right to pursue ‘unilaterally’, as opposed to ‘multilaterally’, what it believes to be a vital interest. We will argue that from a military perspective this is a general mischaracterization of the debate. Both NATO and the U.S. recognize the fundamental threat of terrorism in the form of ‘failed’ and ‘rogue’ states functioning as ‘safe-havens’ for terrorists. Each recognizes that a military response may be the most effective tool for removing such a threat. As we shall see the complexity of the question again revolves around this issue of what constitutes a legitimate context for action.

The second step is to review both NATO and U.S. strategies for dealing with these state threats. We will do this by looking at how each defines the traditional aspects of strategy: ends (objectives), ways (conceptual methods), and means (resources). Specifically, what are their goals as set out in their strategies? What are their preferred methods for achieving those goals? What are their structures and capabilities and are they consistent with the objectives they have set out for themselves? As we shall see, both NATO and the U.S. find common ground in terms of ‘ends’ and ‘means’. It is in terms of ‘ways’ that there is a divergence.

The third step is to look at these strategies through the lens of current operations in Afghanistan. The divergence in the ‘ways’ is aptly exemplified in this case study, highlighting some weaknesses in the U.S. strategy for the GWOT. With NATO and the U.S. conducting separate operations side-by-side in the same country, in the form of NATO’s ISAF and the U.S.’s Operation *Enduring Freedom*, we have a unique opportunity to examine in practice how each

understands the use of the military in the same threat environment.

Finally, the fourth step is to explore an approach for fighting the GWOT that includes a strong link with NATO. What is fundamentally required is full U.S. engagement in and leadership of NATO. The Alliance is a robust and growing organization, fully cognizant of the dangers and threats in the world today. NATO's successes in the past, most notably in the Cold War and the Kosovo campaign, have been based on two facts. First, that despite any parochial differences to the contrary, all members have ultimately recognized that collective security is the foundation of a future peaceful and prosperous world. And second, it is through U.S. leadership that the alliance finds its direction and purpose. Certainly the second part is currently missing.

### **The Issue of Legitimacy**

Before we embark on the aforementioned comparison of NATO and U.S. approaches to the GWOT, it is important to say something more about the concept of legitimacy. The need for legitimacy is a fundamental concept in wars of regime change. Without legitimacy, no long-term success can be envisioned. This is not a new concept. It lies at the heart of both U.S. Army and Joint doctrine on Stability and Support Operations. How then do we define legitimacy? Who must recognize the operation as legitimate? Army FM 3-07 states very succinctly: "Legitimacy is a condition based on the perception by a specific audience of the legality, morality, or rightness of a set of actions. This audience may be the US public, foreign nations . . . [or] the populations in the area of responsibility."<sup>6</sup> These three target audiences then may need to be convinced that an operation is legitimate if it is to succeed. Why?

While the currents of US domestic support, with all of the inherent complexities of national politics cannot be easily elucidated, certainly it is clear cut *why* the US public must support such operations: it is they who are providing the blood and treasure for its prosecution. In

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<sup>6</sup>U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3-07, Stability and Support Operations*, (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, February 2002), II-5.

terms of the local populations, it is the recognition that when attempting to build a stable and secure civil administration for a state, some significant level of popular acceptance must be present in order to achieve success. For example, the roughly 50, 000 law enforcement officers of the state of California would have a difficult time policing its 36 million citizens if those citizens did not want to be policed. This is a peculiar dilemma of liberal democracies, in that one must rule by the consent of the people. It is not a dilemma that an authoritarian regime faces. Saddam Hussein, for example, with a 20 percent Sunni minority, was perfectly capable of controlling a significantly larger Shiite and Kurdish population. It was simply a matter of brutal terror.

Nevertheless, liberal democratic principles exclude resorting to such tactics. The would-be nation builder must govern his fledgling state not through aggressive coercion but by fostering a secure environment and establishing good government. Simply put, if one wishes a populace to embrace democracy as their form of government, they must be convinced of the efficacy of that form of government in providing benefits such as security and prosperity. Of course there are many 'spoilers' and 'obstructionists' vying for that legitimacy in the pursuit of power. Whether they be Afghan warlords pursuing age-old prerogatives, Taliban fighters seeking an Islamist state, or a wide spectrum of Iraqi and Islamist insurgent groups each with its own agenda, these factions struggle with occupying forces for the perception of legitimacy in the minds of the local population. Legitimacy then is the key to long-term operational success.

Finally what can we say of the question of legitimacy in regard to 'foreign nations'? In order to answer this question, we must make the distinction between 'unilateral' and 'multilateral' in relation to coalitions. The U.S. has often been accused of acting unilaterally in the GWOT: implicitly in Afghanistan by selecting only a few key allies to support operations and explicitly in Iraq by ignoring the United Nations. The U.S. has countered such criticisms by creating a self-described 'coalition of the willing', advocating that such a coalition is by definition a multilateral approach. Of course unilateral, in the sense of acting alone, is a misnomer. In practical terms what

critics *really* mean by unilateral is the pursuit of foreign policy objectives outside of the broader context of international institutions--true multilateralism. U.S. efforts to circumvent organizations like the UN, NATO, and the European Union through coalitions is both a perception of their own power and a recognition that legitimacy is tied to multilateral action. Coalitions then, in the U.S. view, provide international legitimacy.

This viewpoint seems to be flawed in two respects. First, in its perception of U.S. power to achieve regime changes, operations in Afghanistan and Iraq are stretching U.S. forces to the breaking point, and after three years of conflict, seem far from achieving stable, secure, and democratic regimes. In terms of time, this is not surprising. This is the reality of nation building, as taught in Bosnia and Kosovo. Transforming societies must be measured in generations, not years. While the U.S. is certainly an overmatch for any conventional military competitor, the manpower and resources required to transform multiple societies into stable democracies simultaneously seems beyond its means. For this to happen, it requires international support. As in Bosnia and Kosovo, that crucial support of the international community is tied to this question of legitimacy.

Which leads to the second point: coalitions in and of themselves do not lend an operation legitimacy. The function of legitimacy is the product of international institutions. Obviously the preeminent institution for bestowing legitimacy is the UN, an organization whose flaws in decision-making and action-taking have rightly frustrated many in the current U.S. administration. However, if legitimacy is a prerequisite of success, then some form of compromising interaction with international institution becomes unavoidable. An important question is whether NATO is capable of fulfilling this crucial legitimizing function? In the Kosovo campaign, with an obstructionist Russia blocking a hardline stance against Serbian aggression in the UN, both U.S. and European interests were served through a NATO response. It functioned in that case in a legitimizing capacity. It is necessary to recognize that NATO did not

see Kosovo as a precedent for future action. The Alliance is determined to maintain the UN as the sole arbiter of international legitimacy. However, despite protestations to the contrary, Kosovo opened the door to military conflict resolution outside of the purview of the UN under certain urgent circumstances. The question thus becomes whether the potential exists for it to function in that same capacity in the GWOT?

## **II. DEFINING THE THREAT**

### **Avoiding the Historical Debate on 'War' and 'Terror'**

What exactly constitutes the threat in the GWOT? The very name given to this conflict by the Bush administration implies an extremely daunting task. The terms 'war' and 'terror' are far from neutral concepts with generally accepted definitions. Significant debate over the past three years has been devoted to defining these very terms. Indeed much of the criticisms of this administration's prosecution of the conflict centers around challenges to how these terms are defined. War, for example, has traditionally been understood as military operations conducted between states, or between factions within a state vying for its control. However, in recent years the term 'war' has functioned in a myriad of uses and contexts within our nation's political life. Two notable examples are the Johnson administration's 'War on Poverty' in the 1960s and the semi-permanent 'War on Drugs' spanning the last thirty years. Both of these 'wars' are euphemistic uses of the term contrived to convey the profound struggle involved in tackling such seemingly intractable social issues. In the vast critical 'commentary war' then on the GWOT much of the debate has centered over whether the term 'war', with its implied concepts of 'victory' and 'defeat', is even appropriate in addressing a struggle against such a historically recurrent social phenomenon as terrorism. Indeed the thrust is that the GWOT has been artificially removed from

its historical context, either for political reasons or simply poor theory.<sup>7</sup>

In the context of this monograph we will strive to avoid this debate over definitions and their historical context. For our purposes, the examination of a common approach for fighting terrorism within a conventional military context for NATO and the U.S., it is sufficient to review how each defines such terms within their own strategy documents. As we shall see, a clear articulation of what constitutes terrorism and the overall nature of the conflict will present itself during the course of this chapter. From the outset we will accept the administration's premise that terrorism is essentially anti-state violence perpetrated by individuals against innocent noncombatants, as opposed to a more broad definition, for example, that includes the political violence of a government against its own citizens.<sup>8</sup> While debates such as this are certainly profitable for the social historian, our task is more practically oriented. It is simply to bring into strong relief how these organizations define their adversary and the strategies they envision for defeating that adversary.

### **The U.S. View of the Threat**

While the Bush administration has used a wide variety of media for conveying its concept of the GWOT, to include strategy papers, speeches, press conferences, and policy debates, we shall focus on two core documents: *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* and *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. In the first document a broad definition

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<sup>7</sup>Often the criticism centers around the notion that by using the term 'war' the administration sets up a conventional war paradigm for the nation, with expected outcomes of 'victory' and 'surrender', rather than recognizing that this is simply the latest round in a vast struggle of "social, technological, and historical trends." See Robert Wright, "A Real War on Terrorism", *Slate*, (September 3, 2002), available at URL <http://slate.msn.com/?id=2070210&entry=2070211> Even worse, the term 'war' is a blanket 'political myth' propagated to establish U.S. world hegemony. As an example, see British MP and former Blair Cabinet Minister Michael Meacher's article printed on *The Guardian's* website. Michael Meacher, "This War on Terrorism is Bogus", *Common Dreams News Center*, (September 6, 2003), available at URL <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1036571,00.html>. Also Jeffrey Record, *Bounding the Global War on Terrorism*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, December, 2003), 2.

<sup>8</sup>Jeffrey Record, *Bounding the Global War on Terrorism*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, December, 2003), 6-9.

of the enemy is offered:

Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadowy *networks of individuals* can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than the cost of a single tank. Terrorists are organized to penetrate open societies and to turn the power of *modern technology* against us...The war against terrorists of global reach is a global enterprise of uncertain duration...America will hold to *account nations that are compromised by terror*, including those *who harbor terrorists*-because allies of terror are the enemies of civilization.<sup>9</sup> (*Italics added*)

As stated here the picture that emerges of the terrorist threat can be divided into two main categories: 1) First is the articulation of terrorism as defined by individuals, or groups of individuals loosely connected into global networks, willing to use weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to attack the American homeland: "Our enemies have openly declared that they are seeking weapons of mass destruction, and evidence indicates that they are doing so with determination"<sup>10</sup> 2) These terrorist networks cannot operate in a void, but must have a physical base from which to plan, organize, train, and conduct operations. These 'safe havens' can be divided into two subcategories or types: 'rogue states' which tolerate terrorist activity by intent and 'failed states' where terrorists operate due to the inability of the central government to stop them. Let us look at each of these two main categories more closely.

## Terrorist Networks

*National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* provides a definition of terrorist networks placing them into three separate but interrelated subcategories." At the first level are those terrorist organizations that operate primarily within a single country. Their reach is limited, but in this global environment their actions can have international consequences. Such state-level groups may expand geographically if their ambitions and capabilities grow unchecked."<sup>11</sup> While this relatively 'single issue' threat may seem to be geo-politically tied to a specific area--for

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<sup>9</sup>*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), Introduction.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, Introduction.

<sup>11</sup>*National Strategy For Combating Terrorism*, (Washington, DC: The White House, February 2003), 8.



example the Basque separatists of Spain--the administration postulates that any terrorist group has the inherent potential to be an adversary. This potential lies in its chosen method of pursuing its cause, in that terrorism aims at destroying the internal stability of a society in order to gain its end. Those who pursue instability "can draw strength and support from groups in other countries", as when in 2001 "three members of Irish Republican Army were arrested in Columbia, suspected of training the FARC in how to conduct an urban bombing campaign".<sup>12</sup> Resources are scarce even for terrorists and experience becomes a valuable commodity. "At the next level are terrorist organizations that operate regionally. These regional operations transcend at least one international boundary."<sup>13</sup> For example Hamas and Hezbollah operate within the context of the entire Middle East, drawing sponsorship, members, and funds from throughout the Arab world in prosecuting their campaign of terror against Israel.

Finally "terrorist organizations of a global reach comprise the third category. Their operations span several regions and their ambitions can be transnational and even global."<sup>14</sup> Clearly al-Qaeda most aptly fits this third group. Operating at a level of sophistication and mobility that defies easy targeting, this 'enterprise' is prototypical in its methodology. In general functioning in a decentralized manner with largely autonomous cells, they are simply incorporating the Information Age into terrorism: "Its global activities are coordinated through the use of...communication technologies emblematic of our era--cellular and satellite phones, encrypted e-mail, internet chat rooms, videotape, and CD-ROMs."<sup>15</sup> The international media, with its 24-hour news cycle, is exploited to spread their message worldwide. Funds are generated through the vast webs of e-commerce, in transnational 'charities', non-governmental organizations, and banking communities. Some of these are legitimate and others are not. In

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 7.

essence, today's terrorists "can now use the advantage of technology to disperse leadership, training, and logistics not just regionally but globally". In an age marked by mobility, the terrorist is physically and virtually always on the move. As already alluded to, this unprecedented mobility allows these organizations at every level to call upon like organizations globally in order to pool resources in dangerous ways.

These three types of organizations are linked together in two ways. First, they cooperate directly by sharing intelligence, personnel, expertise, resources, and safe havens. Second, they can support each other in less direct ways, such as promoting the same ideological agenda and reinforcing each other's efforts to cultivate a favorable international image for their 'cause'...The interconnected nature of terrorist organizations necessitates that we pursue them across the geographic spectrum to ensure that all linkages between the strong and the weak organizations are broken, leaving each of them isolated, exposed, and vulnerable to defeat.<sup>16</sup>

It is this quality of 'isolation' that is the projected defeat mechanism for terrorism and it is where the military option comes into play. In this next section we see the form of the threat that requires such a military response to isolate and destroy the terrorist network.

## Rogue and Failed States

This second main category of threat is critical to the administration's strategy for fighting the GWOT. It defines the strategic and operational space in which the terrorist organization functions. While terrorists certainly take advantage of the porous borders of open societies, it is fundamentally within the context of a sympathetic or weak state that they are able to function. Rogue states, according to U.S. policy, are the more dangerous of the two. While terrorist organizations are able to plan, organize, and train within the context of a weak or failed state whose government is unable or uninterested in curbing their activities, it is in the rogue state that terrorists find their willing partners and sponsors. *The National Security Strategy* identifies a number of characteristics of such states, two of which define the administration's understanding of 'imminent threat' and 'clear and present danger' to the United States and its allies. These are

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 9.

states which:

- Are determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction, along with other advanced military technology, to be used as threats or offensively to achieve the aggressive designs of these regimes
- Sponsor terrorism around the globe<sup>17</sup>

The U.S. State Department currently lists Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria, Cuba, and Libya as threats of this character. Obviously Iraq will soon leave this list, with Libya and Sudan considered to be making improvement.<sup>18</sup> When the President refers to the "gravest danger to freedom lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology," it is based upon the access to WMD technology that a rogue state may possibly give to a terrorist network. In general they seek WMD for three reasons: 1) In order to threaten and coerce their neighbors--"our enemies see weapons of mass destruction as weapons of choice. For rogue states these weapons are tools of intimidation and military aggression against their neighbors"<sup>19</sup> 2) In order to threaten and deter the United States and her allies from interfering in their aggressive behavior and 3) In order to use terror as a potentially policy changing tactic. In essence the administration is postulating that rogue states of this ilk are determined to provide terrorist networks with WMD in order to function as proxy groups: "Rogue states and terrorists do not seek to attack us using conventional means...they rely on acts of terror and, potentially, the use of weapons of mass destruction--weapons that can be easily concealed, delivered covertly, and used without warning."<sup>20</sup> Simply by obfuscating the trail of accountability, the rogue state achieves its effect--catastrophic destruction of U.S. population and property and the accompanying retreat of U.S. influence in international affairs--without a counter-strike risk. In this sense a classic strategy of deterrence only functions against the rogue

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<sup>17</sup>*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), 14.

<sup>18</sup>David Ensor and Elise Labott, "Worldwide terrorist attacks down in 2003," *CNN.com*, (April 29, 2004), available at URL <http://www.cnn.com/2004/US/04/29/terror.report/>.

<sup>19</sup>*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), 14.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

state acting in its capacity as a state. It fails in functioning to deter the rogue state acting through its terrorist proxy because of the lack of evidence.

### **The NATO View of the Threat**

A quick survey of recent professional literature concerning the role of NATO in the global security environment, its transformation process and expansion, as well as its policy in the GWOT, is pessimistic over the Alliance's future. Scholarship seems to be divided into two negative camps. The first perceives NATO as a dying multilateral breed, soon to be made extinct by a unilateral predator. The U.S., with its extraordinary force projection capability and the consequent technology gap, can only be negatively inhibited by such a ponderous organization as NATO. The Alliance is functionally irrelevant by virtue of its defense gap with the U.S. The second group, only slightly less gloomy than the first, sees NATO as maintaining a purpose in its collective security function--a sort of global insurance policy in the unlikely scenario of a revanchist Russia or some other unforeseen calamity--essentially an argument for maintaining a treaty relationship despite NATO's obvious functional irrelevance. Both camps perceive NATO as fundamentally aligned with the European sensibility of power diplomacy and opposed to an interventionist policy of any kind. Where does this pessimistic view come from?

Much of the responsibility for this negative outlook may actually be the fault of the Alliance itself. Scholars are frustrated who look to NATO for the core policy documents of which the U.S. government and its defense establishment frequently publish. In regard to the GWOT, NATO has maintained a low profile. As a military and political alliance, NATO has remained aloof from the security debate. The Alliance's key security policy document, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, has not been significantly updated since 1999. Published policy statements from the organization are often broad and generic in their stances towards the GWOT. In fact NATO refrains from using the term in any official documents, communiqués, or press releases. Clearly the organization is attempting to walk a fine line in maintaining its transatlantic 'bulk

work', while recognizing that it functions in a continental environment increasingly hostile to an offensive posture in the GWOT. Does this mean then that the alliance is defensively oriented?

## Terrorist Networks

The initial temptation may be to answer this in the affirmative. For example, if we look to the results of the Istanbul Summit of June 2004, the alliance's official communiqué articulated its policy towards terrorism as follows:

We strongly condemn terrorism, whatever its motivations or manifestations, and will fight it together as long as necessary. The Alliance provides an essential transatlantic dimension to the response against terrorism, which requires the closest possible cooperation of North America and Europe. We are committed to continue our struggle against terrorism in all its forms, *in accordance with international law and UN principles.*<sup>21</sup> (*Italics added*)

The text of the communiqué goes on to say that NATO is dedicated to the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373--the UN's key document in defining terrorism. One may be inclined to see in this statement a condemnation of U.S. policy in Iraq. Perhaps we might define it as more a friendly nudge between friends. It certainly would be a mistake to perceive it as an unequivocal statement of NATO's alignment with the UN. We will look more closely at this issue in our chapter concerning NATO strategy. First we need to examine UN Resolution 1373 in order to bring some depth to NATO's understanding of the terrorist threat.

In reading this resolution, it is clear that the Security Council was attempting to frame the issue in benign terms. Terrorism is articulated in the framework of a breach of international law--in essence a criminal act--in which states are called upon to prosecute perpetrators with utmost rigor. While the Resolution reiterates Chapter VII of the UN Charter as a fundamental right of states—"reaffirming the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense as recognized by the Charter of the United Nations"—it is extremely careful to avoid the language of conventional

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<sup>21</sup>"Istanbul Summit Communiqué", *NATO Press Releases*, (June 28, 2004), Available at URL <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>.

conflict. It assiduously refrains from placing terrorism within the context of the ‘rogue or failed state’ concept. Below is a summary of its salient points as defined by the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee, established to oversee implementation of 1373:

- Deny all forms of financial support for terrorist groups
- Suppress the provision of safe haven, sustenance or support for terrorists
- Share information with other governments on any groups practicing or planning terrorist acts
- Co-operate with other governments in the investigation, detection, arrest and prosecution of those involved in such acts
- Criminalize active and passive assistance for terrorism in domestic laws and bring violators of these laws to justice
- Become party as soon as possible to the relevant international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism<sup>22</sup>

As one can see, the terrorist threat is essentially defined in terms of individual and group transnational criminal activity, with an emphasis on funding, information-sharing, and international legal consistency. The UN is clearly concerned with maintaining a position in which it is the final arbiter of conflict between states. The issue then becomes one of discerning whether NATO is content with this articulation of the terrorist threat. Is the Alliance simply reaffirming its fundamentally defensive collective security posture by deferring to the UN’s narrow definition of the threat?

## Rogue and Failed States

In order to find the answer to this question we must look first to one of the few policy documents available from NATO on terrorism: *NATO’s Military Concept for Defense Against Terrorism*. Its comments on threat assessment are somewhat vaguely worded. While first postulating that state sponsored terrorism is actually in decline, it makes the admission that “political circumstances could lead to its rise, providing terrorists with safe havens and

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<sup>22</sup>“What does CTC ask of States?”, *UN Counter-Terrorism Committee*, URL <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1373/ask.html>.

considerable resources”.<sup>23</sup> It goes on to also acknowledge that state sponsored terrorists have a proclivity towards large-scale operations, to include weapons of mass destruction. Finally it states that the Alliance recognizes that terrorists must not be allowed “to base, train, plan, stage and execute terrorists actions” and that the threat may be severe enough to “justify acting against these terrorists and those who harbor them, as and where required”.<sup>24</sup> In essence then, NATO recognizes that terrorists and WMDs are a profoundly dangerous combination, one that may warrant ‘offensive military action’ into those places that sponsor them.

In order to bring these policy statements into sharp relief, it is helpful to review the NATO Secretary General’s own words from a recent conference on global security issues. In his speech, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer placed the issue of terrorism in a much broader context than implied in the aforementioned UN Resolution. He states:

For the transatlantic community, *projecting stability has become the precondition for our security*. Territorial defense remains a core function, but we simply can no longer protect our security without addressing the potential risks and threats that arise far from our homes. Either we tackle these problems when and where they emerge, or they end up on our doorstep.<sup>25</sup>

This concept of ‘projecting stability’ is clearly an articulation of what is an emerging policy of NATO: that terrorism is fundamentally connected to the phenomenon of rogue or failed states. Prudence and common sense requires that the Alliance posture itself quickly and efficiently to project force globally in order to defeat these terrorists threats as they emerge. As we shall see in the next chapter on strategy this capability is rapidly taking shape in the NATO Response Force. However does NATO recognize the equal position of rogue and failed states as threats, as indicated in the U.S. understanding of the threat? Practice would seem to indicate a negative answer. The alliance sought full partnership in taming the failed state of Afghanistan, with a clear

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<sup>23</sup>“NATO’s Military Concept For Defense Against Terrorism”, *NATO International Military Staff*, (December 15, 2003), Available at URL <http://www.nato.int/ims/docu/terrorism.htm>.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, “Projecting Stability”, *NATO Speeches*, (May 17, 2004), Available at URL <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s00517a.htm>.

cause and effect relationship in the 9/11 attacks as well as UN support of military action (though that support was not a prerequisite to responding to such an outrageous attack). However NATO, as an alliance, could not support action against the rogue state of Iraq when significant member states felt that other forms of initiative, whether diplomatic, economic, or legal, had not been exhausted.

### **Towards A Common Understanding of the Threat**

In this chapter we have attempted to dispel the notion that a fundamental difference in understanding the threat exists between U.S. and NATO policy. We have established that there is a clear recognition by each entity that terrorism is a complex, highly decentralized, transnational phenomenon perpetrated by extremist individuals and groups on innocents in order to advance a political agenda. In this each also recognizes that such terrorism must be addressed as a form of criminal activity, with a requisite approach of dismantling support networks through information-sharing, financial network disruption, police work, and, perhaps most significantly, economic and social aid to the poor and disenfranchised, in order to isolate the terrorist and disrupt his ability to plan, fund, and recruit his activities. On this understanding of the threat there is universal agreement. However, per se, this is not a form of the threat that would potentially require conventional military action.

We have also established that both NATO and the U.S., albeit with the former's attempt to maintain a non-controversial posture, share a common understanding of the role of the failed state in the formation and sustainment of terrorism of global reach. It is here that both recognize that 'offensive military action' is an acceptable approach to dealing with states that cannot deter terrorists, especially in an environment in which the proliferation of WMDs makes inaction a course with potentially catastrophic results. The caveat to the NATO position is stopping short in identifying the 'rogue' state threat. This is an implied articulation that any action against such an adversary should be sanctioned 'in accordance with international law and UN principles': hence



the issue of legitimacy. This is not to say that U.S. policy does not also take into account issues of international sanction for military action. The issue is that it has unequivocally announced that the U.S. reserves the right to make war based solely on considerations of its own vital interests--without recourse to any international body or institution. Does this represent then an impasse between NATO and the U.S. in terms of their security postures? Now that we have defined the threat and the nature of the conflict, this is a question we must explore in the next chapter when we look more closely at NATO and U.S. military strategies for combating terrorism.

### **III. MILITARY STRATEGIES FOR THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM**

#### **Awake the Sleeping Giants**

The attacks of September 11, 2001, smashed the hopes of many in the U.S. policy elite of a pending 'New World Order', one based on international laws and institutions. They saw the future 'face of battle': powerful asymmetrical attacks on the symbols and icons of Western affluence, in this case the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Americans in its aftermath spoke of the 'day that changed our history', and embarked on a course that eventually led to a radical redefinition of the use of American military power and to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. What is less well appreciated is that NATO also recognized an unprecedented event and responded in somewhat surprising ways. The following day in Brussels NATO members met and, for the first time in the Alliance's history, invoked Article V of its founding charter, initiating a state of collective security, that is, "an armed attack against one or more of the NATO members shall be considered as an attack against all".<sup>26</sup> Unlike the string of UN Resolutions that followed these horrendous attacks, NATO's resolve took more concrete forms. In October 2001, through Operation *Eagle Assist*, NATO's fleet of AWACS aircraft were mobilized and sent to the U.S. for defense of North American airspace--an operation that lasted over nine months. In ensuing

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<sup>26</sup>*NATO Handbook*. (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), 28.

months, the Alliance organized Operation *Active Endeavor*, dispatching elements of its Standing Naval Forces to the eastern Mediterranean to monitor shipping in an anti-terrorist role. In March 2003, this operation expanded to include the western Mediterranean and commercial traffic through the Strait of Gibraltar.<sup>27</sup> In addition to these concrete measures, and perhaps most significantly, NATO has undergone a reevaluation of its charter, organization, force structure, and decision-making apparatus--essentially its vision for the future and its role on the world stage--in a process of transformation that is still ongoing and is in itself constantly transforming.

In this chapter we will review the military strategies of both NATO and the U.S. in combating terrorism, in particular their approaches to fighting terrorism as manifested in what we defined in the previous chapter as rogue and failed states. In terms of the U.S. approach we shall argue that their understanding of the GWOT is fundamentally flawed. A doctrine of coalition warfare against such threats, without any avenue of international sanction or legitimacy, is self-defeating in that the threat is not simply the conventional forces of the adversarial regime, but replacing the regime with one that is a stable and secure member of the international community. To this end, it requires international legitimacy to rally the resources necessary to accomplish the aforementioned regime change. We shall also argue that NATO is transforming itself in an operational sense to coping with such threats, by transforming its core functions, organizations, and force structures to meet a highly unpredictable environment. Through such an ambitious program of transformation, the Alliance is posturing itself to play a significant role in future security issues. The nature of that role is in large part dependent upon the evolving position of the U.S. in the Alliance; specifically, whether the current and subsequent administrations recognize value in reestablishing themselves as a strong leader of that Alliance.

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<sup>27</sup>“Operation *Active Endeavor*,” *NATO Regional Headquarters Allied Forces Southern Europe*, March 17, 2004, URL <http://www.afsouth.nato.int/operations/Endeavor/Endeavor.htm>.

## The U.S. Military Strategy

### The Kosovo Legacy

What is puzzling to many is the U.S. response to that September 12, 2001 meeting in Brussels. In what amounted to essentially a rebuff on the part of the U.S. to NATO offers of support, the administration attempted from the beginning to delineate the type and form of support it required from its allies. In particular it hesitated to endorse the Article V clause in fear of its future ramifications on U.S. options. The administration's fears seemed to be grounded in three areas: 1) a fear that NATO would usurp U.S. operational autonomy 2) a fear that their NATO allies would slow their response due to a distinct 'capabilities gap' and 3) a fear of repeating the elaborate and laborious Kosovo campaign command and control architecture that many in the Pentagon believe hampered those operations.<sup>28</sup> As Secretary Rumsfeld publicly stated, "The mission determines the coalition. The coalition doesn't determine the mission."<sup>29</sup> This reality was made clear to NATO in that the only ally that Washington called upon was the British, with the Blair government providing three nuclear submarines with precision guided munitions, tactical fighter aircraft, 600 Royal Marine Commandos, and the strategic base of Diego Garcia.<sup>30</sup> This is not to say that NATO did not contribute. Operations *Eagle Assist* and *Active Endeavor* indirectly supported operations in Afghanistan by freeing up like assets for the Americans to deploy to the region.

But what of this 'Kosovo legacy'? In short, it is the notion that the war in Kosovo in 1999

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<sup>28</sup>General Wesley Clark relates an interesting anecdote from a meeting with a senior official in the Pentagon a few days after 9/11: "At his invitation, I began to share some thoughts about how we had waged the Kosovo war by working within NATO--but he cut me off: 'We read your book', he scoffed, 'And no one is going to tell us where we can or can't bomb.'" Wesley Clark, "An Army of One?," *Washington Monthly*, (September 2002), available at URL <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0209.clark.html>. See also Rebecca Johnson and Micah Zenko, "All Dressed Up and No Place to Go: Why NATO Should Be on the Front Lines in the War on Terror," *Parameters*, (Winter 2003): 50.

<sup>29</sup>Rebecca Johnson and Micah Zenko, "All Dressed Up and No Place to Go: Why NATO Should Be on the Front Lines in the War on Terror," *Parameters*, (Winter 2003): 50-51.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 52.

was essentially an operational disaster due to the incessant interference of European politicians into the target selection process. This point of view was summed up by LTG Michael Short, the U.S. Air Force general in charge of the air campaign, after the war in a well-publicized media interview: “I hope the alliance will learn that before you drop the first bomb, or fire the first shot, we need to lock the political leaders up in a room and have them decide what the rules of engagement will be so they can provide the military with the proper guidance and latitude needed to prosecute the war.”<sup>31</sup> Hence was born the myth of ‘Euro-squimishness’ in bringing down Milosevic’s regime--a clear dichotomy between U.S. ‘action’ and European ‘talk’.

There are three fundamental problems with this perspective. First, it is indicative of a noticeably American military perspective that once the decision to go war is made, politicians need to take a seat in the stands and watch the game. While such a role for the political leadership in a liberal democracy is unthinkable--electorates vote for these politicians with the clear understanding that they will represent their interests in *all* facets of governance--it is also almost historically unprecedented. It would be difficult to cite a conflict in American history in which political realities did not in some manner shape operations. As for the notion that politicians should be able to discern rules of engagement prior to a conflict, issue guidance and then retire to a safe distance to allow military professionals to take over, it simply ignores the fact that political and military situations are fluid and malleable.<sup>32</sup> War is not by definition total war. Kosovo was essentially an exercise in coercive diplomacy--the limited use of force in order to make a seemingly entrenched foe move diplomatically. It was right and appropriate for politicians to be the final arbiters of the amount of force to be used in such a conflict.

Second, the notion that our NATO allies displayed lack of resolve, as well as casualty

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<sup>31</sup>As quoted in Ivo H. Dalder and Michael O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 221.

<sup>32</sup>For an excellent treatment of this point, see Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002).

and collateral damage aversion, that degraded operational effectiveness is simply not true. Policies of gradual escalation and the ruling out of a ground option came out of Washington, not Berlin or Paris. Decisions to only deploy a modest air fleet to the area--only a fraction of what was eventually deployed--to restrict aircraft to above 15, 000 feet, and to send the only U.S. aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean out of theater ten days before the initiation of hostilities, were all made by the Clinton administration. While the Blair and Chirac governments, and the Clinton administration for that matter, did exercise some veto rights over limited targets, neither affected the course of the war.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the difficulties in the Kosovo campaign were essentially more a product of a failure of U.S. leadership than flaws in the NATO structure. For example many believe that U.S. planners wanted a more robust strategy from the start, with a broad mandate for target selection and the use of ground forces.<sup>34</sup> These options, however, were tabled as the U.S. recognized that their NATO allies would not countenance such a strategy from the beginning. Ivo Dalder and Michael O'Hanlon, in their book *Winning Ugly*, make the case that the U.S. simply failed to explore options with their allies through a lack of vision for the conflict:

Although it is impossible to know whether the allies would have gone along with a more robust strategy, including early use of ground forces, the United States never made the case. U.S. policy presumed the allies' rejection, just as it presumed congressional opposition to the use of ground forces. No one tested the validity of these presumptions, which instead proved a convenient excuse for not making tough strategic choices. It was easier to blame NATO than to make the case for a war-winning strategy.<sup>35</sup>

The lessons of Kosovo point less to a failure of European nerve and more to a failure of U.S. leadership in the Alliance--a phenomenon one may argue that continues today. The key lesson from Kosovo, and one that we would do well to remember, is that despite such a lack of leadership, the Alliance still held and Milosevic retired to Serbia proper. NATO would seem to be

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 222.

<sup>34</sup>Wesley Clark, *Waging Modern War* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 425.

<sup>35</sup>Ivo H. Dalder and Michael O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 222-223.

far more resilient than is the currently held position. The key to NATO effectiveness as a war-fighting and conflict-resolving organization is not simply achieving consensus and acting, but achieving consensus and acting through U.S. leadership. It also held a key legitimizing function for the conflict despite a lack of UN resolve. The Alliance, however, recognizes this function as an exception to the rule of UN mandates for action. In the case of Kosovo, the urgency of the humanitarian crisis and the laborious nature of UN consensus building, forced the Alliance to act on its own authority as a regional organization. In the view of most of the Allies, this is not a scenario of choice.

## A Doctrine of Preventive War

At the heart of the U.S. military strategy for combating terrorism in the case of a rogue or failed state is a fundamental assumption: the failure of the doctrine of deterrence against an essentially irrational adversary. *The National Security Strategy* delineates the dilemma as follows:

In the Cold War, we faced a generally status quo, risk adverse adversary. Deterrence was an effective defense. But deterrence based only on the threat of retaliation is less likely to work against leaders of rogue states more willing to accept risks, gambling with the lives of their people, and the wealth of their nations...Traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of civilians.<sup>36</sup>

Consequently the administration posits a doctrine of 'preventive' war, by essentially broadening the traditional definition of 'preemptive' war, in order to deal with this new strategic calculus. It also posits a military capable of global reach, with unambiguous results.

The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, the greater the risk of inaction--the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively. . . . We will continue to transform our military forces to ensure our ability to conduct rapid and precise operations to achieve decisive results.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002) 15.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 15-16.

Traditionally ‘preemption’ referred to a nation’s prerogative to attack an enemy as it is preparing to take military action against you, with the desired effect of defeating such an imminent attack or at least mitigating its effect by your first strike. For example, in terms of combating terrorism, one can recognize the necessity of a military strike against a terrorist network preparing a WMD for upcoming attack: these are traditional counterterrorism operations, a foundational element of U.S. security policy. The use of special operations forces to interdict imminent terrorist threats, or as advisors in a foreign internal defense role in order to reduce instability, have been and will continue to be a mainstay of our military response to terrorism. Where the administration broadens this traditional definition is by removing the temporal justification, that is, not only *imminent* threat capabilities but also *emerging* capabilities may require an immediate military response. Thus the attack takes on more the character of a ‘preventive’ attack as opposed to ‘preemptive’ one. This is hardly a semantic distinction in that it opens up a much wider range of targets.<sup>38</sup> In essence this broadens the forms of military power to be used in dealing with terrorist threats, rationalizing the potential use of expeditionary forces in a conventional intervention role to deal with an adversarial regime. How then does the U.S. military translate this ‘preventive’ policy into a strategic concept for action against potential adversaries?

This new role for the military is articulated in the *National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (NMS). In summary two potential conflict scenarios are envisioned: ‘Swift Defeat’ scenario and ‘Win Decisively’ scenario. While neither scenario is intrinsically tied to terrorism or a state sponsor of terrorism--each scenario encompasses other forms of threat besides those involved in the GWOT--they are ready responses to rogue or failed state adversaries. In the ‘Swift Defeat’ concept the NMS envisions a conflict with “a limited set of objectives,” for example, a situation in which we wish to simply destroy the offensive capability

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<sup>38</sup>Bruce R. Nardulli, “The U.S. Army and the Offensive War on Terrorism,” Lynn E. Davis and Jeremy Shapiro, eds., *The U.S. Army and the New National Security Strategy* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2003) 27-28.

of an adversary in order to preclude aggressive behavior against a neighbor or ally. The NMS identifies the necessary characteristics of such a U.S. force necessary to carry out this scenario: unprecedented levels of deployability, decisiveness, agility, and flexibility. In terms of deployability, a high premium is placed upon both strategic access and strategic lift in order “to conduct and sustain multiple, simultaneous operations”.<sup>39</sup> The quality of decisiveness is essentially the ability to achieve decisive effects. This vision is centered on overwhelming an adversary by “tailoring packages of joint capabilities designed to achieve specific effects and accomplish objectives . . . overmatching power is the precise application of combat power to foreclose enemy options and rapidly seize the initiative to achieve conclusive victories.”<sup>40</sup> In addition, this level of strategic reach and decisive outcome must be matched by an extreme level of agility, in that such a force must be capable of rapidly reconstituting itself, reconfiguring, and redeploying to another theater of operations. Inherent in the necessity of this kind of agility is a realistic recognition that technological enhancement will limit the amount of standing forces available. The cost of transforming the force into one capable of full spectrum dominance is, in simple terms, a very small force: hence the requirement for a force capable of rapid reconstitution.

The final characteristic of such a force is one marked by flexibility. This quality comes into play in the ‘Win Decisively’ scenario. In such an operation the commander may be required by expansive policy objectives to fight across the entire spectrum of conflict, from high intensity conventional combat to low intensity stability and post-conflict operations, potentially effecting regime change when directed. The requirement upon the force to conduct such fluid and rapid transitions demands flexibility indeed, with a broad range of training and skill sets. The complexity of these conflicts is recognized and stated in the NMS:

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<sup>39</sup>*National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2004), 12.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 7.



The Joint Force must be able to transition from major combat operations to stability operations and to conduct those operations simultaneously. At the operational level, military post-conflict operations will integrate conflict termination objectives with diplomatic, economic, financial, intelligence, law enforcement and information efforts. . . These missions render other instruments of national power more effective and set the conditions for long-term stability and sustainable development.<sup>41</sup>

In recognizing the tremendous strains upon the force when called upon to ‘Win Decisively’, the NMS estimates that current force levels and resourcing allow for overlapping ‘Swift Defeat’ campaigns, with the option to expand one of those into “achieving more comprehensive objectives”<sup>42</sup>

### A Flawed View Of War

What of questions of legitimacy? Interestingly enough, while the NMS acknowledges that strategic reach will require “assured strategic access”--this we may assume means at a minimum basing and over-flight rights--it reinforces *The National Security Strategy’s* position that the U.S. “will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary.”<sup>43</sup> As we have already alluded to, such a stance has precipitated a fault line in the transatlantic partnership. The debate over American ‘unilateralism’ versus European ‘multilateralism’ is a complex issue.<sup>44</sup> However, suffice it to say, this U.S. understanding of its power has created a gap in a shared vision for future operations. Despite the hostile rhetoric of the last two years, it is clear that recognition of the threat is not the issue of debate. As we have already shown, both NATO and U.S. security policies recognize that unstable, hostile states--whether rogue or failed--represent a real threat to transatlantic interests. One can argue that it is not even a question of the ‘use of force’ as opposed to the application of

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>44</sup>For perhaps the most insightful and influential discussion of this dynamic see Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2003).

international norms through international institutions.<sup>45</sup> The real issue may be one of meaningful alliance.

John Lynn offers a theory of warfare in his book *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture* that may provide some insight into the dynamic at work here. Lynn offers a 'cultural understanding' approach to a society's attitude towards and prosecution of war. In terms of methodology the 'cultural model' is essentially a rejection of the premise that war is a universal experience. Military historians, John Keegan for example in *The Face of Battle*, have tended to emphasize the timeless constants that mark warfare--'courage, endurance, self-sacrifice, and heroism'. Lynn points out that the flaw here is the assumption that such terms have universal definitions: bravery in one culture may simply be foolishness in another.<sup>46</sup> Lynn also rejects materialism in his analysis. Essentially this refers to technological superiority. He rejects the notion that such superiority is a determinant factor in how a society makes war and whether it will consequently triumph. The 'cultural model' advocates the conceptual over the material. What is critical is how a society understands war and the warrior in relation to itself. This understanding is what Lynn refers to as its 'discourse'. Now this 'discourse' does not exist in a vacuum, but must interact and find balance with the 'reality of war'. In other words it is a balance between the way a society *wants* war to be like and the way *it is*. The outcome of this struggle will produce one of three phenomena: 1) society will shape conflict to suit its needs ('reformation') as in the medieval tournament or Greek battle of phalanxes 2) society will reshape its own concept of war ('recognition' and 'adjustment') as in the Napoleonic revolution or 3) society will reject 'reality' and create an alternate reality with a new set of rules (or lack there of)

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<sup>45</sup>Owen Pengelly, "Rapid Reaction Forces: More Questions Than Answers", *British American Security Information Council*, (January 2003), available at URL <http://www.basicint.org/pubs/Notes/2003/EU-NATOforgesfin.htm>.

<sup>46</sup>John A. Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), 2-4.

as in terrorism, for example.<sup>47</sup>

Utilizing this theory of warfare, one may argue that the U.S. approach to war is a function of the ‘reformation’ phenomenon, in which a society ritualizes war through practice and art. Certainly the post-Vietnam leadership of the U.S. military recognized that rebuilding the force required a disciplined and somewhat rigid approach to war. In the U.S. Army, by the mid-1980s, our Mission Essential Task List (METL) model and Combined Training Centers (CTC) had created an army fully prepared to execute the Air-Land Battle doctrine in a joint environment. The proof of this fact was demonstrated in the stunning victory of Operation *Desert Storm* in 1991. It created a military culture that accepted as fact the notion that conventional combat operations were the sole purview of the military. Thus stability operations, while a necessary evil from time to time, are not the nature of war and are certainly not the future of war.<sup>48</sup> This is fully embodied in the NMS, with its fundamental focus on ‘decisive operations’ as a conceptual creed. The idea that war is fundamentally a ‘decisive effect’ phenomenon, practiced and ritualized through successive military generations weaned on CTC rotations, is engrained in U.S. military culture. The ‘reality of war’, as fully manifested in simultaneous operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, is that the GWOT--with operations conducted to remove regimes that sponsor or tolerate terrorist networks--requires long-term stability operations in order to allow the new regime to establish itself. Thus the underlying assumption involved in the NMS--that the essential military task in war is the rapid and decisive destruction of an adversary’s conventional means of resistance--is false in relation to the nature of the GWOT. The essential military task is the post-conflict stability operation in which the rogue or failed state is transformed into a friendly or

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., Appendix A.

<sup>48</sup>It may be fair to go so far as to argue that it is not the ‘American way of war’. Candidate Bush famously derided the Clinton administration’s propensity for peacekeeping operations as essentially un-American in 1999: “We will not be permanent peacekeepers, dividing warring parties. This is not our strength or our calling”. As quoted in Frederick W. Kagan, “War and Aftermath,” *Policy Review*, No. 120 (August, 2003): 2.

neutral state. It is in this respect that NATO becomes a necessary and full partner in the GWOT. In order to contend with such nation-building missions, the U.S. needs not only the resources that such an alliance brings to the fight, but also the legitimizing function that a long-standing organization such as NATO potentially embodies.

We ended the last chapter with the question of whether NATO's reluctance to act against dangerous rogue states in the absence of international sanction, and the U.S.'s determination to do so if it deemed such action necessary to its vital interests, represented an impasse to a strong U.S./NATO partnership in the GWOT? The question can be partially answered after our assessment of the U.S. military strategy for the GWOT. It would seem that conflicts involving rogue states require regime change. As we have already shown, legitimacy is the key to the success of such operations. The 'go-it-alone' caveat that U.S. policy exercises in pursuit of its foreign policy goals is then essentially flawed. It is based upon the conceptual assumption that the critical aspect in such operations is military power, while in reality the critical aspect is legitimacy. The debate over U.S. relations with international institutions--whether the UN, or NATO, or the EU--often revolves around the power politics premise that, ultimately, such institutions require U.S. muscle more than any other factor. The debate would seem to be more nuanced than that. That in order to achieve the ultimate political end of stable and secure states, the vital factor is the recognition by the international community that such a state is legitimate. Ultimately this is a status that the U.S. cannot provide on its own, or even through a coalition. If there is an impasse, it is not that NATO does not recognize that certain rogue states, due to their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and a disdain for international law and norms, may require military intervention. It is that U.S. policy does not recognize that war pursued outside of the bounds of a legitimizing institution will not succeed.

## **The NATO Military Strategy**

### **NATO Restructures For An Unstable World**

In NATO's first summit following the 9/11 attacks--Prague November 2002--the Alliance struggled to come to terms with its principle ally's lack of faith in its capabilities. Suddenly the question was not simply one of NATO's relevance in a post-Cold War environment, it was a question of NATO's relevance in the Global War on Terrorism. In many respects, if the events of 9/11 were a 'wake-up call' to the U.S., the events of 9/12 were a 'wake-up call' to NATO. Consequently, the U.S. fought the Afghanistan campaign with almost solely U.S. assets, allowing NATO only a peacekeeping function in its aftermath. The Alliance was determined to find a way forward in dealing with far-flung instability and doing so in partnership with its critical ally--the United States. NATO quickly adapted an initial military strategy for transforming itself for the new threat environment. In summary, they recognized five specific military areas that required reform in order to stay relevant. First, NATO recognized a need for streamlining its command and control structure in order to become more responsive to crisis politics and flexible in rapid decision-making. Second, in terms of military capabilities, the Alliance sought to close the gap in force projection assets and interoperability technologies with its U.S. partner. Third, military readiness was identified as a critical shortfall for the Alliance, with many allies still functioning under Cold War paradigms of force structure and organization. Fourth, rapid response to global instability requires a robust force capable of deployment on short notice and a significant self-sustainment capability. Fifth, protection and defense against weapons of mass destruction is at a premium in this current threat environment. Consequently, NATO sought to develop an up-to-date capability in this critical area. Finally, NATO also recognized that it possessed certain key skills, earned through years of peacekeeping operations throughout the Balkans, that would be critical to success in future conflicts. It wished to maintain those skills and would utilize them extensively in Afghanistan.

## Military Command Structure

The command and control structure of NATO came under severe criticism from the U.S. following Operation *Allied Force* in Kosovo. American military leaders perceived the structure as a cumbersome way to fight a war, with sixteen member states (now twenty-six) weighing in on an operational target list. The operational security of such a system was also highly questionable. However, in defense of NATO, we have already established that such a viewpoint is flawed. Any operational shortcomings in that campaign were due more to a failure of U.S. leadership than collateral damage-adverse European meddling. A few other key points should be made here. First, U.S. military planners chose to leave NATO ‘out-of-the-loop’ on much of the planning. This bifurcated planning process left NATO’s military staff and defense ministers feeling insecure over the operation’s prosecution and progress. Secondly, the Alliance was not prepared for the duration of the offensive. A quick ‘slap’ turned into a protracted 78-day campaign, with an ever-escalating target list.<sup>49</sup> And finally, and most critically, while certainly burdensome, this structure *did hold* and the campaign resulted in Milosevic’s capitulation to Allied demands. Victory, however imperfect, is still victory. In the final chapter we shall have more to say concerning U.S. perceptions of the Kosovo campaign. Nonetheless, NATO did not ignore legitimate U.S. concerns over this command and control structure, and the GWOT provided the necessary impetus to start profound reforms.

NATO restructured its command architecture to adapt more flexibly to the new threat environment. Operationally, it combined its two functioning headquarters into one: Allied Command Europe and Allied Command Atlantic are now Allied Command Operations. Essentially NATO has adopted the U.S. Joint Task Force model as a command and control doctrine. Allied Command Operations, functioning as a Combatant Command, has two

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<sup>49</sup>Rebecca Johnson and Micah Zenko, “All Dressed Up and No Place to Go: Why NATO Should Be on the Front Lines in the War on Terror,” *Parameters*, (Winter 2003): 54.

subordinate headquarters: Joint Force Command (JFC) in Brunssum, Netherlands and Joint Force Command in Naples, Italy. Each JFC has three attached component commands, covering Land, Air, and Maritime operations. In addition the Alliance has introduced a deployable Combined Joint Task Force Headquarters, stationed in Lisbon, Portugal, capable of global deployment in order to provide command and control for far-flung contingency operations. By emulating the U.S. doctrine and structure, NATO has moved towards seamless interoperability with U.S. forces, increasing military effectiveness of combined operations and streamlining the decision-making process at the operational level.

Perhaps even more significantly, NATO stood up its Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk, Virginia, collocated with U.S. Joint Forces Command. Its standing charter is “enhance training, improve capabilities, test and develop doctrines and conduct experiments to assess new concepts. It will also facilitate the dissemination and introduction of new concepts and promote interoperability”.<sup>50</sup> In this vein, NATO has stood up its version of the Joint Forces Command’s Joint Warfighting Center in Stavanger, Norway, using the former as its model. This approach has allowed NATO to leverage away many of the growing pains and setbacks that U.S. experimentation suffered. The potential here for future coalition training, with interoperable training models, is essentially unlimited.<sup>51</sup>

## Military Force Capabilities

Tied to its transformation of its command and control structure is the Alliance’s efforts to modernize its forces and achieve some level of technological parity with the U.S. Initially the Alliance will focus on those units assigned to the NRF. This initiative is aimed at specific ‘niche’ capabilities in the NATO inventory, such as strategic lift, air-to-air refueling, and precision

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<sup>50</sup>“NATO Command Structure”, *NATO Issues*, August 12, 2004. URL [http://www.nato.int/issues/military\\_structure/command/index-e.htm](http://www.nato.int/issues/military_structure/command/index-e.htm).

<sup>51</sup>Michael Maisonneuve, “Challenges and Opportunities for NATO Transformation,” *NATO Transformation: Problems & Prospects*, eds, C. Richard Nelson and Jason S. Purcell, Atlantic Council of the United States (April 2004), 9.

munitions. For example, in assessing its capabilities in supporting the Afghanistan campaign, it quickly became apparent that NATO possessed no long range aircraft, like the American ‘B’ series of which the U.S. possessed a 150 operational aircraft, and would require significant forward basing in order to fly combat missions.<sup>52</sup> It also had few assets in the areas of strategic sea and airlift, and would require significant logistical support from the U.S. if it wished to place forces in the theater of operations. Consequently NATO adapted a formula for developing a comprehensive research and development program, as well production schedule, that maximizes efficiency and spreads costs throughout the Alliance. Initial efforts are as follows:

- More Precision-Guided Munitions will be made available to the NATO Response Force by a consortium made up of the Netherlands, Canada, Belgium, Denmark and Norway.
- Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) will be provided by Italy, Canada, France, Spain, Turkey and the Netherlands.
- Suppression of Enemy Air Defense munitions (SEAD) will be bought by the Netherlands and Spain.
- C-17 transport aircraft will be leased by Germany as a temporary measure whilst a consortium of nations works to pool and organize airlift capabilities.
- Naval counter-mine capabilities will be improved by Norway and Germany.<sup>53</sup>

## Military Readiness

The highly touted ‘defense gap’ between the U.S. and its NATO allies has been generally portrayed as a lack of political will upon the part of the Europeans. To some extent this is true. For example, in the post-Cold War decade, Europeans were more apt to look at integrating themselves with the newly liberated East as a priority, as opposed to reassessing and upgrading military capabilities. However, more is at play here than simply politics. First, the military readiness of each nation was defined by a different envisioned operational role. Europeans, for example, tended toward large, conscript armies in order to build ‘nations-at-arms’, capable of

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<sup>52</sup>“NATO Command Structure”, *NATO Issues*, August 12, 2004, 51. URL [http://www.nato.int/issues/military\\_structure/command/index-e.htm](http://www.nato.int/issues/military_structure/command/index-e.htm).

<sup>53</sup>“NATO Response Force-Proposed Rapid-Reaction Military Force,” *Army Technology*, URL <http://www.army-technology.com/contractors/missiles/nato.html>.



mobilizing in defense of sovereign territory. The U.S. in contrast, by virtue of its strategic location, developed in expectation of a ground and air war in Europe, requiring vast resources to be devoted to rapid strategic lift. Consequently, in an operational environment in which global reach is as significant as firepower, the Europeans find themselves at a steep disadvantage.<sup>54</sup> Second these same large conscript armies required large portions of their respective defense budgets. In response most NATO countries are moving towards smaller, more professional forces. In such forces, while aggregate numbers of troops are reduced, actual deployable numbers are increased by virtue of requisite training and specialized equipment. For example, France has reduced its Army from 293,000 troops in 1989 to its current level of 136,000.<sup>55</sup> In consequence it is one of only three NATO countries capable of independent global deployments, the other two being the United States and Great Britain.<sup>56</sup>

## NATO Response Force

NATO has set itself an ambitious course in creating the NATO Response Force (NRF). The genesis of the organization was a challenge to NATO delivered by Secretary Rumsfeld on September 24, 2002, at the NATO Defense Minister's meeting in Warsaw. Secretary Rumsfeld challenged NATO to build a force much like his own conception for the U.S. military's transformation: "if NATO does not have a force that is quick and agile, which can deploy in days or weeks instead of months or years, then it will not have much to offer the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."<sup>57</sup> NATO rightly accepted the challenge, though one may argue that Secretary Rumsfeld

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<sup>54</sup>Chris Lindborg and Ian Davis, "NATO's Defense Gap: More Than Just Capabilities", *British American Security Information Council*, (November 2002), available at URL <http://www.basicint.org/europe/NATO/fall2002defcapgap.htm>.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>56</sup>John C. Hulsman and Nile Gardiner, "A Conservative Vision for U.S. Policy Toward Europe", The Heritage Foundation Policy Research and Analysis, (October 4, 2004), available at URL <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/bg1803.cfm>.

<sup>57</sup>As quoted in Owen Pengelly, "Rapid Reaction Forces: More Questions Than Answers," *British American Security Information Council*, January 2003, URL <http://www.basicint.org/pubs/Notes/2003EU-NATOforcesfin.htm>.

mischaracterized what constitutes a relevant 21<sup>st</sup> Century force. However NATO recognized that it required such a flexible response force in order to give it more options in dealing with the current security environment. The NRF was established as a headquarters in October 2004, and is on track to be fully operational in October 2006. At full strength it will be 21, 000 personnel with an organic ground, maritime, and air component. Actual deployable forces will be mission dependent, however initial projections are as follows:

- NATO Land forces up to Brigade size.
- Maritime forces up to the size of a NATO Standing Naval Force
- Command and Control capabilities and Air assets capable of carrying out and supporting up to 200 combat sorties daily.
- Globally deployable within 7-30 days
- Sustainable for three months<sup>58</sup>

## Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Alliance is working on five separate initiatives to combat this potential threat: an NBC event response team; a deployable NBC analytical laboratory; a virtual center of excellence for NBC weapons defense; a biological and chemical defense ‘virtual’ stockpile; and a disease surveillance system. The response team and mobile lab are the key pieces of this program. Emphasis is placed on an early assessment of an NBC event and providing NATO leadership with a clear picture of the scope of the event. After an assessment phase, the response team is a fully capable command and control node for coordinating technical expertise and disaster control elements within the crisis itself. The laboratory is also critical to this NBC capability in that early identification of source contagions or materials expedites adequate response. The ‘virtual’ stockpile is a database of available assets and resources within the Alliance, allowing NATO leadership to quickly request support for a crisis. In addition to these capabilities, NATO has pooled its various member nation assets into a multinational Chemical, Biological, Radiological,

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<sup>58</sup>“NATO Response Force-Proposed Rapid-Reaction Military Force,” *Army Technology*, URL <http://www.army-technology.com/contractors/missiles/nato.html>.

and Nuclear Defense Battalion. This new unit, currently based in the Czech Republic, is designed to respond to the use of WMD throughout the world, not simply within NATO countries. With 13 member nations participating in this initiative, NATO has developed a 'core' capability with global reach for the GWOT.<sup>59</sup>

### Peacekeeping as a Core Capability

A common position among NATO allies, one that is generally unappreciated in the U.S., is that the Alliance is already combating terrorism in the Balkans. With the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s and a resurgent Serbian nationalism, the world witnessed the advent of 'ethnic cleansing' as a concept. A series of regional conflicts culminated with Operation *Allied Force* in 1999 and the consequent fall of the Milosevic regime. As is common with war-torn regions, some form of organized crime will fill the gap left by the breakdown of civil government. The relationship between organized crime and terrorism is an understood fact, as recognized in this statement from a British defense source: "All NATO troops in the Balkans will be contributing to the campaign because a lot of terrorist activity is funneled through the region in terms of arms-trafficking, money-laundering, and drugs."<sup>60</sup> In essence, NATO, by providing 80 percent of the roughly 60,000 troops stationed in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia (the U.S. provides the other 20 percent), as well as the critical command and control structure, has been responsible for stopping the region from sliding into a series of 'failed states'. Nations such as Great Britain, Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands, to name a few, have developed highly trained and experienced forces in low-intensity operations--a unique skill set with a wide variety of applications.<sup>61</sup>

Though NATO is now carrying the burden in the Balkans missions, the U.S. has

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<sup>59</sup>Jim Garamone, "NATO showcases New Nuclear, Chemical, Biological Defenses", *DefenseLINK News*, November 21, 2002. URL [http://www.defenselink.mil/news/NOV2002/n11212002\\_200211212.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/NOV2002/n11212002_200211212.html)

<sup>60</sup>As quoted in Rebecca Johnson and Micah Zenko, "All Dressed Up and No Place to Go: Why NATO Should Be on the Front Lines in the War on Terror," *Parameters* (Winter 2003): 55.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 54-57.

continued to voice its concern over NATO's lack of strategic reach, especially in the area of 'forced entry' combat operations. The Alliance has accepted this criticism as valid and is transforming. However NATO clearly recognizes that stability operations, in particular peacekeeping functions, are core capabilities for any military. In its program to transform itself into a more agile and responsive force, it has not lost sight of this fact: in essence, what NATO is doing in transformation can more aptly be called 'rebalancing' its forces. It is striving to add critical capabilities of rapid response, interoperability at every level, and network-centric technologies to its organization, structure, and doctrine, while maintaining an already highly trained force in stability operations.

### **Towards A Common Military Approach**

In this chapter we have attempted to demonstrate two specific points. First, that a potentially serious flaw in U.S. security strategy exists, in that the establishment of a military unilateral action precedent in conflict resolution involving regime change is ultimately a self-defeating mechanism. U.S. military power, while perfectly capable of achieving any required result on the battlefield, is reciprocally incapable of turning that result into the required political objective of the conflict: a stable and secure state. For this to happen, it requires that the conflict be recognized and sanctioned as a legitimate action in accordance with international law and norms. This is an unavoidable element in wars of regime change. In practical terms, the establishment then of sufficient forces and resources through international participation required to establish the new regime becomes untenable. Second, that NATO is undergoing a program of transformation aimed at establishing itself as a relevant partner with U.S. military capabilities. While far from complete, such a program does demonstrate that the Alliance recognizes the same urgency in the threat environment as the U.S. and is working hard to transform itself to meet that threat. It is doing so through a program of warfighting interoperability with their U.S. counterparts, while also maintaining its core capability of stability operations.

The potential then for a common approach to the GWOT exists in these two points: 1) the U.S. recognition that wars of regime change require international legitimacy 2) that NATO is actively working towards transforming itself to support fighting what it perceives as a mutual threat in the state sponsorship of terrorism in such regimes. There is common ground here for a process of reengagement and revitalization in the transatlantic partnership. One based upon mutual respect and need rather than simply nostalgic ties to fifty-year old alliance and vague notions of collective security. The U.S. requires legitimacy in its pursuit of regimes that threaten regional and global stability. NATO shares its vision for a stable and secure world and recognizes that such regimes must be addressed. It must be remembered that in combating the aggression of Milosevic's rogue Serbian regime, NATO as an organization brought legitimacy to that operation outside the bounds of UN sanction. If the U.S. believes that military action is required, it may be able then to achieve the required legitimizing function in a true multilateral action through NATO. Of course the success of such efforts is contingent upon the level of engagement and leadership that the U.S. is exercising in the Alliance. Whether this is all realistically achievable, we will explore in our next chapter on the NATO and U.S. experiences in Afghanistan.

## **IV. AFGHANISTAN CASE STUDY**

### **An Unfinished War**

While Afghanistan may be considered the 'cause-and-effect' war, in that there is a direct correlation between the 9/11 attacks and the failed state in Afghanistan, it has been all but eclipsed by the conflict in Iraq. A quick survey of the articles written about Afghanistan in the last year, with titles such as 'The Other War' or 'The Forgotten War', reveal the marginal place this front in the GWOT has taken.<sup>62</sup> This is in many respects due to the fact that Americans and

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<sup>62</sup> See Mark Sedra, "The Forgotten War Shows No Signs of Abating," *Foreign Policy In Focus* (April 2003), available at URL <http://www.fpif.org/papers/afghan2003.html>; Husain Haqqani, "Think

their media have accepted the notion that we 'won' the war in Afghanistan. With 'mission accomplished' and the end of major combat operations, as announced by Secretary Rumsfeld in May 2003, Americans feel comfortable with turning their focus elsewhere.<sup>63</sup> This notion of victory tied to major combat operations reflects what we discovered in the previous chapter concerning U.S. military strategy in the GWOT. The administration has stated its goals as the creation of a stable, secure, and democratic regime in Kabul, capable of effectively governing the country and denying its borders to the kind of terrorist networks that proliferated under the Taliban. It is difficult to recognize the achievement of such goals, even though the administration is currently striving for an exit strategy.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that U.S. forces in Afghanistan launched a major offensive in December 2003 'to eliminate remnants' of the Taliban, this perception of victory represents a significant domestic success for the Bush administration. Even with the vast resources of the United States, it would have been difficult for the administration to argue for an Iraq option without a declared victory in Afghanistan. As we shall see in this chapter, Afghanistan is far from a victory despite U.S. assertions to the contrary. In many respects it represents a unique example of the different military approaches for the U.S. and NATO. In terms of approach, the U.S. is focused on physically destroying Taliban and al-Qaeda forces remaining in country in order to set the conditions for a rapid exit from this theater of operations. NATO is focused on peace enforcement operations and reconstruction efforts in order to build a stable and secure regime. Its time commitment is indefinite, with a sober assessment that it may stretch into decades.

Currently the United States has almost 18,000 troops in Afghanistan under Operation *Enduring Freedom* (OEF), with an additional 6,500 NATO troops deployed in ISAF. However,

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Again: A Forgotten War", *Center for American Progress* (December 12, 2003), available at URL <http://www.americanprogress.org/site/pp.asp?c=biJRJ8OVF&b=14530>; Seymour M. Hersh, "The Other War," *The New Yorker*, (November 17, 2004).

<sup>63</sup>Vernon Loeb, "Rumsfeld Announces End of Afghan Combat," *Washington Post*, (May 2, 2003), A16.

while these two operations share an understanding as to their stated goals and approaches, even with some overlap, they have been unable to come to terms for a combined operation. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this represents a significant redundancy in resources and manpower. The existence of these dual missions in Afghanistan goes to the heart of the problem in combining NATO and the U.S. approaches to the GWOT. Let's take a closer look at those different approaches.

### **The U.S. Approach**

On September 12, 2001, while NATO officials were meeting in Brussels hammering out their response to the 9/11 attacks, Secretary Rumsfeld directed General Tommy Franks, Commander of U.S. Central Command, to review 'credible military options' to respond to international terrorism.<sup>64</sup> By October 2, General Franks had briefed the President and obtained his approval for operations in Afghanistan under the code term *Enduring Freedom*. With combat operations beginning on October 7th--a mere 26 days after the 9/11 attacks--the speed of the American response was dizzying. From the beginning, OEF represented a showcase for the kind of war Secretary Rumsfeld envisioned for the U.S. military. Essentially strategic (B1, B2, and B52 bombers launched from the continental United States) and operational (carrier based aircraft) fires directed by Special Forces on the ground working side-by-side with indigenous forces 'whose goals were consistent with U.S. interests'.<sup>65</sup> Needless to say, the immediate results of this approach were spectacular. On October 7, 2001, the Taliban Regime controlled roughly 80 percent of Afghanistan, with opposition forces on the defensive and al-Qaeda firmly entrenched in its camps. Within 78 days, the Taliban had been removed from power and al-Qaeda as an effective organization in Afghanistan destroyed. U.S. strategic and operational fires broke a stalemate of sorts in the north allowing the Northern Coalition forces to roll up in quick

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<sup>64</sup>“Operation Enduring Freedom—Afghanistan,” *Global Security.Org*, URL <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/enduring-freedom.htm>.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

succession the critical centers of Mazar-e Sharif, Herat, Kabal, and Jalalabad. In mid-December, U.S. ground forces made their first significant appearance in the form of U.S. Marines, securing Qandahar Airport and ousting the Taliban from their capital. On December 22, 2001, General Franks was able to travel to Kabal to attend a ceremony celebrating the installation of an interim Afghan government.

It is difficult to argue with the rapidity and decisive character of the defeat the U.S. inflicted on its enemies in Afghanistan, all with minimal losses and expenditure of power. The sheer complexity of the operation and its extraordinary coordination over a brief period of time is a testament to U.S. training and competence. In particular, precision-guided munitions reached an unprecedented level of success, with the U.S. averaging only two aircraft per serviced target in Afghanistan in comparison with ten during Operation Desert Storm. All in all, OEF represented a profound example of the efficacy of U.S. firepower and our preeminent position in the realm of conventional warfare: a splendid example of a 'Swift Defeat' scenario as articulated in the NMS. Unfortunately, in December 2001, as General Franks attended the ceremony in Kabal, the war in Afghanistan had entered a dangerous new phase and the U.S. had already moved its strategic vision elsewhere. What the U.S. failed to recognize, mostly due to its own conception of how war should be, is that Afghanistan--like all wars of regime change--is a 'Win Decisively' scenario. The U.S. was about to embark on a second 'Win Decisively' campaign, essentially simultaneous with the first, in contradiction of its own assessment of its capabilities as articulated in the NMS.

As the U.S. military husbanded its resources in gearing up for an Iraq intervention, it essentially lost an opportunity to make significant strides in stabilizing Afghanistan. What the U.S. really won in December 2001 was the 'initial access' battle in Afghanistan. The defeat of Taliban and al-Qaeda forces only transformed the war from a conventional fight to a counterinsurgency. The country simply reverted to the pre-Taliban 'warlordism' that is the hallmark of Afghani politics. Only since the resurgence of the Taliban in early 2003 has a



reevaluation of the situation by the Bush Administration been initiated. By May of that year more troops and more money were moving into the breach. In many ways this represented a begrudging recognition by the Bush administration, coupled with the deteriorating security situation in Iraq, that the war in Afghanistan was about more than simply bombing the Taliban and hunting down Al-Qaeda. It was about reconstructing the country in order to allow a stable and secure environment for democratic institutions to take hold.

Critics of the war in Afghanistan, and their number is growing as time and distance allow for reflection, charge that the Administration is a victim of its own success. Such criticisms can be summarized as follows: the operational method, while highly effective in destroying conventional resistance to U.S. backed forces, essentially surrendered our ability to achieve strategic objectives on the ground.<sup>66</sup> This absence of significant ground forces, one that would allow the establishment of an effective security environment, is a self-defeating methodology. The lesson learned in Afghanistan is that the seemingly profitable 'risk-aversion' strategy of postponing ground force introduction by utilizing indigenous proxies does not come without a price.<sup>67</sup> In the fight against rogue and failed states, the decisive operation is not the defeat of the regime's conventional forces. On the contrary, these are only shaping operations. The decisive operation is the establishment of democratic and stable institutions of governance, acceptable and legitimate to the majority of the indigenous population, in order to reintegrate the state as a viable member of the international community. In many respects then, it is to NATO that the task of finishing this 'half-won war' has been passed.

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<sup>66</sup>For example, Frederick Kagan writes: "Neither Network-Centric Warfare nor 'shock and awe' provides a reliable recipe for translating destruction of the enemy's ability to continue to fight into the accomplishment of the political objectives of the conflict. . . . Network-Centric Warfare and 'shock and awe' are silent on that most important task." Frederick W. Kagan, "War and Aftermath," *Policy Review*, No. 120, (August, 2003): 6.

<sup>67</sup>Bruce R. Nardulli, "The U.S. Army and the Offensive War on Terrorism," *The U.S. Army and the New National Security Strategy*, Lynn E. Davis and Jeremy Shapiro, eds. (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2003), 36.

## The NATO Approach

NATO Secretary General Scheffer has been unequivocal in his attitude towards Afghanistan since he took office in 2002: “My first priority...NATO’s priority--is Afghanistan. The importance of Afghanistan for our security is clear. Afghanistan may be halfway around the world, but its success matters to our security right here.”<sup>68</sup> In essence Afghanistan has become the ‘litmus’ test of the new NATO concept of ‘projecting stability’ and its current leadership is determined to prevail. ISAF was born out of the Bonn Conference in December 2001, in which various Afghan factions met to discuss and nominate an interim government: the Afghan Provisional Authority. The original concept was to create a UN-mandated international force to secure the Kabul area in order to allow the new central government ‘breathing space’ to develop. Though UN-mandated, under UNSC Resolutions 1386, 1413, 1444, and 1510, ISAF was not a UN force, but rather a ‘coalition of like-minded governments’ (read NATO) that saw stability in that region as integral to their own security situations. Initially, ISAF missions were led on a volunteer basis, with the first three 6-month missions led in succession by the United Kingdom, Turkey, and then jointly by the Netherlands and Germany. In the spring of 2002, NATO’s principle decision-making body, the North Atlantic Council, met in Reykjavik, Iceland and made a truly fundamental change in NATO policy, officially dispensing with the geographical limitations on NATO operations. On August 11, 2003, ISAF officially became a NATO mission, fully manned, supported, and financed by Alliance member states.<sup>69</sup> While mostly a command and control reorganization, in that NATO states provided the bulk of forces from the very beginning, the symbolic value of this move is significant. For the first time in the Alliance’s history it accepted an ‘out-of-area’--beyond Europe and its direct periphery--mission, essentially

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<sup>68</sup> Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, “Projecting Stability,” *NATO Speeches*, May 17, 2004, URL <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s00517a.htm>.

<sup>69</sup>“NATO in Afghanistan,” *NATO Issues*, (October 20, 2004), available at URL <http://www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/evolution.htm>

killing the previous decade's debate over NATO's future relevance.

In January 2004, NATO appointed Turkish Minister Hikmet Cetin to the post of Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan. While the significance of an appointment of a Muslim to this critical position is lost on no one, it certainly underscores the diplomatic dexterity that the Alliance brings to this region--a subtlety that the U.S. loses through its vocal promulgation of 'Christian' values. In addition, Cetin's leadership defines the Alliance's approach to Afghanistan, one that emphasizes cooperation, coordination, and engagement with the Afghan authorities. In October 2003, the UN enlarged ISAF's mandate from the Kabul environs to include the entire country.<sup>70</sup> In response to this broad initiative to bring security to all of Afghanistan, NATO instituted a cautious pilot program for nation-building. Under OEF, the U.S. established nine Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in the outlying regions, primarily to the east of Kabul. PRTs are civil-military organizations established in key regions in order to provide security for aid workers and reconstruction efforts. On December 31, 2003, NATO took over the Kunduz area PRT. In June 2004, during the Istanbul Summit, NATO agreed to establish four more PRTs in the north of Afghanistan, and reconnoiter future possible locations in the west. Also the Alliance is working towards taking over the PRTs currently under OEF. All in all, ISAF is responsible for security in the Kabul region, as well as nine northern provinces.<sup>71</sup>

ISAF's other critical programs in Afghanistan are the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) process and the Heavy Weapons Cantonment Program (HWCP). DDR is an effort to demobilize former combatants from a 'warlord militia' society and reintegrate them into civil Afghan society. This program is progressing steadily, with old traditions dying hard. As of July 2004, the process had demobilized roughly 900 militia. HWCP, essentially an effort for the redeployment and cantonment of all Afghan heavy weapons, has met with more success. As of

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>"NATO in Afghanistan Factsheet", *NATO Issues*, September 2, 2004, URL <http://www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/040628-factsheet.htm>.

June 2004, 60% of the country's estimated 500 tanks, APCs, heavy artillery, ADA weapons systems have been cantoned.<sup>72</sup>

Recently both ISAF and OEF have achieved a significant intermediate step towards a stable, secure, and democratic Afghanistan: the successful conclusion of the presidential elections on October 9, 2004. In demonstrating its commitment and recent adoption of a more strategically flexible approach to problems, NATO was able to deploy two additional battalions to Afghanistan (1 Spanish/1 Italian) in order to provide extra security for the election period. The success of those elections, with relatively little violence, is a testament to the effectiveness of NATO efforts in this strife torn land.<sup>73</sup> Clearly NATO's approach is not a 'quick-fix' effort. As in Bosnia and Kosovo, the Alliance is committed to the long-term reconstruction of Afghanistan regardless of artificial time constraints. In essence this is NATO's understanding of the GWOT, as a problem requiring generational solutions in order to fundamentally transform a society.

### **Towards A Common Effort in Afghanistan**

Success in Afghanistan is a long-term proposition. The recognition of this quality of time underscores the most significant difference in NATO and U.S. approaches to Afghanistan. Certainly in terms of objectives each recognized that the crucial endstate for Afghanistan was the introduction and rooting of a stable, secure, and democratic regime in Kabul, one capable of controlling events within its own sovereign borders. This was the essential political objective-- removing the regime of the failed state that tolerated the terrorist network and replacing it with a regime capable of resisting such incursions into its sovereignty permanently. Any option short of this would only set the conditions to create the identical circumstances that required military

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Afghan President Hamid Karzai expressed his gratitude to ISAF clearly: "They played a key role, not only in helping to ensure security, but also by directly supporting the process," *China Economic Net*, (November 30, 2004), available at URL [http://www.en.ce.cn/World/Europe/200411/04/t20041104\\_2186960.shtml](http://www.en.ce.cn/World/Europe/200411/04/t20041104_2186960.shtml).

intervention in the first place. The real difference between NATO and the U.S. in Afghanistan is a question of methods. Fundamentally, the U.S. has seen its role in Afghanistan through the lens of its 'Swift Defeat' scenario strategy. Its efforts were focused on the destruction of enemy formations and setting the conditions for follow-on forces--this has primarily taken the form of counterinsurgency operations to destroy remaining Taliban and al-Qaeda forces--to relieve U.S. responsibility for the country. However, the real problem does not lie in establishing military dominance over the region. Both the U.S. and NATO have sufficient combat power in Afghanistan to defeat any conventional threat or to deny any unconventional threat the ability to topple the Karzai government. The real problem is that the U.S. seems to lack the wherewithal to provide long-term commitment to Afghanistan, in a low intensity mode, in order to create the conditions for establishing democratic institutions and traditions within Afghan society.

Clausewitz's famous dictum seems appropriate here: "first, most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and the commander have to make is to establish *the kind of war* on which they are embarking, neither mistaking for, not trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its true nature."<sup>74</sup> (Italics added) As such, when Secretary Rumsfeld suggested a critical relationship between missions and coalitions, it requires *a priori* a correct understanding of the mission. What is inherent in all military operations in conflict with failed or rogue states in the GWOT is that the destruction of the adversary's regime, as well as the security apparatus that supports it--to include military, militia, paramilitary, and police organizations--will require the establishment of both civil and security administration of the state's sovereign territory after conflict. Only in reestablishing the state as a stable, secure, and prospering member of the international community does one achieve the objective that initiated the conflict in the first place, namely the destruction of sanctuary and material support to terrorist networks. Thus

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<sup>74</sup>Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds., and trans. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 88.

understanding the mission in such terms requires the establishment of a long-term commitment to security and nation-building in Afghanistan. NATO, as it has proven over the past decade in the Balkans, is uniquely capable of providing all the requisite tools for accomplishing that task. As such, NATO has accepted the role of leading in Afghanistan and, within its means, is moving towards full control of Afghanistan. The problem, of course, is that NATO requires significant U.S. participation in order to accomplish such a task. In other words, U.S. notions of passing responsibility for Afghanistan to NATO--if that means a NATO operation without U.S. troops--will not achieve its stated objectives. Combining ISAF and OEF in Afghanistan is a logical approach to a problem that requires vast resources to solve. A redundancy of effort here is simply a waste. However, it is more than simply a question of resources. Indeed such a unity of effort represents an excellent opportunity to reforge the U.S. commitment to NATO and reassure our key allies that the U.S. is truly multilateral in its understanding of global security issues. It is a recognition on the part of the U.S. that it needs the Alliance in its efforts to fight the GWOT. In this last chapter we will review what benefits an alliance such as NATO can bring to the fight and how best we can take advantage of those benefits.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PARTNERSHIP WITH NATO IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM--FROM A MILITARY PERSPECTIVE**

### **The Necessity of A Common Approach**

The U.S. should embrace NATO, not simply as a political expedient to internal domestic squabbles or as a sap to international opinion in order to achieve a veneer of legitimacy. On the contrary, claims of legitimacy will always ring hollow across the Atlantic as long as we treat coalitions as suits of clothing to be worn or discarded based on short-term policy goals and objectives. A strategic vision for the Global War on Terror must recognize the long-term

necessity of close allies and partners in order to achieve a profounder objective of a secure, stable, and prosperous international community. The first and most logical step in achieving that end is to embrace NATO. As an alliance of like-minded states, NATO is a mature, robust, and developing organization, ready to tackle the very issues that plague U.S. foreign policy.<sup>75</sup> General Wesley Clark recognized this fundamental fact in his assessment of the Kosovo campaign, and in his condemnation of the U.S. defense establishment's misappreciation of that conflict: "For all of us involved--the President, Secretaries of State and Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and me--it was a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating process. But in the end, this was the decisive process for success, because whatever we lost in theoretical military effectiveness we gained manyfold in actual strategic impact by having every NATO nation on board."<sup>76</sup> In essence this is the power of NATO, and the strength of alliance warfare. Many forget that even a decade of Serbian atrocities did not temper some from criticizing the war, with large majorities in nations such as Russia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece, demanding an end to the bombing. The power of alliance warfare is the power of the group to weather criticism through unity of effort and determination. While various alliance members wavered from time-to-time, the power of the group--and one might add not simply the U.S.--drove them forward and to eventual success. In the face of such unity, even Russia abandoned Milosevic in the end. As General Clark concludes:

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<sup>75</sup>Many critics of NATO would argue with the term 'like-minded', pointing to the inability of the U.S. to draw such critical allies as France, Germany, and Belgium into its efforts in Iraq. Putting aside questions of the legitimacy of that war, one simply needs to explore the NATO expansion process to understand that NATO is more than simply a military organization but a coalition of liberal, free market democracies (admittedly with different stages of development across its membership), striving to perpetuate the same values that we claim as fundamental to the American view of the world. Partnership for Peace--NATO's well-known 'training school' for new members--has been extremely successful in preparing the former Warsaw Pact nations for this common vision of the world. In a laudatory and exemplary fashion, NATO is demonstrating 'soft power' politics in its recent Mediterranean Dialogue initiative: "[an] effort to support scientific cooperation, education, training on crisis management and defense planning, and the sharing of information on terrorism" amongst the six Arab countries of the North African rim. Strobe Talbott, "From Prague to Baghdad: NATO at Risk," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December, 2002): 56.

<sup>76</sup>Wesley Clark, "An Army of One?", *Washington Monthly*, September 2002, available at URL <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0209.clark.html>.

"The lesson of Kosovo is that international institutions and alliances are really another form of power. They have their limitations and can require a lot of maintenance. But used effectively, they can be strategically decisive."<sup>77</sup> NATO, acting as one, achieved the form of a legitimizing function, heretofore thought the sole purview of the UN. This is a powerful lesson indeed. Again the meaning of the alliance is not in improving combat effectiveness--though this may be an added benefit--rather it is in preparing conditions for achieving post-conflict political objectives. This is what General Clark means by 'strategically decisive.'

Strobe Talbott, in contemplating the future of NATO, described an alliance that once achieved a certain balance in its perspective of the world "On the notion of America as first among equals, and on the principles of common interest, shared responsibility, concerted resolve, collective action, and decision by consensus."<sup>78</sup> The U.S., in its recent appreciation of its relative power in the world, seems guided by a desire to destroy the very institution it helped found over a half century ago. Interestingly enough, if the U.S. had concluded this first round in the GWOT with its military option in Afghanistan, those predicting the demise of NATO may well have been right. Certainly American power, acting independently and with the tacit approval of the international community, would have been sufficient to subdue and transform the political landscape of Afghan society. Ironically then, in its efforts to circumvent international institutions and 'entangling' alliances in order to 'get the job done in Iraq', the U.S. has validated and reenergized the very alliance it sought to marginalize. America has simply overextended itself, and despite whatever posturing to the contrary, it is looking for significant help.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Strobe Talbott, "From Prague to Baghdad: NATO at Risk," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December, 2002): 48.

<sup>79</sup>It is often difficult to ascertain what the Bush administration is doing in its attitude towards NATO. Clearly its public rhetoric seems almost calculated to offend its Alliance partners at the very time in which it needs its wholehearted support. For example, Nicholas Burns, U.S. ambassador to NATO often sets a tone of condescending frustration with the Alliance, echoing the administration's general philosophy that international institutions are just 'talk shops'. In recent statements to the press in regards to



## The U.S. Leadership Role in NATO

In August 2004, the U.S. Department of Defense announced a new realignment initiative for U.S. forces overseas. While encompassing all U.S. forces worldwide, in terms of NATO, the most disturbing aspect of this announcement is that the bulk of the reduction represents the removal from Central Europe of two heavy divisions. In its place, the U.S. will deploy a Stryker Brigade that it deems more capable and “more relevant to the kind of challenges that we will see in Europe.”<sup>80</sup> Some estimates of troop redeployment schedules predict completion of this realignment by as early as FY 2007. The Bush administration is adamant in its stance that this realignment does not signify a changing relationship with its traditional European allies. However, even if we take the administration denials at face value--that they represent a redefining of combat power from a Cold War calculus of bulk numbers to a more appropriate measure of capability in this threat environment: lethality, agility, and flexibility--it may represent a serious lapse in judgment over relative estimates. The values of the troops in Central Europe were never entirely focused on the relatively straightforward values of defending Western Europe and forward presence in the Cold War. They represented a real bulwark of American power and leadership in Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union has not mitigated the importance of European stability in U.S. security policy. On the contrary, operations in Bosnia, Macedonia, and Kosovo throughout the 1990's underscore the reality that European security is not a given. As NATO policy planner Michael Ruhle has argued, NATO and European security cannot be separated: “Only in NATO, the central legitimizing framework for U.S. power in Europe, can the United States play an undisputed leadership role in advancing this objective [European

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Afghanistan, Burns shrieked: "NATO is behind. We should have been in the west by now, and we're not...NATO needs to move faster, with a greater degree of commitment and political will". "U.S. wants NATO to take over Afghan mission," *USATODAY.com*, (December 12, 2004), available at URL [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2004-10-12-nato-afghan\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2004-10-12-nato-afghan_x.htm).

<sup>80</sup>“Defense Department Background Briefing on Global Posture Review,” *Global Security.Org*, (August 16, 2004).

security]...In short, if the United States wants to remain the world's predominant power, it will have to remain a 'European power' as well."<sup>81</sup>

The U.S.'s leadership role in NATO is not a position to take lightly. While the Bush administration is fond of talking about 'coalitions of the willing', any meaningful coalition will certainly look a lot like NATO. While basing and overflight rights may come from a variety of potential partners around the globe, allies that will bring significant military and industrial capacity to the conflict will most likely come from Europe (Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, and Japan to the contrary). As we have already seen, the U.S.'s whopping 40 percent of global defense spending makes it a difficult ally to keep up with. However, NATO's other 25 members make up over 20 percent of remaining expenditures. In other words, while NATO is a distant second, it is still second. The U.S. would be hard pressed if forced to look elsewhere for allies.

Finally, in its leadership role, the U.S. has its only real opportunity to sway reluctant allies to recognize rogue states for the threats that they are. In our chapter on defining the threat we articulated NATO's recognition of failed states as dangerously destabilizing influences in various regional politics, with ripple consequences for its member states, and hence a security concern to the Alliance. However we readily admit that NATO has shown a marked reluctance to accept the U.S.'s rationale on rogue states as an acceptable precedent for initiating conflict. However, the conflict in Kosovo was a war against a rogue state and one that was not sanctioned by the UN. Of course there are significant differences between Kosovo and Iraq. In essence actions in Kosovo were precipitated by the urgency of a humanitarian crisis and the UN's inability to act with determination. Yet what we can take from Kosovo is that the precedent exists for NATO action against a rogue state. The Alliance was able to conduct an intervention and do

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<sup>81</sup>Michael Ruhle, "NATO after Prague: Learning the Lessons of 9/11," *Parameters* (Summer 2003): 92.

so legitimately based upon its own strength as an international institution. The debate around Kosovo, as we have already seen, has been focused through the lens of the U.S. conception of war: that decisive operations exist at the operational level. Thus the debate often takes the form of questions of operational flexibility. The true lesson of Kosovo is that 'real' war exists at the strategic level in the achievement of one's political goals. In this sense NATO, and the legitimacy it potentially brings to the fight, is a 'strategically decisive' asset. Only through U.S. leadership can this form of power even be possibly harnessed for the GWOT.

### **Allies Will Lessen Operational Effectiveness--Get Over It!**

If the Alliance is a necessary part of the GWOT, then we must recognize that such multilateral operations within the context of NATO will inherently be less effective than unilateral, U.S. only efforts. As we have already discussed, the Kosovo experience convinced U.S. policymakers and planners that alliance warfare is inherently operationally inefficient and therefore, in the pursuit of efficient combat operations, they must be avoided at all costs. However, as we have also discussed, war is more than combat operations. Combat is about killing the enemy and destroying his will to resist. War is about achieving political objectives. Having an alliance, and maintaining an alliance even at the cost of operational effectiveness in order to achieve overarching political objectives, was a reality of war not lost upon U.S. leaders of the Second World War. In particular, Eisenhower organized his entire leadership style around the notion of alliance warfare.

At this point it may be well worth a moment's reflection upon Eisenhower's leadership. Certainly as NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, Eisenhower shaped the Alliance and the concept of collective security as we know it. In the Army Leadership Manual, *FM 22-100*, a common misperception about Eisenhower is articulated: "General Eisenhower insisted that military, rather than political, criteria would predominate in his operational and strategic

decisions as Supreme Allied Commander."<sup>82</sup> In fact this is patently not true. Some of Eisenhower's most controversial decisions of the war were fundamentally made for purely political reasons when sound military sense argued otherwise. For example, the 'broad-front strategy' in the march across northwest Europe in which Eisenhower declined penetration and encirclement battles more apt to shorten the war. Eisenhower recognized that a solid, trusting Anglo-American alliance, which also included the French as an equal partner, was a national objective and critical not only to imminent military victory but to a stable post-war environment. Hence the necessity of often providing Montgomery with logistical priorities when clear success was being achieved in other sectors, namely Patton's famous drive to the south.

Another less well-known example is the acrimonious relationship between Roosevelt and de Gaulle in 1942. That Eisenhower recognized in de Gaulle, personally caustic though he was, the only legitimate leader to step forward in the French camp goes much to his credit. Roosevelt, who hated the man, would have cast him aside at the first opportunity--Eisenhower was shocked by the somewhat 'occupation-minded' Roosevelt to a post-war France (the President thought of Vichy as Germany). Nevertheless Eisenhower, with his eye on the ultimate objective of a stable post-conflict Europe, realized that the path to Germany lay through France and that their cooperation was a necessary reality. Thus in 1942, for purely political reasons, Eisenhower allowed a woefully under trained and under equipped French Corps to take its place in the battle line in Tunisia. Furthermore, in 1944 during the Ardennes campaign, when military common sense demanded an allied withdrawal from Strasbourg to straighten out the line, he heeded de Gaulle's pleading that such a move would have disastrous political implications for his budding French government.<sup>83</sup>

To sum up, much has been written about Eisenhower's 'fence-mending' amongst the

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<sup>82</sup>Department of the Army, *FM 22-100, Army Leadership*, (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, August 1999), 7-5.

<sup>83</sup>Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 222.

prima donnas of the Allied general officer corps. This was not simply a personal bent for accommodation. It was a calculated campaign to hold together an alliance in constant danger of disintegrating, even at the risk of operational setbacks. He fundamentally understood that the achievement of the war's political goals were a function of a solid alliance, with its value for post-conflict reconstruction and stability, and more than simply combat effectiveness. Today's U.S. leadership, with its fixation on operational flexibility and decisive effects, might do well to study the campaigns of Eisenhower.

### **Some Issues With U.S. Military Culture**

One of the most difficult aspects of alliance warfare is the issue of interoperability. Not simply in terms of a technological gap, an issue we have already addressed in our section on defense capabilities, but also in terms of in-theater, 'on-the-ground' operational and tactical planning and execution. The traditional answer to this sort of coordination is the liaison officer (LNO) or liaison team. Often these critical players in interoperability are selected haphazardly, or worse, selected not for any particular expertise but rather for their lack of mission-essential value. One can readily imagine the young chemical officer attempting to integrate himself into a coalition partner's headquarters, both unsure of the alien culture he has just entered, and more problematically, unsure of the military capabilities of the forces of which he represents. Unfortunately, when LNOs are given the priority they deserve, they are often highly competent, key personnel who must be detached from their parent unit with a corresponding drop in combat effectiveness for that formation. In Afghanistan and Iraq today, combat formations are struggling with interoperability across a vast spectrum of coalition partners and are doing so in an *ad hoc* manner.

In order to address this key shortfall, the military--the U.S. Army in particular--needs to institutionalize an LNO capability within the structure of NATO, above and beyond current

higher staff and formation levels.<sup>84</sup> In order to attract quality officers, this critical position must be recognized as a functional area and officers need to be able to track and find competitive opportunities for advancement and promotion. Much like our Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program, candidates need to be selected for their potential for learning and cultural curiosity. Officers need to be trained rigorously within the current structures of the Defense Language Institute. In addition, officers would be channeled through national and foreign military education programs to ensure that they are thoroughly familiar with doctrines and capabilities. An institutionalized LNO program would not be a 'one-way' street. In order to fully address problems of interoperability at the operational and tactical level, it requires a reciprocal program of allied officers specially trained to interact with U.S. combat formations.

Of course the institution of any new program, especially one that demands a high quality of participants, must be resourced properly and the question becomes from where does the military draw this new pool of LNOs. Current exchange programs are not large enough to generate an adequate number of officers. Two possibilities are realistic. First, replace the current FAO program with an LNO structure. Officers, if allowed to exclusively track from post-company command time, will have adequate career space to serve in both capacities over the course of their service. Second, institutionalize the program with the Reserve Component, sponsoring officers to pursue language and cultural studies within their chosen area, rotating them periodically to active service.

In term of training, officers attending any number of U.S. training centers or professional education institutions will recognize the following scenario within the parameters of a training exercise. Coalition forces as vastly different as the United Kingdom, Germany, and Turkey, happily functioning within the same theater of operations. Questions of interoperability, while

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<sup>84</sup>Nora Bensahel, "Preparing For Coalition Operations," *The U.S. Army and the New National Security Strategy*, Lynn E. Davis and Jeremy Shapiro, eds. (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2003), 121-122.

momentarily problematic, are quickly glossed over as the sheer size of the issue becomes apparent. For example, profound problems would exist in communications, coordination of battlefield effects, logistics, and command and control. More often than not, such problems would be solved through the generic salve of LNOs. Consequently the operation would continue with the British conducting a supporting attack on our flank, the Germans conducting an air assault on a deep objective, and the Turks conducting a passage of lines through a U.S. brigade, prepared to assume the main effort.

The problem with such interoperability is that it simply does not exist. As we have already identified, problems of interoperability exist at the technological level in terms of equipment, and at the operational and tactical levels in terms of liaison. In addition, we habitually do not recognize the limitations and caveats that our allies bring to the table. Consequently we train our leaders to expect that coalition partners will essentially fight like U.S. forces, only with different uniforms. As our Afghanistan case study identified, this sort of expectation finds its way into the real world operation, with ensuing bitter feeling towards allies when political realities intervene. Consequently it is necessary for the U.S. military to reevaluate its training model, bringing greater realism to the coalition portion of exercise construction. For example, the use of challenging national caveats and ROEs will train our officers to overcome these seeming shortfalls in allied participation. Training exercises down to the battalion need to be regularly resourced in order to include NATO partners as a prerequisite to creating a coalition mindset. Only in this manner can we create a military culture that sees alliance partners as an essential part of the operational and strategic landscape.

### **Concluding Remarks**

During the course of this monograph we have attempted to reexamine some of the core issues involved in the transatlantic partnership known as NATO. In brief, we have argued that NATO represents a unique, critical, and underappreciated form of power in the GWOT. U.S.

military strategy, in its fixation on the operational level of war, has mistakenly identified conventional combat operations as the decisive military task in its recent campaigns. We have argued that, on the contrary, in wars of regime change what is decisive is not combat, but the successful establishment of the new regime through the creation a stable and secure environment. In order to do this, aside from vast commitments of time, manpower, and resources, such campaigns require the *legitimacy* of international sanction. In this respect NATO has the potential to provide this core concept in conducting wars of regime change. This is not to say that NATO partners will universally provide blanket sanction for U.S. military action. Rather, it is the recognition that NATO represents a block of democracies that fully recognize the inherent dangers in the current global environment. As we have pointed out, states that fail and are unable to maintain their sovereignty in the face of terrorist forces are a recognized threat to the Alliance's member states. And, as in the case of Afghanistan, a threat that it accepts may require military action. NATO is currently reorganizing itself to more aptly address that possible option for the future. In terms of rogue states, such as Iraq, NATO members are divided on the immediacy of such threats and the options for dealing with them. However, we have also argued that such division currently exists in a NATO void of U.S. leadership. As an alliance for the GWOT, fully engaged and led by the U.S., NATO's potential has not been fully realized or even fully contemplated.

Aside from issues of legitimacy, as demonstrated in our Afghanistan case study, NATO brings to the fight a long lineage of peacekeeping operations and a sober assessment of what is required to rebuild a nation. However, U.S. expectations that NATO forces will simply fall in on such a role after the culmination of U.S. combat operations is simply fanciful and unrealistic. In the same manner that NATO is striving to build interoperability with the U.S. in combat, the U.S. must recognize the necessity of engaging its NATO partners in interoperability for peacekeeping. Namely, as in Afghanistan, the recognition that rebuilding such a state into a stable, secure, and



democratic society will require the commitment of *all* NATO allies, working as equal partners, for the foreseeable future.

In all of these areas we have discussed the common theme is the essential absurdity of a 'go it alone' approach to the GWOT. Whether in unilateral actions, or *faux* multilateral actions through coalitions of convenience, the U.S. will not be able to achieve the policy objectives it has set out for itself. By acting in such a manner, legitimacy is lost. While no single competitor, or combination of competitors, has the military or economic power to currently challenge the U.S.'s preeminence on the world stage, reciprocally, the U.S. has neither the power, nor the potential for power, to establish a democratic world order whose vision is a singular one. Only by engaging others and helping them to share that vision can the U.S. possibly achieve such an end. Convincing NATO would be a good start.

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