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US MILITARY TRANSFORMATION: ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

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Transformation is a much used, but difficult to specify concept. In the American military the word "transformation" is closely identified with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who has an amazing ability to hold onto his job despite a bad situation in Iraq and bad relations with nearly everyone, but has had a long gestation and likely will out-last the Secretary.

Rumsfeld is both the hero of the War on Terror and its goat. Although he was considered a bureaucratic politics heavy weight, a true Washington insider and the man who had pushed around Henry Kissinger in the Ford administration, he was on his way out in the late summer of 2001, likely the first casualty of the then new George W. Bush administration. He was saved by 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the quick, low cost victories which he tied to his policy of transformation. But as the insurgency increased in Iraq and the prison scandal built his star fell. Moreover the list those distrustful and dissatisfied is growing.

The Office of Transformation likely to be reorganized out of existence when Rumsfeld goes, but transformation concept is likely to live. It is the word of the decade.

Today I want to address four questions:

- What is military transformation?
- Why is the US military transforming?
- What theory fits the transformation of the Post-Cold US military?
- What are the consequences of this transformation?

1. What then is Military Transformation?

Transformation stands for significant changes in military force structure and doctrine, neither of which is quite yet achieved. It is military reform, but on a large scale and as such it is military innovation. Called a variety of names before transformation:

- RMA (Revolution in Military Affairs—Soviets)
- Systems of Systems (industry)
- Net centric Warfare (Navy)

Begins in 1990s(? 1980s, 1970s, 1940s) and has both its Exaggerated and Serious Versions.

Exaggerated Version:

- Admiral Bill Owens LIFTING THE FOG OF WAR—seeing, knowing all
- General Eric Shenseki and the 20 ton tank
- Vice Admiral Andrew Cebrowski and Streetfighter ---expendable US warships
- AF Colonel John Warden (author of THE AIR CAMPAIGN) and the Cyber war that defeats the enemy before he knows war has started.

Serious Version:

- precision guided weapons (laser; GPS)
- improved target identification –better sensors
- improved communications
- improved space systems
- Stealth
- Night vision capabilities
- UAVs

2. Why is the US Military Transforming?

End of Cold War/Gulf War America clearly the world's dominant military power(economically, culturally as well)

- Defense budget bigger than rest of world combine
- Navy 10X the next Navy (which is Royal Navy its closest ally)
- US Air Force building its 5th generation fighters. Second to None
- US Army demonstrated effectiveness of Air Land Battle doctrine in defeating Iraq. Thousands of casualties expected.
- USMC as big as entire British military
- USCG 7th biggest Navy; 12th biggest AF

Why then the push for transformation? Three reasons, not contradictory.

1. A big machine looking for work--- No clear enemy. Trying to limit the inevitable cuts. Mobilized for 50 years. Big staffs trying to anticipate change. "The new inter-war period." Much talk about asymmetric warfare, where weaker nations learn to cope with powerful militaries. Much worry about disruptive innovation. Many studies of the inter war period and Blitzkrieg. What about the challenge of Chinese or what about resurgent Russia ---can't slough off.

2. Need to manage Empire on cheap. Both the Democrat and the Republican leaders came to realize that PAX America was available. Dems wanted to bring peace and justice to world. Republicans wanted to maintain stability and preeminence. One would do it with smile. The other with frown. Have to do this work with AVF (1.4 million people in the military). Keep casualties on all dimensions low. Modern war is war without killing. Allies won't help; only criticize.

America can't rule unless there is MAGIC. The cost isn't worth it.

3. Rumsfeld is not only in his second tour as SECDEF but he has become the Second McNamara. Like Robert McNamara he wanted to rule DOD, not preside over it. And like McNamara he needed a weapon to beat the military into submission. McNamara had systems analysis. You can't beat the brass on military terms. Need your own language. Transformation is Rumsfeld 's systems Analysis. He defines it, you don't.

Army most reformist of services also the most in trouble. Trying to build the Objective Force. Rumsfeld marginalized Shinseki, fired the Secretary and Cancelled Crusader and Comanche. Rumsfeld said they weren't transformational.

Bureaucratic weapon shorted lived. Now everything is transformational. Everyone transforming.

And in fact the US military has transformed. No army can stand against. Rolled into Baghdad in record time. Iraqi AF didn't bother to fly. Capabilities unmatched, probably unmatchable. The 1000 (actually 1375) ship Navy.

- US spending not only as much as rest of world does on defense. Three times what Europe spends; its closest military competitor. It has long term advantage because it spends 7X what Europe spends on defense R&D. Has had scientific mobilization for 60 years.
- F/A-22 will assure that US rules skies—soon an all stealth AF
- Navy will have 60 plus Burkes, but building new class of destroyer. Next carrier is in the \$11-13 billion range; already have 10 nukes.
- Army becoming more mobile. Using airpower to destroy enemy threats at distance. Artillery too close. One shot kills.

What are the consequences of this transformation? What are we to conclude?

- New form of deterrence?
- New vulnerabilities? The net
- New dependence on contractors?
- War with civilian as shields?

3. Theories can explain the innovation?

> Jointness ----Neglected technologies, missions?

> Competition ---the quest for relevance?

> Long slow evolution? ---60 plus years; maturing technologies

> Civilian intervention ---Is Posen right? No casualties. Post-modern war. AVF?

> Mix---a little of everything?

Some think that US Military has not transformed enough.

TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

Global Deep Strike capability.

But others believe that the Military has transformed too much

A. (my interest) Too much system thinking. Military trying to make warfare giant engineering enterprise. Too accepting of the contractor Power Point presentations. FCS, Deepwater. Reaching out to contractors to make it system of systems. Losing control---can't manage. Missing politics of

contracting and of war. This is Development view. There is an operational critique as well:

B. Trying to win without destroying enough of the enemy. Not enough killing. Armies melt away. Cities bypassed. Survive to fight another way--insurgency. Have to destroy more. If it worth fighting for then must destroy enemy. Too much concern with civilian casualties?

4. What are the Consequences?

Smaller forces---cut number of aircraft and other platform? Unintended.

Fight to control network

Hyperwars ----Speed wins or kills?

Drive-by war----Deep strike?

Destroy more next time?. Highway of death.

Real innovation----We learn how to win hearts and minds; Phase IV? The gas of peace.

False God? Head home ----Can't fight on modern terms. No technological solution.