

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

ELIMINATING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE CLASH:
DEVELOPING AN AIR FORCE AGILE WORKFORCE FOR 21ST
CENTURY WARFARE

by

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Introduction

Lieutenant General John A. Bradley, Commander, Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), stated during an interview at the September 2007 Air Force Association Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition that he intends to stick to his decision to have Air Reserve Technician (ART) personnel wear uniforms while on duty.¹ General Bradley made his decision based on his belief that wearing a uniform helps instill a sense of esprit de corps crucial to achieving the organizational harmony required to meet the demands of today's challenging and dynamic Air Force mission. Such esprit de corps is typically instilled in younger members of an organization by more experienced members, particularly those in supervisory positions. General Bradley went on to say in today's era of "blended" Air Force units, in which civil service air reserve technicians often supervise active duty Airmen on the same flightline, it is tougher for crew chiefs wearing civilian attire to credibly mentor their young active duty subordinates who are wearing Battle Dress Uniforms (BDU).² "Looking sharp" in a uniform is the Air Force way, Bradley said.³

One might assume such an edict from the AFRC Commander would be readily accepted by the rank and file members of a military organization committed to playing a critical role in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and buoyed by patriotism in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Many of the ART members being asked to wear a uniform fulltime disagree with the proposed policy and have turned to their local

¹ Mladen Rudman, Air Force Reserve Commander defends new uniform policy, AIM POINTS, <http://aimpoints.hq.af.mil/display.cfm?id=21496>, (accessed 27 September 2007)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Federal employee unions to block implementation of the measure. It should be noted ART personnel are part of the regular civil service and enjoy all the benefits granted to Federal employees in the competitive civil service to include collective bargaining provisions. Personnel management of ART personnel is further complicated by the fact they are required to maintain “active” membership in the Air Force Reserve unit where assigned. As members of reserve units, ART personnel receive on average one weekend of training per month during which they often perform their regular duties while wearing a uniform and under the same personnel policies and performance expectations as their active-duty counterparts.

Air Force Reserve units and its members are subject to immediate call to active duty in mobilization to meet a national emergency.⁴ Being subject to active duty recall makes it imperative ART members understand and are ready, willing and able to satisfy the organizational norms and standards inherent in active duty service.

ART personnel have expressed their displeasure with the policy based on the perception it holds them accountable as active-duty Airmen at all times even though they are paid less and enjoy fewer benefits.⁵ They worry that being forced to wear a uniform while on duty will be but the first step in a series of moves designed to blur the distinction between being in the military versus being a civilian employee.⁶ As a result, the new policy is on hold pending conclusion of AFRC negotiations with a multitude of unions—a process General Bradley himself feels in a best-case scenario will last at least several months.⁷

The above simple illustration highlights one of the biggest hurdles to successful transformation of the United States Air Force in its efforts to meet the challenges of the twenty-

⁴ Overview of Opportunities in the Air Force Reserve, <http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/forcshape/docs/AFReserveOpportunitiesRev1.doc> (accessed 1 October 2007)

⁵ Mladen Rudman, Air Force Reserve Commander defends new uniform policy, AIM POINTS, <http://aimpoints.hq.af.mil/display.cfm?id=21496>, (accessed 27 September 2007)

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

first century: the perpetuation of “separate-but equal” uniformed and civil service sub-cultures within the military. This paper posits the transnational nature of twenty-first century warfare as well as the fiscally-constrained environment within which the American military must operate demand the United States Air Force transform into a more flexible, adaptive and efficient organization if it hopes to remain the world’s preeminent air, space and cyberspace power. In order to effect this transformation, the Air Force must break down long-standing, outdated barriers to its creation and sustainment of an Air Force Agile Workforce (AFAW). AFAW is fostered through a culture of mutually shared commitment among all members to one set of organizational values and norms with personnel management policy distinctions between uniformed and civil service members held to the minimum level deemed practical in light of today’s security challenges. AFAW will help set conditions for victory across the full spectrum of conflict by leveraging the collective efforts of the motivated, ethical and accountable warriors envisioned by Secretary of the Air Force, Michael W. Wynne.⁸

The road to AFAW will not be absent of potholes, among which will be the possible perception by certain members of the Air Force team that some proposals for change will involve the loss of key benefits and long-guaranteed employment protections. This paper will argue such fears are unfounded and assert the personnel systems and policies that perpetuate them evolved from a long bygone era in management-employee relations. Globalization and technology in the twenty-first century have created threats unimaginable during much of the preceding twentieth century. Today, the Air Force literally can no longer afford to maintain personnel policies derived from 1960’s era politics any more than it can afford to sustain a fleet of 1960’s era aerial refueling aircraft when such aircraft are clearly obsolete in terms of meeting contemporary

⁸ Honorable Michael W. Wynne, Letter to Airmen, <http://www.af.mil/library/viewpoints/secaf.asp?id=191> (accessed 10 October 2007)

threats. AFAW offers Air Force leaders, both uniformed and civil service, the flexibility and efficiency they require to successfully lead personnel in delivering sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests—in air, space, and cyberspace.

At the conclusion of his September 2007 Air Force Association interview, General Bradley hinted at the basis for his new uniform policy through the use of the following rhetorical question: “When do ART personnel stop being Airmen?” Development of AFAW will help provide a strikingly simple yet poignant answer to the general’s question.

Challenges in the 21st Century

The men and women under the command of Lieutenant General Bradley face the same unprecedented level of challenges in the twenty-first century as all other members of the United States military, be they uniformed, civilian, active duty or members of a reserve component. The most pressing of these challenges are the evolution of contemporary warfare across the globe and the fiscally constrained environment within which the Air Force must operate to combat these global threats.

The Rise of Fourth-Generation Warfare

The shocking events of September 11, 2001 introduced many Americans to a concept of warfare that has been steadily evolving since the end of World War II. The tactics employed by the terrorists aboard the airliners that destroyed the twin towers of the World Trade Center and significantly damaged the Pentagon are part of the broader concept of warfare favored by terrorists and insurgents alike when dealing with a military superpower such as the United States. Members of terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and the

insurgents currently attempting to forestall political progress, reconciliation and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan have virtually no chance of military success using conventional methods of war against the U.S. Therefore, they have turned to asymmetric means of warfare to counter the overwhelming conventional firepower of the U.S. In doing so, Osama bin Laden and those who support him are following in the footsteps of other asymmetric pioneers such as Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh for very good reason. These men were the primary architects of one of America's worst military defeats: Vietnam. Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, U.S.MC, asserts that today's practitioners of insurgency warfare have taken Mao's and Minh's asymmetric principles and bolstered them with the advantages offered by twenty-first century "globalization" to create what he calls Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW).⁹ According to Colonel Hammes, 4GW makes use of today's globalized societal networks—be they political, economic or information networks—to directly attack the minds of enemy decision makers in order to destroy the enemy's political will to continue to fight or resist the demands of their opponents. Globalization allows 4GW practitioners to use readily accessible information to turn commercially available products into effective weapons of war. Two recent examples of such 4GW ingenuity include the marriage of flight training with a handful of airline tickets to turn commercial airlines into manned missiles on September 11, 2001 as well as the mailing of an envelope of anthrax shortly thereafter to shut down the Legislative Branch of the U.S. Government. Tactics such as these allow insurgents to negate U.S. power by avoiding direct force-on-force confrontations with the vastly superior conventional U.S. military.¹⁰

Despite the success of 4GW in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Lebanon, Somalia, New York City, Washington DC, Iraq, and Afghanistan, the American military is still primarily structured to

⁹ Col Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone* (St. Paul, MN: MBI Publishing Company, 2004), viii, 3-15.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

fight and win large scale conventional wars on foreign soil against other nations based on superior technology. However, the attacks of September 11, 2001 proved the most pressing threats to U.S. interests today and in the future will not emanate from nations but rather from sub-national and transnational actors. 4GW warfare has in large part removed geographical barriers to attacks on U.S. soil, a strategic military advantage enjoyed by America since its inception. Further complicating matters is the fact America's 4GW enemies are not hampered by the same entrenched bureaucratic decision-making apparatus as the U.S. military; instead, they are free to exploit unregulated, worldwide networks to collect information, store it on web sites, use it to recruit and train operatives, collaborate on strategy and direct attacks against U.S. interests.¹¹

The effects of globalization from creating greater reliance on networks of interdependent economic, political and cultural relationships between nations across a virtually "open" information architecture has brought with them greater vulnerabilities to an equally open society such as the U.S.. It is the adaptive and flexible mind of the insurgent that remains his greatest asset in exploiting these open networks to nearly simultaneous tactical and strategic advantage. Thus, the results of an errant U.S. missile strike and its attendant civilian casualties are videotaped and sent around the globe with the effect of not only eroding U.S. political will but also serving as a tool for recruiting young Jihadists to carry on a radical campaign seen as increasingly justified in the eyes of the Muslim community. The 4GW warrior's forward edge of battle is the cyber café, crowded market, train depot, mosque and innumerable huts and hovels found throughout a thousand hardscrabble neighborhoods covering the far reaches of the globe—and quite possibly a neighborhood in the U.S.

¹¹ Col Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone* (St. Paul, MN: MBI Publishing Company, 2004), 195.

The U.S. military must counter the 4GW practitioner with even greater intellect, adaptability and flexibility in order to secure the ultimate victory. To do so, the Services need to move away from overreliance on technologically advanced weapon systems that are of limited value in 4GW where the enemy is nearly indistinguishable from the average citizen and, instead, further develop its forces through promotion of a common ethos, integrated training and flexible organizations.¹² The sooner the U.S. military can adopt such a change in mindset, the sooner it can move from its current reactionary posture to a more proactive approach to dealing with insurgencies across the globe. 4GW places a greater premium on speed of action, not only in terms of machinery on the battlefield but also in terms of information dominance achieved by personnel working in rear echelon command posts, supply warehouses and offices of supporting agencies.

The twenty-first century military workforce must be able to leverage its collective brainpower through collaboration unencumbered by Cold War bureaucratic systems and policies derived during the period preceding 4GW. This offers the U.S. its best opportunity to deny terrorists and insurgents domination over information required to operate at what President Bush has termed “the crossroads of radicalism and technology.”¹³ It is at this unique intersection in history that 4GW allows sub-national and transnational actors to conceivably gain access to chemical, biological and nuclear weapons along with ballistic missile technology; once that occurs, even weak states and small groups could attain the catastrophic power to strike great nations such as the U.S.¹⁴

¹² Ibid., 263.

¹³ The National Security Strategy of the United States, Section V, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss5.html> (accessed 7 October 2007)

¹⁴ Ibid.

Struggling to Meet the High Costs of a “Leading Edge” Air Force

For the Air Force, the need to move to a more adaptive, flexible and collaborative work force bound by a common ethos to combat 4GW is even more pressing given the financially constrained environment within which it presently finds itself. Ironically, the Air Force’s success in building an unmatched conventional air capability has worked so well in creating a dearth of near-peer conventional warfare competitors that it has spawned rhetoric from military journalists such as *Defense Technology International’s* David Axe and academics such as Robert Farley from the Patterson School of Diplomacy and Commerce claiming the majority of current Air Force weapon systems are irrelevant in today’s scheme of 4GW. 4GW forces by definition do not rely on specialized, technologically advanced weaponry; instead, they seek to use asymmetric means to counter such technological advantage. Even the new counterinsurgency manual authored in part by General David H. Petraeus, current commander of Multi-National Forces in Iraq, specifically notes that the excessive use of conventional airpower in counterinsurgency conflict can lead to disaster.¹⁵ However, critics such as Axe and Farley ignore the fact that the Air Force stands unchallenged because it is so strong. Allowing Air Force weapon systems to atrophy as is currently the case only serves to invite competition from nations currently content to cede the airpower domain to the U.S. The loss of U.S. airpower dominance would have a debilitating effect on its future military operations across the entire spectrum of conflict.

In addition, many Air Force weapon systems are proving themselves to be critically important on the battle lines of 4GW by providing vital command, control, communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities to the U.S. ground forces that are in

¹⁵ David Axe, “Disband the Air Force”, <http://www.military.com/features/0,15240,154578,00.html?ESRC=eb.nl> (accessed 1 November 2007)

direct contact with 4GW insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁶ Air Force airlift platforms also play a key role in ongoing reconstruction efforts in both countries and some have argued airlift plays an ever greater role in counterinsurgency operations than conventional missions.¹⁷

Regarding American airpower superiority as a given, senior U.S. leaders have over the years opted to allocate limited defense funding increases to branches of the military where the U.S. advantage does not appear to be so dramatic—namely the Army and Marine Corps. The Air Force's baseline budget has remained relatively static for the past several years. The budget totaled \$101.9 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 and \$104.5 billion in FY 2007, and the FY 2008 budget request is for \$110.7 billion.¹⁸ However, this budgetary stagnation comes at the tail end of a 16 year period of constant deployment and utilization of Air Force aircraft above their programmed rates, from the conclusion of Operation DESERT STORM in 1991 to present day action in the skies over Afghanistan and Iraq. The Air Force budget has failed to keep up with the pace of cost increases due to the overuse of its fleet; this has allowed an aging Air Force aircraft inventory to grow older and more expensive to maintain. The average age of aircraft in the Air Force inventory is now 24 years old—the highest in history—and it is rising every year.¹⁹ The current tanker fleet averages over 40 years in age and, yet, it is the backbone of U.S. ability to project force for any and all military missions.²⁰ While the fleet grows older, the costs to

¹⁶ Col Howard D. Belote, "Counterinsurgency Airpower: Air-Ground Integration for the Long War," <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj06/fal06/belote.html> (accessed 4 November 2007)

¹⁷ Alan J. Vick, Alan J. Vick, Adam Grissom, William Rosenau, Beth Grill, Karl P. Mueller, "Air Power in the New Counterinsurgency Era: The Strategic Importance of U.S.AF Advisory and Assistance Missions", http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG509.pdf (accessed 12 October 2007)

¹⁸ Mackenzie Eaglan, "Airmen vs. Modernization: The Air Force Budget Dilemma", The Heritage Foundation, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg2037.cfm> (accessed 11 October 2007)

¹⁹ Adam J. Hebert, "The Future is on the Line", Air Force magazine Online, <http://www.afa.org/magazine/nov2007/1107future.asp> (accessed 30 September 2007)

²⁰ "KC-767 Common Widebody Tanker & Transport", GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/aircraft/kc-767.htm> (accessed 10 October 2007)

maintain it have risen 85 percent over the last decade.²¹ Without corresponding budgetary increases to account for these increasing maintenance costs, the Air Force has had to resort to the use of “offsets,” in effect, pulling monies from one area of operations to another in order to keep its aircraft flying.

Some of the hardest hit areas in terms of offsets have been the Air Force research, development and procurement accounts. In the decade preceding the first Gulf War, these accounts made up over 50 percent of the Air Force budget and produced weapon systems such as the F-117 that played such a pivotal role in the successful outcome of that war. Today, offsets have reduced the share of these accounts to less than 35 percent of the total budget.²² The use of offsets not only threatens the long-term ability of the U.S. to maintain its decided conventional airpower advantage over near-peer adversaries, it also limits its ability to fund the types of force structure transformation required to better wage battle against 4GW adversaries.

The Impact of Politics and Free Market Forces

Congress has levied additional financial constraints on the Air Force by refusing to let it retire some of its older, less capable aircraft. These aircraft, such as the KC-135E, C-130E and B-52, are part of an aircraft portfolio that is no longer operationally viable and costs the Air Force \$1.7 billion annually.²³ This money could be better used to fund new aircraft procurements and operational innovations required for 4GW, such as greater use of Unmanned Combat Air Systems (UCAS). Unfortunately, many of these aging aircraft are supported by industries located in key congressional districts. Elected officials from these districts have been

²¹ MGen Frank R. Faykes, “Inside the Air Force Budget”, Air Force Association.org, http://www.afa.org/media/scripts/conf2006_Faykes.html (accessed 2 October 2007)

²² Ibid.

²³ Otto Kreisher, “Air Force leaders argue need to retire old aircraft”, GovernmentExecutive.com, <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0207/022807cdpm2.htm> (accessed 11 October 2007)

reluctant to allow the retirement of the aircraft systems without being provided a vehicle to mitigate the economic impact such retirements pose for their districts.

Beyond political interests, economic factors also eat away at scarce Air Force funding. For every \$10 increase in the cost of a barrel of oil, the Air Force's budget is hit with an unfunded \$665 million bill.²⁴ Air Force Materiel Command is leading a hard push toward alternative fuels to reduce the Service's vulnerability to future price hikes. However, this effort is bound to be constrained by the previously discussed reductions to research and development accounts that are being made to free up funding for maintaining the Air Force's aging aircraft inventory.

Stagnant annual budgets, an aging aircraft fleet, high operations tempo; reduced research, development and procurement spending; congressional restrictions; and even market forces have all conspired to put the Air Force in a very precarious financial situation. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are not popular with the American public, and the costs of these two wars are projected to be \$2.4 trillion over the next 10 years.²⁵ Faced with the addition of the Baby Boomer generation to Social Security distribution rolls, an increasing national debt and the possibility of an economic recession, it is highly unlikely the next U.S. President will be inclined to significantly increase defense spending when he or she takes office in 2009. This situation is made even more distressing now that the Air Force faces a 4GW enemy intent on destroying American society with tactics that do not immediately lend themselves to defeat through the conventional airpower means upon which the present U.S. Air Force is built.

This bleak financial forecast has forced senior Air Force leaders to make some very tough decisions regarding future investment. The Air Force must recapitalize its aging aircraft

²⁴ Adam J. Hebert, "The Future is on the Line", Air Force magazine Online, <http://www.afa.org/magazine/nov2007/1107future.asp> (accessed 30 September 2007)

²⁵ Steve Hargreaves, "War on Terror' may cost \$2.4 trillion", CNNMoney.com, http://money.cnn.com/2007/10/24/news/economy/cbo_testimony/ (accessed 3 November 2007)

inventory to maintain airpower dominance across the spectrum of conflict if it hopes to continue to meet its stated mission of delivering sovereign options for the defense of the U.S. and its global interests. To do this, it must seek to reduce costs in other areas. Further reductions in research, development and procurement would work against the goal of a recapitalized inventory; therefore, the Air Force has made the corporate decision to reduce the numbers of its most expensive asset—its personnel.

A Shrinking Workforce

As with the costs of maintaining older aircraft, the costs of employing Airmen have continued to rise as well. Personnel spending increased by 57 percent over the past 10 years despite the fact end strength decreased by 8 percent over the same time period.²⁶ Faced with these increasing costs, Air Force Secretary Michael W. Wynne and Air Force Chief of Staff T. Michael Moseley announced plans to cut 40,000 full-time “equivalent” billets across the Service over the next five years in 2006.²⁷ The Air Force has always considered its personnel to be its most “cherished” resource and the primary reason behind its ascension to the position it now enjoys as the world’s preeminent air, space and cyberspace force.²⁸ Senior Air Force leaders are confident the 12 percent reduction in end strength represented by the cut of 40,000 positions is viable given the fact many of the positions being targeted are not directly supporting expeditionary operations.²⁹ It is hoped the reduction of these personnel positions will free up \$6

²⁶ Mackenzie Eaglan, “Airmen vs. Modernization: The Air Force Budget Dilemma”, The Heritage Foundation, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg2037.cfm> (accessed 11 October 2007)

²⁷ Gen T. Michael Moseley, “CSAF Letter to Airmen: Shaping and Transforming the Force”, Air Force Link, <http://www.af.mil/library/policy/september.asp> (accessed 23 September 2007)

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

billion annually to help pay for recapitalizing the force through modifications on some existing aircraft as well as the procurement of new aircraft.³⁰

The two key challenges facing the Air Force in the twenty-first century, the advent of 4GW and a fiscally constrained environment, mandate that the force structure left in the aftermath of the loss of 40,000 full time positions be sufficiently developed and prepared to overcome these challenges. One mechanism for aiding this developmental process is the removal of bureaucratic and cultural barriers that prevent maximum collaboration, synergy and unity of effort among all Airmen—be they uniformed or civilian, active duty or members of Reserve components. Greater freedom to maneuver the workforce will provide all Air Force leaders the ability to apply the full collective intellectual throw-weight of their assigned personnel against a 4GW enemy intent on exploiting information and the frustrations of their followers to outflank the U.S. military. The time has come for the development of an Air Force Agile Workforce (AFAW).

Time for a Fresh Approach

The threats posed by 4GW as well as the resource-constrained environment of the twenty-first century demand the Air Force workforce be mutually committed and vested in its mission and be provided the tools necessary to achieve the level of collective adaptability, flexibility and collaboration required to secure ultimate victory. With its manpower base shrinking at the same time its operations tempo is increasing due to the ongoing Global War on Terror (GWOT), the Air Force has never faced a greater need for teamwork among all of its members.³¹ One of the primary responsibilities of strategic leaders is to create and maintain the organizational

³⁰ “Air Force Gen. T. Michael Moseley Transcript, Part One”, GovernmentExecutive.com, <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1007/103107gg1.htm> (accessed 12 November 2007)

³¹ “The U.S. Air Force Posture Statement 2006”, Air Force Link, <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-060302-001.pdf> (accessed 12 November 2007)

characteristics that reward and encourage such collective efforts.³² To do so, strategic leaders must ensure organizational values and norms are mutually understood, accepted and followed by all members of the organization. Organizational values express preferences for certain behaviors or certain outcomes.³³ Organizational norms express behaviors accepted by others—they are the culturally acceptable ways of pursuing goals.³⁴ These values and norms, once transmitted and practiced throughout the organization, establish the enduring culture that allows the organization to keep pace with external influences governing its operations.³⁵

The Foundation: Air Force Core Values

In an era of 4GW in which the Internet provides sufficient information to enable terrorists to create a viable smallpox bio-weapon that could wreak havoc on American soil, the U.S. military must operate from a homogenous organizational culture base if it hopes to achieve the synergy of thought and action necessary to prevent or mitigate such attacks.³⁶ This synergy of thought and action will be equally important to the Air Force as it attempts to learn from and not repeat the mistakes it is bound to make using new and unproven tactics, techniques and procedures to combat foes in the still unfamiliar environment of 4GW. Fortunately, the Air Force has already laid the foundation for such homogeneity by codifying the basic underlying assumptions that comprise the very essence of its culture, namely its core values. These core values of “integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do” are widely understood and embraced by both uniformed and non-uniformed members of the Air Force team to support the homogenous

³² Dr Bill Knowlton, “Strategic Leadership and Decision Making: Organizational Culture”, National Defense University, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/AFAWc/AFAWcgate/ndu/strat percent2Dldr percent2Ddm/pt4ch16.html> (accessed 10 October 2007)

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Paul Boutin, “Biowar for Dummies”, [http://paulboutin.weblogger.com/stories/storyReader\\$1439](http://paulboutin.weblogger.com/stories/storyReader$1439) (accessed 1 November 2007)

culture required to underpin successful operations.³⁷

Actions based on these core values have served as the foundation for airpower's early validation as a national instrument of power in its own right during the strategic bombing campaigns of World War II up to the resounding military and political successes facilitated by airpower practitioners during two Gulf Wars and counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan. The "legacy of valor" touched upon in the Airman's Creed³⁸ is replete with examples of uniformed members achieving victory on the battlefield at all odds. The actions of airpower warriors such as Lieutenant Frank Luke flying over the town of Murvaux³⁹ and Airman First Class John L. Levitow saving his comrades over the skies of Viet Nam⁴⁰ helped create the spirit of the Air Force captured in its core values. Such feats of heroism are not restricted to uniformed members of the Air Force. Non-uniformed members such as Daniel J. Kuhlmeier⁴¹ and Barbara C. Heald⁴², who selflessly gave their lives for their country while deployed in Iraq, provide unequivocal proof that civil service employees are as equally committed to the Air Force core values as their uniformed counterparts. Few would argue that the current Air Force core values are not relevant in today's era of 4GW and financially-challenging times. In fact, quite the opposite is true; the current Air Force core values are more relevant than ever and the organizational norms through which they are channeled must be shared and demonstrated equally across the workforce to set the conditions for airpower's continued success in the twenty-

³⁷ "United States Air Force Core Values", [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF%20Core%20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

³⁸ "The Airman's Creed", Airman's Roll Call, <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-070418-013.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2007)

³⁹ "Second Lieutenant Frank Luke Jr.", Air Force Historical Studies Office, <https://www.airforcehistory.hq.af.mil/PopTopics/MOH-bios/Luke.html> (accessed 15 November 2007)

⁴⁰ "Airman First Class John L. Levitow", Air Force Historical Studies Office, <https://www.airforcehistory.hq.af.mil/PopTopics/MOH-bios/Luke.html> (accessed 15 November 2007)

⁴¹ "Fallen Heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom", FallenHeroesMemorial.com, <http://www.fallenheroesmemorial.com/oif/profiles/kuhlmeierdanielj.html> (accessed 15 November 2007)

⁴² "Missile Kills Two U.S. Reconstruction Workers On Election Eve in Baghdad", Arlington National Cemetery Website, <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/bcheald.htm> (accessed 15 November 2007)

first century.

The Scourge of Bureaucracy

Organizational norms that place a premium on adaptability, flexibility and collaboration among individuals and between groups will provide Air Force strategic leaders a counterweight against 4GW adversaries who do not face the same sort of bureaucratic constraints encountered by large formal organizations like the U.S. military. 4GW practitioners are often loosely allied, dispersed and unencumbered by self-imposed regulation. The U.S. military, on the other hand, must deal with internal and external environmental influences such as an Executive Branch of government that sets strategic objectives the military must try to achieve and a Legislative Branch of the same government that allocates the resources for pursuing these same objectives. Often, the two Branches seem to work against one another. The President may pursue strategic policies not wholly endorsed by Congress who in turn does not provide sufficient resources to attend to the President's entire foreign policy agenda. The U.S. military is invariably caught in the middle and as a result must engage in a constant battle of trade-offs between risk and reward as it sets out to protect the U.S. from conventional and asymmetric foe alike.

From this governmental tug of war come tough decisions such as reducing manpower to help pay for modernization of the aging Air Force aircraft inventory while simultaneously waging wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Recently, the U.S. House of Representatives forwarded a \$50 billion war spending bill that would provide the Services only enough funding to cover war costs for four months.⁴³ Congressional leaders stated the Pentagon could eat into its normal operating budget to cover the rest of the costs of war for the fiscal year, but Secretary of Defense

⁴³ Noam N. Levy, "Congress breaks without passing war spending bill", Los Angeles Times, http://www.latimes.com/news/print/edition/asection/la-na-warvote17nov17,1,6859828.story?coll=la-news-a_section (accessed 17 November 2007)

Robert M. Gates remarked that the Department of Defense (DOD) only has enough money in current outlays to transfer about \$3.7 billion to the war effort, roughly enough to sustain operations for one additional week.⁴⁴ Absent an injection of additional supplemental funding, the Department may be forced to lay off employees and terminate contracts which would further reduce organizational effectiveness.⁴⁵ Needless to say, 4GW adversaries are not bound by such bureaucratic limitations.

To level the playing field, Air Force leaders must be free to set workplace conditions that are focused on performance as defined by productivity combined with innovation. According to experts in the field of teamwork and productivity such as Susan Lucia Annunzio, the workplace environments of productive organizations share three characteristics: the environment demonstrates the organization values people, optimizes critical thinking and encourages people to seize opportunities.⁴⁶ The Air Force core values clearly support these workplace characteristics. More importantly, the Air Force core values exist for all members of the Air Force family—officer, enlisted, and civilian; active, reserve, and retired; senior, junior, and middle management; civil servants; uniformed personnel; and contractors.⁴⁷ As such, the cultural groundwork is already in place for the Air Force to promote the type of adaptability, flexibility and collaboration necessary to develop AFAW and defeat 4GW enemies.

The Fallacy of “Separate but Equal”

Unfortunately, the ability of Air Force leaders at all levels to develop AFAW and fully

⁴⁴ Brian Naylor, “Senate Rejects \$50 Billion War Spending Bill”, NPR, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16355247&ft=1&f=1001> (accessed 22 November 2007)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Jennifer Salopek, “Cloning High Performance”, Associations Now, <http://www.asaecenter.org/PublicationsResources/ANowDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=18317> (accessed 14 September 2007)

⁴⁷ United States Air Force Core Values”, [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF%20Core%20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

leverage the collective contributions of Air Force personnel and meet twenty-first century challenges head on is constrained by many of the same systemic factors that have eroded team chemistry since the independent Air Force was formed. These factors have manifested themselves through reliance on antiquated personnel policies and processes that serve to impede the translation of Air Force core values into successful action by perpetuating two distinct “sub-cultures”: one sub-culture for uniformed members and a separate sub-culture for civil servants.

The two sub-cultures have different systems for employee pay, utilization and discipline as well as different processes for professional development and personnel management. These differences ultimately hamper the ability of the workforce to achieve the type of effective teamwork needed to confront today’s evolving challenges. The distinctions between the two sub-cultures also result in less efficiency across the workforce as a whole as both time and money is wasted on dual support systems required to maintain separate sub-cultures. These inefficiencies amplify the severe financial straits the Air Force is already experiencing due to increasing operations tempo and shrinking budgets. With civil servants projected to comprise 32 percent of the total active Air Force workforce by 2009⁴⁸, the time has come to break down these long-standing sub-cultural stovepipes and transform the workplace into one in which common values, norms and performance expectations converge to form an unbeatable team focused on overcoming any challenge across the full spectrum of warfare.

In order to increase productivity among the members of the Air Force remaining after projected manpower reductions take effect, it is imperative all the members be available for duty at the same time to foster greater teamwork and collaboration. Increased workforce productivity and innovation will be essential to fill the operational void left when 40,000 full-time positions

⁴⁸ “Service demographics offer snapshot of force”, Air Force Personnel Center, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/demographics/> (accessed 24 October 2007)

are cut from Air Force rolls without a corresponding reduction in Air Force missions. While uniformed members of the military are available to their leadership 24 hours a day, seven days a week, civil servants, for the most part, are only available 40 hours per week unless additional funding is available to cover overtime costs. The majority of civil service employees cannot be asked to work beyond 40 hours a week without being paid overtime wages at a rate of one and a half times their normal pay rate.⁴⁹ Most of the remaining civil service employees are granted compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay, but the net effect is still a loss in productivity over the long run. Further, supervisors have limited ability to change civil service employee's duty hours to meet dynamic mission requirements. Before supervisors may change the duty schedules of civilian employees covered by collective bargaining agreements, they must first notify the exclusive representative of those employees and, upon timely request, bargain on the matter to the extent required and/or permitted by laws, regulations, and collective bargaining agreements. As of 2002, 71 percent of Air Force civil service employees were covered by such collective bargaining agreements.⁵⁰

In an age of 4GW, the Air Force cannot afford to replace an agile uniformed workforce during drawdown with civil service employees governed by personnel policies that limit workforce flexibility and collaboration. The stakes are too high. Just as 4GW practitioners have made the forward edge of battle in the GWOT nearly omnipresent by removing geographical barriers to attack, they have also rendered the concept of the set 40-hour work week for Department of Defense (DOD) employees an obsolete and potentially dangerous model.

Terrorists and insurgents neither punch a clock nor sign a time card like DOD civil service

⁴⁹ "Handy Reference Guide to the Fair Labor Standards Act", U.S. Department of Labor, <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/hrg.htm> (accessed 12 November 2007)

⁵⁰ Holly O'Grady Cook, "Leader development: tactics, techniques, and procedures for working with union employees", BNet Research Center, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m6052/is_2002_Oct-Nov/ai_98136523 (accessed 12 November 2007)

employees. Instead, 4GW warriors are on duty around the clock and they often strike at night, over weekends and on federal holidays. To deter, defeat and/or mitigate the consequences of such attacks, the entire Air Force workforce must be employed in a flexible manner that allows for the concentration of intellectual and physical firepower at the decisive point to achieve victory. This collaborative effort must not be impeded by bureaucratic wrangling over duty schedules or lack of overtime funds. The Air Force core value of “service before self” recognizes the fact that the profession of arms requires a high level of professional skill, a 24-hour a day commitment, and a willingness to make personal sacrifices on the part of all its members—uniformed and non-uniformed.⁵¹ America’s 4GW adversaries are willing to die and take innocents with them in the name of the causes they believe in no matter how irrational their tactics may seem to others. It is, therefore, certainly reasonable to expect civil service employees should occasionally work overtime, on weekends or during holidays as the mission dictates without additional compensation alongside their uniformed counterparts in order to prepare and defeat these zealots.

A Call for Greater Adaptability, Flexibility, Collaboration and Accountability

While on duty, Air Force members must be able to adapt “in stride” to new mission requirements generated by irregular 4GW tactics while retaining the ability to conduct more conventional forms of warfare should the need arise. Uniformed members of the military are already predisposed to taking on additional tasks commensurate with their rank and experience as the situation warrants. Provided an order from a superior officer is deemed “legal” based on the Uniform Code of Military Justice, a subordinate has no choice but to comply or face

⁵¹ United States Air Force Core Values”, [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF_percent20Core_percent20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

disciplinary action. This creates fertile ground for individual and group adaptability in meeting the mission. On the other hand, the civil service personnel system does not engender such adaptability. Civil service employees are employed according to specific position descriptions tailored to individual manpower billets. As is the case with duty hours, any change to an employee's assigned duties must be coordinated through the exclusive representative of those employees covered by collective bargaining and, upon timely request, bargained on the matter to the extent required and/or permitted by laws, regulations, and collective bargaining agreements.⁵² The use of such restrictive position descriptions also brings with it a cumbersome and expensive attending bureaucracy of human resource specialists to advise, define, refine, catalogue, monitor and administer use of the documents.⁵³

4GW is forcing the U.S. military to think “outside of the box” to match wits with an adaptable adversary who takes readily accessible materials and uses them in an improvised manner to thwart conventional U.S. tactics. To date, 50 percent of U.S. combat deaths in Iraq—more than 1,500 personnel—have resulted from the use of improvised explosive devices built from easily attainable munitions and generic products such as car batteries and cell phones.⁵⁴ 4GW practitioners such as al-Qaeda currently have seized the advantage in the war of strategic communications, and the U.S. military has realized it will take more than guns, bullets and bombs to achieve victory in a GWOT that is derived from a clash of ideas and ideals.⁵⁵ If the U.S. hopes to keep pace and defeat these terrorists at their own game, its military cannot afford

⁵² “In the Matter of an Arbitration between Internal Revenue Service And National Treasury Employees Union”, <http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=must+bargain+changes+in+DOD+position+descriptions&btnG=Search> (accessed 16 September 2007)

⁵³ Mollie Ziegler, “DOD pay reform begins: Starting small, Pentagon sets off on rocky road”, Federal Times, <http://www.federaltimes.com/index.php?S=1755797> (accessed 12 November 2007)

⁵⁴ Tom Vanden Brook, “Reluctance about MRAPs costly by many measures”, U.S.A Today, http://www.usatoday.com/news/military/2007-07-15-ied-losses-usat_N.htm (accessed 1 October 2007)

⁵⁵ Stew Magnuson, “When It Comes to The Battle of Ideas, The U.S. Has No General”, National Defense, <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/issues/2007/July/TheBattleofIdeas.htm> (accessed 13 November 2007)

to limit its own ability to generate innovative new strategies, tactics and tools through collaboration by pigeon-holing employee contributions within restrictive position descriptions. Given today's fiscally-constrained environment, it is an even more egregious error to limit employee productivity when their intellectual capacity has in effect already been paid for in full; paying for an additional layer of bureaucracy which actually assists in limiting employee productivity makes the current system even more indefensible.

As is the case with all organizations, some members of the Air Force will inevitably fall short in meeting the rigorous performance demands placed on them within an AFAW construct built around the collaboration, flexibility and adaptability required for twenty-first century warfare. How well the Air Force deals with these underperformers will have a significant and lasting effect on those personnel working alongside them who do meet acceptable standards of performance. One of the most potent ways through which cultural assumptions are embedded and perpetuated is the process for removing members who do not live up to established cultural values and norms.⁵⁶ The emerging threats imposed by 4GW and the realities of a shrinking workforce due to competing budgetary priorities mandate that all members of the Air Force adhere to its organizational cultural assumptions in order to work together as an effective team and overcome these challenges. As stated earlier, the Air Force core values provide the cultural foundation needed to succeed in the twenty-first century, they are accepted by Air Force members and they apply equally to all Air Force personnel. However, there are currently different systems in place to moderate and enforce acceptable standards of performance and behavior based on whether or not the individual wears a uniform.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) applies to all uniformed members of the Air

⁵⁶ Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (2nd Edition), (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992) 236.

Force and has done a commendable job of enforcing good order and discipline since its creation over 50 years ago.⁵⁷ The UCMJ provides commanders a wide array of options with which to enforce standards in the workplace—from issuing written letters of counseling for minor, correctable infractions to administratively removing members from the Service due to incompatibility, to seeking prison terms for personnel committing felonious acts of misbehavior. Additionally, the formal officer and enlisted evaluation systems flow into an “up or out” promotion process that effectively weeds out those uniformed personnel who are not up to the tasks generated in today’s fast-paced, information-dominant age of 4GW. Together, the UCMJ and personnel management policies governing retention and advancement of uniformed personnel give supervisors of these Airmen the mechanisms they need to develop an AFAW representing the most capable workforce America has to offer to fight and win the GWOT.

The civil service mechanisms for enforcing standards of behavior and removing underperforming members from the Service are not nearly as effective or responsive as those governing uniformed personnel. Civilian and uniformed supervisors alike believe that it remains too difficult to fire underperforming employees due to what they view as archaic and overly complex systems.⁵⁸ A recent study conducted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Office of Merit System Oversight and Effectiveness, confirms these beliefs. In a survey group of 200 supervisors representing agencies across the Federal system, only 7.5 percent attempted to navigate the cumbersome bureaucratic process in place to formally discipline civilian employees who demonstrated or received: low productivity; poor quality/frequent errors; incomplete work products; failure to meet deadlines; backlogged work; customer complaints of

⁵⁷ “Military Justice 101, Part I”, About.Com, usmilitary.about.com/od/justice1AFAWlegislation/a/miljustice_3.htm (accessed 22 November 2007)

⁵⁸ “Deregulation and Delegation of Human Resources Management Authority in the Federal Government”, Office of Personnel Management, <http://www.opm.gov/studies/deregdel.pdf> (accessed 22 November 2007)

inadequate or discourteous service; and failure to keep their supervisor informed.⁵⁹ Of those diligent few who did attempt to take formal action, 78 percent found their efforts ultimately had no effect at all in correcting the employee's performance or behavior.⁶⁰ Although the behavior of the underperforming employees did not change, it is very likely the attitudes of their satisfactorily-performing coworkers regarding the quality of life within their organizations did indeed change. According to OPM's *2006 Federal Human Capital Survey*, only 29 percent of civil service employees felt the current system allows for adequate steps to be taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.⁶¹

Whereas uniformed members must perform satisfactorily with appropriate behavior as judged by their supervisors or face expulsion through their "up or out" promotion and retention system or the UCMJ, no equally efficient and effective retention mechanisms exist in the civil service evaluation and promotion processes. Although a civil service employee who is judged to be a substandard performer will incur a theoretical monetary "punishment" by being denied an end-of-reporting-period bonus reserved for satisfactory performers, their continued employment is nonetheless secure. The continued retention of underperforming civil service employees threatens unit cohesion and places undue burden to "pick up the slack" on those members who are meeting performance expectations in the face of already daunting challenges imposed by external forces. This internal, organizational imbalance in performance limits the ability of supervisors to cultivate the AFAW needed to succeed in the twenty-first century. The AFAW of tomorrow must be based on a common set of shared cultural values and norms as captured in the Air Force core values if it is to meet its charter of providing the collaborative, adaptive and

⁵⁹ U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness, *Report of a Special Study: POOR PERFORMERS IN GOVERNMENT: A Quest for the True Story*, <http://www.opm.gov/studies/perform.txt> (accessed 20 September 2007)

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ U.S. Office of Personnel Management, *2006 Federal Human Capital Survey*, <http://www.fhcs2006.opm.gov/> (accessed 13 November 2007)

flexible efforts needed to achieve ultimate victory against 4GW practitioners as well as conventional foes. The Air Force core values clearly recognize the organization is neither a social actions agency nor an employment agency but instead exists to fight and win wars.⁶² If the Air Force hopes to continue to be victorious in the wars of today and tomorrow, its civilian personnel systems and policies must advance the purpose behind its very existence—especially in light of the fact the civil service workforce is making up an ever growing percentage of the Air Force warfighting capability.

At the same time the civil service corps is projected to comprise a greater percentage of the overall Air Force workforce, it is also being considered to provide senior leadership in key positions once reserved solely for uniformed members. Flag officer positions overseeing logistics and other combat service support positions—traditionally considered as exclusively the domain of uniformed personnel—will increasingly be filled by members of DOD’s Senior Executive Service.⁶³ Assigning civilian members to lead large numbers of uniformed personnel makes it even more important that they share the same values and warrior ethos of their subordinates if the organization is to achieve the level of synergy required for modern 4GW warfare. Like any chain, the chain of command is only as strong as its weakest link. In order to ensure the chain of command for any and all Air Force organizations is as strong as it can be, Air Force leaders must develop and hone skills over the course of their careers to fully exploit the advantages offered by an intellectually agile workforce. Formal education programs provide a key avenue for leaders at all levels to acquire and master the principles of warfare that are instrumental for ultimate victory. The ability to offer formal education of the quality and depth conducted by DOD is a major advantage the U.S. enjoys over its less organized 4GW

⁶² United States Air Force Core Values”, [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF%20Core%20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

⁶³ Stephen Losey, “More Senior Civilians Could Take Air Force Jobs”, *Air Force Times*, 19 November 2007, 25.

adversaries. Unfortunately, formal education in the Air Force suffers from the same sub-cultural influences that negatively impact other critical AFAW elements previously discussed such as duty hours, job responsibilities, and mechanisms for enforcing acceptable standards of performance and behavior.

An Uneven Playing Field

Uniformed members of the Air Force are exposed to formal education upon entry into the Service. Before an Airmen arrives their first duty station they must successfully complete a rigorous 8.5 week basic training course, and most will also attend a follow-on technical skills training course.⁶⁴ Officers receive formal training through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program, Officer Training School or the U.S. Air Force Academy. In both enlisted and officer basic training courses, students are deeply immersed in the core values underpinning Air Force culture; through such, the organizational norms and values that have spurred preceding generations of Airmen to victory are embedded early in the hearts and minds of those uniformed members who follow in their footsteps. Subsequent levels of formal education are provided at established intervals to enlisted members and officers at key junctures in their careers through institutions such as Airman Leadership Schools, Squadron Officer College, the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy and Air War College. At each stage of formal education, enlisted and officer Airmen further develop and hone the skills they will need to assume greater roles and responsibilities in the Air Force should their performance warrant their continued promotion and retention. Formal education is valued so highly in Air Force culture that an entire sub-Major Command, Air University, was established in 1946 and today is dedicated to its

⁶⁴ “Basic Military Training Fact Sheet”, Lackland Air Force Base, <http://www.lackland.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=5414> (accessed 11 November 2007)

mission of providing the full spectrum of Air Force education to all members of the Service.⁶⁵

However, despite the fact the civil service corps is projected to assume a greater leadership role in future Air Force operations as the uniformed force draws down, the overwhelming majority of Air University students still come from the uniformed ranks. Civil service members account for only 13 of the 253 students who comprise the class of 2008 at the Air Force's senior leadership school, the Air War College.⁶⁶ While every enlisted and officer Airmen in the Service receives formal training and education throughout his/her career to include immersion in the core values that form the underlying assumptions of Air Force organizational culture, there is no similar formal education path for civilians beyond very limited opportunities to attend select development programs. As of 30 September 2007, 60 percent of Air Force officers had completed one or more formal professional military leadership courses; only 4 percent of civil service "officer equivalents" has received similar training.⁶⁷ Clearly, this gap in professional development must be addressed if the leaner Air Force envisioned for the future is to have any hope of demonstrating the intellectual agility needed to stay one step ahead of its 4GW adversaries.

There are many other factors emanating from the existence of two distinct Air Force sub-cultures which conspire to limit overall combat effectiveness. Distinctions in recruiting policies, promotion systems, retirement programs and health care benefits are additional examples of institutionalized degrees of separation in how Air Force organizational norms, values and underlying assumptions are embedded and reinforced in uniformed versus non-uniformed members. The National Security Personnel System (NSPS) initiative started under former

⁶⁵ "Air University Facts Sheet", Air University, <http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/facts.asp> (accessed 12 November 2007)

⁶⁶ "AFAWC Student Demographics", Air War College, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/AFAWC/students.htm> (accessed 22 November 2007)

⁶⁷ "Service demographics offer snapshot of force", Air Force Personnel Center, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/demographics/> (accessed 24 October 2007)

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld seeks to address many of these factors. While signing the 2004 Defense Authorization Act and bringing the NSPS into being, President Bush remarked,

This bill advances the vital work of transforming the personnel system for civilian Defense workers, so that we can place the right person in the right job, to meet the challenges we face. Nearly 700,000 civilian Defense workers have been laboring under a cumbersome, inefficient system designed for another century. The bill I sign today reforms this system. It gives DOD managers the flexibility to place civilian workers where they are most needed, without needless delay. It speeds up the hiring process, so that new employees will not have to face a wait of many months before beginning their service to our country. It introduces pay-for-performance bonuses and streamlines the promotion process, making a career at the Defense Department more attractive to talented workers.⁶⁸

The NSPS represents a concerted effort by senior Defense officials to create a more agile, flexible and collaborative workforce for twenty-first century warfare. The need for a more agile civil service system is supported by ongoing operations in Iraq. As of 2003, 83 percent of the civilians in the Operation IRAQI FREEDOM theater were contractors; only 17 percent were civilian federal workers.⁶⁹ Secretary Rumsfeld attributed this disparity to the complex web of rules and regulations that prevent DOD from moving civilians to new tasks quickly.⁷⁰ As a result, managers turn to military or contractors instead of civil-service civilians. However, the NSPS still retains many of the inefficient attributes of the old civilian personnel system it is intended to replace such as current leave and work schedules, use of overly restrictive position descriptions/performance plans, scant professional development opportunities and third-party collective bargaining.⁷¹ The AFAW concept attempts to follow the trail initially blazed by the NSPS to address enduring gaps in key areas directly affecting interaction within the workplace.

⁶⁸ “Remarks at the Signing of the Defense Authorization Act”, Defense Link News, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2982> (accessed 12 October 2007)

⁶⁹ Jim Garamone, “Civilian Personnel System not Cutting It”, U.S. Air Force Press Releases, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_prfr/is_200306/ai_346411204 (accessed 13 September 2007)

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “NSPS 101”, National Security Personnel System, http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/training_employee.html (accessed 20 November 2007)

Improvements in these areas will allow a supervisor at any level to best “play the hand he or she has been dealt” in terms of assigned personnel and their preparedness to work seamlessly together in meeting organizational objectives.

Taking the First Steps Toward an Air Force Agile Workforce

The strategic environment facing Air Force leaders at all levels has changed fundamentally over the last 60 years. Unfortunately, the workplace environment of the Air Force has not undergone a similar evolution since its inception as a separate Service in 1947. Although today’s workforce is more educated and certainly more technologically-savvy than their 1947 counterparts, evolutionary gains have been marginalized by being channeled through the antiquated stovepipes that still exist between the two Air Force sub-cultures. Several systemic changes can be implemented that will help supervisors at all levels begin to develop and employ an AFAW capable of meeting and exceeding today’s dynamic challenges. To achieve the requisite level of teamwork that underpins AFAW, distinctions between the personnel management policies and systems governing uniformed and civil service members must be reduced to the minimum level practical to meet and defeat contemporary threats. Such distinctions often result in perceptions of inequitable treatment among members of both parties which only serve to fuel the dual sub-culture construct an AFAW is designed to tear down.

The incongruities in personnel management systems and policies targeted by the AFAW concept lend themselves to fixes in the near to mid terms (5 to 15 years) and with less—although possibly still considerable—emotional resistance from affected personnel when compared to other limiting factors such as promotion systems and health care benefits. The ability to make these necessary organizational changes in a relatively short time is absolutely critical since the

U.S. is already playing catch-up to the concept and nature of 4GW and many believe the next generation of warfare already looms on the horizon.⁷²

As has been previously stated, the Air Force core values provide the requisite underlying assumptions that a world-class military institution needs in order to synchronize the efforts of its entire workforce to meet organizational objectives. The AFAW proposal seeks to simply provide “course corrections” to existing policy and process mechanisms that currently constrain the ability of the Air Force core values to flow freely through commonly shared values and norms that, in turn, are catalyzed into desired actions and outcomes. Taking these first steps in implementation of the AFAW construct will benefit both supervisor and subordinate by easing the strain of meeting the daunting challenges of contemporary warfare while at the same time pave the way for future initiatives aimed at moving the Air Force closer to the ultimate goal—complete removal of sub-cultural stovepipes that restrict the full and complete translation of Air Force core values into collective, focused action.

In order to set the initial conditions for victory in air, space and cyberspace both now and in the future, the Air Force needs to create an AFAW composed of flexible, adaptive, collaborative, ethical and accountable warriors by instituting the following organizational changes: convert all civil servants to straight-salaried employees; eliminate formal performance plans for civilian employees; revamp Air Force Officer Professional Military Education (PME) programs; place civilian employees under jurisdiction of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ); and eliminate collective bargaining.

Increased Flexibility through a Common Compensation Construct

There are few, if any, civil service jobs in the Air Force that do not have a corresponding

⁷² Col Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone* (St. Paul, MN: MBI Publishing Company, 2004), 289.

“equivalent” position filled by a uniformed member, and all uniformed members, regardless of rank or position, are paid on a straight salaried basis. By compensating all civil service employees on a straight salary basis commensurate with their uniformed “equivalent” counterparts, the need to account for every fractional hour of service in order to limit that service to the objective 40 hour work week would be eliminated. The cost of overtime would never again limit a supervisor’s ability to throw a unit’s collective brain or muscle power at a time-critical problem because formal overtime compensation per se would no longer exist. Because the civilian employee leave program is inextricably linked to the employee’s base compensation package, it too should be revamped to mirror that of uniformed members. Civil service employees would be hard-pressed to justify feeling shortchanged if, like their uniformed counterparts, they were to receive 30 days of paid “normal” leave a year, 10 paid federal holidays⁷³ and several Major Command “family days” off regardless of how much previous time they have actually spent in the workplace. The need to use a “liberal leave policy” to force civilians to use leave when their uniformed counterparts receive time off without having to take leave would also be eliminated. This would remove a long-standing source of tension between the two sub-cultures and would go a long way toward reinforcing the concept of “one team, one fight” promoted by the AFAW concept.

Additionally, under this proposal sick leave for civil service employees would be “unlimited,” provided it was authorized and directed by competent medical authority. This would prevent civil service employees from finding themselves in the unfortunate position of being absent from duty without pay due to prolonged illness when their bank of accrued sick leave had expired. This change in sick leave policy would also end the unsavory practice of

⁷³ “2007 Federal Holidays”, Office of Personnel Management, http://www.opm.gov/Operating_Status_Schedules/fedhol/2007.asp (accessed 18 November 2007)

employees using sick leave to miss work when they are not actually sick. Reports show an increasing trend of civil service employees abusing the sick leave system as they approach retirement because they feel they otherwise forfeit any benefit of such leave.⁷⁴ Many employees also abuse the sick leave system long before reaching retirement eligibility since they can essentially miss up to 72 hours of duty time—with pay—without having to receive prior approval from their supervisor or competent medical authority.⁷⁵

Implementing these changes would ensure civilian employees' physical presence; and, therefore, their contributions would be just as accessible to their supervisors in the workplace when needed as are those of their uniformed counterparts—24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Such a shift in mindset is perfectly aligned with the Air Force core value of “service before self,” which both uniformed and non-uniformed members of the Air Force are expected to uphold.⁷⁶ These changes would also streamline wasteful administrative processes and the attending manpower structure associated with the regulatory requirement to monitor time and attendance (T&A) of civil service employees. In 2000, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) published a 15-page document dedicated to “streamlining” current T&A practices within the federal government.⁷⁷ This document was published as a supplement to guidance already contained in the 37-page Joint Financial Management Improvement Program's *April 1999 Human Resources & Payroll Systems Requirements* publication.⁷⁸ To further aid in “streamlining” civilian employee time and attendance monitoring, the GAO produced and

⁷⁴ Stephen Barr, “Report Shows Federal Employees Overuse Sick Leave”, Gov Central, <http://www.govcentral.com/news/articles/623-report-shows-federal-employees-overuse-sick-leave>, (accessed 1 November 2007)

⁷⁵ “Annual and Sick Leave: General Rules”, Federal Daily, <http://www.federaldaily.com/pay/paidleave.htm> (accessed 24 November 2007)

⁷⁶ United States Air Force Core Values”, [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF%20Core%20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

⁷⁷ “Maintaining Effective Control Over Employee Time and Attendance Reporting”, Government Accounting Office, <http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/d01186g.pdf> (accessed 20 November 2007)

⁷⁸ “April 1999 Human Resources & Payroll Systems Requirements”, Joint Financial Management Improvement Program, <http://archive.gao.gov/f0102/162211.pdf> (accessed 20 November 2007)

published a separate 57-page “Human Resources and Payroll Systems Requirements Checklist for Reviewing Systems under the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act”⁷⁹ document. One can only wonder how much time, money and manpower was expended producing these publications aimed at ensuring every fraction of every hour an employee committed to the workplace was captured, documented and paid for at the appropriate rate. These costs come in addition to costs incurred in the workplace itself as supervisors and human resource specialists are forced to devote part of their busy schedules to complying with such archaic measures. Supervisors could make far better use of such time concentrating on waging and winning the GWOT. Shedding these administrative requirements may also allow the human resource specialist corps to downsize to free up additional funding for other Air Force priorities.

The aggregate costs to the Air Force in terms of lost productivity emanating from the civil service hourly wage pay structure and abuses of civilian leave programs are staggering. Abuses of sick leave policies by civilian employees within two years of retirement alone accounted for over \$60 million in lost productivity for the Air Force in 2004.⁸⁰ There are no such parallel costs incurred within the salaried pay structure of uniformed members. The Air Force simply cannot afford to continue to absorb the productivity losses and administrative costs inherent in today’s outdated civil service pay structure when faced with fighting very capable, flexible and adaptive 4GW adversaries who are likely to strike anywhere, anytime. The challenge becomes even more acute when competing budgetary requirements are forcing the Air Force to replace uniformed members with non-uniformed civil servants. The monetary savings which would be realized by converting to a straight salary compensation system for civil service employees could then be

⁷⁹ “HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL SYSTEMS REQUIREMENTS: Checklist for Reviewing Systems Under the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act, GAO, <http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/ai002123.pdf> (accessed 20 November 2007)

⁸⁰ Curtis W. Copeland, “CRS Report to Congress: Sick Leave: Usage Rates and Leave Balances for Employees in Major Federal Retirement Systems, CRS-17, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL32596_20040922.pdf (accessed 22 November 2003)

reinvested into other programs supporting the AFAW concept. The productivity increases to be realized through a more flexible total force could be directly applied to defeating America's adversaries now and in the future no matter where they reside along the spectrum of conflict.

Increased Adaptability through a Streamlined Performance Appraisal System

NSPS has done an admirable job to date of attempting to more closely tie annual pay increases for civilian employees to their demonstrated performance through the use of performance plans. These increases in pay are in addition to annual cost-of-living increases already received by civil servants; in effect, the payments serve as "bonuses" paid to the employee for doing a good job during the year.⁸¹ Supervisors work in tandem with subordinates to craft performance plans that set workplace priorities for the employee for the coming year.⁸² Mandatory feedback sessions provide an effective mechanism for review of progress throughout the reporting period.⁸³ "Pay Pools," an oversight apparatus expandable to as many as six levels of management review, have been created to ensure employees receive a fair "bonus" at the end of the year based on how well they have met the objectives in their performance plans.⁸⁴ On the surface, all of these steps appear to be prudent courses of action for incentivizing the civilian workforce to be as productive as possible. However, the current performance plan process restricts a supervisor's ability to rapidly change duties for civilian personnel, and it creates entirely new levels of bureaucracy dedicated to justifying the misapplied use of scarce funding in the form of annual bonuses. Both of these attributes work against the goal of greater adaptability on the part of an Air Force workforce engaged against 4GW adversaries while simultaneously

⁸¹ Patrick Purcell, "Federal Employees: Pay and Pension Increases Since 1969", CRS Report for Congress, <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-8259:1> (accessed 23 November 2007)

⁸² "NSPS: Performance Management for Managers/Supervisors", Nation Security Personnel System, <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/PMMSPGS1V3.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2007)

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

looking for ways to pay for other operational priorities.

Under NSPS, supervisors must draft performance plans on each of their subordinates. The construction of these plans may take several face-to-face meetings with each subordinate in an attempt to reach consensus on the employee's priority of effort for the year. Once the plan is complete, it must still be approved at a higher level of management.⁸⁵ Once the plan is finally approved, the supervisor must communicate the plan "in writing" to the subordinate.⁸⁶ Any attempts to assign new duties of an enduring nature to the employee must follow this same cumbersome process. Supervisors are also strongly encouraged to adhere to the NSPS preferred practice of "...no changes in performance plans after the mid-cycle review,"⁸⁷ which means the primary duties for an employee often will remain stagnant for at least 180 days.

4GW practitioners pride themselves on their abilities to adapt and innovate and so they should since these skills are what allow them to survive and operate against the overwhelming conventional firepower of the U.S. From the "improvised" explosive device to using a few keystrokes on a computer to attack a nation's sources of wealth by manipulating the "ones and zeros" underpinning today's globalized financial markets, 4GW adversaries are built for speed and shock—the asymmetric version of shock and awe. Very few 4GW operations or weapons take 180 days to conceive or deliver. The Air Force workforce dedicated to stopping 4GW warriors cannot afford to be tied to performance plans that make it slow to react; instead, it must be adaptable enough to take back the initiative in the asymmetric battlespace.

The constraints on adaptability derived from NSPS performance plans were placed there in large part to ensure fair and equitable distribution of additional annual pay raises or "bonuses."

⁸⁵ "NSPS: Performance Management for Managers/Supervisors", Nation Security Personnel System, <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/PMMSPGS1V3.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2007)

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

However, the whole notion of end-of-year bonuses that the NSPS performance plans revolve around is flawed for several reasons. First, it assumes one can reasonably quantify what an employee “produces” in order to reward them with a clear and consistent system of bonuses. As was the case under the old civilian employee appraisal system, supervisors will be hard-pressed to accurately quantify the contributions their employees make despite their best efforts. Many aspects and effects of airpower are not as easily measured as widgets coming off an assembly line or increases in profitability for a private sector firm. The “weighted” objectives and contributing factors⁸⁸ contained in the performance plans will still lend themselves to broad interpretations on the supervisor’s part when trying to link precisely how well the employee met his/her performance goals. This will result in a level of subjectivity that is sure to create a great deal of consternation on the part of employees who do not feel their efforts have been fairly rewarded. In an ill-advised effort to maintain workplace harmony, many supervisors will feel compelled to rate all of their subordinates the same to give them equal shares of available bonus monies. This sort of workplace “socialism” is what drove the old civilian appraisal system to support the retention of underperforming employees.

Second, the added administrative steps required to manage these new performance plans surpass even those associated with the archaic T&A monitoring practices discussed under the previous recommendation. This means supervisors at all levels will incur additional demands on their time beyond what they experienced prior to NSPS but the results of the process will often remain the same as under the old system, to include at least some disgruntled subordinates who feel receiving anything less than the largest available bonus falls short of what he/she deserves. Finally, the existence of performance bonuses for civilian employees without corresponding

⁸⁸ “NSPS: Performance Management for Managers/Supervisors”, Nation Security Personnel System, <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/PMMSPGS1V3.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2007)

bonuses for uniformed members only serves to foster the “us versus them” mentality in the workplace that is part and parcel of an organization which allows the existence of two distinct sub-cultures.

The entire concept of NSPS performance plans should be abandoned and replaced with a simple annual performance appraisal process that mirrors that of the uniformed workforce. This move would significantly reduce the administrative costs and burdens associated with drafting, reviewing, staffing and administering bonuses on an annual basis. Instead of paying for an army of human resource specialists to classify and re-classify position descriptions based on the whims of individual supervisors, all civilian employee positions should simply include a core description that outlines the primary duties and responsibilities already captured under the manpower standards of their corresponding uniformed “equivalent” position. No further “classification” should be needed. As stated earlier, most if not all civilian positions are interchangeable with uniformed billets—as they should be since the former is expected to backfill the latter as it draws down over the next two years. Supervisors should then be free to assign additional duties beyond the core document as they deem necessary without restriction—provided such duties are reasonable, based on the experience level and grade of the individual filling the position, and not in conflict with applicable laws and regulations. The supervisor would discuss these duties with the individual employee at the beginning of the rating cycle and at the midway point through the same feedback process used to counsel uniformed members.⁸⁹ At the end of the reporting period, a written assessment of the employee’s performance would be prepared and entered into their record just as is the case with uniformed personnel.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ “Military Evaluations: Overviews”, Military.Com, <http://www.military.com/MilitaryCareers/Content/0,14556,Evals,00.html> (accessed 10 November 2007)

⁹⁰ “Military Evaluations: Overviews”, Military.Com, <http://www.military.com/MilitaryCareers/Content/0,14556,Evals,00.html> (accessed 10 November 2007)

Instead of holding back funding each year to reward civilian employees for doing the good job they should be expected to do to warrant their basic pay in the first place, this same funding should instead be used to increase basic pay rates across the board, with the lion's share of the increases going to the higher grades. This will incentivize the civilian employee to strive for the consistent, enduring high levels of performance their supervisor needs to build the case to support the employee's future promotion—thereby offering them the possibility of even larger and more permanent pay raises than those offered through annual bonuses. The current civil service merit-based promotion program is, to a large degree, already a functioning “pay for performance” proposition. Creating and sustaining an additional “annual” pay-for-performance process is wasteful and dilutes the financial incentives inherent in the promotion system by paying bonuses to personnel for levels of performance that often fall below those necessary to be competitive for promotion. Elimination of the bonus system will also eliminate a major source of tension between civilian and uniformed members who often do the same job. More importantly, it reinforces the Air Force core value of “excellence in all we do,” which compels all Air Force members to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force into a long-term, upward spiral of accomplishment.⁹¹ Such innovation will be pivotal in winning 4GW wars now and in the future. All members are expected to uphold this core value without the promise of additional financial reward.

Eliminating the NSPS performance plan program as well as annual bonuses will provide supervisors at all levels the benefit of having to learn and administer a single performance evaluation system that essentially covers both uniformed and non-uniformed members. This will free supervisors to focus more of their valuable time on new and innovative ways to employ their

⁹¹ United States Air Force Core Values”, [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF%20Core%20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

subordinates for maximum effect as opposed to being mired in administrative tasks designed in part to justify annual bonuses which are unnecessary and divisive. As a result, supervisors will enjoy the freedom to maneuver as necessary within the workplace to lead an agile workforce in generating the intellectual firepower necessary to win wars of ideas and ideals such as the GWOT.

Increased Collaboration through Revamped Professional Military Education Programs

In order to possess the intellectual firepower the Air Force requires for twenty-first century warfare, it must do all it can as an institution to develop the intellectual ability of those it chooses to lead its workforce. In 1999, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that in the previous ten years 32 percent of increased workforce productivity was estimated to be due to increased knowledge and skill.⁹² In today's era of globalization and 4GW practitioners who attempt to exploit it, the Air Force must attempt to fully leverage a key institutional advantage it enjoys over most terrorists and insurgents: the ability to take personnel out of the workplace for a period of time so that they can devote full time to the understanding and advancement of the profession of arms. Two ways the Air Force Professional Military Education (PME) program could be improved in order to better develop an AFAW include expanding the opportunities for civilians to attend PME and fundamentally changing the way curriculum is delivered at officer in-residence PME schools.

There is an undeniable disparity in the number of professional development opportunities afforded to uniformed members versus those offered to their civilian counterparts. Senior enlisted service members attend formal education and training programs throughout their careers

⁹² Gina Mauller, "Workforce Development Trends Reflecting the Importance of Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning" http://www.missouribusiness.net/cq/2002/workforce_dev_trends.asp (accessed 13 November 2007)

to include basic training, technical school, Airman Leadership School, the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy and the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy. Their GS-14 or GS-15 civilian supervisor may have reached their present position without having attended any professional development courses due to the dearth of opportunity to do so. It defies logic that the Air Force would allow an unbalanced PME program to result in subordinates being more educated in the profession of arms than those charged with leading them. The reality is civilian employees will occupy an ever-increasing share of key supervisory positions across the Air Force as programmed uniformed manpower reductions continue through 2009.⁹³ Air Force PME is an excellent conduit for increasing the airpower knowledge and leadership abilities of any Air Force member. Civilian supervisors need an equal opportunity to hone such attributes if they hope to effectively lead an AFAW composed of uniformed and non-uniformed personnel to victory over twenty-first century challenges.

To begin to correct the current disparity in overall PME opportunity, the Air Force should refine its methodology for determining seat allocation in its mid- and senior-level officer in-residence PME programs to ensure civilians receive a share of seats in the classroom proportionate to their representative percentage of the total force (Mid-level officer PME is targeted toward officers in the grade of Major; senior-level PME is targeted toward officers in the grades of Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel). As of 30 September 2007, civil service employees comprised 30 percent of the total active duty Air Force;⁹⁴ yet the percentage of seats at the mid-level Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) and senior-level Air War College (AWC) allocated to civilian employees can be measured in single digits. This absence of civilian

⁹³ Stephen Losey, "DOD executives to take more jobs held by generals", *FederalTimes*, <http://www.federaltimes.com/index.php?S=3178057> (accessed 14 November 2007)

⁹⁴ "Service demographics offer snapshot of force", Air Force Personnel Center, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/demographics/> (accessed 24 October 2007)

employees present in resident PME not only negatively impacts their growth potential as future leaders of diverse Air Force organizations but also denies uniformed members the benefit of learning from the unique perspectives and experiences civilian students could offer if they were together in the seminar room.

Revamping the selection criteria for mid- and senior-level officer PME programs allows for improvements in developmental education that are achievable in the near and mid-term and are targeted where they are likely to initially have the greatest Air Force-wide impact—on uniformed and non-uniformed leaders working at the strategic and operational levels of war. Graduates serving at these echelons would then be able to use their improved leadership skills to cascade the positive aspects of the curriculum to all members of the total workforce until time and resources allow for equal representation of civilian employees at all Air Force PME schools. Some of the projected \$6 billion in annual savings resulting from the drawdown of 40,000 full time positions should provide the “seed money” for senior Air Force leaders to expand PME opportunities to civilian employees at all levels in the future.

Renowned organizational culture expert Edgar Schein posits that leaders have six primary mechanisms for embedding the cultural values they feel are important within the organization.⁹⁵ Among these six mechanisms are the observed criteria by which the leader allocates scarce resources⁹⁶ and the observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status.⁹⁷ Attendance at in-residence Air Force PME schools touches upon both of these criteria. First, there are an insufficient number of instructors, infrastructure and funding available to send all mid- and senior-level officers to in-residence PME; as a result, only those officers judged to be in the top

⁹⁵ Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (2nd Edition), (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992) 229.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 234.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 235.

15-20 percent of their peer groups are afforded the opportunity to attend. Second, those fortunate few officers who do attend and graduate are conferred status befitting the unique opportunity and accomplishment. Promotion statistics show a decided advantage in selection rates for officers graduating from mid- and senior-level in-residence PME in comparison to their peers who are not afforded the same opportunity.⁹⁸ Civilian leaders must be afforded the same proportional opportunity to secure a scarce seat at these prestigious institutions as their uniformed counterparts if the Air Force expects them to be as effective in the workplace as the officers they will likely replace in the future due to the ongoing drawdown.

Once civilian Airmen begin to show up in greater numbers in the classrooms of mid- and senior-level Air Force PME schools, they and their uniformed counterparts alike need to benefit from a curriculum designed to prepare them for fighting and winning wars across the entire spectrum of conflict. The current curricula at both ACSC and AWC⁹⁹ have been developed to do exactly that with heavy emphasis on the successful application of airpower within joint, inter-agency and coalition constructs. However, students' understanding and retention of key concepts promoted within the curriculum are impeded by the manner in which the curriculum is delivered to them. Too much of the curriculum is presently delivered in a manner that favors individual accomplishment over teamwork, which sub-optimizes the learning experience for all involved. This negative emphasis can be reduced through the elimination of what ironically is touted as one of the signature aspects of the current ACSC and AWC programs: the granting of mandatory master's degrees.

U.S. students currently attending ACSC or AWC must complete a master's degree as part of their compulsory requirements for graduation. Naturally, this requirement determines to a

⁹⁸ "Active Duty Officer Promotions, Line of the Air Force (LAF) Historical", Air Force Personnel Center, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/demographics/ReportSearch.asp> (accessed 24 November 2007)

⁹⁹ "Curriculum", Air War College, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/AFAWC/curriculum.htm> (accessed 27 November 2007)

great extent how all courses are taught at ACSC and AWC. A master's degree, by design, values the work of the individual because it is the individual student that is being conferred the academic distinction of "mastery" over a given subject. The majority of evaluation instruments within each course taught at ACSC and AWC—exams, essays, research projects and oral presentations—are, therefore, geared toward measuring individual ability. In most cases, students are explicitly prohibited from receiving any type of active assistance from other students or faculty members when working on an evaluation instrument. Thus, a significant portion of time and effort a student spends engaged in academic pursuits while attending ACSC or AWC is, by design, spent in intellectual isolation. Although limited parts of the curriculum are geared toward group problem-solving, the vast majority is not presented in a way that engenders true collaboration.

Additionally, by the time a great majority of students enter ACSC or AWC, they already possess a master's degree; in the case of AWC, many students possess *multiple* master's degrees. In large part this is due to the fact that Air Force boards considering officers for promotion to the rank of Major and above have historically selected a much higher percentage of officers with advanced academic degrees for promotion than officers without such degrees.¹⁰⁰ These students have already clearly demonstrated their individual abilities to successfully comprehend, apply, analyze and synthesize information as well as the ability to articulate their thoughts through clear, concise and independent oral and written communications. Delivering innovative PME curriculum within a restrictive academic framework that values individual performance over teamwork while forcing the majority of students to pursue a degree they neither need nor want only serves to frustrate the student and diminish what should be a very enriching experience.

¹⁰⁰ "Active Duty Officer Promotions, Line of the Air Force (LAF) Historical", Air Force Personnel Center, <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/demographics/ReportSearch.asp> (accessed 24 November 2007)

In order to provide students with greater insight into team dynamics while simultaneously developing the individual's ability to lead increasingly diverse and complex teams, the curricula at ACSC and AWC should be revised to exclusively emphasize team-building exercises and group problem-solving using relevant course material. Renowned experts in educational science such as Dr. Roger T. Johnson and Dr. David W. Johnson of the University of Minnesota's Cooperative Learning Center have conducted numerous studies over the past 20 years that attest to the advantages group learning offers over individual study.¹⁰¹ Drs. Johnson and Johnson as well as University of Arkansas curriculum theorist and researcher Dr. Samuel Totten have received wide acclaim for their collective findings that group/cooperative learning has been shown to increase student commitment and promote critical thinking to a greater degree than independent study.¹⁰² Cooperative teams were also found to achieve at higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students who work quietly as individuals.¹⁰³

The benefits of group/cooperative learning were further validated through independent studies conducted by Dr. Richard M. Felder and Dr. Rebecca Brent at North Carolina State University.¹⁰⁴ The North Carolina State studies not only added credence to the earlier claims of Drs. Johnson, Johnson, and Totten but further proved such collaborative learning advantages are equally applicable to technical courses such as engineering as they are to non-technical courses such as history or political science.¹⁰⁵

ACSC and AWC need not completely eliminate their advanced academic degree programs;

¹⁰¹ "What does the Cooperative Learning Center do?", The University of Minnesota, <http://www.co-operation.org/pages/briefly.html> (accessed 18 February 2008)

¹⁰² Anuradha A. Gokhale, *Collaborative Learning Enhances Critical Thinking*, Virginia Tech University, <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/jte-v7n1/gokhale.jte-v7n1.html> (accessed 16 February 2008)

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Richard M. Felder and Rebecca Brent, *Cooperative Learning In Technical Courses: Procedures, Pitfalls, And Payoffs*, North Carolina State University, <http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Coopreport.html> (accessed 17 February 2008)

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

rather, those programs should be changed from a compulsory requirement for graduation to an elective course of action for those students wishing to bolster their academic credentials. ACSC and AWC group/cooperative coursework could account for part of the advanced degree requirements for students wishing to spend additional time on their own in pursuit of a master's degree. This will allow ACSC and AWC students who already possess a master's degree to concentrate fully on learning to leverage the diversity in knowledge, resources and ideas that groups offer over individuals.¹⁰⁶ Equally important, it will also allow students to learn how to navigate around some of the key pitfalls associated with group dynamics such as the "echo chamber" effect of people forming limited, insular understandings because everybody in the group believes and keeps repeating the same things.¹⁰⁷ Leveraging the inherent advantages of group learning over independent study will be increasingly important for Air Force leaders as they advance in their careers and assume positions requiring interaction with larger, more diverse organizations ranging from the office down the hall to the Department of State or non-governmental organizations working around the globe.

Eliminating the mandatory master's degree programs from ACSC and AWC would also result in increased organizational efficiencies and a higher quality learning environment for students. Moving to a team-building vice master's degree method of curriculum delivery would reduce the total number of evaluation instruments a given instructor would have to administer, reducing his or her workload considerably. A less burdened "core" faculty—those instructors possessing doctoral degrees or credentialed subject matter expertise—would be able to take on larger seminar sizes which would allow for realignment of the entire faculty to better administer

¹⁰⁶ Carole Townsley, "Resolving Conflict in Work Teams", LeaderValues, <http://www.leader-values.com/Content/detail.asp?ContentDetailID=1005> (accessed 27 November 2007)

¹⁰⁷ "Group Dynamics", CriticalMethods.org, http://www.criticalmethods.org/collab/v.mv?d=1_49 (accessed 20 November 2007)

the curriculum by reducing the number of courses a given instructor would have to teach. Realigning the faculty would also stem the practice of assigning primary responsibility for a given course or instruction in a given seminar to newly assigned faculty members who in many cases are recently graduated students with no previous teaching experience or formal education in a given field beyond their personal PME experience. Instead, a realigned faculty would enable core faculty members at ACSC and AWC to team with “associate” instructors in the form of less-credentialed faculty members who nevertheless do bring unique field experiences and perspectives to the classroom.

This teaming approach in the classroom would further support a move away from total reliance in the seminar on the Socratic Method of learning which deemphasizes formal teaching.¹⁰⁸ Fully credentialed, core instructors leading larger seminars would be able to spend at least some seminar time teaching subjects that many of their students have had limited exposure to depending on their individual backgrounds. This would relieve students of the prospect of spending the majority of seminar time attempting to achieve a lesson’s desired learning outcomes by listening to their equally uninformed seminar mates wax poetic for the purpose of securing maximum class participation points.

Collaboration has been and will continue to be a key force multiplier the Air Force must capitalize on if it hopes to remain a military power without peer while downsizing its overall end strength. Revamping Air Force PME to include greater representation on the part of a civil service corps that makes up a significant portion of the Total Force allows for greater *breadth* of collaboration. ACSC and AWC are the appropriate places to begin this process. Eliminating the compulsory master’s degree at ACSC and AWC and adopting a cooperative/team-centric

¹⁰⁸ Sandy Chapman and Peter Connor, “Using the Socratic Method to Foster Critical Thinking”, <http://tilt.colostate.edu/mti/tips/tip.cfm?tipid=53> (accessed 27 November 2007)

approach to curricula delivery allows for greater *depth* of collaboration between students destined for the highest levels of Air Force leadership. There are precious few jobs in the Air Force in which a leader works in a vacuum. The security threats resident in today's highly integrated, interdependent and networked globalized society demand equally integrated and networked solutions. Teams of agile Airmen working together will provide the blueprint for success. Air Force PME needs to be a place where such teamwork is honed to razor-sharp effectiveness.

Higher Ethical Standards through Expansion of the Uniform Code of Military Justice

In the violent arena of twenty-first century warfare where 4GW adversaries make no distinction between combatants and non-combatants, an AFAW must be able to conduct operations that adhere to customary international law and ethics if it hopes to win the hearts and minds of the people most affected by the carnage of warfare—a key element for securing not only victory but a lasting peace. These “hearts and minds” belong to both potential recruits the terrorists or insurgents have targeted for ideological indoctrination and the peaceful citizens who are often manipulated into serving as a source of political legitimacy and material required to support the ongoing efforts of 4GW warriors. In order to be successful, the AFAW must operate as a fully integrated team whose whole is truly greater than the sum of its individual parts. Victory within the psychological realm will demand collective AFAW action is cloaked within the ethical fabric woven throughout the Air Force core values. Values and norms congruent with them must be shared and demonstrated equally among all AFAW members; those members who deviate from the accepted norms must be punished in an equally consistent manner.

The Air Force core value of “integrity first” speaks to the expectation within the military

that its members—all members, uniformed and non-uniformed—will always display the willingness to do what is right even when no one is looking.¹⁰⁹ “Integrity first” forms the basis for the trust imperative in today’s military. This core value forms the foundation upon which the other two core values are built and covers several moral traits indispensable to military service such as courage, accountability and justice.¹¹⁰ These traits provide the Air Force the moral and ethical legitimacy it will need to defeat terrorists whose transnational nature often drive an expeditionary Air Force to confront them with armed violence in somebody else’s “backyard.”

The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) provides the framework essential to ensuring AFAW actions adhere to Air Force core values. The UCMJ is a masterful piece of legislation that balances the need for good order and discipline with the constitutional rights afforded to all United States citizens.¹¹¹ It provides commanders at all levels the tools they need to enforce the ethical standards of the organization they have been entrusted to lead. Together with Air Force Instructions governing administrative disciplinary actions, the UCMJ provides commanders and supervisors a full range of options designed to address ethical or legal infractions ranging from the minor to the felonious.¹¹²

As is the case with compensation models, classification and assignment of individual duties in the workplace and professional development, discipline is another area negatively impacted by the existence of the uniformed and non-uniformed sub-cultures within the Air Force. One is hard-pressed to understand the logic behind setting and enforcing standards of behavior for uniformed personnel deemed to be in the best interests of good order and discipline, while at the

¹⁰⁹ United States Air Force Core Values”, [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF_percent20Core_percent20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ James B. Roan and Cynthia Buxton, “The American military justice system in the new millennium”, Air Force Law Review, http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-1563979/The-American-military-justice-system.html (accessed 28 November 2007)

¹¹² Colonel David C. Wesley, “The Military Commander and the Law”, The Judge Advocate General’s Corps, <http://milcom.jag.af.mil/> (accessed 28 November 2007)

same time not extending these behavioral norms to civilian employees who work alongside uniformed members...and in many cases supervise them. This dichotomy in disciplinary policy and programs is wasteful, counterproductive and dangerous—three traits a shrinking Air Force manpower base cannot afford to be constrained by if it hopes to defeat dynamic, committed 4GW adversaries in distant as well as local environs.

The administrative and adjudicative systems and processes governing the conduct of civilian employees are among the most laborious, wasteful and counterproductive in all the federal government. Because the myriad of oversight agencies regulating discipline of civilian employees dictate that employees with behavior problems be approached cautiously to protect individual employee rights, it may take a supervisor a year or more to issue a simple letter of reprimand for even a minor offense such as an employee displaying chronic tardiness.¹¹³

Uniformed and civilian Air Force leaders alike spend untold hours and dollars attempting to navigate a maze of regulations and collective bargaining stipulations in an attempt to affect even the simplest of remedies for poor performance or misconduct. Huge bureaucracies attending to oversight agencies such as the Merit Systems Promotion Board (MSPB), the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) only add to overall costs. Meanwhile, co-workers are left wondering why no one seems to be responding to the problem of their counterpart's tardiness. It is small wonder that 37 percent of federal "non-supervisory" employees recently surveyed reported their organizations do not do enough to discipline poor performers.¹¹⁴ It would seem even the people these governing bodies and regulations supposedly are intent on protecting are dissatisfied with the return on their tax-

¹¹³ Robbie Kunreuther, "Our Discipline System Needs Corrective Action", FedSmith.com, <http://www.fedsmith.com/article/776/> (accessed 28 November 2007)

¹¹⁴ Paul C. Light, "What Federal Employees Want from Reform", Brookings Institution, http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2002/03governance_light.aspx (accessed 28 November 2007)

dollar investment when it comes to enforcing standards in the workplace.

Even if a supervisor is successful in ultimately issuing a civilian employee that simple letter of reprimand for excessive tardiness, the letter must be expunged from the employee's permanent record after two years at which time the supervisor is prohibited from mentioning it was ever issued. Such policy is foolish; it ignores the serious threat repeat offenders pose to morale and productivity in organizations that are overworked and understaffed—which the Air Force is and will continue to be for the foreseeable future.

Based on the above example, one may readily assume the percentage of uniformed members who feel the current civil service disciplinary system is wasteful and counterproductive is much higher than those protected under it. This is because the system that governs the conduct of uniformed members, the UCMJ, is not only far more streamlined and responsive than the civil service system but also more comprehensive. The UCMJ includes offenses that pertain to uniformed members but not their civilian counterparts, such as being absent without leave and failure to obey a lawful order.¹¹⁵ A person would face an incredibly daunting intellectual challenge in trying to convincingly assert that there is a single offense covered under the UCMJ that could be willfully violated by a civilian employee without having some sort of deleterious effect on the mission, their coworkers, and by extension the organization as a whole. Common sense dictates that offenses such as being AWOL or disobeying lawful orders—regardless of who commits them—is not conducive to achieving the sort of indivisible teamwork required to wage and win 4GW battles.

When a uniformed member commits an offense punishable under the UCMJ, corrective action is administered in a far more efficient and effective manner than under the civil service

¹¹⁵ Department of the Army Pamphlet 690-47, *Civilian Personnel: DA Civilian Employee Deployment Guide*, 1 November 1995. [http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cere/civiliandeploymentguide.htm#Uniform percent20Code percent20of percent20Military percent20Justice](http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cere/civiliandeploymentguide.htm#Uniform%20Code%20of%20Military%20Justice) (accessed 28 November 2007)

system. Consider the earlier example of a worker's excessive tardiness: a commander need not even meet an established standard of proof before administering punishment to a uniformed subordinate—including forms of punishment far more severe than that of a simple letter of reprimand.¹¹⁶ Under Article 15 of the UCMJ, the offender's commander may impose non-judicial punishment (NJP) in the forms of liberty restrictions, forfeiture of pay and even loss of rank. By regulation, the commander must impose the punishment within 10 days of receiving adequate information to justly dispose of the case. The accused has three days to initially respond to the charges and 10 days after receiving punishment to appeal that punishment to the next superior authority for final decision. The entire process on average takes less than 30 days to adjudicate and offers more options for correcting chronic tardiness than a simple letter of reprimand—a letter of reprimand that takes the civil service system a year to administer under favorable conditions and which must be expunged from the offender's file two years later.

Although swift to act, the UCMJ system still includes adequate protections for uniformed members. In the same chronic tardiness scenario, the UCMJ not only allows the offender to appeal their punishment as administered by their commander, it also allows them to forgo the non-judicial punishment process altogether and instead demand trial by courts-martial.¹¹⁷ Unlike NJP, courts-martial proceedings carry the same burden of proof found in civilian courtrooms.¹¹⁸ During courts-martial, an impartial judge or jury will decide on the punishment as opposed to the defendant's commander. As is the case with NJP, the courts-martial process carries with it

¹¹⁶ Colonel David C. Wesley, "The Military Commander and the Law", The Judge Advocate General's Corps, <http://milcom.jag.af.mil/> (accessed 28 November 2007)

¹¹⁷ Colonel David C. Wesley, "The Military Commander and the Law", The Judge Advocate General's Corps, <http://milcom.jag.af.mil/> (accessed 28 November 2007)

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

complete avenues for appeal of judgments.¹¹⁹ At every step of the process, the accused is mandated to consult with an independent defense lawyer who represents the offender throughout the entire judicial process free of charge.

The justice system governing the conduct of uniformed members of the military was deliberately designed to fairly adjudicate criminal cases efficiently. This is particularly important in a deployed or contingency situation when a commander must expeditiously deal with misconduct to prevent degradation of the unit's effectiveness and cohesion. Delaying disciplinary action will invariably prejudice good order, whether the offender wears a uniform or is a civil servant.¹²⁰ Maintaining separate systems of justice within the same Department of Defense when there is no compelling reason to do so is not only wasteful but potentially dangerous if such a dichotomous justice construct contributes to reduced operational cohesion, particularly in a war zone. The United States Congress endorsed this viewpoint when it included a change to Article 2 of the UCMJ within the 2007 Defense Spending Bill.¹²¹ Signed into law by President Bush, the UCMJ now fully covers civil service employees deployed in support of uniformed forces. In adding the language for the change into the bill, its sponsor, Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, stated, "Right now, you have two different standards for people doing the same job. This will bring uniformity to the commander's ability to control the behavior of people representing our country."

The uniformity Senator Graham spoke of is indeed needed by commanders, but not just in

¹¹⁹ Phillip Carter, "THE SEVEN BASIC MYTHS ABOUT MILITARY JUSTICE: Why It's Much Fairer To Defendants Than You May Have Been Led to Think", Concord Law School, http://writ.lp.findlaw.com/student/20021218_carter.html (accessed 27 November 2007)

¹²⁰ James B. Roan and Cynthia Buxton, "The American military justice system in the new millennium", Air Force Law Review, http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-1563979/The-American-military-justice-system.html (accessed 28 November 2007)

¹²¹ Griff Witte, "New Law Could Subject Civilians to Military Trial" WashingtonPost.com, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/14/AR2007011400906_pf.html (accessed 27 November 2007)

the “deployed” environment. On September 11, 2001, 4GW practitioners representing Osama Bin Laden proved the war zone of the GWOT is “universal” in nature. America is now as likely to confront acts of terrorism in a field in Pennsylvania as it is in the deserts of Iraq or mountains of Afghanistan. The omnipresent nature of 4GW threats demands cohesive, focused action on the part of the entire Air Force team to counter them, anytime and anyplace. The time has come to expand UCMJ coverage to all civilian employees of the Department of Defense, in all locations, at all times.

The code of conduct enforced through the UCMJ is more stringent than that of the civil service system; yet it can be administered far more effectively, swiftly and with less cost than its parallel civilian system. This strict code of conduct is absolutely necessary for building the level of trust needed between members of the Air Force whose nation depends on them to defeat a vast array of homicidal terrorists and insurgents in a way that engenders lasting peace. The UCMJ provides the same due process protections that the U.S. Constitution affords all American citizens. The UCMJ is completely aligned with the Air Force Core Values of “integrity first” and “service before self”; the civil service system favors the individual employee over the organization to the ultimate detriment of both.¹²² There is more than a grain of truth in the sarcastic claim that the only individuals who think the current civil service disciplinary system is effective are habitual offenders, union stewards and lawyers—all of whose livelihoods depend on that very system’s inherent flaws. Expanding UCMJ coverage to include civilian employees at all times brings the Air Force one step closer to creating an AFAW...and one step closer to breaking down sub-cultural barriers that are not only self-imposed, but self-defeating.

¹²² Walter Olson, “Fixing the Civil Service Mess”, City Journal, http://www.city-journal.org/html/7_4_fixing.html (accessed 20 November 2007)

Greater Accountability through Elimination of Collective Bargaining

Perhaps no other factor has played a greater role in perpetuating the dual sub-cultural stovepipes separating uniformed and non-uniformed personnel in the Air Force than the existence of collective bargaining. Collective bargaining has influenced all the areas of workforce management and development previously discussed in this section; workplace conditions, job standards, professional development and disciplinary programs and policies governing civilian employees all must at some point be vetted through a collective bargaining apparatus. In the twenty-first century, collective bargaining represents little more than individual protectionism rooted in the leader-follower dynamics of the preceding two centuries. Just as the nature of threats facing the U.S. has changed dramatically since the creation of its separate Air Force, so has the nature of contemporary leader-follower relationships. Continued use of collective bargaining in the military workplace is counterproductive, inefficient, and severely restricts the ability of the Air Force and all other branches of the military to foster the agile workforce needed to confront 4GW and conventional foe now and in the future.

Collective bargaining traces its roots to the establishment of the U.S. government itself. For the first 100 years of U.S. history, Presidents had the power to appoint people from their own political party to any position of their choosing, regardless of job requirements or the individual's personal qualifications.¹²³ As a result, a spoils system was effectively established, with the tenures for many government officials coinciding with a president's four-year term. Under the leadership of these temporary appointees, corruption and abusive management policies such as extremely lengthy workdays for employees were commonplace in many federal organizations. These attributes and others to include turnover of the civil service system

¹²³ Michael Willoughby, "Teamwork and the National Security Personnel System" (Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, 2007), 2.

leadership corps as presidential administrations changed out led to the Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883.¹²⁴ The Act required certain federal jobs be open to all citizens regardless of political considerations and be filled with the best applicant as determined by competitive examinations—ushering in an era of merit-based principles still embodied in today’s civil service system.¹²⁵ The Pendleton Act was one of the first steps in a legislative process designed to take management-employee relations out of the realm of the artisan-apprentice and agrarian based economic principles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where long hours of intense physical labor were necessary to survive much less thrive and bring them into the age of a burgeoning industrialized society in which mechanization offered the hope of all Americans to be free to pursue life, liberty and happiness through a higher standard of living. The Pendleton Act laid the groundwork for instituting greater accountability on the part of leaders and managers by fundamentally changing how those leaders and managers were selected in the first place.

Other significant legislative milestones appeared soon thereafter, including the Lloyd-La-Follette Act of 1912 formally recognizing union representation of federal employees.¹²⁶ The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 are but two examples of a myriad of laws and presidential executive orders of the era targeted at improving the lives of employees in the private sector by setting fair and reasonable conditions of employment while holding employers accountable for their enforcement.¹²⁷ Child labor was outlawed and sweat shops were being systematically closed down. Collective bargaining was often considered a key mechanism for setting these desired workplace conditions. At the same

¹²⁴ Michael Willoughby, “Teamwork and the National Security Personnel System” (Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, 2007), 2.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Major Lawrence E. Lynch, “Federal Sector Collective Bargaining and the War on Terror” (LL.M diss., George Washington University, 2003), 44.

¹²⁷ “Child Labor in U.S. History”, ContinuetoLearn, UIowa.edu, http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/laborctr/child_labor/about/us_history.html (accessed 1 November 2007)

time, Presidents from Franklin Roosevelt to Harry Truman to Dwight Eisenhower all recognized that the unique responsibilities and implicit trust inherent in government service lead to the logical conclusion that federal employees should be legally denied some of the rights enjoyed by private sector employees.¹²⁸ This same recognition that the profession of arms brings with it special responsibilities has led to similarly prudent restrictions on the legal rights of uniformed members, such as those governing free speech in Articles, 88, 92 and 134 of the UCMJ.¹²⁹

Many of the prudent prohibitions against collective bargaining in the federal sector levied by previous administrations were removed when President John F. Kennedy took office. President Kennedy firmly believed that full participation of federal employees in the formulation and interpretation of employee policies and procedures affecting them contributed to the effective conduct of public business.¹³⁰ He appointed a task force to study this issue, and the recommendations of that task force directly led President Kennedy to issue Executive Order 10988 to provide the first framework for formal federal sector labor-management relations.¹³¹ Naturally, Executive Order 10988 was warmly received by unions who had long lobbied for a greater role in federal management-employee relations. As a result, the U.S. government saw a tremendous growth in the number of federal unions clamoring to represent its employees.¹³²

Executive Order 10988 and those that followed it, such as Executive Order 11491, gave a far greater voice to employees in how the business of the military was to be conducted. President Jimmy Carter paved the way for collective bargaining to obtain statutory protections when he

¹²⁸ Major Lawrence E. Lynch, "Federal Sector Collective Bargaining and the War on Terror" (LL.M diss., George Washington University, 2003), 47.

¹²⁹ John Loran Kiel Jr., "When Soldiers Speak Out: A Survey of Provisions Limiting Freedom of Speech in the Military", *Parameters*, U.S. Army War College, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/07autumn/kiel.htm> (accessed 29 November 2007)

¹³⁰ Major Lawrence E. Lynch, "Federal Sector Collective Bargaining and the War on Terror" (LL.M diss., George Washington University, 2003), 49.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 53.

signed the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) of 1978. Collective bargaining in the federal sector was now fully protected by oversight agencies like the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), a bureaucracy spanning over 51 regional and sub-regional offices.¹³³ Through the efforts of its over 800 lawyers and their attending army of field examiners, the NLRB ensures among other things that union officials are granted official time to negotiate or enforce collective bargaining agreements covering workplace conditions ranging from duty hours to specific job duties to employee reassignments deemed necessary to meet the needs of the Air Force.¹³⁴ As a result, the civilian workforce is less flexible and adaptive than it needs to be in order to answer the Nation's call to defend its global interests. Additionally, these bargaining sessions are in essence never-ending, as employers must bargain with unions any time a serious change in workplace conditions is considered.¹³⁵ Determining what constitutes a "serious change" in workplace conditions is but the first of many steps along a highway of ambiguity Air Force leaders are forced to navigate prior to making the decisions needed to improve workforce flexibility and adaptability...decisions which are currently subject to third-party interpretation and influence prior to implementation.

Bargaining with union representatives over workplace conditions takes a tremendous toll on workplace productivity because both supervisor and subordinate must divert their attention from direct support of the mission to engage in this utopian exercise. With over 50 percent of all Air Force civilian employees belonging to unions with which management must deal on a regular basis, the costs in terms of lost productivity is incalculable.¹³⁶ Adding to these overall costs is

¹³³ National Labor Relations Board, "Locating Our Offices", [http://www.nlr.gov/About percent5FU/locating percent5Four percent5Foffices/](http://www.nlr.gov/About%20percent5FU/locating%20percent5Four%20percent5Foffices/) (accessed 1 December 2007)

¹³⁴ "A Short History of the Statute", [flra.gov, http://www.flra.gov/reports/20yr1.html](http://www.flra.gov/reports/20yr1.html) (accessed 29 November 2007)

¹³⁵ "The Legal Rights of Union Representatives: Slide Show", AFGE, http://education.afge.org/afge_sub_leaders.html (accessed 1 December 2007)

¹³⁶ Colonel Joseph E. Hearn, "Labor-Management Relations in the Air Force", <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1971/jan-feb/Hearn.html> (accessed 1 December 2007)

the fact the union negotiators assisting in the workplace bargaining process are often themselves paid government employees who are given official duty time away from their “normal” jobs to bargain on behalf of fellow civil servants. All of these ongoing taxes on productivity are levied as a result of legislation and presidential decrees designed to bring federal labor relations in line with what were at the time standard practices in the private sector.¹³⁷ Unfortunately, as the private sector evolved to the point such protections were no longer necessary or even desired, the public sector retained many of its now outdated processes and programs. In the process, civilian employment with the U.S. military moved from the realm of privilege to the realm of entitlement. The rights of employees now trump the rights of the organization—as represented by its leaders—in determining what constitutes the most appropriate workplace conditions. It is difficult to imagine a more glaring perversion of the Air Force core value of “service before self,” which calls upon all its members to avoid the temptation to subvert the “system” by believing they know better than those above them in the chain of command what should or should not be done. How much more counterproductive can it be for an organization than to pay for some of its employees to miss time away from their normal duties in order to work to the detriment of their own core values?

In no area is this sense of individual entitlement more pervasive than the swamp of rules and regulations governing corrective action for poor employee performance. Senator John McCain, a man who knows quite a bit about both bureaucracies and military operations, recently summed up the civil service system with respect to removing poor performers when he stated, “The failings in our civil service are encouraged by a system that makes it very difficult to fire someone even for gross misconduct...we must do away with the current system that treats federal

¹³⁷ Major Lawrence E. Lynch, “Federal Sector Collective Bargaining and the War on Terror” (LL.M diss., George Washington University, 2003), 47.

employment as a right and makes dismissal a near impossibility.”¹³⁸ Senator McCain was expressing a sense of frustration shared by supervisors at all levels of the Air Force, both uniformed and civil service: the current rules of engagement make it nearly impossible to terminate unproductive employees. Air Force leaders are, therefore, forced to work within a civilian personnel management system that tacitly endorses the wholesale abandonment of individual accountability for performance, a direct contradiction to the Air Force core value of “excellence in all we do”.

How hard is it to actually fire a civil service employee for poor performance? On average, it can take a supervisor more than a year of steady work just to build a case that may warrant termination of an employee covered under collective bargaining who does not meet expected performance standards.¹³⁹ And that year is usually preceded by the supervisor issuing one or more year’s worth of feedback sessions and substandard performance evaluations to the employee in an attempt to spur them towards improvement without resorting to termination. Once the case has been built and submitted for termination processing, it must go through multiple levels of appeal in which the burden of proof is overwhelmingly on the supervisor despite the fact it is often the subordinate who is appealing the termination on grounds ranging from inaccuracy to impropriety on the part of his/her supervisor. At every step along the way a union representative is injecting himself/herself into the process, into an area of supervisor-subordinate relationships that should be reserved for the formal chain of command. It is small wonder that many supervisors simply choose the path of least resistance and forgo attempting to address or terminate unproductive employees. A recent Brookings Institute study bears out the

¹³⁸ Angie Drobnic Holan, “Firing Federal Workers is Difficult”, PolitiFact, <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2007/sep/05/mcain-federal/> (accessed 1 December 2007)

¹³⁹ Angie Drobnic Holan, “Firing Federal Workers is Difficult”, PolitiFact, <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2007/sep/05/mcain-federal/> (accessed 1 December 2007)

self-defeating effect of this overly-bureaucratic process for terminating poor performers. Of over 800,000 employees studied, less than one percent received an annual appraisal rating of “minimally successful” or “unacceptable” in the preceding year.¹⁴⁰ It is wholly optimistic to believe that any organization would be fortunate enough to employ a workforce that is 99 percent successful, particularly an organization like the federal government which has a reputation for inefficiency and which draws a fair amount of its workforce from applicants who view the government as the “employer of last resort—that is, the place to go when the economy gets tough.”¹⁴¹

This may help explain why in a recent survey conducted by the Center for Public Service, federal civil service employees estimated as many as 24 percent of their civil service coworkers were not currently performing their jobs well.¹⁴² These results bolster earlier findings in the *2006 Federal Human Capital Survey* which showed one in three civil service workers feel their units do not do enough to deal with poor performers.¹⁴³ The DOD itself is partly to blame since it has failed to take the aggressive but politically-risky steps needed to streamline the process for terminating underperforming employees. In September 2007, DOD announced it “had no plans to implement the adverse actions, appeals and labor relations portions of NSPS at this time” despite the fact recent court rulings upheld its right to do so.¹⁴⁴ As a result, the rate of terminations for poor performance can be expected to continue to be measured in the hundreds

¹⁴⁰ Shawn Zeller, “Smashing the System”, Government Executive, <http://www.govexec.com/features/1103/1103s2.htm> (accessed 20 November 2007)

¹⁴¹ Paul C. Light, “What Federal Employees Want from Reform”, Brookings Institution, http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2002/03governance_light.aspx (accessed 28 November 2007)

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ U.S. Office of Personnel Management, *2006 Federal Human Capital Survey*, <http://www.fhcs2006.opm.gov/> (accessed 13 November 2007)

¹⁴⁴ Labor Relations, National Security Personnel System, <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/lr.html> (accessed 26 November 2007)

per year for a federal civil service workforce that is over 1,800,000 strong.¹⁴⁵ Over 700,000 of that total resides in DOD where they are counted on to play a pivotal role—and an expanding role at that—in winning a war against a radical ideology the likes of which the world has seldom seen. The U.S. government’s conscious decision to limit the operational effectiveness of its military by retaining employees whose performance truly warrant dismissal only helps the cause of its enemy by making it that much easier for them to achieve their goals.

The rules governing removal of poor performers within the uniformed ranks of the Air Force are far more straightforward and expedient while also protecting the rights of the Airman to due process. Air Force Instruction 36-3208, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, outlines the authority of commanders to discharge members who perform their current duties in an unsatisfactorily manner or show a consistent trend towards downward performance.¹⁴⁶ In these cases, a simple preponderance of evidence warranting such dismissal is required to meet the burden of proof for involuntary separation.¹⁴⁷ This evidence often comes in the form of substandard performance evaluations and a record of counseling and other feedback sessions that show the members were clearly informed by their supervisor of their failure to meet performance standards. The entire process seldom takes over a year and the decision to separate is made completely within the chain of command. The main difference between this system and the system governing civil service dismissals for poor performance is under the uniformed members’ system the best interests of the Air Force as an organization come first; under the civil service system, the process is heavily weighted towards the perceived “right” of the employee to continued employment.

¹⁴⁵ Angie Drobnic Holan, “Firing Federal Workers is Difficult”, PolitiFact, <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2007/sep/05/mcain-federal/> (accessed 1 December 2007)

¹⁴⁶ Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-3208, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, 9 July 2004, 81.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*,

Constraining the ability of supervisors to effectively deal with poor performers is just one way collective bargaining has diluted the importance of individual accountability in the workplace. Numerous other examples exist which encapsulate the wasteful, counterproductive and divisive nature of collective bargaining in the military. For instance, DOD officials spent over two years attempting to negotiate with unions on the matter of punishment for civil servants abusing the use of government-issued credit cards.¹⁴⁸ During this time, DOD leaders slogged through bargaining sessions with over 1,000 local unions in an attempt to forcibly extract repayment for unauthorized purchases by garnering the wages of offending employees. Such negotiation was wasteful because it tied up DOD officials, union representatives and their DOD employee associates in preparations for and attendance at lengthy meetings and review sessions to address an act of larceny that is clearly forbidden. Cardholders are not only briefed on the proper and authorized uses of the card when they are initially issued it but also receive additional warnings any time they are preparing to travel on government business. This “bargaining” was counterproductive because the whole intent of the government-issued credit card program is to save money by outsourcing the administration of travel payments to an organization whose core mission revolves around this service. Those potential savings are nullified when members use the card in a fraudulent manner, forcing the government to initially pay the bill as well as any late fees incurred because they cannot hold the perpetrator to account for their misdeed. This assumes, of course, they have discovered the fraudulent purchase in the first place.

The negotiations described above undoubtedly drove a further wedge between uniformed and non-uniformed sects of Air Force society. While all the negotiation over civilian employee repayment went on, members of the uniformed corps lived with the reality their wages could not

¹⁴⁸ Jim Garamone, “Civilian Personnel System not Cutting It”, U.S. Air Force Press Releases, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_prfr/is_200306/ai_346411204 (accessed 13 September 2007)

only be garnished without any trouble but they themselves could receive additional monetary fines or other punishments imposed through non-judicial punishment authorized under the UCMJ for financial mismanagement. There was no collective bargaining involved when the rules for addressing uniformed members' improper use of the government credit card were established. The entire concept of collective bargaining irritates many uniformed members because it confers special status upon civilian employees that is not likewise extended to them. This is a particularly appalling disparity in treatment, as the uniformed members have formally pledged to give their lives in the cause of the Air Force mission while civil service employees are not equally vested in that same mission. To many uniformed members, the term collective bargaining is anything but "collective" but, rather, is just one more example of how there are two distinct sets of expectations based upon two distinct sets of rules within the same Air Force—making individual accountability an early casualty in this self-imposed, internal border war. In the twenty-first century, the Air Force needs to focus its time, energy and workforce on the external wars that pose far more dangerous implications for the defeated than what may be perceived by a handful on unrealistic malcontents as unfair labor practices.

Collective bargaining should never have been allowed to exist in the military due to the unique nature of the profession of arms, and its elimination is an absolute must if the Air Force seeks to develop and sustain the AFAW it needs to succeed in the world's most dangerous business—warfare. While legislation such as the Pendleton Act and subsequent laws and regulations made important strides in increasing the accountability of *leaders* within government organizations, the legislation and presidential executive orders giving rise to collective bargaining in the federal sector have had the opposite effect where *individual employee* accountability is concerned.

First, the very moniker affixed to the practice of “collective bargaining” promotes the notion that the desires of the individual should bear equal weight to those of their commander entrusted to lead the organization. Unlike in the private sector, giving DOD civilian employees direct and potentially binding influence over their workplace conditions runs directly counter to the concept of the military chain of command upon which all action in the military is based. The 4GW adversaries the U.S. is trying to deter and defeat around every dark corner of the world do not know the meaning of the term “bargain.” Their principles of asymmetric warfare place a heavy emphasis on collective and unified action. This unity of effort is not diluted through third-party intervention or alternate dispute resolution programs. Their foot soldiers kill without hesitation and without questioning the orders of their superiors. The Air Force cannot afford to engage these fanatics without possessing similar agility and unity of effort, as expecting the unexpected has become the norm and not the exception in 4GW.

Second, as previously pointed out collective bargaining is wasteful, counterproductive and divisive—divisive in that the largest segment of the Air Force population is not entitled to its benefits. This only serves to gnaw at the level of teamwork, cohesion and trust the Air Force workforce as a whole must have if it is to be part of the answer to the challenges of 4GW warfare. Collective bargaining will only further increase this gap in teamwork as the financial straits currently facing the Air Force compel it to replace non-collective bargaining uniformed employees with those covered by its umbrella of entitlement.

Finally, there are viable alternatives to collective bargaining available to the DOD that offer sufficient employee protections while at the same time increase individual accountability. These measures are already in place and operate with far greater efficiency and effectiveness than those associated with collective bargaining. These measures are aligned with the Air Force core values

and provide supervisors at all levels the incentive to not only treat their employees fairly, with dignity and respect, but also to hold them accountable when their performance is not up to par. Most importantly, many of these measures have a track record of success that parallels that of the Air Force itself. This is because to date all of these measures have been codified into the multitude of instructions, regulations and laws that have governed the workplace conditions and ensured the individual accountability of uniformed members serving the greatest Air Force in the history of the world.

Nearly all Air Force PME programs include either explicit coverage of proven, time-tested principles for effective leadership and management or are at the very least developed with those same principles in mind. Air Force officers are taught before they are even commissioned how to best balance mission and employee needs based upon lessons learned from leadership and management experts such as Abraham Maslow, Frederick Taylor, Douglas McGregor, W. Edward Deming, General Bill Creech and Jack Welch, all of whom long ago debunked any myth that one could abuse their subordinates or ignore their inputs and have any hope of succeeding as an organization. The curriculum delivered in civilian education institutions pays equal homage to the importance of the individual employee and the impact of their state of satisfaction on productivity within the organization. In light of these nearly-universally accepted lessons learned regarding personnel management theory, it is absurd to think there are enough evil supervisors in existence who are determined to work their employees to the point of exhaustion for substandard wages and without any regard for their personal or professional well-being to justify the aims of collective bargaining. There simply is no place in the modern workplace for an apparatus built upon such employee distrust of their leaders. Absent this distrust, there would be no practical reason for collective bargaining to exist. Collective bargaining arose during an

era when such distrust was valid; those days are long gone.

This is, not to say, that individual instances of employee abuse cannot still arise within an organization even as noble as the Air Force. After all, the Air Force is led by humans and humans are not perfect beings. However, there are plenty of both implicit and explicit protection measures outside of collective bargaining that more than sufficiently guard against the unlikely possibility a rogue supervisor will attempt to take advantage of his or her hard-working civilian employees.

Implicit protections include the likelihood of negative career implications for uniformed leaders who create or endorse workplace conditions that lead to employee dissatisfaction and ultimately low productivity. Uniformed supervisors are promoted based in large part on the results achieved by the organizations they lead. As mentioned above, there is too much empirical evidence available in the world of leadership and management theory to ignore the fact one must take care of his/her employees if he/she hopes to drive them towards peak performance. For a member to ignore such evidence, evidence that is reinforced as the accepted institutional norm during Air Force PME at all stages of their career, would obviously put that member's future with the Air Force in doubt. This is because, as stated earlier in this paper, the promotion system for uniformed members of the Air Force is based on an "up or out" methodology. Even those leaders who are not interested in promotion still face administrative discharge for poor performance as supervisors in accordance with the stipulations of AFI 36-3208. The overwhelming majority of uniformed supervisors are simply not going to risk career suicide by enticing their civilian employees to underperform through an exercise of truly unfair labor practices.

Another implicit check against supervisor abuse is the fact they themselves have a

supervisor, a leader who is grounded in the same principles of effective leadership and management that subordinate leaders are expected to uphold. A significant part of a uniformed member's promotion potential is tied to how their personal judgment is viewed in the eyes of their own supervisor. It is highly unlikely that a leader would confer a high rating for judgment upon his or her subordinate serving in a supervisory position if that subordinate ignored the accepted institutional norm for the treatment of his/her employees. This norm is captured in the Air Force core value of "service before self," a large part of that "service" being the willingness of good leaders to "place the troops ahead of his/her personal comfort."¹⁴⁹ Failure to adhere to Air Force core values is one of the best ways a uniformed member can ensure his/her career with the Air Force is a brief one.

Of course, no quality organization such as the Air Force would rely solely on implicit protections for its employees, no matter how powerful those measures might be. There are numerous explicit protections in place to guarantee civilian employees receive the respect, dignity and quality workplace conditions they so richly deserve as called for in the core value of "excellence in all we do."¹⁵⁰ First and foremost, civilian employees have the rule of law on their side. All of the laws protecting their rights that have been codified as a result of collective bargaining over the years would still be in effect regardless of whether collective bargaining itself ceased to exist. These laws directly influence the plethora of Air Force regulations and directives governing the personnel management policies of the entire workforce. In addition, these laws are can be sufficiently enforced through the same oversight agencies that currently monitor the rights of uniformed Airmen, such as the Judge Advocate General (JAG), Military Equal Opportunity Office (MEO), the Inspector General (IG), the Office of Special Investigation

¹⁴⁹ United States Air Force Core Values", [http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF percent20Core percent20Values.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/afrotc/documents/U.S.AF_percent20Core_percent20Values.pdf) (accessed 25 September 2007)

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

(OSI), and most importantly—the chain of command.

To address alleged violations or unfair labor practices not already covered by an applicable law or regulation, civilian employees are free to take the matter up the chain of command to their supervisor's boss to discuss the issue, provided they first give their immediate supervisor a chance to address the problem. Again, it is highly doubtful a supervisor would jeopardize his/her career by running his/her workplace in a manner that constantly has the employees knocking on the door of their boss' boss. In the unlikely event there is still some area of civilian employment as yet that requires a change that the leadership is unwilling to make, civilian members can always pursue their collective interests in the same way uniformed members have worked to improve their lot in life—through *external* lobbying efforts.

Uniformed members of the Air Force have long enjoyed a voice in matters affecting their workplace conditions, but their collective voice is channeled through external lobbying organizations as opposed to the internally intrusive and divisive system of collective bargaining. Organizations such as the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)¹⁵¹ and the Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)¹⁵² have successfully advanced the interests of uniformed members on Capitol Hill, covering a wide range of issues ranging from cost-of-living adjustments to health care to survivor benefits programs. These external lobbying efforts have allowed uniformed members to indirectly influence their workplace through normal political discourse with elected officials as a block of concerned voters, keeping their attention while actually in the workplace itself where such attention belongs—on the mission. That mission centers on defending America's unique system of democratic government, not attempting to

¹⁵¹ Military Officers Association of America, "Legislative Action Center" <http://www.moaa.org/lac/index.htm> (accessed 1 December 2007)

¹⁵² Air Force Sergeants Association, "About", <http://www.afsahq.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=About> (accessed 1 December 2007)

emulate democracy in the context of supervisor-subordinate relationships. Collective bargaining actually owes its very existence to external lobbying efforts. The decisions of both Presidents Kennedy and Carter to formally recognize labor-management relations in the federal sector came about as a result of lobbying on the part of federal employee organizations such as the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC).¹⁵³

Uniformed members' use of external lobbying has, in effect, "outsourced" the practice of collective bargaining on their behalf to their selected lobbyists and elected officials, along with all the time, money and effort associated with the process. As a result, formal bargaining over inconsequential changes to workplace conditions such as the length of coffee breaks or the locations of smoking areas is removed from the workplace itself—no longer pitting supervisor against subordinate or uniformed member against civil servant. These and all other matters of workplace conditions are left up to the judgment of the organization's leaders, whose primary duties include balancing the mission with the needs of the workers and whose judgment is constantly reviewed and assessed by the chain of command for its impact on organizational effectiveness.

If a civilian employee feels he/she still needs additional protections beyond all of those detailed above, he/she may always exercise their most powerful option for avoiding unfair labor practices at the hands of their DOD employer—he/she can seek employment elsewhere. As is the case with uniformed members, government service is purely voluntary for civilian employees. America's robust economy offers limitless opportunities for those who are unable or unwilling to live up to the core values of the Air Force. It is hard to imagine how one could expect to receive any empathy for voluntarily maintaining his/her employment with an

¹⁵³ National Association of Letter Carriers, "10 Great Moments in Letter Carrier History", <http://www.nalc.org/nalc/facthist/top10.html> (accessed 2 December 2007)

organization he/she distrusts to the point of requiring constant, third-party intervention on his/her behalf. That is the sort of logic that is representative of a culture of entitlement not the culture of selfless service underpinning the Air Force.

There is no rationale justification for continuing to pursue the protections supposedly offered through collective bargaining and its accompanying set of bloated oversight agencies because it simply cannot be proven that civilian employees need any additional protections beyond those afforded to the uniformed member who sits next to them—a uniformed member whose service presently carries with it far more personal risk than that of a civilian employee. It is a great disservice to all the Airmen who live up to the Air Force core values to allow the existence of a collective bargaining system that detracts from those very values. Trust in one's fellow Airman is an indispensable element of airpower that cannot be obtained through bargaining; one can only obtain trust by earning it. Fortunately, there is a way to remove collective bargaining along with all of its negative influences from the Air Force workplace.

Just as in the case of UCMJ jurisdiction over civil servants previously discussed, there is precedent for exempting federal employees from the collective bargaining provisions currently codified in law. When the CSRA of 1978 was passed into law, it included a provision that allowed the President government-wide authority to exempt federal agencies from collective bargaining requirements if the agency's primary function revolved around national security work.¹⁵⁴ Agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Secret Service are among those organizations currently exempt from collective bargaining statutes.¹⁵⁵ What might surprise many people is the fact the Research Division at the Library of Congress has also been excluded from collective bargaining under this

¹⁵⁴ "Presidential National Security Authority and the Federal Workforce", The Whitehouse, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/10/print/20021003-2.html> (accessed 18 September 2007)

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

provision¹⁵⁶; what might outrage more people is the fact the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) is also exempt.¹⁵⁷

Very few people could offer a convincing argument on any intellectual level to disprove the claim that DOD is infinitely more important to national security than the Library of Congress. It would be equally absurd to think the FLRA plays a more critical role in national security than DOD; perhaps the only thing more absurd is the fact the FLRA, an agency charged with oversight of collective bargaining in the federal sector, exempts its own employees from participating in the practice of it. Clearly, 4GW has increased the importance of DOD to national security both at home and abroad. This sentiment is undoubtedly shared by the families of the nearly 3,000 people who perished in the attacks of September 11, 2001, as well as the families of the over 4,000 servicemen and women who in response to those attacks have died in Iraq and Afghanistan as part of a U.S. effort to wage the GWOT “over there” instead of on its own soil.¹⁵⁸

The time has come for DOD senior leadership to press the case for presidential exemption of the department from collective bargaining. The entire DOD workforce needs to possess the intellectual and physical agility to anticipate, deter and prevent the next “9/11” from ever happening. This same agility will be crucial in mitigating the effects of an attack should the best efforts of the U.S. fail to predict and prevent it from taking place. Collective bargaining does not advance either of those abilities; in fact, it degrades such agility by weighing the workforce down with inefficient, unaccountable employees along with unnecessary, expensive, counterproductive and divisive policies intent on protecting them. It is ironic to note that a primary source of

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Edith A. Pearce, “Federal Employees Covered Under the Labor-Management Relations Statute”, The Pearce Law Firm, <http://www.thepearcelawfirm.com/lawyer-attorney-1164448.html> (accessed 18 September 2007)

¹⁵⁸ Robin Stringer, “U.S. Military Losses Hit 4,000 in Iraq, Afghanistan”, Bloomberg News, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=aHIWBG4J_81I&refer=us (accessed 3 December 2007)

inspiration for allowing collective bargaining in the federal sector—the private sector—has all but abandoned the practice. As of January 2007, only 12 percent of all wage and salaried employees in the U.S. belonged to a union.¹⁵⁹ Thanks in large part to the sense of entitlement perpetuated through collective bargaining, union membership in the federal sector is now five times greater than that of private industry.¹⁶⁰ Today’s globalized, interdependent economy has placed a high premium on productivity. Private industry companies that want to remain competitive must employ the type of agile, innovative workforce that is seldom found in unionized organizations, a primary reason for the steady decline of unions worldwide.¹⁶¹

All of the recommendations offered throughout this section are intended to reduce levels of distinction in personnel policies that unnecessarily divide Air Force organizational culture into two separate camps. All five recommendations seek to bridge that divide and bring the two sides closer together to produce the type of collective, agile action needed to confront the threats of 4GW while simultaneously maintaining unequalled conventional capability. The above recommendations can be implemented in the near- to mid-terms by using or expanding existing precedents and provisions codified in public law, and do not exacerbate the financial straits presently facing the Air Force. It is to be expected that even these first steps in the journey towards an AFAW will be controversial and emotional, particularly for civil service employees since most of the recommendations target well-entrenched personnel policies governing the civil service. However, the Air Force has, at least, two mechanisms for dealing with any turmoil resulting from the “unknowns” resident in such monumental shifts in personnel management paradigms.

¹⁵⁹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Union Members Summary*, *BLS.gov*, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm> (accessed 14 November 2007)

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Manfred Weiss, “The Dynamic of the European Social Model”, *Work in the Global Economy*, <http://www.ilo.ch/public/english/bureau/inst/download/global.pdf> (accessed 1 December 2007)

First, in the unlikely event a mass exodus of experienced civil service employees was feared as a result of the recommended policy changes, the Air Force could aggressively recruit from among the more than 40,000 former or soon-to-be-former military members whose careers were prematurely ended as a result of the ongoing Air Force end strength drawdown to replace the departing civilian employees. These former uniformed members would join thousands of their prior-service brethren already employed as civil servants and for whom strict adherence to Air Force core values is already engrained as a preferred way of life. Second, the Air Force can take advantage of a unique vehicle also codified in law that will allow the first steps of AFAW to be “baby steps” to lessen the fears senior leaders and civilian employees alike may face as a result of deviating from decades of past practices. That vehicle is the demonstration project.

Demonstration projects are permitted under Section 1101 of Title 5 to the U.S. Code.¹⁶² Title 5 governs the entire civil service system. Subject to congressional oversight, demonstration projects are permitted to allow for experimentation with new and different personnel management concepts in controlled situations to achieve more efficient and greater productivity.¹⁶³ All five recommendations above are designed to do precisely that—increase workforce efficiency and productivity by lessening the negative effects produced through the perpetuation of sub-cultures within the Air Force. Breaking down the invisible walls separating uniformed from non-uniformed Airmen will lead to greater collective action. A demonstration project would provide for a large-scale operational test of a revised civilian personnel system more closely aligned with the management system governing uniformed members—allowing both sides to put the principles embodied in their shared core values into equally shared commitment to operational success.

¹⁶² Colonel Donald Conaway, *Military Leadership of Civilian Personnel: Achieving a Balance* (Carlisle, PA: Army War College, 1996), 31.

¹⁶³ 5 U.S. Code, Sec 1101, 1994, 584.

Because the current civil service system enjoys wide political support, Air Force leadership will need to seek a venue for the demonstration project that will meet its objectives without being politically dangerous for the members of congress who support it. Hurlburt Field in Florida offers one such a venue. Both Air Force Special Operations Command and the 1st Special Operations Wing housed at Hurlburt Field are comprised primarily of uniformed members, and their mission is directly tied to the GWOT and defeat of 4GW adversaries. At the same time, there are sufficient numbers of civilian employees there to make the demonstration project worthwhile without disrupting the base's critical mission. Resistance to the project on the part of civilian employees at Hurlburt Field may be tempered by the fact many of them are themselves former members of the uniformed special operations corps, a tight-knit fraternity with a reputation for their abundant willingness to uphold the principles embodied in the Air Force core values under the most trying of circumstances. Congress has recognized the importance of special operations to national security as evidenced by their recent calls to increase the number of personnel dedicated to this unique mission area¹⁶⁴. It is quite likely Congress would be equally receptive to the idea of a demonstration project designed to help its vision of an expanded special operations corps operate with even more efficient and effective lethality.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) should push for approval of an AFAW demonstration project with the same vigor as he is pursuing recapitalization of the Air Force's aging aircraft inventory. This is because the former will have a direct impact on the latter. It will help pave the way for the AFAW needed to continue to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the U.S. while, at the same time, undergoing end strength reductions to free up funding to buy new, more capable aircraft. Senior military leaders have used demonstration

¹⁶⁴ William M. Arkin, "Special Operations: Democratic 'Fetish' or False Conception?", Early Warning, http://blog.washingtonpost.com/earlywarning/2007/02/special_operations_a_democrati.html (accessed 12 November 2007)

projects over the past twenty years to increase workplace flexibility and reward top-notch performers.¹⁶⁵ Such projects provided much of the impetus behind former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's attempts to overhaul the civilian personnel system through implementation of the NSPS¹⁶⁶; demonstration projects could now be used to fill in the personnel policy divides remaining despite enactment of the NSPS. At no time in history has the need for a demonstration project been greater. It will help to create the AFAW America needs to continue to dominate air, space and cyberspace now and in the future. CSAF and the Air Force Legislative Liaison Office should proceed at warp speed through the current Secretary of the Air Force and the Secretary of Defense to convince the Executive and Legislative Branches that such a demonstration project is in the best interests of the nation and those committed to protecting it.

Conclusion

The events of September 11, 2001 profoundly changed the way the U.S. military establishment views warfare in the twenty-first century. Asymmetric warfare principles embodied in 4GW now occupy the thoughts of military strategists to a greater degree than the conventional warfare tenets that have shaped much of the force structure and personnel policies governing the current workforce within the Air Force and other Services. In today's globalized, interdependent, information age small bands of fanatical 4GW ideologues rely on innovation, precision and speed to produce terrifying effects at the tactical level that are then transmitted over inexpensive media means to achieve strategic effects on the will of nations to continue to battle them. 4GW is about using warfare to advance radical ideology indoctrination campaigns,

¹⁶⁵ Jim Garamone, "Civilian Personnel System not Cutting It", U.S. Air Force Press Releases, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_prfr/is_200306/ai_346411204 (accessed 13 September 2007)

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

the exact opposite of previous evolutions of warfare. As 4GW warriors become more adept at exploiting the information domain, their chances of obtaining weapons of mass destruction to further their cause increases—a far graver proposition for America than car bombs or even aircraft serving as guided missiles against skyscrapers. In order to counter 4GW zealots, Air Force personnel must operate in unison and with focused determination to anticipate, deter and/or defeat transnational enemies before they have the opportunity to attack U.S. interests at home or abroad.

In order to achieve this unity of effort, the U.S. Air Force must break down long-standing sub-cultural stovepipes that separate its uniformed members from its equally-important civilian employees. All Air Force members must be in this fight, fully committed, fully engaged and fully prepared to go above and beyond the call of duty if necessary. The Air Force core values provide the foundation for harnessing the legacy of valor forged by previous generations of Airmen and transforming their spirit of sacrifice into the essence of teamwork needed to propel today's Airmen to victory over a determined, non-negotiating, fight-until-the-death 4GW adversary. Air Force core values belong to all Airmen, uniformed and civilian; and strict adherence to the organizational norms flowing from the core values represents the cost of membership for all personnel in the Air Force. This membership is not an entitlement, and must be denied to any person unable or unwilling to live up to the Air Force core values if the values are to be successfully embedded within the culture of the organization. All Airmen need to embody the principles derived from the Air Force core values in order to engender the level of trust among one another that is so vital to overcoming the fog and friction of war, and the U.S. learned early on that 4GW poses particularly thick fog and heavy friction within its shadowy, unpredictable realm.

The ability of Air Force core values to flow freely through their supporting organizational norms and catalyze individual actions into desired organizational outcomes is presently constrained by disparate personnel management policies that accentuate what is different between uniformed and civilian members instead of what unites them. Many of these policies were crafted either before or during the Cold War and are no longer viable in the battlespace of the twenty-first century. Complicating matters is the fact many tools of the trade Airmen depend on to battle 4GW practitioners were also crafted during the Cold War era and are showing levels of wear and tear unprecedented in the history of the Air Force. The financial costs of supporting large levels of ground forces in Iraq and Afghanistan in an attempt to defeat 4GW warriors on their home turf has meant little funding is available to replace an aging Air Force aircraft inventory. As a result, Air Force end strength is being reduced to help pay for new weapon systems. The remaining Air Force workforce must prove themselves more capable than their predecessors if the Air Force is going to remain without equal. In an era of 4GW and shrinking defense budgets, the Air Force simply can no longer afford to perpetuate a dual sub-cultural construct which sub-optimizes individual entitlements and protections at the expense of overall organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

AFAW represents a major step toward optimizing what has always been the Air Force's most prized asset—its workforce. Unifying Air Force culture through personnel policies, programs and processes designed to engender a “one team, one fight” mentality among all of its members will foster the sort of workforce agility needed to overcome the daunting external and internal challenges facing the Air Force in the twenty-first century. A salaried compensation structure to improve employee flexibility, scaled down performance measurement systems to increase adaptability, revamping Air Force PME to increase collaboration, expanding UCMJ

coverage to better enforce ethical behavior, and exempting the Air Force from collective bargaining provisions to bolster individual accountability are all initial steps intended to improve workforce agility. AFAW will be a more united and more productive workforce, better able to employ the unique advantages of airpower at decisive points along an omnipresent forward edge of battle. AFAW will be instrumental to airpower remaining relevant in 4GW and all future evolutions of warfare.

Taking the initial steps towards AFAW will not be without controversy, and therefore, should be approached in a cautious, methodical manner to increase the chances of long term success. The use of a demonstration project as provided for in Title 5 of the U.S. Code gives senior leaders an effective vehicle for sowing the seeds of long overdue change by proving such change serves the interests of all Air Force members. The majority of the initial recommendations for creating AFAW involve changes to the civilian personnel system, and it is the “system”—not the civil service employees themselves—that provides the source of the operational inefficiencies discussed throughout this paper. Civilian personnel have a long and distinguished record of heroic service alongside their uniformed counterparts, and one can reasonably expect the majority of civil servants will accept the recommendations offered without complaint so long as they are fairly compensated and protected from unfair labor practices in the same manner as their uniformed counterparts. Survey after survey indicates many civilian employees are not only open to the idea of fundamental change to their personnel management system, they are eager to embrace such change if it results in greater accountability on the part of their coworkers. Communication on the part of senior leaders on the contemporary challenges prompting the move to AFAW as well as the intuitive practicality behind it should go a long way towards encouraging the civil service corps to accept AFAW as a new model for their workplace

environment.

4GW and globalization have fundamentally changed the way the U.S. views the world. It is time the Air Force reshapes its workforce to account for this new reality. The AFAW construct sets out to achieve one overriding objective: align workforce personnel policies as close as practical with the organizational norms and values codified in the Air Force core values to set the conditions for success in twenty-first century warfare. In doing so, the first shots will be fired in an internal battle to remove long-standing, inefficient, and divisive sub-cultural stovepipes that hinder the Air Force from producing maximum effect in air, space and cyberspace.

The vision behind AFAW provides a simple yet poignant answer to the rhetorical question posed by Lieutenant General Bradley in the introduction to this paper. When do ART personnel, or any Air Force personnel for that matter, stop being Airmen? Never. America needs its Airmen—all of them—ready to wage war 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That is the level of commitment to airpower that has made the Air Force the greatest in the world since its inception in 1947. AFAW will ensure that same level of commitment keeps the Air Force the best in the world now and in the future.

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