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Irregular Warfare: Operational Theme or Full-Spectrum Operation?

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It is Department of Defense policy to recognize that irregular warfare is as strategically important as traditional warfare. We must maintain capabilities and capacity to be as effective in irregular warfare as in traditional warfare. We must be capable of conducting irregular warfare independently of, or in combination with, traditional warfare.ⁱ

--DOD Directive 3000.07, Irregular Warfare, 1 December 2008

Irregular warfare needs to be an element of full spectrum operations co-equal to offense, defense, stability, and civil support operations. DOD Directive 3000.07 (Dec '08) states that irregular warfare is a strategically important as traditional warfare. It explicitly calls for the integration of irregular warfare concepts and capabilities across all activities including doctrine.ⁱⁱ FM 3-0 ('08), the Army's overarching doctrinal guidance and direction for conducting operations, frames irregular warfare as an operational theme comprised of counterinsurgency, foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare, support to insurgencies, and combating terrorism.ⁱⁱⁱ From about 1975 to 2001, irregular warfare was pretty much the exclusive responsibility of special operating forces. The current reality is that for the past eight years virtually the entire conventional Army and Marine Corps have been leading and conducting irregular warfare in various forms of security force assistance, counterinsurgency, combating terrorism, or foreign internal defense. This trend is likely to continue into the near and distant future. It is therefore critical to determine whether the Army's operational concept is broad enough to effectively describe operations in the near and distant future and whether it is flexible enough to effectively frame irregular warfare.

Recently, the Army decreed that both stability and civil support operations are as important as offense and defense. The previous edition of FM 3-0 ('01) stated that full spectrum operations included offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations.^{iv} However, stability and support operations were relegated a much less important status by the statement that 'warfighting is the Army's primary focus—the ability to dominate land warfare underscores the effectiveness and credibility of Army forces in full spectrum operations.'^v DOD Directive 3000.05 (Nov '05) states that stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense will be prepared to conduct and support. This directive further states that stability operations will be given priority comparable to combat operations and explicitly addressed and integrated across all activities including doctrine.^{vi} As a direct result, FM 3-0 ('08) elevated both stability

operations and civil-support operations to equal importance with offense and defense by stating that stability operations and civil support operations are now primary elements of full spectrum operations.^{vii} The elevation of stability and civil support operations as co-equals with offensive and defensive operations is a truly revolutionary step.

Another major refinement to the Army's operational concept between the 2001 and 2008 FM 3-0 constructs is the creation of 'operational themes' to describe the predominant character of major operations. Operational themes include irregular warfare, limited intervention, peace operations, peacetime military engagement, and major combat operations. Major combat operations are the operational theme for which Army doctrine was originally developed and usually occur during general war. Major combat operations defeat or destroy an enemy's armed forces or seize terrain.^{viii} On May 1, 2003, President George W. Bush declared "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended." Earlier that same day, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld declared "Major combat actions in Afghanistan are over... we're at a point where we clearly have moved from major combat activity to a period of stability and stabilization and reconstruction activities." Since these two statements were made, Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom have claimed many more casualties from armed combat than major combat operations and have continued for six to eight years since the fall of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein regimes. Perhaps this apparent disconnect exists because stability operations are being confused with irregular warfare.

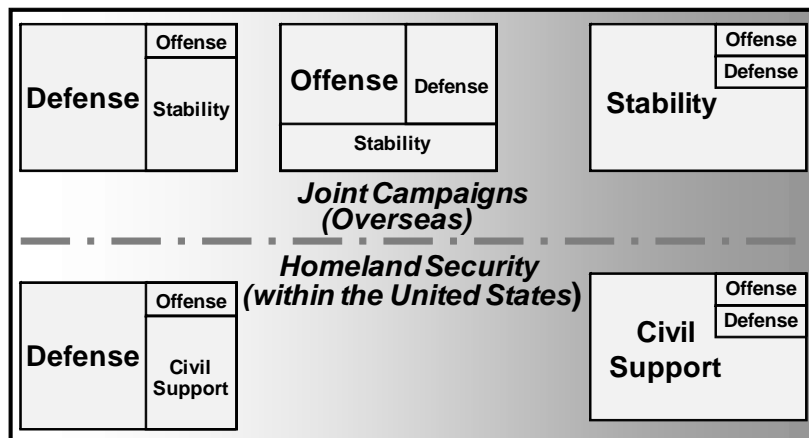
An accurate description of war and peace by those who frame strategy is fundamentally important both to those who go into harm's way and to the American people. Recently an Obama administration official reportedly stated "This Administration prefers to avoid using the term "Long War" or "Global War on Terror." Please use "Overseas Contingency Operation."^{ix} It is reasonable to understand that general war is composed primarily of major combat operations and incurs the risk of significant casualties. It is also reasonable that stability operations occur primarily during peacetime and thus incur a much lesser risk of casualties than major combat operations. Perhaps it is reasonable to consider a form of warfare somewhere in between unstable peace and general war that, over a protracted conflict, incurs a risk of casualties rivaling major combat operations. This has significant implications not only to the mindsets of those who go into harm's way and to the American people, but also to the laws of warfare, rules of engagement, and risks of collateral damage. If the Army were to decree that irregular warfare is as important as offense and defense, such a decree would effectively recognize that irregular warfare is as strategically important as traditional warfare. FM 3-0 (08) did this for stability and civil support operations by describing them as elements of full spectrum operations co-equal to offense and defense.

Leaders are continually called to examine and debate doctrine, measuring it against their experience and strategic, operational, and tactical realities.^x Even though the Army's operational concept allows for combinations of the different full spectrum elements because operations are rarely pure combat or stability, it is still necessary for strategists to effectively describe the state of human conflict as either war or peace. Those who translate strategy into tactical actions must accurately describe the predominant element of full spectrum operations, which tasks from other elements are embedded, and the respective weights of each effort. Those who actually go into harm's way must know whether their nation is at war or peace and intricately understand the true

and holistic nature of the operations they are undertaking. The Army's current framework of thinking seeks to accomplish all this based on a *continuum of operations* onto which a spectrum of conflict and various operational themes are placed to frame the operational concept of *full spectrum operations*.^{xi} Perhaps the time is right for Army doctrine to take another revolutionary step with its framework for operational thinking.

Full Spectrum Operations

Current full spectrum operations. The Army's operational concept is full spectrum operations. 'Full spectrum operations' is the core of Army doctrine and is the model used to frame operational problems and formulate solutions not only for major combat operations, but for all operational themes. Full spectrum operations requires the simultaneous combinations of four elements—*offense, defense, and stability or civil support operations*.^{xii} By this framework of thinking, the ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan can be characterized as either predominantly offensive, defensive, or stability operations. The relatively low number of armed military on military engagements does not lend itself to these operations being characterized as predominantly offense or defense. Likewise, the relatively high number of combat casualties since the declarations that major combat operations have ended does not lend itself to these operations being characterized predominantly as stability operations. Perhaps there is a blind spot in the Army's framework of thinking.



Current full spectrum operations—the Army's operational concept (Fig 3-1, FM 3-0)

The pertinent question is whether the Army's framework of thinking recognizes that irregular warfare is as strategically important as traditional warfare. Although the Army highlights the current importance of irregular warfare by designating it as the contemporary aim point for training,^{xiii} the distinct absence of any references to it up front leads to the conclusion that irregular warfare is not as important to the Army as offense and defense. In fairness, major combat operations are not mentioned up front either, but they are still very effectively represented up front because they are primarily constructs of the offensive and defensive full spectrum elements. This all begs the question of whether irregular warfare should continue to be viewed simply as an operational theme or whether it should be elevated as another element of full spectrum operations of equal importance with offense and defense just like FM 3-0 (08) did for stability and civil support.

Current Stability Operations. Doctrine describes *Stability operations* in four different contexts. So whenever the term ‘stability operation’ is used, the context must be specified or the idea can very easily be taken in the wrong context and misunderstood. Joint doctrine *first* states that stability operations encompass various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the U.S. in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.^{xiv} *Second*, Army doctrine states that stability operations require the absence of major threats to friendly forces and the populace and outlines five different stability tasks: civil security, civil control, restoring essential services, support to governance, support to economic and infrastructure development.^{xv} *Third*, Army doctrine describes stability operations as an element of full spectrum operations which, when combined with various combinations of offense and defense, can be considered combat operations.^{xvi} This obviously contradicts the context requiring the absence of major threats. *Last*, Army doctrine frames stability operations in the context of joint operations by describing that stability tasks typically dominate peace operations, peacetime military engagement, and some limited intervention operations.^{xvii}

Peacetime military engagement	Limited intervention	Peace operations	Irregular warfare
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multinational training events and exercises • Security assistance • Joint combined exchange training • Recovery operations • Arms control • Counterdrug activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEO • Strike • Raid • Show of force • Humanitarian assistance • Consequence management • Sanctions enforcement • Elimination of WMD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peacekeeping • Peace building • Peacemaking • Peace enforcement • Conflict prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign internal defense • Support to insurgency • Counterinsurgency • Combating terrorism • Unconventional warfare
<p>Note: Major combat operations usually involve a series of named major operations, such as Operation Desert Storm, each involving significant offensive and defensive operations and supporting air, land, sea, and special operations.</p>			

Joint military operations conducted within operational themes (Table 2-1, FM 3-0)

Current Irregular Warfare Operations. Army doctrine describes *irregular warfare* as an operational theme, but not as an element of full spectrum operations. It is not specifically stated that an element of full spectrum operations is more important than an operational theme, but the implication is clear that the elements of full spectrum operations are what the Army considers most important. An operational theme describes the predominant character of the major operation being conducted at any time. Operational themes are intended to help convey the nature of the major operation and facilitate common understanding of how a commander broadly intends to operate.^{xviii} Irregular warfare is defined as a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over a population. There are five joint operations grouped under the irregular warfare operational theme: foreign internal defense, support to insurgency, counterinsurgency, combating terrorism, and unconventional warfare.^{xix} The net effect of irregular warfare not being an element of full spectrum operations is that irregular warfare cannot be effectively envisioned as its own form of warfare within the Army’s operational concept; it can only be envisioned as an operational theme.

Current Confusion. The current framework of thinking confuses stability operations with irregular warfare. Stability operations require the absence of major threats to friendly forces and the populace,^{xx} threats such as those incumbent in irregular warfare. While the U.S. State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, the United Nations, and various other governmental and non-governmental organizations have a great collective capacity for nation building, they are neither organized nor designed to do so in an environment where an active insurrection seeks to prevent their nation building actions. Given the fact that there is at least a minimum level of support and sympathy for the insurrectionists' goals in Iraq and Afghanistan, the major operational theme for both Operation Enduring and Iraqi Freedom is most accurately described as irregular warfare and the predominant element of full spectrum operations being employed should also be irregular warfare - not stability. If the state of human conflict could correctly and accurately be described as unstable peace, such a condition 'might' allow the predominant element of full spectrum operations to be stability vice irregular warfare. This 'may' now be the case in Iraq, but in Afghanistan the level of human violence is currently increasing, not decreasing. A broader, more accurate and inclusive framework of thinking takes shape when irregular warfare is elevated as an element of full spectrum operations.

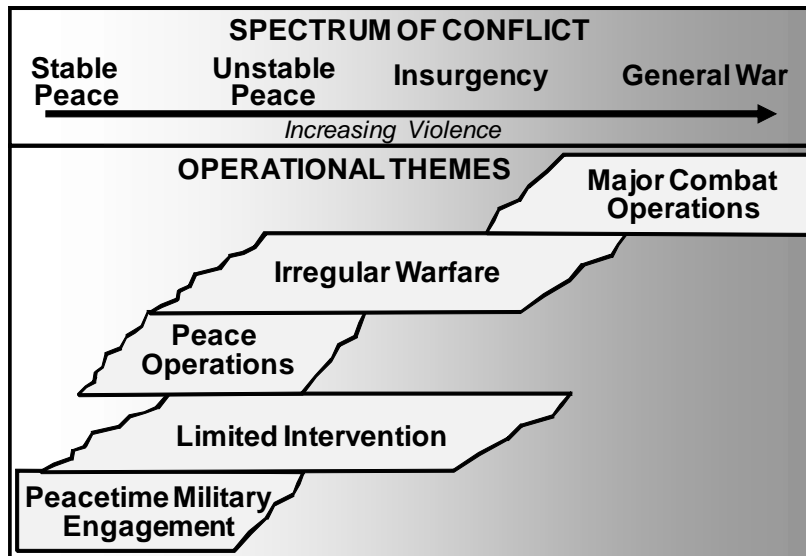
<u>Defensive Operations</u>	
Primary tasks	Purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile defense - Area defense - Retrograde 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deter or defeat enemy offensive operations - Gain time - Achieve economy of force - Retain key terrain - Protect the populace, critical assets, & infrastructure - Develop intelligence
<u>Offensive Operations</u>	
Primary tasks	Purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Movement to contact - Attack - Exploitation - Pursuit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dislocate, isolate, disrupt, & destroy enemy forces - Seize key terrain - Deprive the enemy of resources - Develop intelligence - Deceive and divert the enemy - Create a secure environment for stability operations
<u>Irregular Warfare Operations</u>	
Primary tasks	Purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Security force assistance - Foreign internal defense - Support to insurgency - Counterinsurgency - Combating terrorism - Unconventional warfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generate, employ & sustain local, host nation or regional security forces - Free & protect a society from insurgency, subversion & lawlessness - Support the overthrow of unfavorable regimes - Defeat insurgency - Prevent, deter, preempt, and respond to terrorism - Reduce vulnerability to terrorist acts - Defeat or support guerilla warfare, subversion, or sabotage
<u>Stability Operations</u>	
Primary tasks	Purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil security - Civil control - Restore essential services - Support to governance - Support to economic & infrastructure development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a secure environment - Secure land areas - Meet the critical needs of the populace - Gain support for host-nation government - Shape the environment for interagency & host-nation success
<u>Civil Support Operations</u>	
Primary tasks	Purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide support in response to disaster or terrorist attack - Support civil law enforcement - Provide other support as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Save lives - Restore essential services - Maintain or restore law and order - Protect infrastructure and property - Maintain or restore local government - Shape the environment for interagency success

The elements of full spectrum operations - including irregular warfare

Elevating irregular warfare's relative importance. Army doctrine might take another appropriate step by more accurately describing irregular warfare as a co-equal element of full spectrum operations. Rather than framing irregular warfare as a stability operation with some elements of offense and defense, irregular warfare is more accurately framed as is its own form of warfare. This enriches the Army's operational concept because it creates more possible combinations of full spectrum elements, all of which are more accurate descriptions of the operation. Although both the Army and the joint community have come a long way at defining security force assistance, it is not mentioned in FM 3-0 (08). Security force assistance, in order to be effectively placed within the Army's operational concept, must be declared either as its own operational theme; or listed as a joint operation within each operational theme; or listed as a joint operation under the irregular warfare operational theme (Table 2-1, FM 3-0 (08)). For arguments sake, it is listed under irregular warfare in the figure above, which adapts Figure 3-2 in FM 3-0 (08) to include irregular warfare as an element of full spectrum operations. This figure lists all of the elements of full spectrum operations—including irregular warfare—along with the primary tasks associated with them and the purposes of each element. Each primary task has numerous associated subordinate tasks. When combined with who (unit), when (time), where (location), and why (purpose), the primary tasks become mission statements.

Continuum of Operations

Current continuum of operations. The continuum of operations superimposes a spectrum of conflict with operational themes to frame the Army's operational thinking. The spectrum of conflict places levels of violence on an ascending scale and is the backdrop for Army operations. This spectrum spans from *stable peace* to *general war* and includes the intermediate levels of *unstable peace* and *insurgency*.^{xxi} Grouping military operations with common characteristics under operational themes allows doctrine to be developed for each theme, rather than for a multitude of joint operations. The Army's five operational themes also provide a way to characterize the predominant major operation underway. *Peacetime military engagement* comprises all military activities that involve other nations and are intended to shape the security environment during stable peacetime. *Limited interventions* are executed to achieve a clearly defined and limited scope end state, but are not intended to become campaigns. *Peace operations* encompass multiagency and multinational crisis response and limited contingency operations involving all instruments of power with military missions to contain conflict, redress the peace and shape the environment. *Irregular warfare* is a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over a population. *Major combat operations* are aimed at



Current continuum of operations (Fig 2-2, FM 3-0)

defeating or destroying an enemy's armed forces and seizing terrain, generally revolve around *offensive* and *defensive operations*, and occur in circumstances usually characterized as general war.^{xxii}

The introduction of operational themes into the Army's framework of thinking was intended to help characterize the predominant major operation underway and to simplify doctrinal organization.^{xxiii} Operational themes are first characterized by the list of joint operations grouped under them (Table 2-1, FM 3-0 (08)).^{xxiv} On any given operation, different combinations of the elements of full spectrum operations are then aligned with an operational theme in order to characterize the operational theme in the context of the offense, defense, and stability full spectrum elements. One of the full spectrum elements must be declared predominant.^{xxv} Virtually the entire U.S. Army has been heavily engaged in irregular warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq for the last six to eight years. Yet the Army's operational concept of full spectrum operations, in and of itself, cannot effectively describe these operations without cross-referencing the lesser important operational themes. By the current framework of thinking, commanders must effectively correlate four critical aspects of thinking: where they are on the spectrum of conflict, their predominant full spectrum operation with combinations of the other elements; their operational theme, and various joint operations necessary to accomplish their mission. The pertinent question is why the predominant full spectrum operation, in and of itself, cannot effectively characterize the predominant major operation underway. Perhaps there is a better way to correlate the Army's thinking.

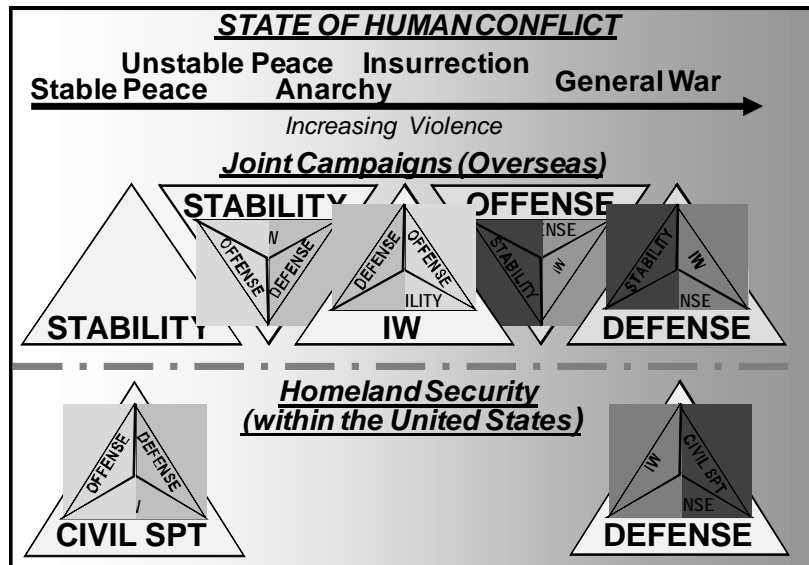
Redefining the state of human conflict. The spectrum of conflict currently describes four levels of violence. But is this spectrum of conflict descriptive enough to effectively describe operations in the near and distant future? Is it flexible enough to effectively apply to irregular warfare? *Peace* is freedom from war and violence. *War* is armed fighting between two or more countries or groups. Current Army thinking on *stable peace* and *unstable peace* seems to accurately reflect two general states of peace. Likewise, *general war* is probably accurate enough. But

given conditions in both Iraq and Afghanistan, *insurgency* is not definitive enough to describe human conditions somewhere between unstable peace and general war. It is also noted that multiple types of violence can exist simultaneously. For example, in order to further the goals of an insurgency, insurgents may incite anarchy or support one side or the other in a general war.

Insurgency might be further delineated into *insurrection* and *anarchy*. *Anarchy* is the lack of societal organization and control because of an absence or failure of government. It is usually characterized by violence, mostly by angry mobs or criminals out for vengeance, profit or survival, but with no organized efforts to seize control of a government. *Insurrection* is an organized attempt by a group of people to defeat a government and take control of a country by employing violent means.^{xxvi} It is by nature a holistic political movement with a military arm that conducts the violence. Insurrection can be further delineated into low, medium, and high-level insurrections. Low-level insurrection is characterized by unconventional tactics such as sabotage, terrorism, and propaganda. Mid-level insurrection maintains the themes of low-level, but adds the massing and employment of militant insurgents in platoon to company size units. High-level insurrection is characterized by militant insurgents massing and employing larger units and military operations that very much resemble traditional major combat operations. So long as there is a minimum level of support and sympathy from the local population, rises or declines in the level of insurrection can occur at any time for a variety of reasons. Further delineating insurgency into *insurrection* and *anarchy* doctrinally enables a more accurate correlation between levels and types of violence with the major operations undertaken. One could characterize that irregular warfare operations in Iraq have successfully moved the state of human conflict from insurrection through anarchy to what might be accurately called unstable peace, but the level of support and sympathy for the insurrectionists' goals are still in question. One could characterize that the failure of the Afghan government to establish societal organization and control (anarchy?) has led to ineffective irregular warfare operations and thus set favorable conditions for insurrectionists to regain the support and sympathy of the Afghan people. In order to get the level of violence moving towards peace, it is vital to determine why the Afghan people's support and sympathy for the insurrectionists' goals are on the rise. All operations and actions must then seek to continually diminish the Afghan people's support and sympathy for the Taliban, while at the same time increasing their support and sympathy for their elected government and the coalition that supports it.

Redefining the Army's operational concept. A more flexible and comprehensive framework of thinking solidifies by superimposing the newly articulated state of human conflict with various combinations of offense, defense, *irregular warfare*, stability or civil support tasks. Full spectrum operations in support of joint campaigns overseas might be redefined as the simultaneous combinations of four elements—offensive, defensive, stability, and *irregular warfare operations*. Land forces combine these four elements as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve desired results. Land forces employ synchronized action—lethal and nonlethal—proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of the political, military, economic, social, informational, and infrastructure variables of the operational environment. Pure stability operations may be appropriate during stable peace, as is the case for most peacetime military engagement operations. Homeland security within the United States might be redefined as the simultaneous combination of four elements—civil support, offense, defense, and

irregular warfare operations. Redefining full spectrum operations in this way begins to enable irregular warfare to be envisioned as its own form of warfare.



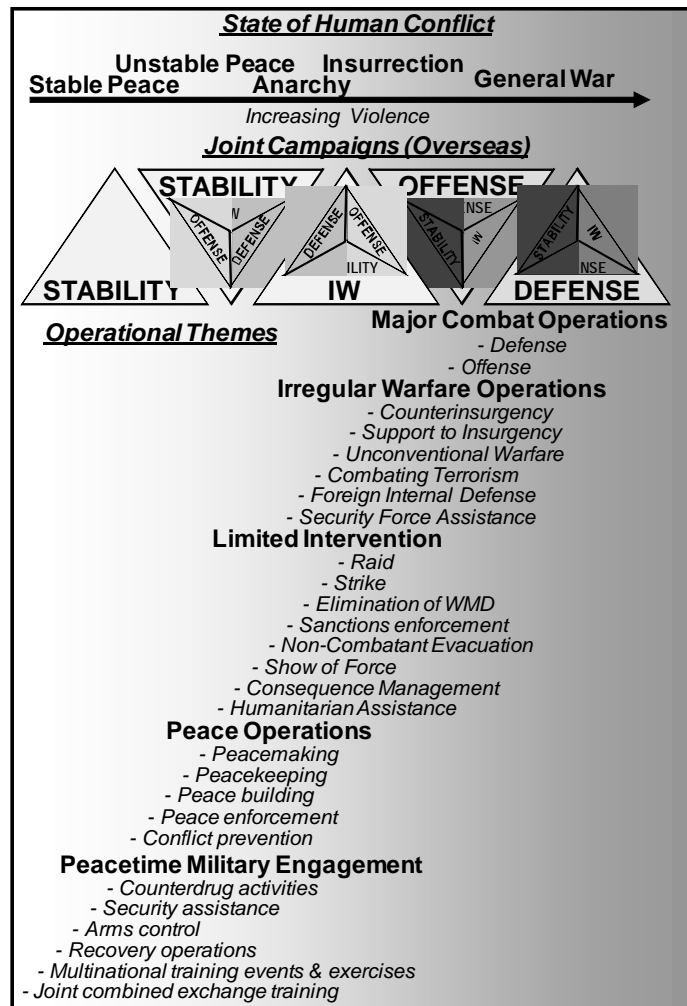
Redefined spectrum of conflict and full spectrum operations

Redefining the continuum of operations. The current continuum of operations includes the spectrum of conflict and operational themes.^{xxvii} A redefined continuum of operations for joint campaigns overseas might integrate four aspects of thinking: the newly defined state of human conflict, various combinations of the newly defined elements of full spectrum operations, operational themes, and the joint operations employed to accomplish operational missions. These four aspects might be framed so there is an obvious correlation between them all. The overarching goals of such a framework of thinking is to more efficiently and effectively highlight the predominant full spectrum element and enable the optimal combinations of elements in ways that best accomplish strategic and operational objectives.

It is necessary to elevate irregular warfare as an element of full spectrum operations co-equal to offense, defense, stability, and civil support operations. This effectively and accurately frames irregular warfare as its own form of warfare within the context of the Army’s operational concept. It doctrinally enables tactical commanders to formulate irregular warfare mission statements by combining ‘doctrinal’ irregular warfare tasks and purposes with unit, location, and time. The newly possible combinations of full spectrum elements better enables operational artists to much more comprehensively and accurately identify the predominant element of full spectrum operations and the weights of effort of tasks from other elements.

The natural goal of an operation characterized predominantly as irregular warfare is to reduce the level of human conflict so that stability operations become the predominant full spectrum element. Taking this a step further, it is also natural for counterinsurgency operations to transform into security force assistance in order to further legitimize the indigenous government and form an operational bridge from an operation that is predominantly irregular warfare to one that is predominantly stability. Organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding, and advising another

nation's security forces to counter threats to their country is not the way land forces have 'traditionally' conducted warfare. Security force assistance, for arguments sake, might therefore be added to the group of joint operations categorized under the irregular warfare operational theme. In order to operationally cross the bridge from predominantly irregular warfare to predominantly stability operations, the insurrectionists must be effectively denied the minimum level of support and sympathy from the local people needed to keep the insurrection alive and active. This is how an insurrection is defeated; it is effectively 'contained' because the local people do not support it or sympathize with its goals. This is what 'decisive' is in counterinsurgency operations. In an operational sense, decisive counterinsurgency operations transform the predominant full spectrum element from irregular warfare to stability. It is difficult to envision 'decisive counterinsurgency operations' using the Army's current operational concept and continuum of operations primarily because irregular warfare is only an operational theme and is not its own form of warfare. Redefining the continuum of operations as described more efficiently enables correlation of critical aspects of thinking leading to effective operational visualization of how to be decisive in irregular warfare.

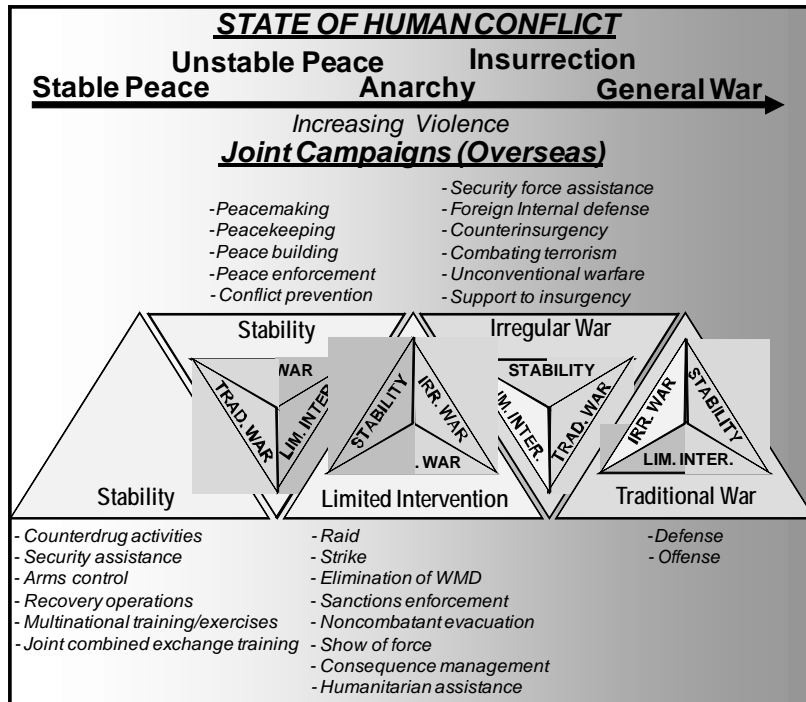


Redefined continuum of operations

Revolutionary Framework of Thinking

The overarching benefit of elevating irregular warfare's importance is that it enables the Army to envision itself conducting irregular warfare to counter and defeat irregular threats as opposed to conducting stability operations with some elements of offense and defense to defeat irregular threats—to fight fire with fire. The ultimate goal in irregular warfare is not simply to defeat an adversary's armed militant component as it is in offensive and defensive operations; nor is it simply to provide a safe and secure environment as it is in stability operations. The ultimate goal in irregular warfare is to gain the support and sympathy of the local people while simultaneously denying it to the adversary. Knowing the true strategic form of an operation is critical because the purposes, methods, key tasks, and end states are significantly different between traditional warfare, irregular warfare, limited intervention, and stability operations. *Stability operations*, since they require the absence of major threats to friendly forces and the populace, are conducted primarily during stable or unstable peace; it's questionable whether they could have primacy during anarchy. They are oriented on maintaining or reestablishing a safe and secure environment, providing essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. They are not combat operations per se, but can include relatively small elements of irregular warfare, offense, or defense. However, if any of these combat-oriented elements grows larger, they de facto become the predominant full spectrum element. *Irregular warfare operations* are conducted primarily during insurrection and correlate with the irregular warfare operational theme. They are primarily oriented on gaining or denying the support of the local population. Their secondary effort is combat operations to defeat the violent militant arm of an adversary, but these efforts must be conducted in ways that effectively gain and maintain the support and sympathy of the local population.

To optimize practical utility, the Army's framework of thinking must enable effective correlation between the state of human conflict, the various combinations of full spectrum elements, and operational themes which represent the multitude of joint operations conducted by joint force commanders. This is particularly important when the state of human conflict lies on the nexus between war and peace and those in harm's way seek to describe the nature of the conflict and how they intend to resolve it. The predominant full spectrum element will still have tasks from the other elements, the relative weights of which are mission dependent. A further step to simplify the Army's operational concept is to group all joint operations under the newly defined elements of full spectrum operations and eliminate operational themes altogether. It would be revolutionary to identify the predominant full spectrum elements as traditional warfare, irregular warfare, limited intervention, and stability and then generally correlate each of them with a state of human conflict. The list of joint operations could then also be generally correlated both with a state of human conflict and a predominant element of full spectrum operations. Such a revolutionary framework of thinking still allows any type of joint operation to be a subcomponent of any predominant full spectrum operation.



Revolutionary framework of thinking

This revolutionary framework of thinking has great potential at all levels of war. *National strategists* frame operational problems by describing the state of human conflict and visualizing the political ends and appropriate policy objectives that yield their desired results. If the state of human conflict is insurrection or general war, strategists accurately describe a state of war requiring the execution of significant combat operations thus incurring the risk of significant casualties. Given the state of human conflict, political ends and objectives, *military strategist* envision concept plans involving major operations that will accomplish the stated political objectives while continually seeking to reduce the level of violence. This is accomplished by considering all joint operations necessary to accomplish the political objectives and then accurately describing the major operational theme. *Operational art practitioners* then translate policy objectives into tactical tasks by first more accurately describing the predominant element of full spectrum operations and formulating campaign objectives that would create the desired political conditions. They then select the appropriate combinations of tasks from the holistic list of joint operations that would create the best possibility for mission success. *Tacticians*—knowing whether they are at war or peace; knowing whether their task is primarily a combat operation or a stability operation; knowing their major operational theme; knowing the predominant element of full spectrum operations they are undertaking; knowing the weights of effort of other full spectrum element tasks inherent in their mission—are then empowered to more effectively train, plan for, and execute their assigned tactical tasks.

Conclusions

The overarching conclusion calls for the Army to reevaluate its framework of thinking to determine whether its operational concept is flexible enough to effectively apply to irregular

warfare. DOD Directive 3000.07 very much suggests the Army needs to reevaluate its operational concept. The current framework of thinking confuses stability operations with irregular warfare primarily because it does not recognize that irregular warfare is as important as offense, defense and stability. Given the current framework of thinking, the only way to effectively recognize that irregular warfare is as strategically important as traditional warfare is to elevate irregular warfare as a primary element of full spectrum operations co-equal to offense, defense, stability, and civil support operations. This would effectively and accurately frame irregular warfare as its own form of warfare within the context of the Army's operational concept. Additionally, the list of joint operations grouped under irregular warfare should include security force assistance, thus effectively placing this emerging mission capability within the Army's operational concept. Just as foreign internal defense is normally a subset of holistic internal defense and development, so is security force assistance a subset of holistic stabilization, security, transition, and reconstruction (nation building by another name?). The state of human conflict needs to further delineate insurgency into 'insurrection' and 'anarchy' in order to better describes levels and types of violence that literally lie on the nexus between peace and war. A redefined continuum of operations that enables effective correlation between the state of human conflict, dominant full spectrum elements, joint operations undertaken, and operational themes is of great value at all levels of war. Such a framework of thinking doctrinally enables strategists to operationally define war and peace and more effectively integrate all pertinent aspects of their thought processes, thus better linking ends, ways, and means.

The discussion and conclusions presented here may or may not be the right answers. They are offered to stimulate professional discussion and debate within the Army and the joint community. It is critical that the Army determine whether its operational concept is broad enough to effectively describe operations in the near and distant future and whether it is flexible enough to effectively frame irregular warfare. If not, it must be redefined so it is useful and relevant to those who must use it.

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ⁱ Department of Defense Directive Number 3000.07, *Irregular Warfare*, (1 Dec 2008), p. 2.

ⁱⁱ *Ibid.* p. 2.

ⁱⁱⁱ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0, Operations*, (Jun 2008), p. 2-4.

^{iv} Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0, Operations*, (Jun 2001), pp. 1-15/16.

^v *Ibid.* p. 1-1.

^{vi} Department of Defense Directive Number 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations*, (28 November 2005), p. 2.

^{vii} General William S. Wallace, "FM 3-0 Operations, The Army's Blueprint," *Military Review*, June 2008, p.51

^{viii} *FM 3-0 (2008)*, p. 2-13.

^{ix} Al Kamen, Washington, "The End of the Global War on Terror" *Washington Post*, 24 March, 2009.

^x *FM 3-0(2008)*, p. vii.

^{xi} *Ibid.* p. 2-1.

^{xii} *Ibid.* p. 3-7.

^{xiii} Department of the Army, *Field Manual 7-0, Training for Full Spectrum Operation*, (Dec 2008), p. 1-7

^{xiv} *FM 3-0 (2008)*, p. 3-12.

^{xv} *Ibid.* p. 3-13/14.

^{xvi} *Ibid.* p. 3-19.

^{xvii} *Ibid.* p. 3-2.

^{xviii} *Ibid.* p. 2-3.

^{xix} *Ibid.* pp. 2-10/13.

^{xx} *Ibid.* pp. 3-13.

^{xxi} *Ibid.* pp. 2-1/2.

^{xxii} *Ibid.* pp. 2-3/5.

^{xxiii} *Ibid.* pp. 2-3.

^{xxiv} *Ibid.* pp. 2-4.

^{xxv} *Ibid.* pp. 3-19.

^{xxvi} *Answers.com*

^{xxvii} *FM 3-0 (2008)*, p. 2-1.