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## Bringing the Hurricane: The American Way of War

by David S. Pierson

*Looking ahead, though, in the competition for tight defense dollars within and between the services, the Army also must confront the reality that the most plausible, high-end scenarios for the U.S. military are primarily naval and air engagements – whether in Asia, the Persian Gulf, or elsewhere. The strategic rationale for swift-moving expeditionary forces, be they Army or Marines, airborne infantry or special operations, is self-evident given the likelihood of counterterrorism, rapid reaction, disaster response, or stability or security force assistance missions. But in my opinion, any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should “have his head examined,” as General MacArthur so delicately put it.*

-Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, West Point, NY, Friday, February 25, 2011

Over five years have passed since Hurricane Katrina came ashore in the Gulf Coast region and the United States is still recovering from the effects of that storm. In a matter of hours Katrina knocked out power and phone systems, destroyed levees, flooded vast areas of land, destroyed almost 300,000 homes, killed over 1500 people and even changed the political landscape of the United States. For every 20 minutes that Katrina pounded the Gulf States, it produced energy equivalent to a 10-megaton nuclear bomb exploding.<sup>1</sup> Imagine if a nation had the ability to drop a storm of such destructive power on its enemies – not a nuclear storm, but a storm of enormous magnitude. Could that nation influence their enemies' actions and behavior by using such power or even just threatening to use it? While we can't control the weather, the United States easily possesses the ability to produce similar effects of such a storm. The effects of a storm are widespread, sometimes arbitrary, and not at all surgical in their focus. Such effects run counter to the restrained and measured operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We currently wage war with the precision of a golf course sprinkler system as opposed to potential deluge of armaments that could bring the perfect storm.

For ten years we have been fighting the Long War in Afghanistan and Iraq. While the best in the world on the modern battlefield, the legion that occupied Iraq and Afghanistan is not adequately resourced to succeed in a large-scale, protracted ground conflicts, particularly irregular ones. Many have said that the military force that the US amassed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century is the result of the Cold War; this outdated force must face the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which failing states and non-state oppose the US with asymmetric tactics. We are told that future wars will be irregular, fought against enemies who hide amongst the populace and refuse to fight us directly. Yet war is what you make it and just as our enemies look to hide their

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<sup>1</sup> Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory, “Hurricane Research Division FAQ page,” <http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd/tcfaq/C5c.html>, (accessed Aug 7, 2010)

weaknesses and maximize their strengths through tactics and strategies, so must we. We must situate future battles such that they play to our strengths and our enemy's weaknesses. Do we really have to mire ourselves in the mud and the blood to change others' behavior or can we simply drop a Katrina in their lap and let them deal with the consequences. Rather than embroiling ourselves in long fights amongst foreign populations, we should focus on short-term raids aimed at influencing our enemies while preserving our resources. Examples of such operations are the Grenada invasion in 1983, the Panama invasion in 1989, or Desert Storm in 1991. The US should adopt this "strategic raid" as the principal means of waging war on its enemies because it is relatively cheap and politically feasible, reflects our core military capabilities and strengths, and conforms best to our national culture.

War is a battle of resources, and financing wars is no easy matter. Great nations have been bankrupted by war. One of the chief causes of the collapse of the Roman Empire was the fiscal demands of the military fighting numerous civil wars, invasions, and revolts.<sup>2</sup> The French lost their bid for the Americas and ultimately their aristocratic government because of debts incurred while fighting the British. After the French Revolution, Napoleon sold French holdings in America to balance the sheets in one of the greatest bankruptcy sales ever.<sup>3</sup> Both the American Civil War and World War II were rife with war bonds, taxes, and other schemes to raise the necessary capital to fight the wars. The Cold War bankrupted the Soviet Union and ushered in a new world order.

It is little wonder that one of Osama bin Laden's stated goals is to bankrupt the United States. In a tape released in November 2004, bin Laden stated, "We are continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy." He went on to state that the attacks of September 11, 2001 cost a mere \$500,000 to carry out compared with the billions spent recovering from the attack and carrying the fight the Middle East. "Every dollar of Al Qaeda defeated a million dollars."<sup>4</sup>

While any military action is costly, strategic raids look relatively cheap when compared with decisive campaigns. World War II cost the United States \$360 billion or \$4.65 trillion in modern dollars. Vietnam cost \$111 billion or \$565 billion in modern dollars.<sup>5</sup> The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have cost over \$1 trillion and projections out to 2019 show that the total cost may reach \$1.8 trillion.<sup>6</sup> Grenada, Panama, and even Desert Storm were examples of limited conflicts and were far less costly to the American taxpayer. The invasion of Grenada cost a mere \$76 million or \$136 million in modern dollars. Panama was \$163 million in modern dollars. Desert Storm cost \$61 billion with \$54 billion reimbursed by coalition nations – net cost to the US taxpayers was \$7 billion.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Joseph M. Miller, Daan Joubert, and Marion Bulter, "Grand Super Cycle National Bankruptcies: Part III - Fall of the Roman Empire,"

<http://www.freebuck.com/cgi-bin/header.cgi?./articles/elliott/030127bankruptcies1.htm>, (accessed Jul 26, 2007)

<sup>3</sup> Byron King, "The History of the Imminent US Bankruptcy," *The Daily Reckoning*, 10 Aug 2006,

<http://www.dailyreckoning.co.uk/article/10082006.html> (accessed Jul 26, 2007)

<sup>4</sup> CNN World, "Bin Laden: Goal is to Bankrupt U.S.," Nov 1, 2004, [http://articles.cnn.com/2004-11-01/world/binladen.tape\\_1\\_al-jazeera-qaeda-bin?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2004-11-01/world/binladen.tape_1_al-jazeera-qaeda-bin?_s=PM:WORLD), (accessed Jul 26, 2007)

<sup>5</sup> Jon Erlendsson, "The Cost of War," *USAToday*, Sep 16, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Amy Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11," Congressional Research Service, September 28, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Erlendsson

Even though it provides a vivid means of comparison, the raw cost of a war is not necessarily the main consideration, particularly in light of politics. When comparing the cost of the war in Iraq with World War II, the latter cost more, but more importantly consumed much more of the US's gross domestic product and therefore had a greater effect on the economy. Defense spending today is trivial when compared against the World War II. The defense budget of World War II consumed 38% of the country's GDP compared with the paltry 3.8% being consumed today while fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In fact, the country is at an all-time low for defense spending, even while at war.<sup>8</sup> If the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are unlikely to have a lasting effect upon the US economy, why do we debate such a little cost so hotly?

War expenditures take on a life of their own politically, particularly if the conflict spans multiple budget cycles. It's a perception issue of which duration plays a major part. It's not that we can't afford any long-term, decisive campaigns; it's that politicians try to get political mileage out of the spending. Even if spending increases in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is unlikely that the wars will have any severe effect on the overall economy. However, having any effect at all has political ramifications – particularly in an economy racked by unemployment. This is exacerbated in a long, decisive campaign because its duration allows for many spending debates to take place as part of supplemental bills and annual budgets. This scrutiny of the warring administration's war funding often leads to inaccurate, but highly effective, politically charged analyses concerning the effects on the economy. The relatively small cost of strategic raids and small-scale contingencies, coupled with the lack of fiscal scrutiny over a long period of time, make these more acceptable to the American public who perceive less impact on their economy.

The US military is a highly professional, technologically-centric organization whose operations are characterized by power projection, speed, lethality, and precision. A strong economy and a certain level of isolation have combined to create a high tech military designed to fight far from home. The common belief is that US military's principal warfighting capacity – aircraft, ships and armor – exists largely because of the Cold War. Because of the need to stop the Soviets, the US built this force in a frenetic arms race with their adversary. That would mean that this force was reactionary -- a response to an enemy, driven by strategies and force design. Perhaps the Cold War simply provided the justification to build a force that made sense, a force the US was comfortable fighting with, a uniquely American war machine. This military juggernaut, dubbed the "Leviathan" by political theorist Thomas Barnett, is without peer in the world in its "capacity for high-speed, high lethality, and high precision combat operations."<sup>9</sup> While land power has certainly been an important component of this force, this juggernaut, that prefers to stay in motion when fighting, is a water and airborne beast.

Protected by two oceans and with no military threat from its neighbors to the north and south, the United States is a de facto island. As such the United States is naturally an air and seapower nation. Our national strategies and our military structures are based primarily upon control of air and sea. Landpower is a secondary capability that we require in certain situations, but it is not the source of our national strength or the cornerstone of our defense. As political author George Friedman points out:

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<sup>8</sup> William Matthews, "The GDP Argument," *Armed Forces Journal*, March 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Wikistrat Glossary Page, <http://thomaspmbarnett.squarespace.com/glossary#Lev>, (accessed Aug 8, 2010)

Control of the seas allows the United States to intervene where it wants, survive the consequences of failure and be immune to occupation itself. It was the most important geopolitical consequence of World War II, and one that still defines the world. The domination of the world's oceans represents the foundation stone of U.S. grand strategy.<sup>10</sup>

America came to age as a global power in the late 1800's with the Spanish-American War. It was the first war fought against a European power outside of North America. And while American soldiers acquitted themselves well against the Spanish and later the Pilipino insurgents, it was the United States Navy that made all of it possible, and in a strange twist of self-interest, benefitted the most from the result. In the 1890's, following a plan laid out by naval theorist Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, the United States embarked on an ambitious shipbuilding campaign that produced a respectable fleet by 1898.<sup>11</sup> Even while a strong naval strategy was forming, the Army's role in global hegemony was being minimized. Lieutenant General John Schofield, the retired Commanding General of the Army said in 1897:

In a country having the situation of the United States, the navy is the *aggressive* arm of the national military power. Its function is to punish an enemy until he is willing to submit to the national demands. For this purpose entire freedom of action is essential; also secure depots whence supplies may be drawn and where necessary repairs may be made, and harbors where cruisers or other vessels may seek safety if temporarily overpowered. Hence arises one of the most important functions of the land defense: to give the aggressive arm secure bases of operation at all the great seaports where navy-yards or depots are located. It may be that in special cases military forces may be needed to act in support of naval operations, or to hold for a time important points in a foreign country; but such service must be only auxiliary, not a primary object. Foreign conquest and permanent occupation are not a part of the policy of this country.<sup>12</sup>

Schofield saw the Army's role as that of an auxiliary supporting the offensive naval arm by securing foreign bases of operation and occasionally holding terrain in foreign countries for a limited time. When the Spanish-American War occurred, America's "Great White Fleet" soundly defeated the Spanish squadrons at Santiago and Manila Bay in two brief, one-sided fights. The Army defeated the Spanish troops in Cuba and occupied the Philippines putting down an insurgency that involved several years of fighting. However, the retention of the Philippines was not based upon the need to become a colonial power, it was the fulfillment of Mahan's vision of having harbors and coaling stations for a fleet in the Pacific. The war was testament to America's naval destiny and the land forces had merely supported this vision.

Perhaps no war better displays the American way of fighting than World War II. While the landings at Normandy and subsequent breakout proved too much for the Germans to handle, it was Russian land power coupled with the effects of the U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces that ultimately lead to victory in Europe. In the Pacific, island hopping was the strategy that lead to victory. As good as the Marines and soldiers were at seizing Japanese-held islands, let us not forget that the reason they fought for these patches of ground was to provide harbors and airfields for the armada closing on Japan. It was not our ground forces that defeated the Japanese, rather it was a resurrected Navy and the bombers of the Army Air Corps that crushed them.

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<sup>10</sup> George Friedman, "The Limitations and Necessity of Naval Power," *STRATFOR*, APR 10, 2007, [http://www.stratfor.com/products/premium/read\\_article.php?id=287049](http://www.stratfor.com/products/premium/read_article.php?id=287049), (accessed Jul 23, 2007)

<sup>11</sup> Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998) , 30

<sup>12</sup> John M. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army*, (New York: Century, 1897).

World War II also demonstrates the frugality of the United States when it comes to resourcing land warfare. A quick review of the armies of the main combatants in World War II shows an imbalance between the warring armies. Russia with a population of 190 million amassed an army of over 35 million soldiers in over 500 divisions.<sup>13</sup> Germany with a population of 73 million built an army in which over 18 million served in over 300 divisions.<sup>14</sup> These countries threw from 18 to 25% of their total population into their land forces. At the same time the United States with a population of 131 million managed to scrape together 11.2 million troops to man its 91 divisions, 8% of its population.<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to note that the two other island nations prominent in World War II, also put a small percentage of their population into the fight. Great Britain, an island of 46 million, managed to field a total land force of 3.5 million in 67 divisions,<sup>16</sup> while Japan, with a population of a 75 million, put almost 7 million men into its 55 divisions.<sup>17</sup> Respectively these nations put from 7% to 9% of their population into land warfare. America minimized her ground fight in World War II to support an air and naval strategy.

If Mahan could have foreseen air power, he would have combined it into his comprehensive plan for American world power. In the post World War I years theorists like Billy Mitchell and Giulio Douhet foresaw the burgeoning capabilities of air power and its affect on national strategy. Admiral William Moffett expanded the role of U.S. Naval aviation and by World War II the aircraft carrier had become the capital ship of the Navy. The colossal demonstration of air power by the United States in the World War II led to the establishment of the Air Force as a separate branch of service. As the Cold War ramped up it was the Navy and Air Force that led the way with a dizzying array of nuclear submarines, persistently deployed carrier groups, and missile silos and nuclear bombers on constant alert.

This reliance upon the Navy and Air Force during the Cold War can be seen in the changing defense budgets of the era. In 1950, the first year of a separate Air Force budget, the Army received 33% of the Defense budget with the Navy receiving 33% and Air Force 31%. By 1958 the Air Force was receiving 47%, followed by the Navy at 29% and the Army in trail at 21%. From 1950 to 1968 the Air Force averaged 39% of the budget with the Navy 29% and the Army at 27%.<sup>18</sup> America has an established fiscal pattern that favors air and sea power over land power.

Even recent military budgets show that America is content to control the sea and air at the expense of land power. From 1985 to 2005 the Army accounted for 27% of the defense budget with the Air Force and Navy accounting for 30% and 31% respectively over the same period (12% of the budget was considered defensewide spending). Only since 2005 with the surge in Iraq and the realization that long wars require lots of manpower, have those figures turned around. From 2005 to 2010 the Army has accounted for 33% of the budget compared to 25% for

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<sup>13</sup> David Glantz, *Colossus Reborn: The Red Army at War 1941–43*, (University Press of Kansas, 2005), 600–602.

<sup>14</sup> Davies, W. J. K., *German Army Handbook, 1939–1945*, (New York: Arco, 1984).

<sup>15</sup> Kent Roberts Greenfield, Robert R. Palmer, Bell I. Wiley, *The Organization of Ground Combat Troops*, (Washington DC: Department of the Army, Historical Division, 1947), 160.

<sup>16</sup> BBC World War II page, “Fact File: British Army, Prewar to present,” [www.bbc.uk/ww2peopleswar/timeline/factfiles/nonflash/a6648078.shtml](http://www.bbc.uk/ww2peopleswar/timeline/factfiles/nonflash/a6648078.shtml), (accessed Jul 24, 2007)

<sup>17</sup> docstoc, “Imperial Japanese Army,” [http://www.docstoc.com/docs/6180830/Imperial\\_Japanese\\_Army](http://www.docstoc.com/docs/6180830/Imperial_Japanese_Army), (accessed Jan 7, 2011).

<sup>18</sup> Douglas M. Fox, “Congress and U. S. Military Service Budgets in the Post-War Period: A Research Note”, *Midwest Journal of Political Science* Vol. 15, No. 2 (May, 1971), 389

the Air Force and 26% for the Navy.<sup>19</sup> Even with the increases the Army is not properly sized to handle simultaneous, long-term ground wars. In 2007, 23% of the Army and Marines were deployed to Iraq,<sup>20</sup> with another 10,000 U.S. troops occupying Afghanistan. At that time Army officials described this stretched thin force as a being in a “death spiral” challenged to react to other contingencies.<sup>21</sup> Relief did not come in the form of appropriately sizing the Army, rather it came with the end of combat operations in Iraq. We chose to down-size our wars rather than up-size our land forces.

The United States possesses a Navy and Air Force capable of reaching and dominating almost any point in the world. Its land forces can defeat any competitor in a straight up, short duration fight. Our strength lies in prosecuting the far-off, high-intensity, short duration fights, and we have designed and funded a military to do just that for the past century. Our brief forays into long-duration, land-centric operations in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan have produced mixed results with very high costs in terms of treasure and blood. Our military was originally designed to be a naval force supported by land-power. We quickly realized the value of air power and used it to fill some of the voids that naval power could not fully address. At the end of the day, America’s military power lies in its air and sea forces; land power is secondary.

A combination of geography and history has shaped an American culture that avoids protracted ground conflicts and the mess that accompanies them. The United States has a reluctance to use violence over a long period of time against an opponent. This translates into a lack of national will necessary to prosecute campaigns to win decisively without a clear threat to the nation. National will is the willingness of the people of a country to submit to operations against an enemy.<sup>22</sup> If military action is undertaken to ultimately achieve a political solution, then national will is the most critical element in reaching that goal. The US public doesn’t like the long fight and the violence that accompanies it.

Going into the midterm election of 2006 the number one issue with voters was the handling of the war in Iraq. Voters wanted a timetable for withdrawal, an investigation into the intelligence leading to the war, and the firing of Secretary Rumsfeld.<sup>23</sup> They also cited that the war was not worth fighting, it was ineffective, had damaged the United States’ image, and had been badly handled by the President and Republicans in general.<sup>24</sup> The Nov 7 election resulted in a resounding defeat for Republicans and control of Congress by the Democrats for the first time in 12 years. The next day the President announced that the Secretary of Defense was stepping down. The war in Iraq had been going on for over three years with no sign of ending and the American people had had enough. Overnight they changed the course of their government and shook up the cabinet. In a democratic republic, the decisive ouster of the political party deemed responsible for the war was the ultimate manifestation of national will.

Despite being the lone superpower, the United States is, and perhaps always will be, a reluctant empire. Rising nations have a capacity, born of hunger and ambition, to readily use

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<sup>19</sup> Frank A. DiStasio, Jr., *The Army Budget, Fiscal Year 2010: An Analysis*, (Arlington, VA, Association of the United States Army, 2009), 28-34.

<sup>20</sup> Jim Garamone, “Gates Calls for 92,000 More Soldiers, Marines,” *American Forces Press Service*, Jan 11, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Ann Scott Tyson, “Military Is Ill-Prepared For Other Conflicts,” *Washington Post*, March 19, 2007

<sup>22</sup> Department of the Army, *FM 2-0 Intelligence*, (Washington DC, 2004), 1-26.

<sup>23</sup> Greenburg Quinlan Rosner Research Reports, “Election 2006: Referendum on Iraq,” November 08, 2006, <http://www.gqrr.com/index.php?ID=1824>, (accessed Jul 22, 2007).

<sup>24</sup> Dan Balz and Jon Cohen, “Independent Voters Favor Democrats by 2 to 1 in Polls,” *Washington Post*, October 24, 2006.

violence as a means of advancing their aims. The western plains were swept and the Philippines stabilized with extreme force but not extreme national reaction. To be sure, there were many anti-war movements that accompanied both of these conflicts but they lacked the strength to force change. Modern media, with easy access and rapid dissemination, makes violence less viable since the world is watching. Even in such a vigilant world, human rights violations often equate to youthful indiscretions when perpetrated by an immature, but rising nation. When a nation matures and steps onto the world stage as a leader, it is expected by other leading nations to act with restraint when considering the use of force. It is a victim of its own success in that with great power comes greater responsibility; it is held to a higher standard. This is the point that the United States and many western nations have reached.

Nations that have effectively controlled empires did so with overwhelming force against the peoples they administered. The Romans, Ottomans, British and even the US on the western plains and in the Philippines, did not hesitate to use deliberate and widespread force against civilian populations to change attitudes and practices. These occupiers not only controlled the monopoly on violence, they weren't afraid to use it. Standard practices by US forces on the plains and in the Philippines were reprisals, devastation of infrastructure, and concentration camps.<sup>25</sup> The people of the United States today will not tolerate the level of violence and force necessary to break the long-term will of an opposing population. Over an extended period our opponents can take more pain than the US public is willing to impart. Unless our survival is in peril, the people of the United States are reluctant to fight a decisive conflict.

Many of these long wars are stability operations aimed at restoring infrastructure and governance. Since they aren't classified as offensive combat operations, some would argue that they are not inherently violent and do not require as many troops. A better characterization is that the violence is spread out over a greater period of time and the troops are less concentrated but usually in greater numbers. During the drives to Kabul, Kandahar and Baghdad, the number of US killed in action was slightly over 200.<sup>26</sup> Since then another 5300 have been killed.<sup>27</sup> Decisive land wars are major consumers of land forces, and the strength requirements for land forces in stability operations are usually higher. The Romans administered an empire of 65 million with an army of 500,000 Legionnaires and auxiliaries.<sup>28</sup> The British have averaged 20,000 troops in Northern Ireland controlling a population of 1.7 million.<sup>29</sup> In the Philippines, American troop strength was 70,000 for a population of 7.6 million.<sup>30</sup> The formula for success is a ratio of at least one soldier for every 100 civilians. In Iraq, at the coalition troop peak, the ratio reached one soldier for every 130 civilians – pretty close to the recommended ratio.<sup>31</sup> The ratio in Afghanistan was approximately one soldier per 220 civilians but by 2010 reached one

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<sup>25</sup> Andrew J. Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860-1941*, (Washington DC: Center of Military History, Department of the Army), pp. 83-85, 126-129.

<sup>26</sup> Reuters, "A Look at U.S. Deaths in the Iraq War" *Washington Post*, October 25, 2005  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/10/25/AR2005102501190.html> (accessed Aug 8, 2010)

<sup>27</sup> Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, <http://icasualties.org/> (accessed Jan 7, 2011)

<sup>28</sup> UNRV History, "Roman Empire Population," <http://www.unrv.com/empire/roman-population.php>, (accessed Jul 22, 2007)

<sup>29</sup> *CAIN Web Service*, "Background Information on Northern Ireland Society - Security and Defence,"  
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ni/security.htm>, (accessed Jul 22, 2007)

<sup>30</sup> Henry Gannett, *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, Vol XXXVII, No 5, 1905, 260.

<sup>31</sup> Herman Mineshaftgap "The Urge to Surge," *The Bland Corporation*, September 16, 2007

per 190.<sup>32</sup> This puts the coalition about halfway toward the historical requirement. Overall, the stability phase of decisive land campaigns is marked by protracted violence and large troop requirements, something that Americans do not want to support.

The American way of war is a unique style born of a variety of factors. Americans are reluctant to pay for conflicts, particularly over multiple budget cycles. However, Americans are willing to fund and maintain a modestly-sized, high-tech, deployable force -- a Leviathan force of ships and planes, augmented by armor and elite ground forces, capable of temporarily isolating and devastating almost any area of the world through rapid, lethal, precise fires. However, Americans are reluctant to build a ground force capable of controlling land areas for extended periods of time due to an American aversion to inflicting violence on another culture for an extended period of time. These American attitudes suggest a strategy of short-term, offensive operations, aimed at influencing the behaviors of our adversaries through coercion -- the strategic raid.

The basic premise behind the strategic raid is to present the leadership and people of an area with so much pain and discomfort that they modify their behavior. The strategic raid will work well in some circumstances but could be challenged in others. Favorable conditions for a strategic raid include areas with centralized, elected leadership, developed infrastructure, and industrial and manufacturing centers. The NATO bombing of Serbia in the 1999 Kosovo War provides a great example of changing a nation's behavior by targeting key leadership and infrastructure. Potential adversaries who would be vulnerable to strategic raids include Iran and Venezuela. Conversely, it would be difficult to elicit a singular response from agrarian or tribal cultures in which power is fragmented. Dictatorships would be resistant to the political effects of the strategic raid since they have already protected themselves against and negated the effects of the will of their people. Societies lacking infrastructure would be somewhat insulated from effects of the raid since they are already living in an environment devoid of power, water, and sewage. You can't take away from them something they don't have. Such environments would require a ground force, supported by an air and sea armada, to more precisely target the enemy. This would be more akin to a thunderstorm or tornado, rather than a hurricane. The drive to Kabul and Kandahar in the early part of Operation Enduring Freedom provides a good example of a strategic raid against a lesser developed society. The goal may not be regime change, but rather behavior modification at minimal cost. The methods include taking out power grids, destroying key bridges and chokepoints on routes, threatening leadership in their homes and offices, targeting wealth-producing activities, destroying military capabilities, and making life so uncomfortable for society that they demand change from their leadership and themselves. Adding to the targeted society's frustration would be the knowledge that much of the force that is being applied to them is from systems and people that are out of their reach -- aircraft at altitude, ships at sea, and drones. At some point this force should even consist of unmanned ground vehicles and robots. It is the most unfair of fights relying on an asymmetry born of wealth and technology.

Just like there was a Katrina that wrought destruction, there was also a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that helped stabilize and rebuild the area. While it seems counterintuitive, we need to provide a FEMA counterpart when we unleash the hurricane. It is a stick and carrot approach and necessary to assuage political concerns both at home and

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<sup>32</sup> AFP News Service, "Five NATO soldiers killed in Afghanistan," Jun 6, 2010, [http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g\\_ICckIJwwKAT2eRWgueAKbaNSRg](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g_ICckIJwwKAT2eRWgueAKbaNSRg), (accessed Jan 8, 2011).



abroad. Our rebuilding effort would be limited and subject to many conditions and provisions. First, we would provide the life saving, food, water, and medical supplies to affected areas in the form of airdrops or cargo ships from proxy parties such as non-governmental organizations. We would provide emergency shelter kits with tools and tarps for repair of shelters or building of temporary shelters as well as generators and fuel for temporary power. We would require assurances of security for the aircraft and ships delivering supplies. If these efforts were met with compliance we would provide infrastructure repair materials including bulldozers, cranes, concrete, transformers, transmission towers, water pipe and many other items required to rebuild. We would provide materials but not the labor or supervision since this would inevitably lead to mission creep and gradually pull us into a costly occupation. We would give them the tools to recover, provided they abided by our terms of security and did not demonstrate the behavior we set out to modify in the first place. For those underdeveloped areas of the world that we target, there probably won't be significant infrastructure to repair, but rather wealth producing activities – illegal drug production, weapon smuggling, etc – to restart. For these areas appropriate relief may come in the form of payments to the tribes or factions that are most compliant and nothing for the stubborn holdouts.

While this carrot-approach may sound unnecessarily costly, it would be a fraction of the rebuilding cost that takes place with occupation. In many cases the affected areas would not accept the aid since it would be perceived to undermine the authority of their government. Serbia did not look to the United States to provide aid to rebuild its infrastructure after the Kosovo war (although significant money was poured into Kosovo itself which had been destroyed by exiting Serbs). We did not provide aid to Iraq following the first Gulf War (only to neglected Kurdish areas in the north). Iran would be unlikely to accept any aid if it were the target of a strategic raid. For those undeveloped areas like Afghanistan, we would reward compliant tribes with money with the understanding that over time they would overwhelm their non-compliant neighbors who would continue to feel the effects of U.S. raids. By providing, or offering to provide, relief from the hurricane we may gain further compliance from our adversary and grudging political approval from within and without.

The strength of the United States military is its naval and air forces and the ability to rapidly project their power to any part of the world. The U.S. military's land forces provide a very necessary, but limited, capability to control terrain for discrete durations. This military composition is the result of a strategy crafted over the last century and proven in numerous conflicts. This strategy favors short, duration, high-intensity conflicts fought far from home. It meets with the fiscal and cultural preferences of its citizenry. It is the American way of war. The United States should continue to employ military strategies that play to its strengths while avoiding its weaknesses. Slugging it out on the ground with large land forces is not our forte. Rapidly projecting power to the far corners of the globe and following up with very limited stabilizing efforts will satisfy most of our strategic goals without exposing us to the risks and costs associated with a large land engagement. Bring the hurricane and let our adversaries enjoy the clean-up they have earned.

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