

Address to the Dole Institute
The Changing Face of Warfare in the 21st Century
Lawrence, KS
14 November 2007
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As Delivered 071411

Thank you for that wonderful introduction. It is truly an honor and a pleasure to be speaking here tonight... in this magnificent building, named after such an influential member of our government and decorated war hero. This institution has played host to former Presidents, Senators and members of Congress so it is quite humbling to have the honor to follow in those footsteps.

I was watching the scrolling ticker on the bottom of a news broadcast last week and I noticed a score flashed across the screen... KU 76, Nebraska 39... I thought it was a basketball score... Then someone reminded me that the Jayhawks football team is on fire this year!! Now one of only two unbeaten teams in the nation! 10 and 0 for the first time since 1899! Come to think of it, the last time I was stationed here in Kansas was 1988 and the basketball team won a National Championship.... maybe the Caldwell's are good luck for the Jayhawks!

In my capacity as Commander of the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, I have the exciting opportunity to affect some important institutional changes in our Army. The Combined Arms Center consists of seventeen centers and schools that span the length and breadth of our great Nation and are responsible for everything from... collecting lessons learned and... generating new Army Doctrine... to training and educating our force. From Fort Benning, Georgia to the Defense Language Institute in Monterey California... From the Center for Army Lessons Learned to our Command and General Staff College which educates the future leaders of our Army... the Combined Arms Center is one of the greatest instruments of organizational change in our Army. My responsibility to you and the American public is to use that instrument to move

the Army in the direction we need to go to be prepared for any challenges that lay in the future.

The Greek Philosopher, Heraclitus said over 2500 years ago “Nothing endures but change.” Sun Tzu said in *The Art of War*: “... as water has no constant form, there are in war no constant conditions.”

Throughout history the tactics, strategies and nature of warfare have changed and evolved. The challenge of successful, professional Armies has always been in adapting to changes more quickly than their adversary in order to be victorious... or better yet, though it is very, very difficult – predicting changes and changing to address them before a conflict arises.

An old axiom says that Generals always fight the “last war.” It is probably more accurate to say; generals and political leaders have trouble rapidly changing the tactics and strategies that were successful in the last war to meet the realities of the next war.

Through much of our own Civil War, we find the use of Napoleonic tactics... ranks of men in linear formations marching forward on the battlefield sending volleys of fire at their adversaries. Between the time of Napoleon and the American Civil war the Minié Ball was invented, in concert with rifled barrels, the Minié Ball made the weapons of the Civil War much more accurate.... accurate, in fact, out to 200 yards as opposed to the 40 yards of Napoleonic era muskets. This extended distance accounted for 3 to 4 additional volleys of accurate fire before two armies converged and the fighting became hand to hand and bayonet. Thoughtful military leaders on both sides struggled to adapt their tactics to this new reality without success - a contributing factor to the extreme bloodiness of that war.

Additionally, if we examine later battles of the Civil War, like Petersburg, we start to see the tactics shifting and the use of trenches and fortified defenses.... a battlefield that eerily resembles France in 1917.

When we finally get to France in 1917 we find those same tactics in use... trenches, fortifications and obstacles, but now we find the widespread use of another new weapon... the Machine Gun. Until the tank and the airplane provided the means to cross the so-called no-man's land years after the war ended, many brave men lost their lives in seemingly senseless attacks.

So, you can see from these few examples that Armies, and especially leaders tend to rely on the successes of past battles when preparing for the future. The real challenge is trying to equip and train our Armies for an unknown invention, tactic, technology or strategy. Sometimes we get it right... sometimes we get it a little right... and sometimes we get it dead wrong. In fact the great British historian Sir Michael Howard famously wrote some years ago that it doesn't matter that armies may have their doctrines wrong prior to the outbreak of a war. What matters is who can most quickly adapt to get it right.

Warfare in the 21st Century is no different... The only constant is change. The question is how will warfare continue to evolve in the future? What kinds of things do we need to be doing to properly train and equip our Army to fight this war, while simultaneously preparing and equipping them for the next war?

Today I would like to talk about some of the ways that we see warfare changing in the 21st Century and what we are doing in the Army and more specifically at the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth to address those changes.

There are several key changes in Warfare in the 21st Century, but they essentially fall into two main areas... changes in the battle space and changes in the nature and characteristics of the enemy.

Information – The first major change is in the use and dissemination of information. We are truly in the Information Age. Information travels literally at the speed of light.

The explosion of the internet has caused a revolution in how we look at the information domain. It allows anyone to have immediate access to an audience of millions around the world and to be somewhat anonymous.

The media is everywhere and technology allows them to almost instantly broadcast events across the globe. The competitive nature of the news and the twenty four hour news cycle have created a situation where, news agencies constantly search for the spectacular, eye grabbing and breaking story. When an incident occurs, it gets instant media attention, reporting and, in many cases, speculation about the details... speculation that becomes perceived reality to viewers and very hard to change after new facts or a clearer, more complete picture emerges.

The enemies we face have also changed.... The threats from nation states are ever present. However, threats from terrorist or radical organizations that don't wear uniforms or clearly identify themselves have vastly increased... we call them armed non-state actors. They include, but are not necessarily limited to, rebel opposition groups, local militias and warlords, as well as vigilante and civil defense groups, when they are clearly operating without state control.” We must be prepared to deal with both.

Of course, the most commonly known and lethal armed non-state actor we face in Iraq and Afghanistan is Al Qaeda. However, there are also smaller

groups such as the Islamic Army in Iraq and others that add to the challenge of maintaining international security.

One of the biggest challenges in dealing with non-state actors is that their organizational structures are decentralized and dispersed around the globe. I recently read a book called ***The Starfish and the Spider*** which excellently illustrates the power of this command structure. Their organization does not thrive on the directives and guidance of one figure head, but rather, they are loosely organized around a common radical ideology... They resemble a starfish. If you cut an arm off a starfish, the starfish will grow a new one.... In fact, the arm that was cut off will grow a whole new starfish!! Terrorist and non-state actors are a lot like starfish. That is why defeating non-state actors is so difficult.

Their dispersion around the globe is another contributing factor to the difficult challenges we face. They find safe harbor in nations around the world. They intersperse themselves with civilian, **innocent** populations. This makes it very hard to find them and when we do, it is even more difficult to remove them. They are like a cancer that is dispersed throughout the body. When the doctor finds it, he always has the challenge of removing it with as minimal damage to surrounding organs and tissues.

However, this dispersion is also a weakness! Armed non-state actors depend on local populace support. They depend on the sanctuary and external resources provided by countries and the populations within. Most importantly, they are relying on “virtual” safe havens, such as the Internet, global financial systems, and the international media. Essentially, the survival of armed non-state actors depends on having accepting populations or, at least, populations who are so terrorized that they support the enemy out of fear.

The use and dissemination of information is one of the key factors contributing to the way our enemies operate. Our enemies are masters at exploiting the media and information to their advantage. They utilize the latest technology to include; the internet and blogs. This technology allows them to reach an audience of millions in real time. They know and exploit the information domain. They play off the 24 hour news cycle, sensationalism and our own democratic principles of a free press. Sometimes when we find the enemy and execute a strike... they will exaggerate, play up and even falsify innocent deaths and property damage.

Because of these two features; our emergence into the information age, and the nature of our enemy, specifically their dispersion and decentralization, our enemies have chosen to pursue a Strategy of Exhaustion.

Strategies of exhaustion have existed for centuries. However, the critical difference between our current enemy's strategy and past strategies is the target of the exhaustion. Historically, Armies have chosen strategies of exhaustion when the enemy has some logistical weakness they can exploit. The Civil War is a great example of this. The Confederacy was considerably outmatched in the ability for industrial output of weapons of war. Nearly all US heavy industry was located in the Union. Therefore, once the Union was able to harness its industrial and human resources, it was able to take advantage of the Confederacy's weaknesses. The Confederacy still had many men under arms, yet it surrendered in large part because it was simply exhausted by the naval blockade and lack of logistics.

Our enemy isn't after our logistics... they know that we have immense resources and the ability to project those resources around the globe. They know they cannot defeat us militarily. Their goal is to exhaust our will to fight. And their biggest tool for that is the exploitation of information. They utilize high visibility sensational attacks that will grab attention on the news and portray an

image of utter chaos and confusion. Set off a roadside bomb here... blow up a mosque there... Incite violence and hatred through propagandist websites while setting the conditions to exploit that information in the news reports. They know they don't have to win; they just have to survive until we go away.

Now... in the US Army.... We train to execute decisive operations and not strategies of exhaustion. We like to show up on the battlefield and bring our Tanks, our Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and a few hundred thousand Infantrymen and meet the enemy face to face... and kick their butts! That is how we have traditionally trained and that is how we like to execute... quick, professionally and completely. But, if the enemy won't mass...if they won't identify themselves... If there is no definitive chain of command... we can't fight them that way. So in this case, the enemy has chosen the strategy and we must change to address it.

So how do we need to change? How can we address these challenges? There are three key things we need to do in order to adapt to the 21st Century Battlefield. First, we need to develop Adaptive Leaders. Second, we need to address and leverage Strategic Communications. Finally, we need to be able to operate in a Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, Multi-national Environment.

So what does adaptive leadership mean and why is it so important? First of all, if we develop adaptive leaders they will be better prepared to adjust to the changing nature of the battlefield, the enemy and warfare. They will be able to fight the "big war" against a belligerent state and still adapt to an asymmetric, armed non-state actors. We want our leaders to be able to think on their feet, analyze information quickly and make critical decisions. That kind of thinking on the 21st Century battlefield requires a certain set of traits. Among these traits are Cultural Fluency, Situational Awareness, Communication Skills, and Critical Reasoning Skills.

Our leaders need to have Cultural Fluency. Our soldiers are the front line ambassadors for our nation. THEY are the ones who interact with the populations they protect on a daily basis. We need to ensure they have the proper training AND education to....

- Understand and be responsive to cultural issues
- Establish trust and confidence

A great example of this happened in April 2003. LTC Chris Hughes was the Battalion Commander of 2-327th Infantry during the initial ground invasion and push to Baghdad. On the way to the capital he was ordered to take the city of Najaf. In Najaf stood one of the holiest landmarks for Shi'ite Moslems, The Grand Ali Mosque. The key Imam of the city residing in the mosque was the Ayatolla Ali Sistani and LTC Hughes knew that if he could get Sistani to issue a fatwa (religious decree) to his people, he could essentially sail through the rest of any Shi'ite cities and territory on his way to Baghdad. Therefore, he decided to go to the mosque and confer with the Ayatollah. However, on the way, an angry mob gathered and blocked his way chanting and growing more hostile by the minute. But, LTC Hughes didn't panic, he quickly appraised the situation, correctly surmised that the crowd was only concerned about protecting the mosque and he did something which is very hard for a Soldier in a "sticky" situation to do... he used restraint. First, he had pointed his weapon down at the ground... then he had his soldiers take a knee... some of the Iraqis also took a knee.... then he did something that is in no Army manual I have ever read.... He told his soldiers to SMILE! In the end, the crowd quieted and dispersed, he was able to meet with Sistani and a fatwa was issued.

How was he able to confidently issue those orders..., because he had studied the Iraqi people? First while serving on the Joint anti-terrorism task force and then on a 54 hour convoy where he soaked up as much information as he could from his Iraqi-American translator. He was culturally attuned.

Our leaders need to be Situationally Aware – It is critical that our leaders AND Soldiers understand that tactical actions have strategic implications. We

ask our soldiers to do some pretty extraordinary things for their age and maturity level. We ask them to patrol streets, take in data from countless sensors and indicators and... in a split second, decide to engage or not... decide to strike up a conversation or arrest. Most of the time they get it right, we all know of the few times they get it wrong because it gets hours of attention and analysis from every major news agency in the world. I once heard a cop use an old police adage that is fitting for our Soldiers as well. He said “Juries deliberate for days and weeks about actions that cops have to make in a split second.”

Our Leaders need to be Active Communicators – They must understand that Contact = Confidence = Cooperation.

We need to develop leaders who have Critical Reasoning Skills

It may come as a surprise to some of you, but we promote a thinking force.... AND we have done a pretty good job. We want officers and leaders who challenge assumptions and ask why. At the Command and General Staff College, we have our officers read books like **Fiasco** and **Cobra II**. Many officers... and Soldiers for that matter, write and publish in professional journals and even the popular press.

We also need our leaders to...

- be forward looking
- Anticipate 2nd and 3rd order effects.
- Rapidly exercise effective decision-making.

Along with adaptive leaders, we need an army that is focused on the information battle space or what we call Strategic Communication.... THE ENEMY IS FOCUSED ON IT!

In 2005, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who some consider to be Al Qaeda’s mastermind, said, “...I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle

is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle race for the hearts and minds of our Umma (People).”

Non-State Actors are influencing public opinion; therefore, it becomes paramount to deny their popular acceptance and use of any sanctuary in the world to include sanctuary in the information domain. Eroding their support should then become a desired effect of any Strategic Communication plan.

The Defense Department recognizes this... but organizational change takes time. Last year, the Quadrennial Defense Review, or QDR, indicated, “Victory in the long war ultimately depends on strategic communication by the United States and its international partners.” The QDR went on to say “Effective communication must build and maintain credibility and trust with friends and foes alike, through an emphasis on consistency, veracity and transparency both in words and deeds. Such credibility is essential to building trusted networks that counter ideological support for terrorism.”

There were several things we did when I was spokesman for the Multinational Forces – Iraq (MNF-I) in order to focus on this.

The leadership at Al Jazeera told me that I was the first American General to set foot in their studios. I conducted press conferences there in order to reach the Arab populations. Before we did that, the DOD basically had a no engagement policy with news agencies like that.

We recognized that we need to get information out to the public quickly in order to stop misinformation and to meet newsworthiness criteria like timeliness.

So you see we have a responsibility and necessity to communicate effectively internally and externally. We know that Al Qaeda’s goal is to erode the will of the people, drum up support in the Sunni Arab community, from the

Philippines to Africa, and sow chaos and discord among competing factions. We can either allow them to continue to exploit the information domain or we can set the record straight and take an aggressive stance to ensure that an accurate picture of events is presented.

Finally, we need to develop organizations and personnel who are comfortable operating in a Joint, Inter-agency, Inter-governmental, and Multi-national environment.

Gone forever are the days when we will go it completely alone. The mission is too complex, the populations we interact with too diverse. We need experts in nation building and implementation of community services. In the current fight and in future asymmetric fights which will overwhelmingly characterize the 21st Century, combat forces alone will not be sufficient to secure and maintain a lasting peace. We need increase the number of engineers... Civil Affairs personnel, Public Affairs Officers, and Civil Police advisors on the battlefield.

Currently, the Army is performing a lot of these civil functions in Iraq, Afghanistan and let's not forget Bosnia and Kosovo. We are by no means the experts in many of these fields. Therefore, we need to be prepared to bring the experts into our areas of operation, we need to know how to use them, how to protect them and how to resource them. Experts from other Government agencies like Dept of State, the Treasury, Agriculture and Commerce... we need to bring in experts from USAID. The better we can interact, cooperate and incorporate these non-military entities into our plans and operations, the more successful we will be. Many of the students in this room may not become Soldiers, but they may work for one of these many organizations. We may see you and work with you in some distant land in the future.

We also need to be prepared to operate in a multinational environment. Our allies have unique cultures; cultures that we may not fully understand. Also, they operate under different national political directives. If there are 30 or so nations involved in a coalition... you can bet there will be thirty or so different restrictions on how, when, where and for what purpose each of those Nation's forces can be used. It is hard and a huge challenge to bring all those different nations together and get them to operate as a cohesive team... but it is ABSOLUTELY the right thing to do!!

Information has become the Minié ball or the Machine gun of the 21st Century. Al Qaeda and our enemies are leveraging the use, exploitation and distribution of information in order to recruit members, slander the United States, and break the will of the American people. In order to prevent this exploitation, we must develop adaptive leaders who know when to use force trigger and when to lend a hand... leaders who can process information quickly and make sound tactical decisions that will have solidly positive strategic implications. We need to engage the media and correct errors, report the facts and inform the American people. Finally, we need to build relationships with other services, other agencies, and other nations. If we do all of these things, we can adapt to the changing face of warfare in the 21st Century and meet any challenge that will arise in the immediate future. Your Army, and the Soldiers and civilians at Fort Leavenworth are working very hard to adapt to the challenges of today and to be ready for the challenges of tomorrow.