

DRAFT THOUGHTS FOR GEN. PETRAEUS LETTER:
CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION:
GREENSBURG, Kansas and the WAR ON TERROR:

I tell you, in all honesty, that no one is paying any attention to a very real “Warfighter Insurgency,” that has been hindering any attempt to win the Peace in Iraq; not the Secretary of Defense, the Department of the Army, the Congress, the Senate, the President or even the main line media. There has been a small group of military Academics, Serving Officers, Senior NCOs, and Department of the Army Civil Servants who have tried, since starting the great Iraqi Punitive Expedition, to brief national decision makers on the perils of allowing this insurgency to continue, and its continuation has brought us directly to the critical point that we find ourselves today; that this country is now in the position of truly fighting a two front insurgency; and it is a sad thing indeed that one of the major insurgent groups is within our own Army.

So, let’s start with Greensburg, Kansas, and try to break through all the fog and get a clearer view of this mess we find ourselves in. What does Greensburg, Kansas have to do with the War on Terror? Well that little town is at the very tip of the bowsprit of a Titanic like ship about to be sunk by a total “failure in generalship.” Greensburg, Kansas, is the collateral victim of the same “failure in generalship,” that Lt. Col. Paul Yingling wrote about recently, which was quoted in the Washington Post article by Tom Ricks.

In 2004, in my capacity as Professor of Civil-Military Operations at the Joint Readiness Training Center, I wrote a 17 page letter to General Peter J. Schoomaker, then Chief of Staff of the Army, outlining the failure of the United States Army to provide in depth training in the Post Conflict Stability Operation skills necessary to, at the very least, start the process of winning the Peace in Iraq. (A copy of that letter is attached for your information.)

In that letter to General Schoomaker, with copies to the Secretary of Defense, The Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Chairpersons & Ranking Members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, it was pointed out, at the bottom of page 15, that “the majority of Brigades that have passed through the JRTC (Joint Readiness Training Center) have been National Guard Brigades. I have a serious concern that not only are we not training them to win the Peace, but we are diverting, and weakening, their disaster management and humanitarian assistance skills; to the point that should we ever suffer a major disaster within the United States that what skills they retain might not be effective. My basic point being that if we continued to divert all military skills, including the ability to do disaster and humanitarian operations, totally down the point and shoot path, than those skills might well be missing in this country when we need them the most.”

Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and the recent disaster in Greensburg, Kansas, have more than proven my early concerns to be far more painfully accurate than even I could have imagined. At that point in time no one factored in the missing National Guard equipment issue, but in Kansas today missing equipment has been a prime major consideration to be added to the equation. At the same time in 2004, in discussions with

various entities within the Department of the Army, it was pointed out that deploying National Guard Units from adjoining states, at the same time, would potentially be courting danger if a major disaster affected both of the states being deployed.

Quite recently, LTG H. Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, is reported to have visited a major disaster exercise held jointly in Ohio and Indiana. This was a very timely thing to do because both of those adjoining states will be deploying their National Guard Brigades to Iraq at the same time, as will the adjoining states of Arkansas and Oklahoma. It seems like we never learn, and we constantly re-invent wheels that just do not work well. LTC Yingling's concept of a "failure in generalship" continues to roll on as business as usual; spreading far beyond the borders of Iraq and Afghanistan to contaminate the U.S. Army as a whole, and further endanger our national security.

LTC Yingling is pretty much on the money with his assessment about a "failure in generalship," but the failure really goes well below the General Officer level, and is far more insidious in nature than even he might realize. So let's leave Greensburg, Kansas, and take a look at one of the root causes of this "failure in generalship," the "Warfighter Insurgency."

What exactly is a "Warfighter Insurgency," and where does it come from? To better answer that question we first need to look at the "Warrior Ethos" that spawned the insurgency. General Schoomaker, the former Chief of Staff of the Army, placed an emphasis on individual combat skills as part of a larger program to infuse the entire Army with a "Warrior Ethos." Many senior Army leaders were convinced that the focus on technical skills, particularly in the non combat arms branches, had resulted in neglecting basic combat skills, thus weakening the ability of the U.S. Army to accomplish its mission. Quite simply, General Schoomaker drew off of his Special Operations background to motivate the Army, copying a page from the Marine Corps play book, and make every soldier a rifleman first. At first glance there's nothing negative in that reasoning. In fact that concept has worked quite well for the U.S. Marine Corps.

To quote straight from Army recruiting material, "The Warrior Ethos forms the foundation for the American Soldier's spirit and total commitment to victory, in peace and war, always exemplifying ethical behavior and Army values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

The warrior ethos concerns character, shaping who you are and what you do. In that sense, it's clearly linked to the Army values. It requires unrelenting and consistent determination to do what is right and to do it with pride, both in uniform and out. Understanding what is right requires respect for both your comrades and other people.

The Army's continuing drive to be the best, to triumph over all adversity, and to remain focused on mission accomplishment does more than preserve the Army's institutional culture; it sustains the nation, and each individual Soldier.”

All in all this “Warrior Ethos” looks pretty straight forward, and innocuous. However, the U.S. Army is not the compact and tight knit expeditionary force that the Marine Corps is, and almost instantly, mainly within the Combat Arms branches of the Army, the basic outline above started to morph. Various interpretations of the “Warrior Ethos” started to appear, based on the personalities of the Army’s leadership at all levels. Soon text appeared worded like below:

“**A** Soldier must possess many traits to personify the Warrior Ethos. The following are beliefs that I recommend reinforcing in AIT to continue Army training in the Warrior Ethos:

- Understanding that a Soldier comes to fight only as prepared as the Soldier was last night.
- Knowing that a battlefield is not a level playing field.
- Knowing that you never fight a fair fight when your Soldiers’ lives and your nation’s freedom hang in the balance.
- Hating to lose.
- Knowing that second place in warfare is defeat, loss of freedom, loss of liberty and enslavement.
- Maintaining physical and mental preparedness to kill enemies to prevent a second-place finish during warfare.
- Understanding that being a warrior cannot be learned in a school.
- Understanding that a leader never surrenders.
- Understanding that warriors never want their leader to surrender.”

Then all of that seemed to boil down to just:

“➤ Knowing that you never fight a fair fight when your Soldiers’ lives and your nation’s freedom hang in the balance.”

Then finally everything came together to just mean—“**We are Warriors and conducting anything but combat operations is not warrior like.**” At that point a resistance started to grow to anything other than conducting kinetic operations. This resistance grew to have a profound effect on how the Army utilizes its Civil Affairs assets. Basically Civil Affairs soldiers became less than “Warrior like” in the eyes of the “Warfighters,” and were consistently minimized; as was the importance of the Army’s second doctrinal mission-----“to conduct Civil-Military Operations.”

Quite simply, according to current Army doctrine, Combatant Commanders still have two main responsibilities, i.e.: (1.) To fight and win our nation's wars, and (2.) To conduct Civil-Military Operations, using the main doctrinal tool allocated for that task--- Civil Affairs. The Army does an outstanding job at fighting and winning this nation's wars, but it is failing miserably to properly use its Civil Affairs assets to win the Peace in Iraq. Why? Because the Army doesn't understand how to conduct, nor truly wants to conduct, Civil-Military Operations, it consistently misuses its Civil Affairs assets. Civil Affairs soldiers are not trained to act as Military Police, to pull base security, to escort convoys or deliver supplies. They are highly trained for two missions—to enhance the Combatant Commander's ability to conduct successful Civil-Military Operations, and win the Peace.

It has long been my position that there are several significant factors that have prevented Civil-Military Operations (CMO) and Civil Affairs (CA) from being the force enhancement tools that they truly can be. First, and foremost, there is a "Warfighter" insurgency within the Army that is highly resistant to conducting anything but kinetic operations. Despite DOD Directive 3000.5, and the other directives that preceded it, pre-deployment training, effectively using CA-CMO to conduct training in Stability Operations (Phase IV), has been consistently minimized to the point where we now find ourselves in the position of not being able to transition to Phase IV Stability Operations in Iraq, or anywhere else for that matter. Quite simply, we can't train the Iraqis to secure the Peace, because we aren't training our Army to do that either.

So the end result is that the Army "Warfighters" pay great lip service to DOD Directive 3000.5, which requires the Army to greatly improve their capacity to conduct Post Conflict Stability Operations. Instead the Army continues to actually avoid providing the caliber of training necessary to stand up a successful Phase IV-Stability Campaign. Not only do current CTCs not provide adequate Phase IV training, but the ability to plan for Phase IV operations simply just does not exist Army wide, and the "Warfighters" have gotten quite adept at smoke screening their insurgency.

Whenever a VIP visits the JRTC-NTC, by the time they arrive, the shortfalls will have miraculously disappeared under the surface. I know as a fact that when Secretary Gates recently visited the JRTC that what he saw was an impressive display of the Army training to fight the kinetic fight, rather than training to help in winning the Peace; as he had no major interaction with the Civil Affairs or Psychological Operations staff there. So still to this day the last words a Brigade Commander hears as he leaves JRTC is "Go Kinetic is your first response." These same commanders are literally told "do not worry about this post conflict stuff; everything will fall into place when you get in country."

The fault for this misuse of Civil Affairs/Civil-Military Operations assets does not rest solely with the “Warfighters.” It is also shared by the U.S. Army Civil-Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC), and that organization’s inability, or unwillingness, to market its skill sets to the Army at large. When some organizations are attached to a deploying Brigade they immediately go to the Combatant Commander and brief him on the skills that they can bring to the table, and how those skills can best be used to enhance the Commander’s mission.

USACAPOC has been consistently unable, or unwilling, to successfully do that type of marketing. This inability has contributed significantly to the failure of the rest of the Army to fully understand how to use Civil Affairs, or conduct Civil-Military Operations. Civil Affairs long association with the SOF community has not been compatible with the work that they needed to be doing with/for the rest of the Army. In truth, they would have been far more effectively used under the U.S. Army Reserve Command from the start.

While USACAPOC has been a major player in the U.S Army’s inability to win the Peace, its culpability pales in comparison to Senior Army Commanders, within FORSCOM and TRADOC, who have long turned a blind eye to a “Warfighter” insurgency within the Army that is highly resistant to conducting anything but kinetic operations; which has had a direct correlation to the ever increasing numbers of killed and wounded returning home to a U.S. Army Medical Command that seems equally ill prepared to care for them.

Once again, as a result of a lack of enhanced pre-deployment training, effectively using CA-CMO to conduct training in Phase IV Stability Operations, Civil Affairs has been consistently minimized to the point where we now find ourselves in the position of not being able to transition to Phase IV operations in Iraq, or anywhere else for that matter. Once again, we can’t train the Iraqis to secure the Peace, because we aren’t training our forces to do that either.

The “FORSCOM Vision” states, in brief, that they “Provide relevant, mission-focused training and training readiness oversight for all assigned active and reserve units.” Yet enhanced CMO training, more effectively utilizing Civil-Affairs, is just not happening. In turn the “TRADOC Mission” states that it “maximizes Institutional Learning and Adaptation: As an integral component of an innovative Generating Force, TRADOC shapes and links it seamlessly to the Operating Force to maximize Army Learning and Adaptation.” Yet the emphasis remains on kinetic, combat, skills; not on the skills that will enhance the combatant commander’s second doctrinal responsibility--- “To Conduct Civil-Military Operations,” and in turn--- win the Peace, and establish stability.

As for USACAPOC, even if you overlook years of colossal personnel mismanagement, the propagation of highly questionable Unit Status Reports (USR), a total internal failure to coordinate the USACAPOC WARTRACE Plan with the Department of the Army, and sub standard training & equipment, (despite belonging to U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), which gave them access to an extensive and creative budget to be spent on equipment), at the end of the day Civil Affairs soldiers still have to face “Warfighter” commanders who don’t know how to use them, or want to use them—except as just extra Infantry soldiers, Military Police or for training the Iraqi Army in Non-Civil-Affairs tactics, techniques and procedures.

The Walter Reed scandal deals with the wounded returning home to uncertain care, but that situation is only the tip of a very big ice berg. There’s a far greater scandal brewing; especially for the U.S. Army. In 2003 General Tony Zinni outlined the situation for the Combatant Commander. He stated ***“On one hand, you have to shoot and kill somebody; On the other hand, you have to feed somebody. On the other hand, you have to build an economy, restructure the infrastructure, build the political system. And there’s some poor lieutenant colonel, colonel, brigadier general down there, stuck in some province with all that saddled onto him, with NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] and political wannabes running around, with factions and a culture he doesn’t understand. These are now culture wars that we’re involved in; and we don’t understand any of those cultures.”***

The situation that General Zinni described in 2003 is worse today. The United States is failing to secure Peace and Stability overseas because it is not training properly to do that mission. That continuing failure to train properly is contributing directly to the number of killed and wounded coming home. We are fast reaching the point where we are deploying soldiers unprepared and they come home unprepared; in the middle running a gauntlet filled with bullets, blood and body bags.

I have every confidence that General David Petraeus will continue to make great progress, but at some point in time the weight of force of arms will have to lift and a transition to Phase IV civil authority will have to take place. The permanent success of that transition will depend largely on our ability to conduct Post Conflict Stability Operations, and how well we train the Iraqi’s in maintaining their own Peace and Stability. This isn’t rocket science. It seems like we might want to be preparing ourselves to provide that training. 2,500 extra Military Police in Iraq are just what the doctor ordered for locking down neighborhoods, but Civil Affairs is still the Combatant Commander’s best tool for helping those same neighborhoods recover to stand up responsibly on their own.

In truth, I do not seriously expect anything to drastically change. Why? Because the Army is allowed to perpetuate its “failure in generalship,” by maintaining this “Warrior Ethos---Code of the Samurai,” and therein silently encouraging the “Warfighter Insurgency.” General Schoomaker has retired, but his “Warrior Ethos” was lovingly passed on to General George W. Casey Jr.; yet another “Warfighter.”

The bottom line on all of this is that there's plenty of blame to go around as to why we are in the mess we are in over there. There is a fix still available, and a shrinking window of opportunity in which to use it. It will be the Army Reserve and National Guard who will be called on to bear the brunt of snatching victory from the Jaws of Defeat. The final question for the Army leadership, as well as for Congress and the State Governors, is do you want to continue to see your troops go in harm's way less than fully prepared to go, and for Combatant Commanders to be less than fully prepared to use your troops effectively?

In closing, there was recently a interview reported in the Boston Globe, where Professor Andrew J. Bacevich of Boston University, a 1969 West Point graduate, Vietnam Vet, and retired Army Colonel, talked about the death of his son in Iraq. He asked this question; "What kind of democracy is this, when the people do speak, and the people's voice is unambiguous, but nothing happens?" I've been asking that very same question since before the ground invasion of Iraq started, and join Professor Bacevich in asking it again today.