Lessons Learned in the Global War on Terrorism

--Bosnia
--Georgia
--Philippines
--Afghanistan
--Horn of Africa
--Yemen
--Colombia?
Lessons Learned from The War on Terrorism

Lesson #1: SOF core competencies are clearly emerging.

- IO
- STRATEGIC ACCESS
  - PSYOP & CIVIL AFFAIRS
  - SOF INFIL/ FS PLATFORMS
  - SURROGATE/COALITION WARFARE
    - SURGICAL OPNS
    - UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE – SPECIAL FORCES
    - RANGER RGT, SEALS
The Competencies: Powerful Mix

GRENADA

Key Tasks: DA/SR

PANAMA

Key Tasks: SR/DA/CA/PSYOP
The Competencies: Powerful Mix

EI SALVADOR

Key Tasks: FID/IO

AFGHANISTAN

Key Tasks: UW/FID
Would this work?

USSOCOM MISSION

SOF COMPETENCIES:
--National Resource Skill Sets??
--Strategic Access??
--Information Operations??
--Surgical Operations??
--Surrogate Warfare??

CORE TASKS:
CP, CT, UW, FID, SR, DA, CA, PSYOP, ?
Lessons Learned from The War on Terrorism

Lesson #2: Be ready.

TRAIN and EQUIP for worst case scenarios, even in extended periods of relative tranquility.
Lessons Learned from The War on Terrorism

Lesson #3: Convergence of forces – an operational and tactical reality.

The battlefield is fluid, dynamic, …
#1: We converge on the battlefield.

*Example:* Afghanistan
#2: We plan and execute together.

Example: Panama
#3: Surrogate Warfare fails or is failing.

Example: **Philippines**: 1892 revolution against Spain begins in Philippines. 1898 US brings Emilio Aguinaldo back from exile, but must use conventional troops under General Merritt to defeat Spain. *(PI Insurrection follows.)*
#4: SF is on the ground when *IT* happens.

Example: DROC, Kenya, Albania, Rwanda, Congo, Cote D’Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone…

*Golden Pheasant (Honduras), now long forgotten…*
How do we work together?

- RCCs do what they want
- RCCs are graded on effects not efficiency
- This is a human business

US Army Special Operations Forces
Mostly SF, CA, & PSYOP
Lesson #4: *UW math has changed.*

Red Army Convergence:

- Convergence was recognized.
- C2 was passed to Russian Corps Commanders prior to convergence.
- Partisan activity moved from strategic to operational support
- Battle of Kursk?

Give us INTENT!!!!

Rail Cuts in the Thousands
Lessons Learned from The War on Terrorism

Lesson #5: The Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) need significant investment both in personnel and equipment.

Here is why:

Invest! Now!!
Forward Based!!
Culturally Astute!!
Theater Experts!!
Embedded In GCC Staff.

“...another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins—war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of by combat; infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him.”

President John F. Kennedy
Lesson #6: Info Dominance = situational C2.

In UW/COIN, C2 must be malleable, and situational—while being absolutely clear.

Lesson #6A: There is no substitute for Checklists, Risk Assessment, and solid TTP…

CAUTION!!!!

Fantastic cooperation is NOT a substitute for POSITIVE CONTROL and coordinated TTP!
Lesson #7: Joint fires need to move to the next level.

Ground commanders need all-weather, 24/7, responsive fire support.

SOF troops on the ground, overt, covert, or clandestine, need to be able to provide terminal guidance and to receive responsive support.

Need common joint terminology, radios, and standards. JCAS qualification.
Lesson #8: Wise enemies invest in deception and denial, to include Al Qaeda.

Therefore SF and SOF need fully developed “ferreting” TTP, equipment and support.

Every “INT” there is.
Pursue HUMINT.
Fully fund SF cultural expertise.
Fix record keeping…. “national collective memory.”

SF
GLOBAL SCOUTS
FRONT LINE FERRETERS
Lesson #7: In some UW environments, forward units must “self-generate” their targets.

HUMINT

SIGINT

COALITION

HN FORCES/POLICE

POPULATION

“…hard, hard work.”

ARCHIVES

SHARING

REACHBACK
Lesson #8: Info Dominance and JIM warfare break down industrial age OPSEC practices.

Read-ons.

Clearances by TOE position.

Black ops cells in TOCs/JOCs.

It's over. In the INFO AGE we need Just-In-Time clearances!!
Lesson #9: Bottom up planning and execution worked well. SF doctrine was validated.

In Afghanistan...

SF ODAs were given a mission to plan. Frequently knew little more than intent and a link-up scenario.

SF ODAs were chartered to “develop” their operational areas and to make good things happen.

Each team overcame their distinct difficulties and challenges to meld the resistance forces in the north to serve common purpose, followed by those in the south.
Lesson #10: There is no substitute for live-fire, full profile training in anticipated environments.

Lesson #11: There is no substitute for the Special Forces soldier; theater oriented & culturally aware.
Lesson #12: Thanks.