



## Mission Command: Realizing Unified Action

by Richard N. Pedersen

The U.S. Army recently promulgated new ideas about “mission command” and is seeking to use them as an instrument of cultural change. General Martin Dempsey stated that new ideas emerging from human, historical, and technological contexts can affect understanding, influence behavior, and be a driving force for significant institutional change. Admiral Mullen said that future operational environments require new doctrine, tactics, techniques, procedures, and methods for integrating our actions, both internally and with partners.

Army senior leaders recently created an opportunity to develop a culture that will better enable appropriate adaptation to any operational challenge. The goal is a culture that develops leaders who maintain current core competencies while adding competences to prevail in complex environments that require the integration of joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational capabilities.

This paper asserts that bolder changes are still needed for mission command to realize unified action—the synchronization, coordination, and integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort. Mission command is emerging as a construct that integrates the functions and techniques of the art and science employed during the exercise of command authority over missions applying military and other instruments of national power.

Dr’s. Alberts and Hayes asserted that peace operations near the “great divide” between peace enforcement and peacemaking represent the greatest challenge and account for the vast majority of troubled situations in the post-Cold War era. Lengthy peace imposition or enforcement operations are failures if bloodshed continues, stability does not manifest, and peace is not the condition.<sup>1</sup> Developing this idea beyond the dimension of peace operations, what if a conflict is not even clearly defined as war or peace? What if there is another “great divide,” between war and peace? *What if we face an enemy who:*

- has global social reach and resources, but no standing conventional army and will thus always seek to avoid traditional pitched military battles that have historically been our military’s forte;
- has a system of ideas requiring the dedication of their very lives to imposing their ideology on the world through any means including violence and global terrorism against any targets they choose;
- knows that we know where he recruits and trains, but also knows we can prevent neither activity with military power alone and that we must invest heavily to counter them, while he has to invest little;

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<sup>1</sup> Alberts, Dr. David S. and Hayes, Dr. Richard E., *Command Arrangements for Peace Operations*, NDU Press, 1995, pp. 17-19.

- assesses our national ideology makes it difficult for our military power to be too closely intertwined with our other national powers because we designed our system of government that way;
- assesses there are a significant number of our military and civilians who, for whatever reasons, will always seek to avoid having the military perform tasks that are not purely military functions;
- identifies a gap in our framework of thinking because we characterize conflicts as either stability or major combat, thus making it problematic to focus on the “great divide” where irregular warfare lies;
- knows our strategy will dictate we must win all conflicts, so he devises a campaign of regional conflicts on the “great divide” between war and peace where tactical outcomes are unimportant to his strategy;
- systematically frames and reframes his strategy in ways asymmetrical to ours in order to capitalize on the gaps in our framework of thinking, erode our will, fracture our unity, and expend our resources?

If we were ever to go to war with such an enemy and we desire to prevail, we will be presented an opportunity to think and organize differently. Today, we have this opportunity before us. The Army is contemplating moving from an organizational culture that has previously focused on the application of military power as a part of the nation’s foreign policy, to an organizational culture that embraces joint operations with other elements of national power as well as international partners. Such new roles and responsibilities will require commanders at all echelons to adopt a new vision of their professional roles, responsibilities, and decision styles.<sup>2</sup>

My own command experiences bear this out. In late 2003, I was preparing to deploy to Afghanistan to serve as Commander, Regional Command—South. As part of my preparations, I sought advice from Sarah Chayes, a former reporter who had been living in Kandahar since 2001. Sarah provided me with very rich cultural information and insights into what interagency and intergovernmental issues I would face in southern Afghanistan. She bluntly told me, “I’m not sure this is what you signed up for, Colonel, but you’re the one who’s going to be running U.S. foreign policy out there, and you had better prepare yourself for it.” My response was “I don’t like it, but I think you’re right.”<sup>3</sup> From my perspective, Sarah’s prediction rang true during my entire year-long tour ending in April 2005. My personal experiences in Afghanistan, coupled with my subsequent 3-year role in training Army division and corps commanders for duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, have caused me to consider the possibility that perhaps our military culture must adapt to current and future operational realities.

All national security shaping documents reflect a need for cultural change. The *National Security Strategy (NSS)* calls for all plans and approaches to be integrated in order to leverage the capabilities across all governmental departments and agencies.<sup>4</sup> The *National Defense Strategy (NDS)* says we must harness and integrate all aspects of national power and work closely with a wide range of allies, friends, and partners.<sup>5</sup> The *National Military Strategy (NMS)* asserts that our military power is most effective when employed in concert with the other elements of

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<sup>2</sup> Baysinger, Barry, Dr., comments provided to the author upon review of the final draft.

<sup>3</sup> Chayes, Sarah, *The Punishment of Virtue*, The Penguin Press, New York, NY, 2006, p. 284.

<sup>4</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy (2010 NSS)*, 2010, pp. 51

<sup>5</sup> Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy (2008 NDS)*, June 2008, p. 1.

power.<sup>6</sup> The *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO)* states that the more widely the premises and practices of mission command are infused, the more effective joint synergy will be.<sup>7</sup> The *Army Capstone Concept (ACC)* contends that the Army must hone its ability to integrate joint and interagency assets.<sup>8</sup> The *Army Operating Concept (AOC)* highlights that uncertainty in future operational environments will continue to increase as political, economic, informational, and cultural systems become more complex and interconnected.<sup>9</sup>

Cultural change is needed. Since the end of the Viet Nam war, many have argued we should never again commit to counterinsurgency—a holistic form of warfare involving all instruments of national power. This idea pervaded right up until September 2001. For the last decade, the entire U.S. Army and Marine Corps, along with coalition partners, have been engaged in regional counterinsurgency operations that are subsets of the free world’s global strategic counterinsurgency. Once again, some are now arguing we should move away from counterinsurgency strategies even though our enemy’s strategy is based on insurrection. Whether or not the military should be involved in applying the other instruments of power is moot because it’s been happening for ten years and the future will continue to require it. Military commanders need practicable conceptual tools so they can effectively address the full spectrum problems they are faced with.

The U.S. Army has made “mission command” its instrument of cultural change and recently promulgated its new mission command theory. This paper asserts that bolder changes are still needed for mission command to realize unified action—the synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.<sup>10</sup> Several transformational notions with the potential to significantly contribute to realizing unified action are found in *The Army Functional Concept for Mission Command (MC AFC)*. Bolder changes to doctrine and methods may lead to the effective harnessing and integration of all national powers called for by the *NSS*, *NDS*, *NMS*, *CCJO*, *ACC*, *AOC*, and *MC AFC*. It is not intended that the Army abandon traditional warfare. Rather, it is intended that the Army retains its traditional warfare capability, but also creates new full spectrum capabilities.

Within the Army, the very meaning of the term “mission command” is currently under transformation. Mission command was previously described as a command technique based on decentralized execution. Although recent Army doctrine and futures concepts expand this meaning considerably, there remains a gap between its theory and its unified action practicability. The discussion in this paper orients on adapting existing command and control ideas used by Army commanders chartered with complex missions in uncertain environments. This approach is not intended to suggest that the military subsume the application of all instruments of power. Rather it is intended to highlight how the Army might make positive progress in creating a culture where Army commanders are more effective joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) partners. In this way, the ideas presented have

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<sup>6</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America (2011NMS)*, 8 February 2011, p. forward.

<sup>7</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO)*, version 3.0, 15 January 2009, pp. 25-26.

<sup>8</sup> Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pam 525-3-500, The Army Capstone Concept (ACC)*, 21 December 2009, p. i.

<sup>9</sup> Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pam 525-3-1, U.S. Army Operating Concept (AOC)*, 19 August 2010, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Department of the Army, *Change 1 to Field Manual 3-0, Operations (FM 3-0 C1)*, January 2011, p. G-15.

relevance within a JIIM context. Briefly, this paper proposes a bolder transformational approach to mission command that is organized into three broad conceptual adaptations:

- 1) Describe Army mission command in a way more practicable to unified action;**
- 2) Adapt how Army commanders conduct the operations process; and**
- 3) Develop practicable unified action functions (UAFs).**

These three adaptations are not posed as a holistic solution that will solve all future operational problems. They are offered in the spirit of first proposing solutions to help define and understand a complex problem as a precursor to further study, experimentation, discourse, and evaluation. These refinements have the potential to create new frameworks of thinking within which more holistic missions can be effectively prosecuted by military commanders, including those requiring the application of and coordination with “soft” power. This approach could contribute to the creation of new doctrine and methods that national security guiding documents assert are necessary to harness and integrate all aspects of national power.

### ***The Problem with Current Mission Command Ideas***

There are two fundamental shortfalls with how Army mission command is currently conceived. First, its description of how commanders interact with their staffs does not enable a clear vision of how to put new mission command ideas into action—to actually do it, particularly where JIIM partners, design, and framing are involved. Second, although it acknowledges the importance of commanders teaming with JIIM partners,<sup>11</sup> it falls short of providing practicable ways for commanders to facilitate the integration of all instruments of power, which is a requirement of full spectrum operations. A brief description of how mission command notions are transforming sets the stage for a better understanding of the shortfalls.

### **Mission Command Theories**

Mission command was previously described in Army doctrine as one of two broad command techniques; the other was called detailed command. The fundamental difference was that mission command focused on decentralized execution while detailed command focused on centralizing information and decision making authority.<sup>12</sup> Published in 2008, the Army’s capstone doctrinal field manual (FM 3-0) reasserted this narrow definition of mission command as the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based on mission orders. It also noted that mission command is the Army’s preferred method of exercising command and control.<sup>13</sup>

Recently, many have argued that the Army still has a tendency towards the centralization called for by detailed command. Many have argued that the Army’s “battle command” concept was not conducive to full spectrum operations because it focused exclusively on an enemy,<sup>14</sup> thus excluding stability operations and support to civil authorities. Recognizing the need for

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<sup>11</sup> *FM 3-0 CI*, p.4-4.

<sup>12</sup> Department of the Army, *Field Manual 6-0, Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces (FM 6-0)*, 11 August 2003, pp. 1-14—1-16.

<sup>13</sup> Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0, Operations (FM 3-0)*, February 2008, p. 3-6.

<sup>14</sup> *FM 3-0*, p. G2.

change, the Army created an historic opportunity for cultural change by refining its lexicon regarding mission command.

The Army expanded the meaning of mission command in February 2011, with the publication of Change 1 to FM 3-0 (FM 3-0 C1). Mission command was redefined as the exercise of command authority and direction using mission orders. Mission orders are said to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of full spectrum operations. Mission command is further described as being commander-led and that it blends the art of command and the science of control to integrate the warfighting functions (WFFs) to accomplish missions.<sup>15</sup> Design was added as a cognitive tool to facilitate understanding complex problems before attempting to solve them.<sup>16</sup> In a further expansion, mission command replaced command and control as a WFF, subsumed and rendered the term battle command obsolete.<sup>17</sup> This current mission command conception is a dramatic expansion from its previous definition as a command technique of decentralized execution.

The current mission command conception appears theoretically founded, but is not necessarily practicable. Theory deals with principles or methods. Practicability means the ideas are actually capable of being put into practice. The current conception describes a set of tasks for commanders and a different set of tasks for the staff. The theory is that the key commander tasks are to understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess; key staff tasks are to plan, prepare, execute, and assess (conduct the operations process). The inference is there is a certain level of interaction required between commanders and their staffs as both go about conducting their specified tasks. It could also be construed that there are two mutually exclusive processes occurring simultaneously, one for the commander and the other for the staff. This is compounded because new ideas about design and framing are not fully developed.

How commander tasks interact with staff tasks during actual practical application is subject to interpretation. The current conception implies that the commander artfully commands while the staff scientifically controls. It is accurate that the commander's tasks require more art than science and the reverse is true of the staff's tasks. But in practical application, both commanders and staffs employ art, science, and control. Although design is said to pervade all tasks,<sup>18</sup> it is not clear how. Planning is said to be continuous and design is said to be a conceptual subset of planning. Thus neither design or problem framing are separate activities from planning.<sup>19</sup> Describing design and framing as subsets of planning diminishes their potential to contribute to cultural change.

We must consider if our current mental models are constraining the development of more innovative and creative frameworks of thinking. Peter Senge, a noted organizational learning expert, asserted that mental models represent a belief, idea, or deeply held internal image about how something works. Often, we are not consciously aware of the effects our mental models have on our behavior. Sometimes they limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting.<sup>20</sup> At the

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<sup>15</sup> *FM 3-0 C1*, p. 5-2.

<sup>16</sup> *FM 3-0 C1*, p. forward.

<sup>17</sup> *FM 3-0 C1*, p. 4-4.

<sup>18</sup> *FM 3-0 C1*, p. 4-5.

<sup>19</sup> Department of the Army, *Field Manual 5-0, Operations Process (FM 5-0)*, March 2010, p. 1-11.

<sup>20</sup> Senge, Peter M., *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Doubleday Currency, 1990, p. 8.

risk of creating more complex mental models, if the goal is to realize effective unified action in complex and uncertain environments, it becomes increasingly important to develop conceptions that are less theoretical and more practicable.

## The Gap between Mission Command and Realizing Unified Action

The current mission command conception does not postulate any significant ideas regarding the other instruments of power in its new definitions, descriptions, concepts, tenants, and ideas. The Army sees its newly defined mission command as an evolved concept encompassing both its philosophy of command and the integrating function that combines all warfighting functional capabilities.<sup>21</sup> Currently, mission command is fundamentally the exercise of command power to adjudicate or otherwise settle issues revolving around the WFFs during the conduct of the operations process.

The current mission command framework is based solely on WFFs with no framework for ideas that might serve to facilitate working with JIIM partners to integrate all instruments of power. The current conception describes mission command as the WFF that develops and integrates those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control. Replacing the command and control WFF, it is said to be an adaptation that captures what the Army has learned in a decade of war. These lessons include the changing roles and responsibilities in decentralized operations, the requirement to co-create the context for operations, the need to anticipate and manage transitions, and the importance of teaming and collaborating with JIIM partners.<sup>22</sup> Basing the framework of thinking solely on WFFs will continue to yield staff organizations and processes based solely on them.

WFFs govern the Army's combat [military] power; they do not govern diplomatic, informational, or economic powers. A WFF is a group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions.<sup>23</sup> As currently conceived, the mission command WFF is the bond that integrates all WFFs (Figure 1). WFFs provide a very effective framework for missions that involve applying military power to affect the military operational variable. The WFFs are culturally inculcated within the Army Professional Military Education System comprised of Senior Service Colleges (SSCs), Command and General Staff Officers Course (CGSOCs), Captain's Career Courses (CCCs), and Officers Basic Courses (OBCs). There are five other WFFs that govern combat power,<sup>24</sup>—the military power the Army provides to the joint force:

- **Movement & maneuver (M2):** the related tasks and systems that move forces to achieve positional advantage in relation to the enemy.
- **Fires:** the related tasks and systems that provide collective and coordinated use of Army indirect fires and joint fires through the targeting process.
- **Intelligence (Intel):** the related tasks and systems that facilitate understanding of the operational environment, enemy, terrain, and civil considerations.
- **Protection (Prot):** the related tasks and systems that preserve the force so the commander can apply maximum combat power.

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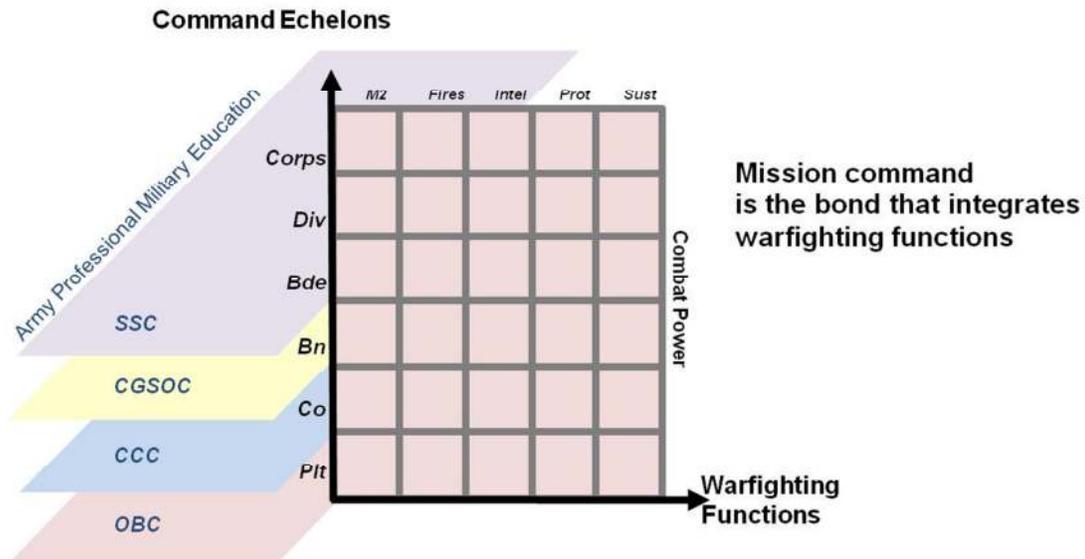
<sup>21</sup> Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pam 525-3-3, The Army Functional Concept for Mission Command (MC AFC)*, 13 October 1010, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup> *FM 3-0 CI*, pp.4-3—4-4.

<sup>23</sup> *FM 3-0 CI*, para 4-3.

<sup>24</sup> *FM 3-0 CI*, p. 4-7—4-12.

- **Sustainment (Sust):** the related tasks and systems that provide support and services to ensure freedom of action, extend operational reach, and prolong endurance.



**Figure 1: mission command integrates warfighting functions**

The current conception is a two-dimensional construct that describes the Army’s military power in terms of WFFs pertinent across command echelons. Although current mission command ideas acknowledge the importance of teaming and collaborating with JIIM partners,<sup>25</sup> no practicable ways to facilitate the integration of all instruments of power are described. The Army’s contribution to the joint force’s military power is described as *combat power*—the total means of destructive, constructive, and information capabilities that a military unit can apply at a given time. Although “constructive” capabilities could allude to other instruments of power, it is underdeveloped and overshadowed by the well-developed WFFs. This is not to suggest the military should increase its non-military capabilities at the expense of its core military competencies. Quite the contrary, the military must maintain its military competencies, but must now develop new competencies.

Doctrine does not define diplomatic, informational, and economic powers. The instruments of national power are defined as diplomatic, informational, military, and economic, but there are no further definitions for the non-military powers. The inference is that other agencies are responsible for them. *JP 3-0* says we employ all instruments of national power to protect our national interest and achieve national objectives.<sup>26</sup> *JP 5-0* defines the instruments of power as all of the means available to a government in its pursuit of national objectives and states that they are expressed as diplomatic, informational, military, and economic powers.<sup>27</sup> *FM 3-0 CI* states that success in future conflicts will require the protracted application of all the

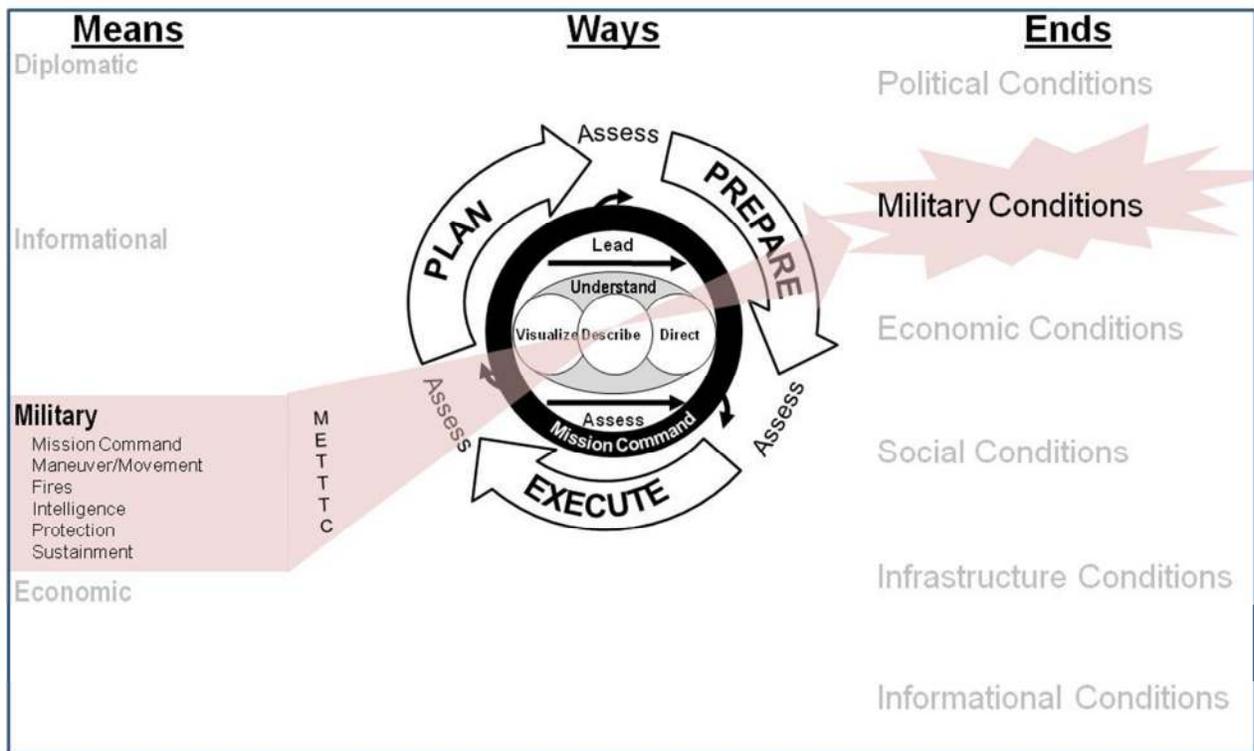
<sup>25</sup> *FM 3-0 CI*, p. 4-4.

<sup>26</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, Incorporating Change 2 (JP 3-0 C2)*, 22 March 2010, p. I-2.

<sup>27</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Operations Planning (JP 5-0)*, 26 December 2006, p. G-13.

instruments of national power—diplomatic, informational, military, and economic.<sup>28</sup> *FM 5-0* notes that lines of effort are often essential to helping commanders visualize how military capabilities can support other instruments of national power.<sup>29</sup> Lines of effort concepts can somewhat move from theory towards practicability, but still fall short, particularly at lower command echelons.

A fundamental problem with moving from theory towards practicability is that diplomatic, informational, and economic powers are not doctrinally defined. The *NMS* assesses that military power alone is insufficient to fully address the complex security challenges we face.<sup>30</sup> Commanders must now not only apply military power to achieve military objectives, they must also insure the effective application and integration of all national powers to achieve more holistic objectives. As anecdotal evidence, the *MC AFC* cites that tactical units have been producing their own versions of campaign plans to deal with mission complexities.<sup>31</sup> Commanders will continue to find themselves in positions that range from being the lead actor in applying non-military powers, to being supporters or facilitators, to doing nothing with them. Interagency participation will also range from interagency representatives being present and taking the lead, to a minor presence, to being absent. All command echelons will continue to face these challenges in future operational environments as the strategic, operational, and tactical layers become less distinct.



**Figure 2: the gap between mission command and realizing unified action**

<sup>28</sup> *FM 3-0 CI*, p. ix.

<sup>29</sup> *FM 5-0*, p. 2-17.

<sup>30</sup> *NMS*, p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> *MC AFC*, p. 19

The current conception does not clearly address how to harness and integrate non-military powers to achieve desired conditions on all operational variables. Although the current conception offers ways to correlate military forces and means to affect the military operational variable, there are no commonly understood ways to correlate, integrate, and apply non-military means to create the desired holistic results (Figure 2). The mission variables of mission, enemy, troops available, terrain, time, and civilian considerations (METT-TC) focus on applying military power to affect the military variable. As currently defined, the “C” in METT-TC does not consider how military power affects the non-military operational variables. “Civilian considerations” orient on how civilian aspects in the environment (areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events) impact military operations.<sup>32</sup>

The fundamental gap to realizing unified action is that the current conception does not sufficiently address the fact that commanders must optimize not only their military combat power, they must also optimize their *mission power*—the power afforded by effectively integrating all national powers to accomplish more holistic missions across the full spectrum of conflict. *Mission power*, in this context, is the power exercised by commanders to accomplish their assigned full spectrum mission, not to be confused with “normative” power which relies solely on civilian rather than military means. While the current mission command conception seeks to expand the term’s previous meaning, its descriptions are not entirely accurate and there are no significant ideas about how to effectively integrate the instruments of national power that JIIM partners offer to unified action. Bolder steps still need to be taken for mission command notions to realize unified action.

Notions within the *MC AFC* description of the operational context offer an idea with significant potential for cultural change. The idea is that mission command must functionally change how commanders conduct the operations process. National policy aims are set within an operational context that is increasingly uncertain, complex, and poses ill-structured problems. This condition is said to expand the traditional criteria not only for whole of government mission success, but also for Army mission success. Therefore, the Army must be capable of success in a range of operations across the full spectrum of conflict that is much broader than missions within traditional warfare alone.<sup>33</sup>

## ***The Proposals***

This paper proposes to describe mission command in a more accurate and practicable way. Rather than describing mission command as a technique or a description of command authority, all words, ideas, and tasks are arranged around the central idea that mission command is a construct. A construct is a complex image, idea, or theory formed from multiple facets. Mission command is a construct that integrates the functions and techniques of the art and science employed during the exercise of command authority over missions applying military and other instruments of national power. This paper proposes a bolder approach to cultural change that describes *thirteen mission command facets* and seeks to: **P1)** describe Army mission command in a way more practicable to unified action; **P2)** adapt how Army commanders conduct the operations process; and **P3)** develop practicable unified action functions.

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<sup>32</sup> *FM 5-0*, p. C-7.

<sup>33</sup> *MC AFC*, pp. 10-15.

## **P1: Describe Army mission command in a way more practicable to unified action**

**P1-1:** The *first facet* maintains existing ideas regarding the *technique of decentralized authority* and execution. Decentralized authority invokes the greatest possible freedom of action to subordinates. It applies the principal that decisions ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority. Each command echelon should perform only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at lower levels.<sup>34</sup> Commanders apply this mission command *technique* of empowering subordinates with mission orders and intent and then decentralizing authority to the maximum feasible extent. Decentralizing authority empowers subordinates to seek innovative unified action solutions with JIIM partners.

**P1-2:** The *second facet* describes a *commander's sphere of influence* as the commander's capacity to be a compelling force on or produce effects on the actions, behavior, or opinions of others and also to be similarly affected by others. There are multiple people, activities, and potentialities that fall within a commander's sphere of influence; key among them include other commanders, JIIM partners, Soldiers, battlefield circulation, engagement, the staff, and the cyber/electromagnetic dimension.<sup>35</sup> Although commanders can choose either to lead or to command their lawful subordinates, in most cases they cannot "command" interagency or intergovernmental partners. The most commanders can do is to lead them, but only then under certain circumstances. Commanders can influence them, support them, facilitate their efforts, or even follow their lead. Recognizing and giving due consideration to their spheres of influence empowers both commanders and JIIM partners to seek innovative unified action solutions, possibly even outside of various processes.

**P1-3:** The *third facet* describes *art and science* in a way that each can be employed by both commanders and staffs. It is acknowledged that commanders' tasks require more art than science, and the staffs' tasks are the reverse. But both art and science tools must be available to all commanders, staffs, and JIIM partners to facilitate effective unified action solutions. *Art* is creative and innovative human output distinguished by skillful application of principles. *Science* is the skillful study of information systematically arranged by principals to yield better understanding. Although only commanders command, both commanders and staffs employ appropriate control, art and science tools. Relegating commanders to art and staffs to science limits critical and creative thinking.

**P1-4:** The *fourth facet* describes that *critical and creative thinking* pervades all tasks. This is more succinct than the previous notion that "design" pervades all tasks. *Critical thinking* is the application of purposeful, reflective, and self-regulating judgment to determine the meaning and significance of what is observed or expressed. *Creative thinking* is the conception of something new or original that leads to new insights. Unified action with JIIM partners routinely embodies complex problems requiring constant critical and creative thinking. Uncertainty in future operational environments will continue to increase as political, economic, informational, and cultural systems become more complex and interconnected.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, all tasks and processes must continually consider whether experiences, ideas, and concepts remain relevant and meaningful. Critical and creative thinking must continue to be manifested throughout all activities, but particularly within framing activities and periodic assessments of

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<sup>34</sup> Baysinger, Barry, Dr.

<sup>35</sup> *MC AFC*, p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> *AOC*, p. 7.

effectiveness which address whether the operational approach is actually making positive progress.

## **P2: Adapt how Army commanders conduct the operations process**

**P2-1:** *The fifth facet* elevates **framing** as a new major operations process activity. The *MC AFC* asserts that framing the operational context and the problem is a prerequisite to developing a viable solution. Framing requires a different way of thinking than problem solving. In complex environments, commanders must begin the operations process by first establishing a framework of thinking about the environment and its problems. Framing is a practicable way that commanders, staffs, and JIIM partners can interact to co-create the context of the operational environment and its problems. During and after operational execution, assessments of effectiveness may require that the problem be reframed anytime it is learned the current approach is not correct or is not working. If framing is more than a subset of planning, and is in fact its own major operations process activity, there must be a way of thinking about how to conduct it. This paper endorses the *MC AFC* idea that design is the methodology by which framing is conducted.<sup>37</sup>

**P2-2:** *The sixth facet* describes **design** as an operations process subcomponent alongside the military decision making process (MDMP), rehearsals, and the rapid decision and synchronization process (RDSP). Design is a methodology for applying critical and creative thinking to understand, visualize, and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them.<sup>38</sup> It involves a cycle of inquiry, contextual understanding, and synthesis including debate and collaboration within the constraints of available time and people. Design promotes enhanced understanding of the environment, enables the ability to frame the problem, provides a basis for further learning, and enhances the commander's ability to provide insightful planning guidance. All of this is a precursor to planning, not a subset of it. Whereas MDMP seeks to solve the problem, design seeks to frame the problem. Describing design as a precursor to MDMP clarifies the overall process for JIIM partners and all command echelon, thus better enabling their abilities to influence it or be influenced by it.

The products of design can take the form of an environmental frame, a problem frame, and an operational approach. Environmental framing can begin by creating graphic and narrative descriptions that capture the history, current conditions, future goals, relevant actors, tendencies and potentials within the operational environment. Learning about the operational environment typically involves analysis of the operational variables to enable visualization of the environment not only in terms of enemy, adversary, friendly, and neutral actors, but also in terms of all environmental variables. Once analysis yields the appropriate understanding of the environment, problem framing begins with descriptions of risks, resources, and tensions between relevant actors. Analysis results are synthesized into problem sets and then an operational approach addressing all instruments of power is developed. This operational approach can take a form of a planning directive that may include initial commander's intent, planning guidance, and narrative and graphical depictions. Design is a methodology more familiar to many JIIM partners and provides a critical forum to coordinate effective unified action approaches prior to planning.

**P2-3:** *The seventh facet* improves understanding of the operations process by describing it in the **context** of how that the staff manages it. The operations process is a broad term

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<sup>37</sup> *MC AFC*, p. 21.

<sup>38</sup> *FM 5-0*, p. 3-1.

encompassing numerous supporting processes that can be difficult for JIIM partners to understand. To simplify understanding of the operations process, we should focus on the context of how the staff manages it. *Design*, *MDMP*, *rehearsals*, and *RDSP* are the principle methods the staff uses to manage the major operations process activities of *framing*, *planning*, *preparing*, and *executing*, respectively. Design is the methodology used to *frame* the problem and set conditions for MDMP. MDMP is the process used to *plan* the operation and set conditions for rehearsals. Rehearsals are the primary procedures used to *prepare* for the operation and set conditions for RDSP. RDSP is the decision process often used to *execute* the operation and make adjustment decisions. The nature of RDSP decisions and continual *assessments* of operational effectiveness set conditions for a new iteration of design to *reframe* the problem should it be learned the operation must continue.

**P2-4:** The *eighth facet* describes a new key commander's task to *learn* through action. Learning is the cognitive activity that leads to greater understanding. There are many modes and methods of learning, all of which should be continually capitalized upon. Actual mission execution is critical because grappling with ill-structured problems is often the only way to learn about them.<sup>39</sup> Commanders continually learn and increase their understanding through a variety of means within their spheres of influence. Learning in future complex environments must account for all instruments of power and all environmental variables to better enable commanders and JIIM partners to learn together through unified action. Current commander key tasks include understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess. Learning through action, within the context of a commander's key tasks, is the culmination of a commander's learning cycle about a particular operational approach. Such learning occurs when assessments of executed actions influence cognitive processing to yield recognition of better situational understanding. This paper proposes that commanders' key tasks are to understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, assess, and *learn*.

**P2-5:** The *ninth facet* describes the operations process as an *integral subset* of mission command. Although the commander has an appropriate role within the operations process, it is more accurate to describe that the operations process has a role in mission command. The commander *leads* all activities of lawful subordinates and, with the staff's assistance, continually *assesses* the situation. All major operations process activities increasingly enhance the commander's ability to *understand* the situation while simultaneously setting conditions for the next major operations process activity. Framing enables the commander to *visualize* and set conditions for planning. Planning enables the commander to *describe* requisite operational actions and set conditions for preparing. Preparing enables the commander to *direct* operational actions and set conditions for execution. Executing seeks mission accomplishment, enables the commander to *learn* through action, and sets conditions for any necessary reframing.

The nine facets described above have the potential to enable commanders to more effectively influence JIIM partners and/or be influenced by them at anytime. When facing complex problems, the current conception may not be easily understood by JIIM partners and can cause difficulty in effectively integrating all of the requisite commander and staff activities. The Army must also come to understand various JIIM partner processes and adapt accordingly. We must recognize the power of doctrinal mental models and continually assess to ensure they remain correct, relevant, and useful. Adoption of the nine mission command facets described above can move the current mission command conception further towards unified action practicability (Figure 3).

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<sup>39</sup> *MC AFC*, p. 21.

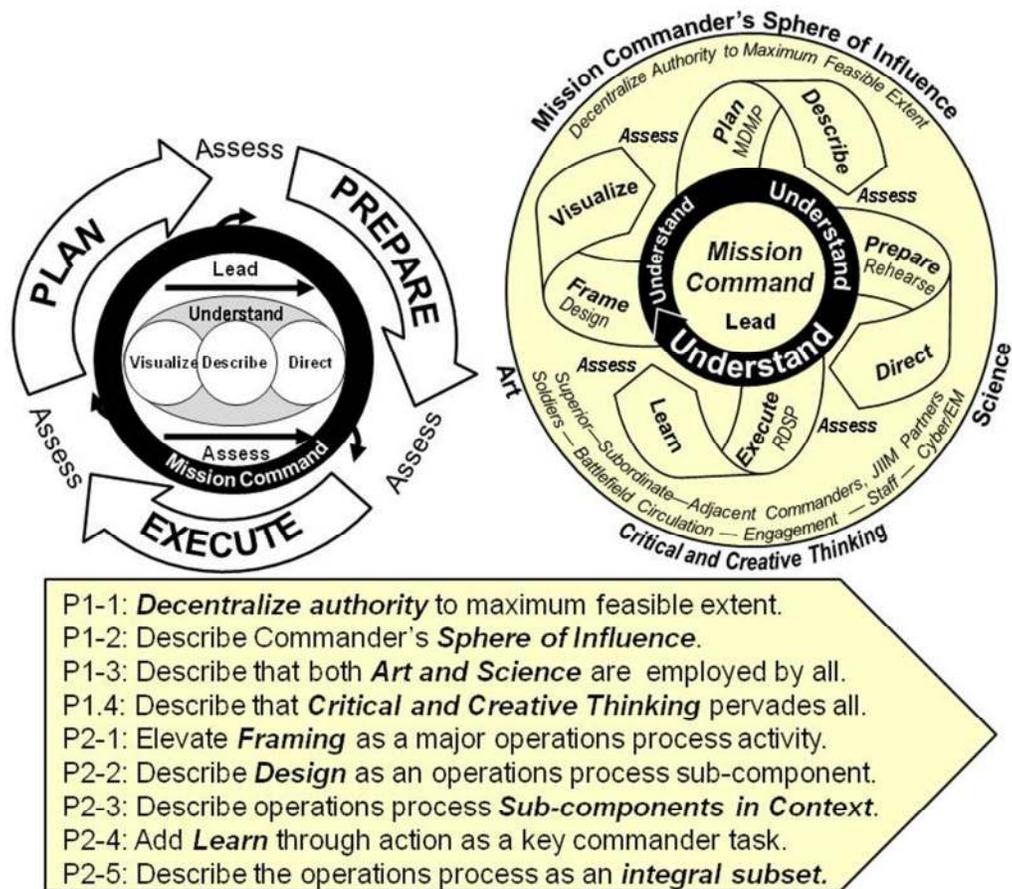


Figure 3: Mission command – moving towards unified action practicability

### P3: Develop practicable unified action functions (UAFs)

The *tenth facet* describes mission command as the overarching *unified action function (UAF)* employed to integrate not only the WFFs amongst themselves, but also to integrate them with functions governing the other instruments of power. Functions are factors related to or dependent upon other factors. Just as WFFs relate the factors of military power, UAFs can relate the factors of all instruments of power. A UAF is defined as a group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, activities, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish full spectrum missions. Three facets regarding UAFs are incorporated into the mission command construct. **P3-1** defines *diplomatic mission power* and five UAFs that govern it. **P3-2** defines *informational mission power* and five UAFs that govern it. **P3-3** defines *economic mission power* and five UAFs that govern it.

The *NDS* points out three pertinent requirements for future national security. First, Department of Defense (DOD) efforts to integrate with interagency partners require a unified approach to both planning and execution. Second, given that our military has stepped up to the tasks of long-term reconstruction, development, and governance, that these new capabilities must be institutionalized and retained. Third, we must strengthen not only our military capabilities, but also reinvigorate other important elements of national power and develop the capability to

integrate, tailor, and apply these tools as needed.<sup>40</sup> As such, mission command must enable commanders to integrate much more than WFFs.

Commanders conducting full spectrum operations in complex operational environments, must not only apply military power to achieve military objectives; they must also insure the effective application and integration of all national powers to achieve more holistic objectives. The instruments of national power—diplomatic, economic, informational and military—are the means available to a government in its pursuit of national objectives.<sup>41</sup> Effective *mission power* increases the effects of unified action through the integration and application of all instruments of power.

**P3-1:** The *eleventh facet* defines ***diplomatic mission power*** as the total means of building productive relationships between U.S. and foreign governments that a commander can apply, influence, or facilitate at a given time. Diplomacy is the conduct of negotiations and other relations between nations by government officials.<sup>42</sup> Department of State (DOS) is the lead agency for conducting diplomacy. DOS’s mission is to advance freedom for the benefit of the American people and the international community. DOS purports to accomplish this by helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world composed of well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people; reducing widespread poverty; and acting responsibly within the international system.<sup>43</sup> DOD routinely supports DOS with defense support to public diplomacy—the activities and measures DOD components take to support and facilitate DOS’s public diplomacy efforts.<sup>44</sup>

DOS is organized to conduct diplomacy through promoting understanding of U.S. values and policies, negotiations, advancing democracy, monitoring conditions in foreign nations, and foreign aid and assistance.<sup>45</sup> The *NSS* states that new skills are needed to foster effective interaction to convene, connect, and mobilize not only other governments and international organizations, but also non-state actors who increasingly have a distinct role to play on both diplomatic and development issues.<sup>46</sup> The *NMS* asserts that we must continuously adapt our approaches to how we exercise power because our foreign policy must employ an adaptive blend of diplomacy, development, and defense.<sup>47</sup> As such, full spectrum operations will often require military commanders to generate, apply, facilitate, influence, or integrate certain aspects of diplomatic power with military and other instruments of power. Commanders can conceptualize applying and integrating *diplomatic mission power* around five UAFs:

- **Strategic Engagement (SE):** the related tasks and activities that enable effective relationships with relevant foreign nation actors to promote and progress U.S. goals and objectives.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> 2008 NDS, p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> JP 5-0, p. GL-13.

<sup>42</sup> Dictionary.com, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/diplomacy>.

<sup>43</sup> Department of State website, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/index.htm>.

<sup>44</sup> JP 3-0 C2, p. GL-13.

<sup>45</sup> Department of State website, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/index.htm>. The definition of diplomatic power within a mission command context was derived from information provided throughout the DOS website.

<sup>46</sup> 2010 NSS, p. 14.

<sup>47</sup> 2011 NMS, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> eDiplomat.com, <http://www.ediplomat.com/nd/functions.htm>, lists “represent the home country to the host country” and “promote friendly relations between the host country and the home country” as a functions of a diplomatic mission. This paper’s definition of the unified action function “strategic engagement: was derived by combining these two diplomatic functions.

- **Negotiation (Neg):** the related tasks and activities that enable effective dialogue with relevant foreign nation actors to devise dispute resolutions that are mutually acceptable to all concerned parties.<sup>49</sup>
- **Governance Building (GB):** the related tasks and activities that enable the development of a foreign nation’s governmental institutions, infrastructure, and abilities to govern.<sup>50</sup>
- **Monitor and Report (M&R):** the related tasks and activities of monitoring and reporting on a foreign nation’s conditions and developments in its governmental, military, economic, social, and cultural life.<sup>51</sup>
- **Aid and Assistance (A&A):** the related tasks and activities that enable foreign aid and assistance to a foreign nation consistent with and supportive of U.S. interests.<sup>52</sup>

Staff organization accounting for the UAFs governing *diplomatic mission power* is subject to the chosen operational approach and to available personnel and experience levels. Options to oversee some or all UAFs that govern *diplomatic mission power* include the Operations Officer (G3), the Inform and Influence Officer (G7), the Civil Affairs Operations Officer (G9), or new “diplomatic” staff sections. Interagency representation, if available, could include DOS, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Foreign Assistance Office, and others as appropriate. The form of a commander’s relationship with interagency representatives depends on whether they serve as advisors working for the commander or as an ambassador’s liaison to the commander.

**P3-2:** The *twelfth facet* defines **informational mission power** as the total means of informational capabilities a commander can apply, influence, or facilitate at a given time. There are operational and technological aspects of informational power. Operational aspects are information operations (IO); informational devices and systems—to include cyberspace—comprise the technological aspects. Joint IO is defined as the integrated employment of electronic warfare (EW), computer network operations (CNO), psychological operations (PSYOP), military deception (MILDEC), and operations security (OPSEC). These capabilities are applied in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own.<sup>53</sup>

The current Army mission command conception shows potential progress regarding informational power with its new approach of regrouping IO tasks under inform and influence activities (IIA) and cyber/electromagnetic activities (C/EM).<sup>54</sup> The current conception describes staff tasks to conduct IIA and C/EM activities and also to conduct information management (IM) and knowledge management (KM).<sup>55</sup> Although IO, EW, CNO, PSYOP, Military Information

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<sup>49</sup> eDiplomat.com, <http://www.ediplomat.com/nd/functions.htm>, lists “negotiate with the host country government” as a function of a diplomatic mission. This paper’s definition of the unified action function “negotiation” was derived from the Wikipedia definition of negotiation found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negotiation>.

<sup>50</sup> Department of State website, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/index.htm>, this paper’s definition of the unified action function “governance building” was derived from the “build and sustain a more democratic world” statement from within the DOS mission statement.

<sup>51</sup> eDiplomat.com, <http://www.ediplomat.com/nd/functions.htm>, lists “monitor and report on conditions and developments in the host country” as a function of a diplomatic mission.

<sup>52</sup> Department of State website, <http://www.state.gov/f/>, this paper’s definition of the unified action function “aid and assistance” was derived from the Director of U.S Foreign Assistance site within the DOS website.

<sup>53</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP3-13, Information Operations (JP 3-13)*, 13 February 2006, p. ix.

<sup>54</sup> *FM 3-0, C1*, p. forward.

<sup>55</sup> *FM 3-0, C1*, p. vi.

Support Operations (MISO), MILDEC, OPSEC, IIA, C/EM, KM, IM, and others can be defined individually, finding a practicable definition of informational power is elusive. The number of acronyms involved with informational power alone demonstrates the complexity of this instrument of power. It is acknowledged that the Army's new IIA and C/EM concepts have the potential to improve both informational power understanding and practicability.

Each governmental department employs its own definitions, techniques, and procedures regarding information. The *NMS* asserts that we must improve the sharing, processing, analysis, and dissemination of information across all domains.<sup>56</sup> The *NSS* states that effective strategic communications, across all of efforts, are essential to sustaining global legitimacy and supporting our policy aims. It goes on to say we must use a broad range of methods for communicating with foreign publics.<sup>57</sup> Successful unified action requires the integration of informational powers within and among governmental departments. Thus, full spectrum operations will often require commanders to generate, apply, facilitate, influence, or integrate certain aspects of informational power with military and other instruments of power. Commanders can conceptualize applying and integrating *informational mission power* around five UAFs.

- **Cyber/Electromagnetic (C/EM):** the related activities that seek to seize, retain, and exploit advantages in and through cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum.<sup>58</sup>
- **Strategic Communications (SC):** the related inform and influence activities that enable efforts to inform U.S. and foreign audiences to be integrated and synchronized with other pertinent actions.<sup>59</sup>
- **Information Sharing (IS):** the related tasks, systems, procedures, and agreements that enable coordinated information access between and amongst agencies whose missions require it.<sup>60</sup>
- **Information Management (IM):** the related tasks, procedures and systems employed to collect, process, store, display, and protect information while still optimizing access by all who have a legitimate need.<sup>61</sup>
- **Knowledge Management (KM):** the related tasks and systems that create, organize, apply, and transfer knowledge to facilitate situational understanding and decision-making.<sup>62</sup>

Staff organization accounting for the UAFs governing *informational mission power* is subject to the chosen operational approach and to available personnel and experience levels. Options to oversee some or all UAFs that govern *informational mission power* include the Operations Officer (G3), the Signal Officer (G6), the Inform and Influence Officer (G7), the

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<sup>56</sup> 2011 *NMS*, p. 19.

<sup>57</sup> 2010 *NSS*, p.16.

<sup>58</sup> *FM 3-0, C1*, p. 6-20. This paper's definition of the unified action function "Cyber/Electromagnetic" is derived from the definition of Cyber/electromagnetic activities found in *FM 3-0, C1*.

<sup>59</sup> *JP 3-0, C2*, p. GL-26. This paper's definition of the unified action function "Strategic Communication" is derived by synthesizing the definition of strategic communication found in *JP 3-0, C2* with the Army definition of Inform and Influence activities found in *FM 3-0, C1*, p. 6-15.

<sup>60</sup> *JP 3-0, C2*, p. I-7. This paper's definition of the unified action function "Information Sharing" is derived from the *JP 3-0, C2* discussion of information sharing found on p. I-7.

<sup>61</sup> *JP 3-0, C2*, p. GL-16. This paper's definition of the unified action function "Information Management" is derived by synthesizing the definition of information management found in *JP 3-0, C2* with the Army definition found in *FM 3-0, C1*, p. G-7.

<sup>62</sup> *FM 3-0, C1*, p. G-8. This paper's definition of the unified action function "Knowledge Management" is a direct lift from the definition found in *FM 3-0, C1*.

Public Affairs Officer (PAO), or new “informational” staff sections. Since there is no clear governmental agency that oversees informational power, any interagency representation cannot be envisioned, but should not be ruled out. Given the highly complex nature of the cyberspace/electromagnetic dimension, various subject matter experts from industry and academia could also support commanders.

**P3-3:** The *thirteenth facet* defines ***economic mission power*** as the total means of U.S. development capacity a military commander can apply, influence, or facilitate at a given time. Economics involves the power to produce and to trade the products.<sup>63</sup> It is generally composed of a country’s industrial base, natural resources, capital, technology, geographic position, health system, and education system. Narrowly defined, the economic instrument of power includes economic sanctions and foreign aid. Commanders conducting joint operations overseas consider both the U.S economic capacity to support wartime efforts and also the U.S. capacity to conduct development operations in foreign countries. “Developmental power” is the subset of economic power most pertinent to unified action.

USAID is the principle U.S. agency responsible for foreign development.<sup>64</sup> The *NSS* states that the U.S. focuses its development efforts on assisting foreign countries to manage security threats, reap the benefits of economic expansion, and set in place accountable and democratic institutions.<sup>65</sup> USAID supports long-term and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy by supporting economic growth, agriculture, trade, health, democracy, conflict prevention, and humanitarian assistance.<sup>66</sup> The *NMS* asserts we are moving towards a "multi-nodal" world characterized by shifting, interest-driven coalitions based on diplomatic, military, and economic power.<sup>67</sup> Accordingly, full spectrum operations will often require commanders to generate, apply, facilitate, or influence certain aspects of economic power and integrate it with military and other instruments of power. Commanders can conceptualize applying and integrating *economic mission power* around five UAFs.

- **Production and Trade (P&T):** the related tasks and systems that enable U.S. aid and assistance to influence a foreign country’s production and trade systems and capacity.
- **Industrial Base (IB):** the related tasks and systems that enable U.S. aid and assistance to influence a foreign country’s total industrial infrastructure, capabilities, and capacity.
- **Finance (Fin):** the related tasks and systems that enable U.S. aid and assistance to influence a foreign country’s financial systems and capacity.
- **Agriculture (Agric):** the related tasks and systems that enable U.S aid and assistance to influence a foreign country’s agriculture systems and capacity.
- **Health and Education (H&E):** the related tasks and systems that enable U.S. aid and assistance to influence a foreign country’s health and education systems and capacity.

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<sup>63</sup> Arn Rand Lexicon, [http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/economic\\_power\\_vs\\_political\\_power.html](http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/economic_power_vs_political_power.html) .

<sup>64</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development website, [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/primer.html](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/primer.html) .

<sup>65</sup> 2010 NSS, p.15

<sup>66</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development website, [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/primer.html](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/primer.html) . This paper’s definition of economic mission power and its governing unified action functions was derived from information throughout the USAID website.

<sup>67</sup> 2011 NMS, p. 2.

Staff organization accounting for the UAFs governing *economic mission power* is subject to the chosen operational approach and to available personnel and experience levels. Options to oversee some or all UAFs that govern *economic mission power* include the Operations Officer (G3), the Logistics Officer (G4), the Civil Affairs Operations Officer (G9), Engineer Operations Officer (EN), or new “development” staff sections. Interagency representation, if available, could include USAID, DOS, and others as appropriate. The form of the commander’s relationship with these interagency representatives depends on whether they work for the commander or the ambassador.

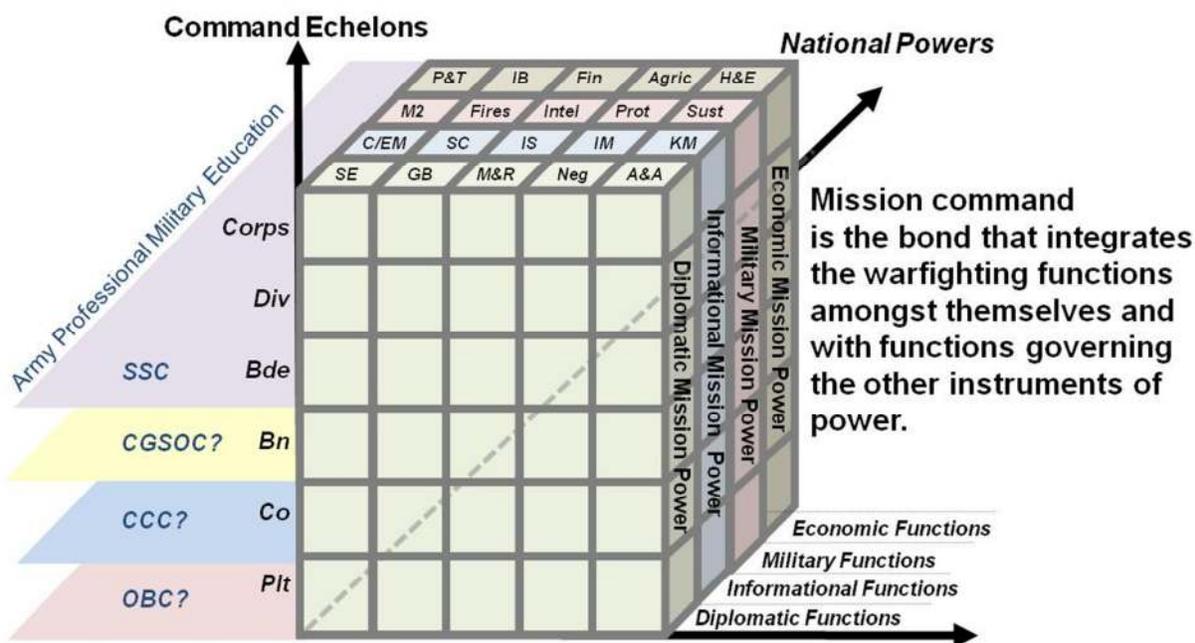
### ***Discussion and Conclusions***

Thinking of mission command as a construct allows the description to be further expounded to describe all construct facets. *Thirteen mission command facets* are identified. Commanders apply the technique of *decentralizing authority* to the maximum feasible extent. Within their *spheres of influence*, commanders can develop their capacity to be a compelling force on or produce effects on the actions, behavior, or opinions of others and also to be similarly affected by others. Key people, activities, and potentialities within a commander’s sphere of influence include other commanders, JIIM partners, Soldiers, battlefield circulation, engagement, the staff, and the cyber/electromagnetic dimension. The tools of both *art and science* are available to commanders, staffs, and JIIM partners. *Critical and creative thinking* is manifested throughout all activities, particularly during framing activities and periodic assessments of effectiveness which evaluate whether operational actions are achieving desired environmental conditions.

Given future complex operational environments, commanders at all echelons must integrate much more than WFFs. Collectively, the three facets that define the non-military instruments of mission power can move mission command ideas from two to three-dimensional thinking. The *MC AFC* asserts that mission command will undoubtedly manifest itself differently at each command echelon. Mission command notions must be broad enough to apply to all levels of war yet specific enough to be practicable at each command echelon.<sup>68</sup> Mission command is the *overarching UAF* that integrates all UAFs with each other across all command echelons (Figure 4). Whereas WFFs govern how the Army generates and applies military power, all command echelons must now also come to understand the UAFs that govern *diplomatic, informational, and economic mission powers*.

Production & Trade	Industrial Base	Finance	Agriculture	Health & Education
Movement & Maneuver	Fires	Intelligence	Protection	Sustainment
Cyber/Electromagnetic	Strategic Communication	Information Sharing	Information Management	Knowledge Management
Strategic Engagement	Governance Building	Monitor & Report	Negotiations	Aid & Assistance

<sup>68</sup> *MC AFC*, p. 9 and p. 19.



**Figure 4: mission command integrates unified action functions**

Commanders use *diplomatic, informational, military* and *economic mission powers* to increase the effects of unified action by integrating complementary and reinforcing capabilities. Commanders conceive of, apply, and integrate the instruments of power through up to twenty-one UAFs (inclusive of existing WFFs). The newly developed UAFs provide commanders with practicable tools with which to conceive of, apply, and integrate all instruments of power. This, in turn, enables commanders to work more effectively with JIIM partners to develop and implement unified action solutions. Training and professional military education on UAFs could contribute to more effectively preparing leaders for full spectrum operations that the Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS) calls for.<sup>69</sup> The *NSS* notes that adapting the education and training of all national security professionals is a key step to improve our interagency integration.<sup>70</sup> Army Professional Military Education could culturally inculcate UAFs not only in SSCs, but also in CGSOCs, CCCs, and OBCs.

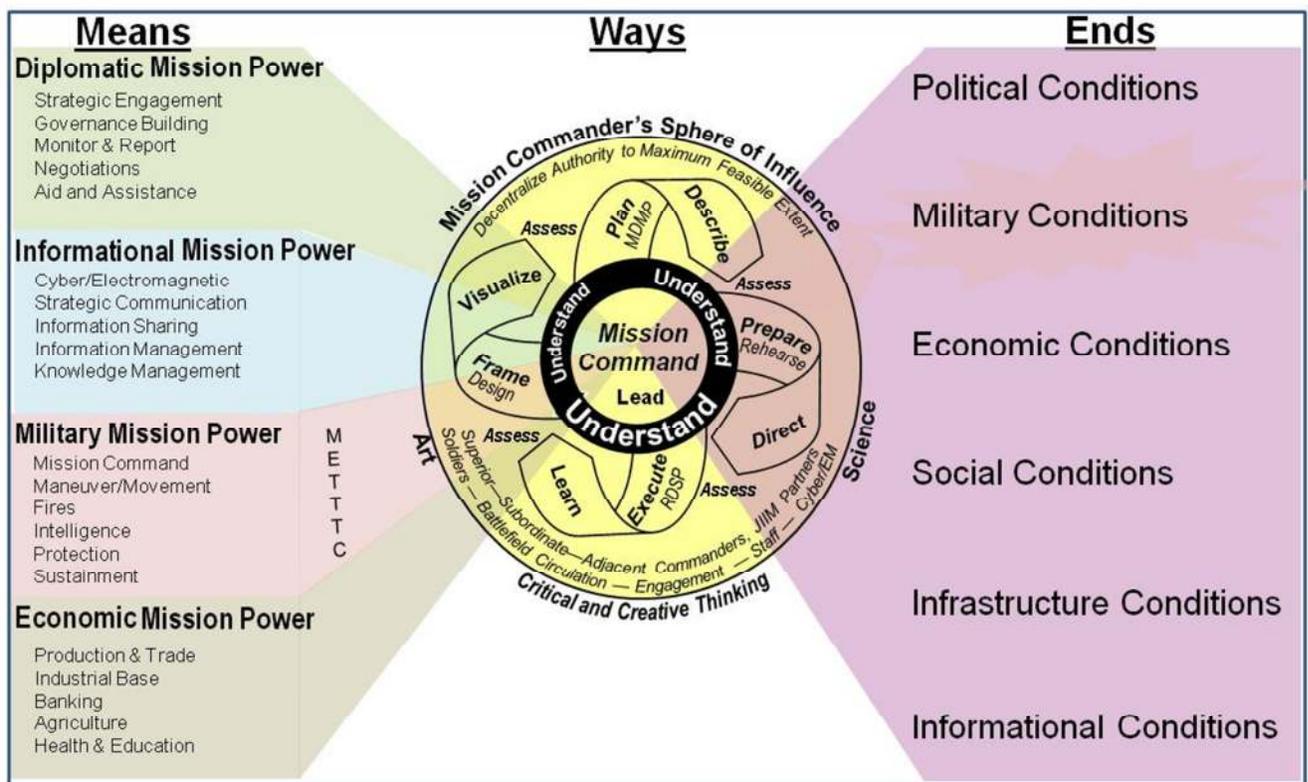
New mission command ideas must be easily understood by and practicable to commanders, staffs, and JIIM partners at all echelons. The Army must also come to understand various processes used by JIIM partners and adapt accordingly. Describing framing and design as separate activities from planning optimizes their potential to contribute to cultural change. *Framing* should be understood as a new major operations process activity. *Design* should be understood as the way to conduct framing. Understanding of the operations process is simplified by describing the *context* of the staff-managed operations process subcomponents. Design enables framing, MDMP enables planning, rehearsals enable preparations, and RDSP enables execution. Adding *Learning* through action as a key commander's task sets conditions for a

<sup>69</sup> Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff, G3/5/7, *Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS)*, 25 November 2009, *ALDS*, p.2. The Army ALDS calls for life-long learning through an appropriate balance of training, education, and experience.

<sup>70</sup> *2010 NSS*, pp. 14.

framework of organizational learning. These practicable adaptations to how commanders conduct the operations process will facilitate better unified action with JIIM partners.

The operations process is an integral subset of mission command. The commander leads all activities and, with the staff, continually assesses the situation. All major operations process activities increasingly enhance a commander’s ability to understand the situation and simultaneously set conditions for the next major operations process activity. Framing enables the commander to visualize and set conditions for planning. Planning enables the commander to describe requisite actions and set conditions for preparing. Preparing enables the commander to direct actions and set conditions for execution. Executing seeks mission accomplishment and enables the commander to learn through action and set conditions for reframing, if necessary. Mission command can come to embody the overarching ways all national means are conceived of, integrated, synchronized, and applied to achieve the desired full spectrum ends (Figure 5).



**Figure 5: mission command — closing the gap to realizing unified action**

Commanders use the operations process to integrate and appropriately synchronize all capabilities under their lawful command and also to effectively contribute to the integration of the capabilities of JIIM partners. Succinctly stated, commanders lead the operations process by integrating the art and science of understanding and framing operational problems, visualizing solutions, planning and describing requisite actions, preparing for and directing events, learning through execution, continually assessing results, and reframing as appropriate in order to prevail in full spectrum operations. By this framework of thinking, the gap to realizing unified action can be closed.

The principle actors in unified action are DOS, USAID, and DOD. This is consistent with the *NMS* assertion that in the future "multi-nodal" world, our operational approaches must employ an adaptive blend of diplomacy, development, and defense.<sup>71</sup> It is acknowledged that many other governmental agencies are involved in unified action, but that they generally support diplomacy, development, and/or defense efforts. It is acknowledged that the fifteen new UAFs described above may not be totally accurate or precise. Further study, experimentation, and discourse are needed to further develop or refine them, eliminate them, or create new ones. The salient point is that the business of applying and integrating all instruments of power is complex business that cannot be fit into a framework of thinking revolving around WFFs alone. Depending on the nature of the operation and the mission, organizing thinking and staffs around WFFs may not even be appropriate to the operational approach.

Adopting the new mission command ideas described carries potential risks. Adjustments to frameworks of thinking and processes to create operational adaptability for a greater range of full spectrum options may risk reducing traditional warfare capabilities and capacities. Additionally, the development of such capabilities and capacities within the military could lead to overuse and the usurping of rightful roles and authorities of other governmental agencies, or to the perception that the military can routinely succeed in such activities without the contribution of other agencies. Any mitigation of these risks is dependent upon the decisions of political authorities and the behavior of other governmental agencies.<sup>72</sup> Instead of war being an extension of politics by other means, war and politics march together to the point that the term "political general" becomes redundant, both externally and internally.<sup>73</sup>

## ***Summary***

This paper proposed to describe mission command in a more accurate and practicable way. Effectively integrating the operations process within mission command activities in current and future environments is a complex problem. Enacting changes to time-honored and culturally inculcated institutional concepts is also a complex problem. Complex problems cannot be fully understood until possible solutions are proposed and developed through collaborative discussion and learned about through action. This paper provides a starting point for that process by offering three substantive proposals that may now be discussed and evaluated in order to stimulate further cultural change by transforming institutional concepts. Specifically, the paper proposed that we:

**1) Describe Army mission command in a way more practicable to unified action.** Mission command is a construct that integrates the functions and techniques of the art and science employed during the exercise of command authority over missions applying military and other instruments of national power.

**2) Adapt how Army commanders conduct the operations process.** New mission command ideas include: elevating framing as a major operations process activity; describing design as an operations process subcomponent alongside MDMP, rehearsals, and RDSP; describing the operations process subcomponents in the context of how the staff manages the

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<sup>71</sup> 2011 *NMS*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>72</sup> *CCJO*, p. 35.

<sup>73</sup> Baysinger, Barry, Dr.

operations process; adding learning through action as a key commander task; and integrating the framework by describing the operations process as an integral subset of mission command.

**3) Develop practicable unified action functions.** Mission command is the overarching unified action function (UAF) bond that integrates all unified action functions across all command echelons. The warfighting functions (WFFs) are retained and described as military mission power UAFs. Fifteen new UAFs collectively governing diplomatic, informational, and economic mission powers were developed.

These proposed concept refinements may enable the military to more effectively meet the challenges of unified actions in complex and uncertain environments. Although the discussion in this paper is from the perspective of Army commanders, the ideas put forth have great relevance to potential JIIM partners. These three broad conceptual refinements offer a framework within which both “soft” and “hard” power can be transformed into “smart” power. These ideas should now be collaboratively discussed, studied, experimented with, and further developed in order to better learn the true nature of the problem and ultimately to solve the complex problems that require unified action.

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