

Decline of Western Militaries: USA and UK Case-Studies

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Abstract

The present work aims to understand the process of innovation in the defense sector, performing a case study of the Command and Control Project of the Brazilian Army, given its strategic value attached to the National Defense and the industrial development of Brazil. For purposes of mapping innovation, the Department of Defense was divided into two parts, one on the production of goods and services called Strand Hard and another on the application of the products in the sphere of Military Doctrine and Strategy and Tactics of war—Strand called Soft. The innovation in each component is checked into vectors, and the strand hard links in the value chain of the Complex Product Systems (CoPS) and strand Soft Operating System to Combat Military Doctrine of the Earth Brazil. This methodology allows you to explore all stages of innovation in the production process and marketing of goods and services for defense, showing where the core of competitive advantage and bottlenecks in the process and at the same time, exploring aspects of the generation of strategic advantages and defense tactics, which reflect the main aspect of innovation in the defense sector. It should be noted, also, presented the concept of strategic knowledge, divided into central, critical and sensitive. The case study allows us to test this methodology and at the same time, identify strengths and weaknesses of the innovative process design study and conclude that for CoPS development projects generates defense on the one hand, strategic and tactical advantages to the National Defense and on the other hand, provides competitive advantages to organizations and businesses, contributing to economic diversification and competitiveness of the productive country.

Keywords: Western military; Military forces; Afghanistan; Military strategy

Introduction

Military forces throughout history served as the most dominant and influential instrument of the national power in all security and military challenges. The use of military force changed European and American history as it did the history of many other non-European countries. A decade into the 21st century it is possible to see significant indicators demonstrating the decline of western military organizations. The experience of the USA and UK military forces deployment in Afghanistan and Iraq recognize that western military forces don't effectively support political forces in the circumstances of irregular conflict. The decline of the western militaries is expressed in some significant trends:

-Supreme political and military leaders of the USA and UK explain the nature of the current conflict in Afghanistan as a war against terrorism only.

-Military force employment doesn't support the achievement of the political objective declared by the leaders of the USA and UK.

- Military force stops serving as the most significant instrument of national power.

- Permanent increasing of budget investments to the military forces to people, don't decrease the number of killed and wounded in military actions in Afghanistan.

The Current State of The Problem

The Western Understanding of Nature of The Current Conflict in Afghanistan Versus The Local Populations' Perspective

The core problem for those who are charged with the strategic function of conducting defense planning for national security is the need to prepare prudently for a future about which almost everything in general is known, but nothing is known in reliable detail [1].

The new National Defense Strategy published by the US President in May 2010 declared that, "the United States is waging a global campaign against al-Qa'ida and its terrorist affiliates. To disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, we are pursuing a strategy that protects our homeland, secures the world's most dangerous weapons and material, denies al-Qa'ida safe haven, and builds positive partnerships with Muslim communities around the world" [2]. The National Defense strategy defines the war in Afghanistan as a war against al-Qa'ida, which is a terrorist organization. However, the local population's point of view is different. The local population sees the conflict the USA, UK and other western militaries are engaged in as a value-based conflict between western and local Muslim cultures. The USA and UK idea to build-up the democratic state of Afghanistan is for the Afghan local population a threat to their culture and way of life. The western point of view entails a US headed military coalition deploying military forces against the Al-Qaeda – a global terrorist organization and not against the Afghan local population. However, from the Afghan local populations' perspective, the USA headed a war against their tradition, culture, social norms and basic values. The western security and military strategy would like to win 'hearts and minds' of Afghan local population and to destroy the support relationship between it and insurgents, who manage the active war against American, UK and other western militaries.

The US Department of Defense official position is; "We must expect that for the indefinite future, violent extremist groups, with or without state sponsorship, will continue to foment instability and challenge

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U.S. and allied interests. Our enemies are adaptive and will develop systems and tactics that exploit our vulnerabilities” [3]. The USA JP-3-0 “Operations”, the doctrinal basis of US Joint Military Forces agrees that “Warfare that has the population as its focus of operations requires a different mindset and different capabilities than warfare that focuses on defeating an adversary militarily” [4]. The USA and UK security and military strategies like their political leaders don’t accept the fact that the real enemy in Afghanistan is not the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda, but the local Afghan population which is reluctant to build-up their society on western norms and values. The support of the local population as presented in professional mass-media is the support of a small segment of the local population which would like to achieve its political and financial goals, but lack any real and stabile support from the majority of the local population. The doctrinal basis does not explain what a different mindset is, instead it explains the range of operations which must a US lead Joint Military Force to carry out. The USA strategy is arriving at a solution directly without the necessary in depth discussion about the nature of the current conflict in Afghanistan.

The UK strategy in Afghanistan, similar to that of the USA is based on the assumption that the coalition forces will deliver a decisive victory over the terrorists and assist local forces in rebuilding the state based on democratic principles and values. However, the idea of a strong central state is contested and lacks legitimacy [5].

The USA National Security and National Military Strategy reject basic and significant characteristic of the irregular conflict – that in essence is impossible to solve with military force. The USA and UK further reject that conventional armies are not well suited to the demands of counterinsurgency. The firepower on which they pride themselves cannot be leveraged against the insurgent [6].

The USA National Security and Military Strategy present the possible solution as an outcome of the comprehensive approach, which includes the employment of all the instruments of national power. One source of such power is the USA headed coalition decision to continuously employ local military forces in Afghanistan. The USSR unsuccessful historical experience in Afghanistan (1979-1989) recognized that the enhancing of the Marionette regime brought forth social alienation between them and the local population. The Soviets recognized that the political and social structure based on foreign help and not on local population support deteriorates shortly after the foreign help is no longer provided. As a result, the nine year war in Afghanistan proved that the military operation didn’t support the achievement of political objectives in Afghanistan. While the coalition forces defused the Taliban Para-military forces, they didn’t bring stability and security to the country. It is apparent that any foreign invasion of Afghanistan is perceived by the local population as a threat to Muslim cultural and social traditions. Only a small fragment of Afghan elites desire an invasion as they seek instead to maximize the potential benefits accruing to them from political, financial and military resources that flowed from Kabul [7].

Analysis of Military Way of Realizing of Political Goals

The strategic perspectives of the military conflicts that involve a western alliance demonstrate that current military force fails to bring forth the planned end-state. The deployment of military forces for the purpose or restructuring the political and military situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, were unsuccessful in attaining the planned political outcomes as set out by US political leaders.

The employment of the coalition military forces in Afghanistan in

the last decade has permitted the opportunity to control territory and establish military bases, but the general security situation is still chaotic. The emerging twenty-first century spectrum of conflict is interactive and requires a full-spectrum strategy to ensure that advanced militaries are multifunctional [8]. The USA and UK supreme political and military leaders understand that the current security environment is in age of hybrid conflicts, of deadly cocktails, in which old and new and traditional and non-traditional modes of war may interact across the spectrum of conflict [9]. But this basic insight, doesn’t account for the changing of the paradigm in the nature of the current conflict in Afghanistan. The understanding that the western world needs an alternative national security strategy is beginning to be formulated on the political level, but not implemented on the military level. The military leaders of both countries look on the conflict in categories of war between “blue” and “red” forces. The western military leaders build their military strategies and operational programs in categories of the conventional wars of 20th century. The haste and superficiality with which the Obama Administration has been pursuing its version of completing the Afghanistan mission almost guarantees that, after withdrawal of NATO and Coalition forces, the country will become dangerously unstable [10].

The military forces of the western countries are not bringing forth effective solutions and their employment requires extremely high budgets. The political leadership continues to assign budget to the military based on insights of conventional wars of the 20th century. In the 2010 budget, even if all of Gates’ proposals are passed by Congress, most of the money still goes to conventional weapons – about 10 percent for irregular warfare, about 50 percent for traditional, strategic and conventional conflict, and about 40 percent for dual-purpose capabilities [11]. The problem present is that the western militaries think in categories of past conflicts and fail to develop new and effective strategies for the victory in irregular conflicts such as Afghanistan. The British military institutions are much threatened by old fashioned territory focused insurgencies [12]. The military institutions in the USA and UK need to understand that the war in Afghanistan is a war against insurgents whose basis of power is derived from the wide support of the local Afghan population. If the insurgent manages to dissociate the population from the counterinsurgent, to control it physically, to get its active support, he will win the war because the exercise of political power depends on the tacit or explicit agreement of the population or, at worst, on its submissiveness [13].

The Budget versus Killed and Wounded Military Personnel

The circumstance present is that the armies require a greater budget although they are unable to solve the current problems. As a result, a reduction of the budget and of status inflation of military organizations has taken place although the military forces have sustained greater casualties in the last 3 years, than in the first years of the coalition forces deployment in Afghanistan. According to the UK Ministry of Defense, 90% of the British military forces casualties were injured or wounded in the period between 2007 to August 2010 (397 from 438). From the 1429 British soldiers and officers who were wounded in action in Afghanistan between 2001 to August 2010, 875 were wounded between 2009 to August 2010 – 61% all military persons who were wounded in action during the UK military forces employment in Afghanistan from 2001 [14]. The same picture is present in the UK casualties analysis; 77.8% of all UK officers & soldiers killed in action in Afghanistan were killed in the period between 2008 to August 2010 (204 from 262). The casualties and fatalities numbers are an excellent base for modern military army’s

problem analysis. The overview of the numbers brings forth significant insights. The number of fatalities and casualties increased extremely in 2007 versus former years and increases every year up to date. During 2008-2009 UK force progressively rose from 7800 to 8300. In June 2008 a net increase of 230 posts was announced, designed primarily to improve the level of protection afforded to personnel and to increase the capacity of our forces to train and deliver reconstruction and development in insecure or semi-secure environment. In December 2008 the UK Ministry of Defense increased the infantry contingent in order to enhance the security provincial capital of Lashkar Gah. These include regional battle group operational gains made in retaking Nad-e-Ali [15].

The UK Ministry of Defense didn't report to the government about effectiveness of budget use in reducing the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from international terrorism [16]. The relationship between the western societies and the military are not in congruence under the current circumstances of the world economic crisis. The economic crisis will focus taxpayers' minds on the funding of ongoing deployment as the cost of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan will be well over 3 billion pounds for the financial year 2008-2009 [17].

The USA military forces in Afghanistan face a similar situation. The statistics present that the number of military personnel killed in action doubled in 2009 from 2008 (from 132 to 272) and increased every year after that. From the 985 USA casualties who were killed in action during Operation 'Enduring Freedom' 70% (688) were killed between 2008 and 2010 [18]. The number of wounded military personnel doubled in 2009 versus 2008 and increased every year (from 2139 to 793). From the 7951 Americans who were wounded in action during the 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan, 82.7% (6578 persons) were killed in the last 3 years, and 3179 of those were killed in 2010 alone. According to the US Congress Budget Office information, 146 billion dollars in appropriations was provided as support in and around Iraq and Afghanistan. Costs per person in some categories, including operation, transportation, supplies were approximately 50 percent higher, than they were in Iraq [19].

The significant consequence from casualties analysis versus budget is a symptom of the fundamental problem that characterizes current irregular conflicts. The lack of coherence between the budget and number of killed and wounded in action personnel brings forth a question about the effectiveness of the military operational planning and lessons-learned process. After a nine year deployment in Afghanistan it is legitimate to see a decrease of casualties due to the USA and UK militaries ability to manage the system of lessons-learned and their implementation in the operational planning and employment. But the reality portrays a different picture: the western militaries have higher casualties constituting a problem in the operational planning and lessons-learned process. Consequently, the ineffectiveness of the USA and UK militaries in achieving their main goals of war in Afghanistan influences their public image.

The image of the western military is one of governmental organizations which strive to constantly receive a higher budget. Despite the current economic crisis the military continues to receive a high budget. However, without any concrete gains or solutions in sight, the military's public image is damaged. The ineffectiveness of western military forces in the stabilization of the security situation in Iraq and Afghanistan is a significant reason for the decline of military forces today. As a result, both the government and the public identify the military as a source for budget cuts, as they are receiving high funds without providing effective military solutions.

The long-term military forces deployment of the UK and USA in Afghanistan is the cause of a damaged relationship between the military institutions and the society. The UK Ministry of Defense has been under significant pressure over the last six months due to the gloomy outlook for public finances which looks set to increase pressure on the defense budget. The economic crisis will certainly focus taxpayers' minds on funding for ongoing deployments (the cost of operation in Iraq and Afghanistan were over 3 billion pounds in the 2008-2009 financial year) [17]. The source of pressure on the military institutions in the USA and UK is not only financial deficit and economic crisis; the deeper reason is the understanding that the solution of interior social and economic problems is more important than the stabilization & reconstruction in Afghanistan and build-up of the democracy.

The USA and UK societies understand that the solution of the security problems starts not with the military force deployment, but with the systematic implementation of comprehensive strategy of interior problem solving. The security challenges present in Afghanistan do not constitute a first priority in the eyes of USA and UK societies. Problems such as unemployment, financial stability, education and healthcare are more significant to the USA and UK population than the global threat of Al-Qaeda therefore posing a problem to the present western military structures in the enhancing of military forces and increasing of budgets.

The current American and British political leaders understand, than the current strategic environment is one characterized by uncertainty and complexity, not by a single existential threat [20]. This means that security & military challenges no longer have a first priority anymore. The lack of realistic threat like the possible nuclear conflict between the NATO and the Warsaw Pact is a main reason of the fundamental change in the system of national priorities of western countries, firstly the USA and UK. The most significant challenges to modern western countries are in social and economic and not in the security sector. The economic crisis of 2008 turned the focus of western societies to immediate problems and not towards a long and expensive war in Afghanistan, which was unable to bring forth a solution to political and security problems.

The Strategy for A Successful Solution – Russia Case Study

In comparison to the unsuccessful efforts of the USA and UK militaries in Afghanistan, it's possible to identify a successful model of achieving political goals by means of the military instrument of national power in identifying the military and political victory of the Russian Federation in Russian- Georgian War 2008.

The end-state of the Russian-Georgian War 2008 could serve as a successful model of military victory through non-technology based militaries. The political and military success of the Russian Federation in the War against Georgia was also an example in the achievement of political aims by the military instrument of national power, which was based primarily on narrow budget and old military technologies. The source of success of deployment of the Russian military forces in the war against Georgia signifies a professional employment of the military instrument and of military art and science.

The key factors of success of the achieving of political desired end-state by military instrument of national power are:

- Effective formulation of political objectives of military operation
- Time choice for the military operation
- Effective implementation of military art and science.

The success in the Russian-Georgian war can be attributed to the ability of the Russian Supreme leadership to formulate effective political goals, which could be achieved by the employment of military forces shortly and effectively prior to the military campaign. From the Russian point of view, the military force is only one of the available instruments for the changing of the strategic situation in Georgia. The Russian Supreme political leaders declared the Abkhazian region 'a region of national interests of the Russian Federation'. This means that the Russian Federation will influence the political situation in order to limit the pro-NATO policy of the Georgian president. De-facto, the political leaders of Russia formulated the goal of the war – the enhancing of the Russian interests in Abkhazia and the stopping of Georgia's integration into the NATO. After the war it is possible to see that Russia achieved both political objectives:

- Russia control the Abkhazia region
- The integration of Georgia into NATO came to a halt

The Russian Federation initiated the war in passed time. The international community concentrated on the Olympic Games in China and did not react to the war immediately. Therefore the Russian military forces were able to accomplish the military operation before the international community formulated a reaction. The war achieved its objectives and didn't bring the international revilement.

The Russian-Georgian war of 2008 recognized low technology based military forces with poor budgets can achieve its strategic objectives shortly as opposed to high-technology and rich budget western militaries, which failed to stabilize the security situation in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The significant problem of the western military institutions is a wrong understanding of the current conflict in Afghanistan. The American and British military doctrines don't accept the fact, that the real enemy is not Al-Qaida, but most Afghan civil population, which see in western military persons representatives of the enemy culture. While the coalition forces defused the Taliban Para-military forces, they didn't bring stability and security to the country. The military operation in Afghanistan has proven to be unpopular at home, given the combination of continuing casualties and uncertain prospects for success. The support of local populations and governments for intervening British forces has proven fragile at best, making the UK's task much more difficult. Not least, as discussed above, such operations can be very costly in financial terms [21].

Some would argue that other means will often be able to achieve the majority of the same objectives at lower costs, while avoiding many of the pitfalls of comprehensive state-building efforts [22]. The security dynamics in Afghanistan brought to the decline of western militaries beginning with the USA & UK. The significant indicators of decline is apparent in the misunderstanding of the nature of the conflict in Afghanistan, the lack of coherence between military budgets and number of military personnel killed and wounded in action. The significant expression of decline of western militaries is a public understanding that the military institutions are no longer the most significant instrument of national power, and the main problems of western societies are in economic and social areas. Despite the current economic crisis the military continues to receive a high budget. However, without any concrete gains or solutions in sight, the military's public image is damaged.

The 5-day war between Russia and Georgia in 2008 recognized the ability of military forces to provide the political objectives shortly and successful. The key factors of the victory of the Russian Federation were: effective formulation of political objectives of military operation, time choice for the military operation and effective implementation of military art and science. The lessons-learned process, which will include the fundamental study of the military experience of the Russian Federation over the last 20 years and development of the passed strategy for Afghanistan situation can serve as a good basis in halting the decline of western militaries.

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