14. ABSTRACT
Should a recession drive China to choose domestic over military investment, it must explore alternative options to maintain its regional influence, and access to raw materials. An inexpensive alternative would be an asymmetric - "Proxy War"- model. Similar to Kruschev's strategy for the USSR in the 1960s, the Chinese would support political insurgencies sympathetic to their interests in contested economic zones. Resultant instability would then be politically exploited, netting access to scarce resources to the exclusion of competitors like India and the United States. While conventional military solutions are ill-suited for this type of threat, less conventional approaches, particularly Foreign Internal Defense (FID), are tailored specifically to address such a strategic requirement. The Marine Corps is ill-prepared for such a mission. Thus, there is a strategic requirement to transform the Marine Corps in the next ten years to accomplish this mission.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
FUTURE WAR PAPER


SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF OPERATIONAL STUDIES

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AY 2013-14

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Date: 28 Apr 2014
DISCLAIMER

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Executive Summary


Thesis: The US Marine Corps should invest in its ability to conduct foreign internal defense in southern Asia, as part of a closely integrated component of a US Government political-military integrated strategy, in order to counter asymmetric political-military capabilities that would challenge US access to vital SLOCs and scarce economic resources.

Discussion: Should a recession drive China to choose domestic over military investment, it must explore alternative options to maintain its regional influence, and access to raw materials. An inexpensive alternative would be an asymmetric - “Proxy War”- model. Similar to Kruschev’s strategy for the USSR in the 1960s, the Chinese would support political insurgencies sympathetic to their interests in contested economic zones. Resultant instability would then be politically exploited, netting access to scarce resources to the exclusion of competitors like India and the United States. While conventional military solutions are ill-suited for this type of threat, less conventional approaches, particularly Foreign Internal Defense (FID), are tailored specifically to address such a strategic requirement. The Marine Corps is ill-prepared for such a mission. Thus, there is a strategic requirement to transform the Marine Corps in the next ten years to accomplish this mission.

Conclusion: The Marine Corps is unable to support a FID campaign involving direct or combat support to FID operations for a variety of reasons. Meanwhile, the PRC and PLA are expanding their ability to perform non-traditional missions. If the PRC decides to promote destabilizing movements within its closest security rings, and invests in less traditional capabilities to do so, the Marine Corps must be prepared. Therefore, the Marine Corps must be able to conduct FID from amphibious platforms and sea-based capabilities which will require interoperability between a Marine Special Operations Battalion and a Marine Expeditionary Brigade within a Joint Task Force formed by a theater special operations command.
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Introduction

China will face a strategic decision in the next twenty years. This decision will hinge on domestic versus military investments if its economic growth slows. Should China choose domestic over military investment, it must explore alternative options to maintain its regional influence, and more importantly, access to raw materials. An inexpensive alternative would be an asymmetric model, a “Proxy War.” Similar to Kruschev’s strategy for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the 1960s, the Chinese would support political movements and insurgencies sympathetic to their interests in contested economic zones. The resultant instability would then be politically exploited, netting access to scarce resources to the exclusion of competitors like India and the United States. While conventional military solutions are ill-suited for this type of threat, less conventional approaches, particularly Foreign Internal Defense, are tailored specifically to address such a strategic requirement. Current Marine Corps capabilities are inadequate to support a future foreign internal defense requirement in Southern Asia as part of an integrated political-military strategy.

The country of Burma situated between India and China, whose government has long been challenged by the Karen National Union (KNU), is an ideal proxy between these two regional powers. Though somewhat stable at present, it has experienced significant internal turmoil, bordering on civil war, in the past fifteen years. As China expands its influence, a friendly Burmese neighbor to the south is required. To Burma’s west lies India, who is deeply concerned with the insurgent, especially Naxalite, control of the so-called “red-corridor” along the southeastern coast. At present there is no evidence that the KNU of Burma and the Naxalites in India are aligned, though India is probably keeping a close eye on this relationship. Thus, divergent Indian and Chinese security interests (each possesses nuclear weapons aimed at the other) in Burma coupled with hegemonic ambitions underscore a little noticed regional security
dilemma\textsuperscript{1} in southern Asia. It also provides a backdrop to implementation of FID strategies by all the major actors – India, China, and the United States – with interests in this region.

Conventional military power is ill suited to resolve this dilemma, and the seeds for a major regional conflict for resources are clearly sown in the handling of this tension between India and China by the United States.

In a future environment, the friendly neighbors, uncontested air space, access to a functioning embassy, and a functioning IDAD program required to deploy special forces teams will be unavailable; a quick glance at the conflict in Syria illustrates just such a scenario in southwest Asia. The United States is clearly interested in maintaining a regional power balance in Asia, articulated through its reoriented defense strategy.\textsuperscript{2} However, it also intends to sharply reduce DoD involvement in large-scale, resource intensive stability and counterinsurgency operations.\textsuperscript{3} Paradoxically, a “minimalist” approach to countering and defusing violent reformists’ movements through foreign internal defense must be expanded. The Marine Corps must develop a concept that integrates the unique FID capabilities of a Marine Special Operations Battalion, with the sea-based reach and sustainability of a Marine Expeditionary Brigade that is fought through a Theater Special Operations Command. Thus, the US Marine Corps should invest in its ability to conduct foreign internal defense in southern Asia, as part of a closely integrated component of a US Government political-military strategy, in order to counter Chinese asymmetric political-military capabilities that could challenge US access to vital SLOCs and scarce economic resources. Synthesizing the unique capabilities of a Marine Special Operations Battalion, with the logistics, resources, and force structure of a Marine Expeditionary Brigade, deployed aboard amphibious shipping would fulfill this strategic requirement.
The problem: A Chinese approach to small wars

Chinese economic growth and its expanding spheres of influence drive United States strategy towards the Asian region. Without the strong economic growth needed to sustain a large conventional military, the People’s Republic of China will defend its national interests through other means. United States policy makers have not examined the implications of such a decision. A Chinese decision to pursue its strategic interests through political subversion in economically and politically vulnerable regions would stress contemporary strategic capabilities to preserve regional access. Global economic stability is a critical interest for both regional and global allies, including the United States. Critical to both the United States’ and Chinese national interests is that regional economic partners like India, Japan and the Republic of Korea, maintain access to raw materials such as oil and minerals, as well as the sea lines of communication, within China’s sphere of influence, necessary to move these resources.*

China views this activity within four overlapping and interlocking security rings. The first ring includes the territory China administers or claims. The second ring of security includes the 14 countries adjacent to China. The third ring of Chinese security concern consists of the six distinct geo-political regions that surround China: Northeast Asia, Oceania, continental Southeast Asia, maritime Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Central Asia. Security of regional trade routes would fall heavily within this ring. The fourth ring is the world far beyond China’s neighborhood, and it has only entered this ring since the 1990s to gain access to resources necessary for continued economic expansion.4

In competing with China, United States policy makers need a broader range of options within their diplomatic, developmental, and military toolboxes. Diplomatic engagement is the foremost option, but this requires subsequent actions in the form of development programs via the United States Agency for International Development and military partnerships through security cooperation activities. These all require time to achieve their desired outcomes. Pro-active military options available to enhance diplomatic and development initiatives in Southern Asia include major combat operations, security cooperation, and foreign internal defense. Neither China nor the United States desire major combat operations, and indicate as much in their national strategies. Security cooperation is particularly limiting to policy makers given the lead time in planning, the lag time in payoff. It offers little immediate relief to a partner nation under pressure from an indigenous subversive movement(s), especially within geo-strategically important areas. Security cooperation campaign plans generally look out years in advance for results, and seek to reinforce partnerships vice contain insurgencies. Foreign Internal Defense is a well-established operational concept capable of checking and containing revolutionary and insurgent movements, as part of a larger internal defense and development program, and can be scaled up quickly in times of emergency. FID is clearly the best strategic option for policy makers in a future contest for regional access.

Special Operations Command (SOCOM) as the Department of Defense proponent for foreign internal defense oversees highly specialized, multi-capable special forces advisors deployed throughout the globe in support of FID. Since September 11th SOCOM has focused heavily on dismantling terrorists organizations around the globe. Foreign security force development (FSF) is a key aspect of the counter-terrorist (CT) mission. The Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, now the Marine Special Operations Regiment within Marine Special Operations
Command (MARSOC) is the USMC proponent for FID and as such is trained, equipped, and organized to conduct the FSF mission within the Marine Corps. Its FID involvement culminated in the Village Stability Operation/Afghan Local Police (VSO/ALP) program, a solution to subversive Taliban influence in strategic areas of Afghanistan\(^5\). VSO/ALP was specifically designed to solve an operational problem in Afghanistan, and demonstrates a recent example of special and conventional force personnel working in concert to maximize the authorities and capabilities each contributes to the fight. Success in this concept is entirely dependent on personalities. Doctrine, organization, and training are not available to overcome challenges to SF/CF integration\(^\dagger\).

As a maritime nation, the United States should have such a force forward deployed in key regions around Asia that can conduct or support FID. However, current Marine Corps capabilities are inadequate to support a future foreign internal defense requirement in Southern Asia as part of an integrated political-military strategy. FID is a difficult mission that requires specialized training and education. China’s desire to exert greater regional influence is understandable, and requires strategic finesse. Major powers will seek alternative means to achieve their strategic interests once conventional military parity is achieved, or its pursuit becomes cost-prohibitive. US policy-makers require a variety of pragmatic strategic options that serve the nation’s strategic interests in southern Asia and soothe tensions between the United States, China, and India.

The Marine Special Operations - Expeditionary Brigade

The Navy is the only true strategic service in the Department of Defense. As stated in its doctrine, it can deploy and sustain substantial military force structure anywhere in the world and

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\(^\dagger\) Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures publications have been developed, signed and disseminated by service combat development headquarters. These reflect ad-hoc solutions to theater specific problems, and with the desire for consensus associated with MTTPs do not offer service specific contributions to SF/CF integration.
project that force through the air, land, and sea without reliance on land bases or overflight access. It will develop doctrine, organizations and training for those assets and resources needed to project and sustain an integrated Marine Special Operations Battalion / Marine Expeditionary Brigade – FID MEB in response to a large scale destabilizing movement within the PACOM AOR. The Marine Corps is perfectly suited to build a task organized landing force, deploy it aboard Navy shipping, and then plug it into the global SOCOM network. A FID MEB, comprised of highly trained light infantry forces deployed aboard amphibious shipping, under a unified – seaborne JTF that integrates regional and national level military and civilian capabilities, operating through a sea-base is the answer. In discussing the role a MEB should play in FID, it is important to clarify some key terms and identify the scope within which the MEB would perform FID.

**Key Terms**

Internal Defense and Development (IDAD), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), and Security Force Assistance (SFA) are all distinct yet related activities which require precise definitions.

*Internal Defense and Development* include the full range of measures undertaken by a nation to promote its growth and protect itself and its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to their security. These efforts are developed and executed by the Host Nation.

*Foreign Internal Defense* is the participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another (host-nation) government or other designated organization, to free and protect its society from the previously mentioned threats. FID activities are generally divided into three overarching categories: *Indirect Support, Direct Support (not involving combat operations) and U.S. combat operations in support of FID.*
Security Force Assistance is DOD's contribution to a unified action effort to support and augment the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces (FSF) and their supporting institutions to facilitate the achievement of specific objectives shared by the USG. This support includes training, equipment, advice, and assistance to FSF.8

The discussion of FID within this paper involves designing a military campaign between the categories of direct support (non-combat operations) and U.S. Combat Operations in support of FID, in order to achieve U.S. political objectives, specifically in southern Asia. SFA are those advisor tasks specifically performed by general purpose forces in support of a FID campaign, for example a Marine Corps artillery battalion advising a HN artillery battalion in fire support coordination. These tactical tasks are the output of the operational design framing a FID campaign. The role of indirect FID, such as security cooperation, is related to, but not within the scope of this paper. IDAD, as a larger concept, remains beyond the scope of this paper. Finally, FID is a SOCOM core competency that is planned within a Combatant Commander through a Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC). The TSOC would assume a “supported” command relationship in relation to general purpose forces unless otherwise specified. A Marine Expeditionary Brigade would be the supporting force within this concept and would be plugged into the SOCOM global network via a FID coordination cell.

A FID coordination cell would be a regionally task organized team, of no more than 10 personnel, embedded within an MSOB and MEB HQ. The primary purpose of this team would be to align MEB (supporting) capabilities with a Marine Special Operations Battalion (supported) tasked with a direct support FID mission. Members within a coordination cell would include Foreign and Regional Affairs Officers/specialists, USMC interagency fellows, staff

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Footnote:

*Supported/Supporting relationships are inherently personality driven during planning, which lend to smoother execution. SOF/GPF integration offer unique authorities, capabilities, and reach.*
judge advocates, US government civilians, and planners versed in special operations, civil affairs and information operations, among others. This team would be led by a FID coordinator, a senior Major or Lieutenant Colonel, with a career track that included interagency, special operations and conventional force experience.

A career track FID coordinator would be a truly unique Marine. He would have training as a regional or foreign area officer and experience with both conventional and special forces. Such a highly specialized team would be led by a senior major or lieutenant-colonel selected through a board process, within the purview of Plans, Policies, and Operations (PPO), Headquarters Marine Corps. Centralization of such an asset is not anathema to the Marine Corps’ fundamental warfighting philosophy; in fact, it embraces the USMC’s focus on dismembering the enemy’s system.9

Centralizing FID coordinators within a FID Integration Cell at PPO, HQMC would offer the most economic means to develop and employ such a capability. It could oversee personnel with unique career tracks that might include fellowships at the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the United States Institute for Peace, and other select interagency fellowships. FAO and RAO postings would also be a desirable background in addition to service with joint special operations forces.

The core of this JTF would be built around an MSOB, MEB, and Amphibious Ready Group. The FID coordination cell would serve as an executive agent to planning and coordinating JTF operations with US civilian interagency partners and Special Operations Command, Pacific (PACSOC). The generic mission of an amphibious JTF-FID could be to gain entry into a country or region challenged by a violent and turbulent political situation and protected by a modern anti-air and anti-ship capability; introduce a specialized FID MSOB, reinforced with any number of
capabilities from a task organized MEB; and assist in containing threats to a partner’s government. As the situation evolves, First Special Forces Group would assume control of the FID/IDAD mission while Marines are redeployed aboard the sea-base. The footprint ashore should remain as light as possible, relying primarily on long-range assault support for movement ashore, and ISR/Fires supported by fifth generation STOVL, LHA/D based aircraft.

Marine Special Operations Command would provide the FID force with the unique training and authorities to perform this highly complex mission. The Marine Expeditionary Brigade, with an embedded FID coordination cell, can provide a command and control platform that integrates the combat power of a regimental combat team, expeditionary/ littoral strike group, and logistics support to project, protect, and support a MARSOC FID force. Critical to employing this concept is the development of a MEB level FID coordination cell.

Access to the land bases FID forces presently require cannot be assured in the future as forward military presence is scaled back. The Navy and Marine Corps team can provide a highly potent, sustainable, and robust interim capability to contain and stabilize insurgencies in littoral regions. Though the Navy and Marine Corps would provide the bulk of the initial – triage – force, an Amphibious FID campaign is undoubtedly a joint force effort. Thus emerges a concept to establish a Joint Task Force – FID.

FID is an inherently military approach to stabilizing a violent political situation. Civic action programs are a key aspect of reconnecting an apparently legitimate government with its population. The MEB, aligned for FID, provides a full range of forces and capabilities to implement any variety of Civic Action Programs, from infrastructure construction and repair to training programs, development, and others as needed. Basing the additional 10-18,000 personnel ashore that could support civic action efforts would detract from host-nation credibility
and harm counter insurgent efforts. Conversely, a MEB afloat, especially one with a Maritime Pre-position Force Squadron and sea base in support, would nullify the perception among an aggrieved population that “the Marines have landed” yet could perform any variety of missions.

Civilian advisors would be augmented by expeditionary logistics and strike capabilities of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force. A political officer, maintaining a close relationship with an SFA or FID team leader, would avoid cross-purposing of efforts. PACOM’s Deputy Combatant Commander, a senior Foreign Service Officer, would be critical to planning a Navy-Marine Corps FID campaign within the US State Department’s policy and USAID’s long term development plan. The US Navy’s expeditionary logistics capabilities are unique in the world. It’s not difficult to imagine the host nation population growing used to a standard of support its own government would be unable to provide. Thus, integration of civilian experts across the interagency enabled with the unique expeditionary logistics and communications resources military forces employ would provide precise implementation of civic action programs incorporated into FSF and FID. Additionally, non-governmental organizations and foreign government aid organizations have proliferated over the past twenty years and will permeate the future operating environment and require an integrated US approach to FID.

Building Blocks

Presently (2014), the SFA concept is in nascent stages of experimentation within the Marine Corps. The Security Force Assistance/Advisor Teams (SFAAT) concept has evolved in Afghanistan, and the concept is gaining traction among some policy makers and academics. The SFA concept involves small teams of civilian and military advisors partnered with host nation government and military forces deployed in key regions. In Afghanistan, SFAATs would be enabled by air power and Special Operations Forces that would conduct counterterrorism missions and back up indigenous forces when needed and is estimated to reduce costs by as
much as 75%\textsuperscript{12} while capitalizing on the tactical evolution of conducting CF/SF integrated village stability operations. SFA is the vehicle by which regular Marine formations support indirect FID presently, but falls extremely short of the emerging strategic requirement in Asia. Present steps within the Marine Corps to develop SFA and FID capabilities will further identify steps to be taken to realize how this operational concept must grow in the next ten years.

The Small Wars Center for Irregular Warfare, Integration Division (SWCIWID) has been established with a charter that includes Security Force Assistance capability development. The Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group (MCSCG), a function of Marine Forces Command (MARFORCOM), and Advisor Training Group (ATG) within Training and Education Command (TECOM) are the service level training and evaluation components (respectively) for SFA\textsuperscript{13}. However, MCSCG is not in the FY15 Marine Corps Force Structure\textsuperscript{14} though its function will be retained within MARFORCOM. ATG provides mission rehearsal, training, and a repository of operational experience for SFAATs deploying to Afghanistan, but is funded through Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds, which are set to end in FY15\textsuperscript{15}. Despite these challenges, a free military occupational specialty (FMOS), 0571, Foreign Security Force Advisor, has been established to track advisor experience\textsuperscript{16}. In addition, the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit is developing an “Advisor” Company within Battalion Landing Team 2/1.\textsuperscript{17} This Security Force Assistance/ Crisis Response Company is undergoing training and certification with MCSCG as a proof of concept within I MEF.\textsuperscript{18} Therefore, the Marine Corps presently has an SFA MOS to qualify and track advisory experience, but this is far from a career track MOS with associated training, education, and grade shaping associated with other career tracks. Nor does formal organization or doctrine exist to guide the operating forces in training, equipping, deploying, and employing SFA forces. Finally, the current fiscal environment threatens the future existence of
these nascent organizations, and with that the loss of institutional experience and knowledge of SFA within the Marine Corps. Aside from trained advisors, SFA and FID require unique enablers to perform civil-military and information operations.

Civil Affairs and Information Operations are key asymmetric capabilities that enable the Marine Corps to conduct SFA and support FID. The Marine Corps has institutionalized these capabilities; however, they are low-density, high-demand resources. Like SFA their present role in supporting SFA and FID is poorly understood. Planning and executing SFA or FID without IO or CA is prohibitive, yet each might be reduced in capability or eliminated if the Marine Corps draws down below 174,000. Recent experiences in the challenges and nuances in building an integrated SF/CF force structure to support operations in Afghanistan should alert civilian military leaders to the danger of allowing this experience to atrophy as competition for budgets and force structures undergoes increased scrutiny. While the Marine Corps struggle to answer these questions and identify its future role, the PRC and PLA continue to develop military capabilities that can accomplish it “new historic missions”.

PLA Asymmetric Capabilities

The PLA is expanding its strategic capabilities beyond the Taiwan straits, in non-traditional ways. As China has grown, so too have discussions by its leaders about non-traditional security roles for the PLA. Military Diplomacy and soft-power, as foreign policy options, have evolved through China’s involvement in United Nations Peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster response missions. This fits within Hu Jintao’s guidance in his 2004 “New Historic Missions for the PLA,” promoting peaceful and harmonious coexistence with China’s regional and global neighbors.
China rarely projects military force beyond its third security ring. Chinese “soft power” projection, primarily in the form of development aid, is the preferred method to achieve their goals. Unlike the U.S., Chinese development aid is not contingent on adherence to human rights standards or promotion of democratic values. This provides a higher degree of flexibility in Chinese soft power projection. Political officers promoting destabilizing ideals could augment PRC development aid. All the ingredients needed to implement a policy promoting revolutionary war currently exist between the evolution of PLA employment and the Party’s outlook on foreign policy. The inherent risks in supporting destabilizing movements still outweigh the strategic payoff for China, but it remains uncertain how long this view will prevail.

PLA participation in UN peacekeeping, HA/DR, and counter-piracy operations are expanding its experience base in non-traditional military operations. This evolution will continue in the next fifteen years. Based on the PLA’s evolution since the mid-1990s, it will likely have a viable military capability to support a regional FID campaign in the next ten years. Additionally, Chinese development aid, its “soft power,” is more readily accessible, and not tied to human rights standards like the policies of most western powers. This provides a higher degree of flexibility to employ development aid to serve Chinese national interests compared to the United States. This will limit US responses to FID operations in key regions of southern Asia.

Opportunities and Challenges

Scrutiny in analyzing the future role of the Marine Corps in a period of fiscal austerity has invited numerous ideas on how it should look in fifteen years. Some have suggested a slightly smaller version of what the Marine Corps is now, and others promote an evolved organization to reflect the changing threat environment. This concept represents the latter approach. First, among several benefits, is an increase in operational reach, endurance, and capabilities to SOCOM in developing joint doctrine for supporting FID from sea-based platforms in a contested
environment. Second, once legal authorities and responsibilities are sorted out following a series of SF/CF joint exercises, an enormous amount of ‘swing’ force structure in the nature of an amphibious MEB would be available to enhance PACSOC FID missions in contested environments. A MEB can project, self-sustain, and with proper training and doctrine, support SF forces through combat and direct FID (not involving combat). Third, the FID integration cell at HQMC would serve as both an interagency and joint service cross-roads that manages extraordinarily high-demand, low-density capabilities that operate in extraordinarily sensitive environments. Fourth, elevating the TSOC to a headquarters capability that can fight with all elements of the joint force is a benefit to everyone. A TSOC in a supported capacity would be able to plug into a MEB and an ARG-TF, with the air power assets of both, in addition to a JFACC. This greatly expands the capabilities available to a Geographic Combatant Commander.

Challenges to preparing a MEB to support SOCOM FID missions abound, though many are superficial and easily overcome. First, competition for limited fiscal resources will see organizational retrenchment into traditional roles. Parochial social and organizational mindsets, fearing a loss of resources and force structure associated with a loss of mission, must be challenged and expanded to see the benefits of all parties in this construct.

Second, the arguments built around Air Sea Battle and Land Power Task Force obscure the benefit to the four services and SOCOM focusing on the human and technological challenges presented in the actual environment. In an era of fiscal austerity, access to contested regions necessary to stabilize key partners against disruptive movements requires the synergistic whole of the joint force. The technology required to make Air Sea battle work in a major conflict is the same technology that will be needed to cover a FID force based off shore and operating within contested air space ashore.
Third, within the Marine Corps the expansive and compartmentalized discussion of Irregular Warfare has become expensive, distracting, and disruptive to combat development initiatives. The Marine Corps is, and has always been, an irregular warfare force that can expand into an auxiliary land power force during major conflicts. After a decade of fighting in land locked regions it views itself first as a land power force with some irregular capabilities. This is flat wrong. It's historical niche has been irregular conflicts, including complex amphibious operations. In fact General P.X. Kelley, USMC, was the driving force in developing the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force to address rapidly evolving irregular threats in the Middle East; it evolved into what is now US Central Command26.

Fourth, the superficial notion that existing title X roles and responsibilities somehow constrain USMC and SOCOM interaction in developing a joint amphibious FID capability is a barrier. Amending existing legal impositions that impede the USMC from participating more directly in FID operations is simpler fix, according to some US Army JAGs with experience in the 75th Ranger Regiment8. In their view amending legal authorities will follow a shift in the social and organization outlook of SOCOM, the USMC and Congress.

Conclusion

FID is not COIN, and enhancing FID capabilities is quite different from expanding COIN capabilities as was seen in the previous decade. It will require a shift in thinking about special operations and conventional force integration. The Marine Corps has had extensive experience in supporting FID and conducting SFA since 2001. Unfortunately, tension and confusion between SOCOM and GPF and their role in FID has compartmentalized service level concept development. Command post exercises between SOCOM and the USMC don’t occur, nor do

8 Informal discussion with US Army Staff Judge Advocate, Major Brett Shephard, currently assigned to 75th Ranger Regiment.
joint planning exercises. Fellowships within the U.S. interagency involve senior field grade officers,\textsuperscript{27} typically post-command, in which the operating force yields little profit. Marine Corps units have partnered with MARSOC and OD-A teams in Afghanistan and Iraq and worked through difficult command and control and command relationship challenges, yet little doctrine has emerged within the Marine Corps, aside from a Multi-Service Tactics Techniques and Procedures\textsuperscript{28} publication primarily focused on OEF-A. In addition to these shortcomings, sequestration, within the budget control act of 2011, will reduce resources available to both SOCOM and the Marine Corps necessary to maintain core competency and combat proficiency over the next ten years. Meanwhile, competition for regional hegemony between India and China will increase tensions in southern Asia, requiring a strategic capability to conduct FID from sea-based and amphibious platforms.

The 75th Ranger Regiment will be no less busy in the next fifteen years, nor is it oriented towards the complexities in amphibious operations. SOCOM should have an amphibious variant of the 75th Ranger Regiment's airborne capability, which is a highly-trained, light-infantry, self-contained forward deployed amphibious MEB. Synthesizing these two like capabilities offers innumerable opportunities for defense savings in a period of fiscal austerity. Experimentation in planning, command and control and various forms for operation will be required to fully develop this concept. Critical to that is a FID integration cell embedded in PP&O that can train, operate and establish policy while this capability is fully developed. Critical U.S. interests will require intervention in small wars abroad, particularly in Asia. These minimalist approaches can net disproportionately large results. \textit{Therefore, the US Marine Corps must invest in its ability to conduct foreign internal defense in southern Asia, as part of a closely integrated component of a}
US Government political-military strategy, in order to counter asymmetric political-military capabilities that would challenge US access to vital SLOCs and scarce economic resources.
Notes

9 MCDP-1 Warfighting, 1997
13 Batinga, Edward, LtCol (Head, Security Force Assistance Branch, Small Wars Center for Irregular Warfare, Integration Division), interview by Major Ryan Brannon
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17 Email from LtCol Batinga
18 Email from LtCol Batinga
20 Non-attribution brief to SAW class
25 Conversation with a Marine Corps General officer privy to these discussions.
26 The Twilight War, David Crist
27 Current Fellowships roster from IW capabilities home page
28 Insert MTTP on SOF/CF integration
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