

Irregular Warfare: Policy and Practice from 1941-2012

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This paper is dedicated to the men and women that have served and are currently serving in the United States Military. May God Bless you and bring you all home safely.

**Abstract:**

Irregular warfare is defined as warfare in which one or more combatants are irregular military rather than regular forces. Irregular forces do not follow the normal pattern of war and think outside the box to defeat their enemies. Another name for irregular warfare is guerilla warfare. In today's modern battlefield irregular warfare is becoming more prevalent among the United States military and its forces. This paper will look at the changes in warfare as well as the policy behind irregular warfare from its beginning in World War Two, to the battlefields in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

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## **Introduction:**

Wars come and go but tactics have evolved and have changed the way wars are fought. One way that war has changed is in regular warfare to irregular warfare. Irregular warfare is warfare in which one or more combatants are irregular military rather than regular forces. This means that regular forces (such as the United States Marine Corps and Army) are not at the forefront of the war. Other units such as paramilitary units (such as the Central Intelligence Agency's Special Activities and Special Operations Group division and United States Army Special forces) are the units that fight in these wars. These units are the first into the enemy territory to take the fight to the enemy's door. But these units also serve another purpose. These units go in and train the local armies of that country so that when the American units leave, the local forces in the country can defend themselves against the terrorists or the next invading military force. These irregular warfare units were formed in the 1940's and have been a part of the United States military forces ever since. But before these units were formed, policy had to be made to define irregular warfare and how it could be fought. From World War Two to the present conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are policies that have influenced the ways these units have fought.

The way that war is being waged with small low-intensity conflicts emerging throughout the world (Libya, Syria, and Afghanistan) increase the likelihood of irregular warfare will continue on the same course, if not increase in size and in intensity as small countries fight for political power in their own country and in their sphere of influence. This paper will argue that the policy of modern day irregular warfare has evolved since the 1940's. Lessons learned from World War Two through the Iran-Contra scandal of the 1980's have helped shape modern-day irregular warfare units and policies in the United States Military.

## **William Donovan “Father of American Intelligence”**

To understand the creation of the Office of Strategic Services, the predecessor of the Central Intelligence Agency, one must understand the man who created the OSS. William Donovan used his extensive knowledge learned over years of service for good use in the future.

William Donovan was born on January 1, 1883 in Buffalo New York.<sup>1</sup> He attended Columbia College and received his A.B. in 1905. Donovan was very athletic and played on the football team at Columbia and received his nickname “Wild Bill” on the football team and the nickname stuck with him for the rest of his life. After graduating from Columbia Law School he began to practice law and eventually became a very powerful Wall Street lawyer.

But even though he was a successful businessman and a lawyer, Donovan became a soldier in the United States Military. He served in the New York National Guard. When the outbreak of World War One occurred he was on his honeymoon. He cut his vacation short so that he could return home and train with his soldiers. America was an ocean away from the conflict over in Europe and many Americans believed that the war would only last several weeks, but not Donovan. He saw the war in Europe as a conflict that would last more than weeks, and that it would take years for the conflict to end. Donovan began to drill the troops of (Troop I) of the New York National Guard in rifle proficiency as well as conducting joint maneuvers with other units of the United States military. The troops of Donovan’s command became so efficient in their training that many of the soldiers became commissioned officers in the war.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Corey Ford. *Donovan of OSS*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970.)13.

<sup>2</sup> Ford, 24.

Donovan traveled overseas to see the conflict that was occurring Europe and learn firsthand the destruction in the early years of the First World War. As he traveled more and more throughout Europe (France, Germany, and Poland) he became more convinced that the United States should no longer remain neutral but rather should pick a side to fight alongside with in war. He engaged in talks with the military leaders on both sides as well as learning about the latest in German war technology, including German tactics in open and trench warfare.<sup>3</sup> Donovan was a smart man who could see events unfolding and wanted to be at the forefront of the cutting edge of battle. In 1916 his national guard unit (Buffalo's regiment Troop I) was deployed to the Mexican Border to engage in border patrol during the time of raids conducted by Pancho Villa.<sup>4</sup> After completing their tour of duty along the border, Troop I returned home.

With the war still raging in Europe and the sinking of the *Lusitania* coupled with the Zimmerman telegram (German telegram sent to Mexico stating that the Mexican military should invade the United States), President Woodrow Wilson felt the U.S. could no longer remain neutral and America declared war on Germany in 1917. In August of 1917, Donovan National Guard Regiment (69<sup>th</sup> Regiment of New York) was selected to be the only Guard unit from New York to be a part of the newly founded 42<sup>nd</sup> Rainbow Division.<sup>5</sup>

The 69<sup>th</sup> regiment was then posted near Rouge Bouquet in France.<sup>6</sup> While serving in World War One, Donovan received many awards for his actions taken during the war. He would

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<sup>3</sup> Ford, 25.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ford 31.

<sup>6</sup> Ford, 35.

receive the following awards: Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal (3), Purple Heart (2), National Security Medal, Freedom Award.<sup>7</sup>

Donovan received the Medal of Honor (the nation's highest military honor) for Near Landres-et-St. Georges, France, 14–15 October 1918. The citation reads as follows:

Lt. Col. Donovan personally led the assaulting wave in an attack upon a very strongly organized position, and when our troops were suffering heavy casualties he encouraged all near him by his example, moving among his men in exposed positions, reorganizing decimated platoons, and accompanying them forward in attacks. When he was wounded in the leg by machine-gun bullets, he refused to be evacuated and continued with his unit until it withdrew to a less exposed position.<sup>8</sup>

Following the end of the war, Donovan returned home and continued working as a lawyer. But he did also make trips to Europe and meet with several key leaders in Europe, including Benito Mussolini of Italy.<sup>9</sup> While Donovan was traveling in Europe in the 1930's he noticed some disturbing trends. He foresaw another world conflict growing in the shadows of Europe, just like he had predicted that the First World War would last longer than just a few weeks. He spoke openly of the growing conflict in Europe, and he gained a friend out of this viewpoint, President Franklin D. Roosevelt. President Roosevelt valued the insights of Donovan due to Donovan's past knowledge of war and his ability to see things and understand the outcomes of those events and how they would impact the future. While traveling in Germany in

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<sup>7</sup> Military Times William Donovan: Hall of Valor." <http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php?recipientid=3330> (accessed November 29, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Medal of Honor Recipients. World War One. <http://www.history.army.mil/html/moh/worldwari.html>. Accessed November 5, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Ford, 79.

1932, a year before Hitler came to power, Donovan saw the events unfolding and told President Roosevelt his opinion on the state of the German government.<sup>10</sup>

Due to his closeness to the President, Donovan was name Coordinator of Information (COI) in 1941.<sup>11</sup> At that time, before America was involved in World War Two, the intelligence system was fragmented, meaning that each of the armed services had its own intelligence service. Donovan saw the need to have a centralized intelligence organization because each of the armed services were reluctant to share information with each other when it came to intelligence. He began to work on the creation of a singular intelligence unit and in June 1942, the COI was turned into the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) under Executive order 9182 signed by President Roosevelt.

William “Wild Bill” Donovan had the background and knowledge to create and command a unit such as the OSS. With his vast knowledge of battle tactics from World War One, to his duty along the Mexican Border fighting in raids against Pancho Villa, and his foresight in world events, Donovan was the right man to lead the OSS into the world’s most crucial intelligence gathering conflict the world had seen to date.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ford, 109.

## **Creation of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)**

The OSS or Office of Strategic Services was created to be the United States centralized intelligence service. In Executive Order 9182 there were thirteen different directives about the direction the OSS should take. The part concerning the OSS directly was section four and the direction in which the director should take. It reads as follows:

- a) Formulate and carry out, through the use of press, radio, motion picture, and other facilities, information programs designed to facilitate the development of an informed and intelligent understanding, at home and abroad, of the status and progress of the war effort and of the war policies, activities, and aims of the Government.
- (b) Coordinate the war informational activities of all Federal departments and agencies for the purpose of assuring an accurate and consistent flow of war information to the public and the world at large.
- (c) Obtain, study, and analyze information concerning the war effort and advise the agencies concerned with the dissemination of such information as to the most appropriate and effective means of keeping the public adequately and accurately informed<sup>12</sup>

These three points under section four proved to be the basis for an intelligence agency during wartime. Their main goal during the war was to go behind enemy lines and gather intelligence, then relay that information back to headquarter so the commanders in the field could make tactical changes in preparation for battle. Besides gathering intelligence, the OSS was also tapped to perform another duty; train and fight with partisan groups in occupied Europe. These were the main roles laid out for the OSS in Executive Order 9182.

After President signed Executive Order 9182, the OSS was created and it was time to start gathering intelligence during World War Two. But first the unit and its members had to be trained in the art of espionage and intelligence gathering. Training began right away and “Wild

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<sup>12</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Executive Order 9182 Establishing the Office of War Information.," June 13, 1942. The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16273>. (Accessed December 13, 2012)

Bill” Donovan chose some unlikely candidates to use as his operatives. He found out that the best espionage operatives were political leftists. Political leftists turned out to be the most valiant field officers in his sabotage branches. They consisted of people that were associated with the communist party and Donovan was quoted saying “I know they are a communist that is why I hired them.”<sup>13</sup> These men that Donovan was referring to were men that had served in Spain during the Spanish Civil War in 1936 to 1939. The fighters that fought in Spain were founded by the American Communist Party.

Recruits came from all walks of life and many of them could speak a language other than English, which proved useful when it came time for their deployment in Fortress Europe in the later years of the war. Many of the field operators that took part in operations overseas were idealists. They received their college degrees during the Depression years, with many of them under the age of 30. One key thing that high command was looking for was candidates, who could get along with people, could handle high-stress situations, and think clearly in those situations. The last group of operators that the OSS employed was recent refugees of Nazi occupied Europe.<sup>14</sup> These operators were of great use to the OSS because they had ties back to their homeland, knew the lay of the land, and could speak the language. The field operators of the OSS were the backbone of the intelligence gathering of the Allies in the Second World War.

After the operators were selected they underwent training. They were given field manuals on what targets to sabotage. The manuals gave easy targets for the field operators to sabotage.

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<sup>13</sup> Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (London: University of California Press, 1972), 11.

<sup>14</sup> Smith, 29.

These targets mainly consisted of trucks, other modes of transportation and buildings.<sup>15</sup> For the building they were instructed to use fire or make a simple bomb to destroy the buildings. When it comes to modes of transportation, OSS operatives were told to use methods to destroy the engines and fuel of the trucks or cars. By diluting the fuel in the tank, the car or truck could be rendered useless to use on the battlefield.<sup>16</sup> These simple tactics would prove useful on the battlefield in both Europe and in the Pacific theatre.

Also the OSS field operators were trained in communications to relay their field intelligence back to headquarters as well as in weapons training. Weapons training consisted of learning how to operate all weapons on the battlefield, both Allied and Axis weapons. If the operator had to fight with an Axis weapon, the OSS field operators could pick up the weapon and know how to use it right away and engage the enemy without having to stop and learn how to fire the weapon. After their training was complete they were sent into the field to create massive chaos for the Axis behind enemy lines.

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<sup>15</sup> William Donovan, *Simple Sabotage Field Manual* (Washington D.C.: Office of Strategic Service, 1944), 12.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

## **OSS Operations during World War Two in the European Theatre:**

After completing their training in either the United States and or Great Britain, the OSS operators were sent on their assignments all across the European and African theatre. In order to arrive at their drop zone (also known as DZ) OSS members would parachute into the occupied territory. This was dangerous; not only would the OSS be completely surrounded by the enemy without any immediate reinforcements, but also the planes would have to evade anti-aircraft weaponry (AA batteries) and the German Air Force (the Luftwaffe). If the planes managed to evade the Germans and safely drop the OSS troops on the ground, the operators of the OSS would link up with resistance forces and retreat to a safe house (the staging grounds or house in which the attacks would be planned a safe distance away from enemy forces.)

When the OSS was deployed they were generally deployed in three man teams. They were known as “Jeds” from the operation known as Operation Jedburgh. The operation was named after the city in which the Jeds trained in Jedburgh, located in the Scottish border regions in England. Jeds consisted of a commander, an executive officer and a non-commissioned radio officer. The radio officer would be in charge of communication with Special Operations Headquarters located in London, England. The commander and the executive officer would train the resistance forces and lead them into battle.<sup>17</sup>

OSS operators and the resistance allies helped take part in many of the battles in the European theatre during World War Two. During the invasion of Normandy ninety three Jed teams were deployed in and around the Normandy beachhead and ordered to sabotage the German forces in that area so that the Germans could not plan an effective counterattack in the

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<sup>17</sup> M R D Foot, *SOE 1940-46* (London: Random House, 1999), 77.

wake of D-Day. These units served from June to December of 1944 to help with the push towards Paris and eventually all the way to the German border.<sup>18</sup>

One individual who helped play a crucial role in the OSS was Moe Berg. Berg was recruited to OSS because of his language skills. He could speak unaccented German, as well as Italian, French, Spanish, Japanese, Greek, Russian, Hebrew, and Latin, in addition to English. Due to his diverse knowledge of languages he could be deployed to almost anywhere in Europe and be a valuable asset to the Allies during the war.<sup>19</sup>

One of many operations that Berg was involved in was the Balkan campaign. He was sent behind enemy lines to evaluate the effectiveness of resistance groups. This was crucial to the war effort because the Allies needed to see whom they needed to allocate supplies and who would be the most effective in the effort to defeat Hitler and the Nazi party. Berg was successful in his operation and told High Command that Josip Broz Tito and his forces would be the most effective to combat the Germans in the Balkan region of Europe.<sup>20</sup>

That was not the only role the Berg played in the war. His next mission would be even more dangerous, yet the whole war could have ridden on his shoulders. He was deployed to Zurich, Switzerland and went undercover as a physics student at a conference filled with Nazi officials that talked about Germany's nuclear program. Berg's orders were to kill the head scientist if he posed a threat, but after going to the conference, Berg determined that he did not

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<sup>18</sup> Foot, 124.

<sup>19</sup> "Moe Berg 1902-1972," Jewish Virtual Library, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/MBerg.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

pose a threat to America and did not kill him. After filling his report to High Command, President Roosevelt was pleased with the work that he produced. Another mission Berg undertook was to go behind enemy lines, to infiltrate a German ammunition plant to inspect new German technology, and to report back on the activity at the plant.<sup>21</sup>

OSS officers such as Moe Berg and members of Jed teams helped contribute to accurate intelligence gathering that eventually helped to turn the tide of war in Europe in 1944 and 1945. Without the efforts of these men, the war in Europe could have either taken longer and or ended differently. Intelligence gathering proved crucial to the conclusion of the war in Europe.

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<sup>21</sup> "Moe Berg 1902-1972," Jewish Virtual Library, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/MBerg.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

## **OSS Operations during World War Two: In the Pacific Theatre:**

With the war winding down in Europe in early 1945, the war was still raging in the Far East. The Japanese still controlled several key islands as well as China. The Allies needed to come up with an unusual tactic to help turn the tide of the war. One irregular way that the allies came up with was an explosive called HMX.

HMX, also known as octogen, was an explosive that is similar to RDX, a more common explosive used during that time. But the Allies had an irregular way of using the explosive. The program was known as “Aunt Jemima.” HMX was mixed with flour to hide the explosive from the Japanese as the Allied powers transported it across enemy lines in Japanese controlled China. Once the OSS had managed to smuggle the HMX passed the Japanese, they would use the mixture to sabotage the enemies transportation system. But that is not the only interesting thing about the “exploding pancakes”. The mixture of flour and HMX, when heated up into a pancake, was even edible for humans to eat safely, without any side effects. This would come in handy if the operators were on a long mission behind enemy lines; if they ran out of rations, they could eat the HMX mix while still accomplishing their mission. Over the course of the war in the Far East, 15 tons of HMX mix were transported behind enemy lines, with none of the mixture ever being discovered by the Japanese.<sup>22</sup>

While HMX was a huge success, the OSS met with opposition in the Far East campaigns. OSS operators were deployed to India in 1942. The groups of OSS operators were known as

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<sup>22</sup> *Weird Warfare* (2011), History Channel

Detachment 101 and were commanded by Major Carl Eifler.<sup>23</sup> Eifler was a acquaintance of General Joseph Stilwell, the commander of American Forces in China, and was tapped to lead 101 on missions in China. The plan was for detachment 101 to launch sabotage and training missions in all of the Far East theatres (Korea, Thailand, Philippines and eventually Japan itself.) But when the men arrived in New Delhi, they found out that the Chinese did not want their work in the war effort, so the men of 101 just sat in New Delhi for weeks.<sup>24</sup>

While the OSS was sidelined in New Delhi, there were other irregular units fighting in the Far East Campaigns. One of those units was known as the Alamo Scouts. The Alamo Scouts were part of the United States 6<sup>th</sup> Army Special Reconnaissance Unit that served in the Pacific Theatre during the war. Their missions were to go behind enemy lines in Japanese occupied territory and report back to High Command on the positions of Japanese troops. Alamo Scouts also worked with guerrilla movements in the Philippines to sabotage the Japanese.

But the Alamo Scouts are known for one famous mission that occurred during the war. They helped guide the 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion 30 miles behind enemy lines to rescue nearly 500 American prisoners of war (POWs) at the Cabanatuan POW camp. Along with the Scouts and the Rangers were Filipino guerillas that helped guide the American Forces behind enemy lines and provided support to distract the main Japanese garrison that was nearby Cabanatuan camp.<sup>25</sup> With the help of the Filipino guerillas, who helped block the main Japanese garrison from ever reaching the POW camp, all the Americans in the camp were rescued and bought back to

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<sup>23</sup> Smith, 243.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Hampton Sides, *Ghost Soldiers: the Forgotten Epic Story of World War II's Most Dramatic Mission* (New York: Doubleday, 2001)

American lines. Although this operation had no significant impact on the war, the operation proved that a small contingent of highly skilled, trained professionals could carry out a successful operation behind enemy lines with the help of foreign nationals that they had also trained.

The Aunt Jemima Project along with highly skilled units of the OSS and the Alamo Scouts helped the Allies in the Pacific Theatre win the war against the Japanese. The use of these “quiet professionals” showed that irregular units and tactics can work against a longer, well equipped army such as that of the Japanese Army. In late 1945 the war in the Pacific was over.

## **End of War and the Disbandment of the OSS:**

On September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1945, the Japanese signed the surrender papers aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Harbor, officially ended the Second World War. The Second World War was the most destructive war that the world had ever seen. But out of the dark period in human history gave birth to a new type of warfare and units capable of fighting this type of war.

But just as soon as the OSS and Alamo Scouts appeared, they also disappeared. On September 20, 1945, President Truman signed Executive Order 9621 and effective of October 1, 1945, the OSS would be disbanded from the United States military.<sup>26</sup> Some people in the Government saw the OSS as a threat to its own nation due their highly skilled tactics and sabotage with their ability to recruit fighters to their cause. Also the Alamo Scouts were disbanded after the war. They were disbanded in November of 1945. But the lineage of the two historic irregular warfare units would soon be revived in the coming years with the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the formation of the United States Green Berets.

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<sup>26</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Executive Order 9621 - Termination of the Office of Strategic Services and Disposition of Its Functions .," September 20, 1945. The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16273>.

## **Build Up of Irregular Warfare Units 1947-1963:**

With both the OSS and Alamo Scouts disbanded after the war, the United States military did not have a central intelligence community that could effectively gather intelligence to combat any of its enemies. But one enemy in particular emerged from the Second World War, and that was the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union wanted to expand its power throughout war-torn Europe as well as parts in the Pacific theatre (Korea and China). The United States needed a way to combat the Soviet Union and its expanding empire across the world. This section will explore three irregular warfare units that were created during the time frame between 1947 and 1963. Those units are the Central Intelligence Agency (the CIA), the United States Army Special Forces (Green Berets), and the United States Navy SEALs (Sea Land and Air).

With the cold war heating up in the late 1940's, the United States needed an irregular unit to combat the Soviet's potential military conquest of Europe and later Asia. That is why the National Security Act of 1947 was passed and signed by President Truman on July 26, 1947. The National Security Act of 1947 allowed for the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency, commonly referred to as the CIA. The creation of the CIA marked for the first time in American history Americans first maritime intelligence agency (non wartime units) . The CIA had three functions which were:

- The primary function of the CIA is to collect information about foreign governments, corporations, and individuals.
- To advise public policymakers
- And sometimes conduct emergency tactical operations and carries out covert operations.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "About the Cia," Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov/about-cia/index.html> (accessed November 9, 2012).

With the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Americans had a new unit that could run sabotage and counter-insurgency missions against the Russians all across the globe. But since the CIA was not considered a Government agency (is a private company with tax payers funding) the United States military needed to create an irregular warfare unit of its own and they did with the creation of the Green Berets in 1952.

The Green Berets can trace their lineage back to the Alamo Scouts of the Second World War. Two member of the OSS founded the Green Berets, they were General John Singlaub and Colonel Aaron Bank.<sup>28</sup> The main purpose of the Green Berets was to train units for unconventional warfare (UW) in areas that the public was not intended to know about. But the Green Berets also serve other roles within the military. They include:

- Unconventional Warfare
- Foreign Internal Defense
- Special Reconnaissance
- Direct Action
- Counter-terrorism
- Hostage Rescue
- Counter-proliferation
- Information operations
- Humanitarian missions<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> "Colonel Aaron Bank: Founders of Us Army Special Forces," The California State Military Museum, <http://www.militarymuseum.org/Bank.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

<sup>29</sup> Eric Olson. "U.S. Special Operations: Context and Capabilities in Irregular Warfare." *JFQ* 56 (2010): 64-70.

The Green Berets are trained to fight anywhere in the world, in any type of warfare, at any time needed to defend the American people. The Green Berets often work together with other organizations such as the CIA to accomplish their missions in hostile territories across the globe. This was the United States Army first irregular warfare unit and it is still on active duty performing the same tasks set out over fifty years ago.

The last irregular warfare unit to be discussed in this section is the United States Navy Seals. The Navy Seals can trace their lineage back to several different units that took part in operations during the Second World War. The first unit was the Navy Scouts and Raiders. The Navy Scouts and Raiders were a unit that was designed for covert intelligence of beach landings and coastal defense. This first group included Phil H. Bucklew who is known as the “Father of Naval Special Warfare.”<sup>30</sup> The second group of raiders was coded named Special Service Unit No. 1.<sup>31</sup> This “special service unit” was tasked with finding suitable beach landings for the upcoming beach invasions, such as the invasions of Normandy and the many beach landings in Italy and in the Pacific.

The next unit that the Seals can trace their lineage back to is Naval Combat Demolition Units. The task of the demolition units of the Navy were demolitions, explosive cable cutting, and commando raiding techniques. These units would land on the beaches and clear the beaches of obstacles that were on the beaches so that landing craft could safely land and continue with their missions. On D-Day (June 6, 1944) the Naval Combat Demolition Units were tasked with

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<sup>30</sup> Dick Couch, *The Warrior Elite: the Forging of Seal Class 228* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003).

<sup>31</sup> Cunningham, Chet *The Frogmen of World War II: an Oral History of the U.S. Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams*. New York: Pocket Star, 2005.

destroying German landing defenses so the Army could land their troops safely on the assigned American beaches.

The third unit from the Second World War was the OSS Operational Swimmers. As mentioned early in this paper, the OSS was used to gather intelligence behind enemy lines and relay it back to the High Command. But the OSS Operational Swimmers completed their missions with a slight twist. Instead of being airlifted into the target landing zone, the OSS swimmers used amphibious modes of transportation to reach their target landing zone. The OSS swimmers were part of the team that tested and implemented the first closed-circuit diving system.<sup>32</sup> With this type of equipment, the OSS swimmers could reach their target without the enemy knowing that they were ever there and perform their task of reconnaissance or mine laying/destroying.

Fourth and finally was the Underwater Demolition Teams, also known as UDTs. Their job was similar to that of the other units mentioned above. The UDTs were tasked with clearing water-based obstacles as well as reconnaissance of the beaches prior to landings in the Pacific theatre. But when the war ended in 1945, the UDT teams were disbanded due to the lack of missions needed for them after the war.<sup>33</sup> But these four units that participated in the Second World War would not be forgotten about.

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<sup>32</sup> Butler FK (2004). "Closed-circuit oxygen diving in the U.S. Navy". *Undersea Hyperb Med* **31** (1): 3–20.

<sup>33</sup> Cunningham, Chet *The Frogmen of World War II: an Oral History of the U.S. Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams*. New York: Pocket Star, 2005.

With the Cold War growing in the 1950's and 1960's and with the Army creation of the Green Berets (1952), the Navy was also in need of a maritime irregular warfare unit. In 1961 the United States Navy Seals were created. The Navy Seals were similar to the United States Green Berets and the CIA units, but they specialized in all forms of arriving at their target (Land Sea and Air), but what the Seals were most comfortable using the sea landing method because they are deployed with the United States Navy. All three units still exist today and will prove useful in the future conflicts to come.

## The Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was the first major conflict that irregular warfare units were involved in. The war lasted from 1955 till 1975, lasting nearly 20 years. Before the massive amount of U.S. troops were on the ground in Vietnam, military advisors were sent to Vietnam to help the local population. The advisors that were sent were the United States Special Forces, also known as the Green Berets. One local ethnic minority that the Green Berets helped was the Montagnards. The United States believed that such small minority groups were susceptible to Communist propaganda, so the United States wanted to recruit the Montagnards for their large and well placed land holding throughout Vietnam.<sup>34</sup>

Just like in World War Two, the Special Forces would train the Montagnards and other local groups in tactics such as weapon training, ambush, as well as tactics in counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare. Their training and tactics would be put to good use when in May of 1964, Project Leaping Lena was initiated. Under Project Leaping Lena, the Special Forces and their counterparts (Vietnamese Special Forces) would conduct reconnaissance operations in Vietnam. These missions were conducted to gather intelligence and for long-range reconnaissance missions as well.<sup>35</sup>

One other type of operation that the Green Berets conducted during the war was to rescue downed pilots and other prisoners of war. Whenever they would hear of a prisoner of war camp was nearby, they would attempt to rescue the imprisoned soldiers, regardless of their country of origin. But many times these operations would fail. The Vietcong would move the POWs around

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<sup>34</sup> Department of the Army, *Vietnam Studies: U.S. Army Special Forces 1961-1971* (Washington D.C.: CMH Publication 90-23, 1989), 19.

<sup>35</sup> Department of the Army. 53

from camp to camp, making it hard for the Green Berets to rescue the POWs. Even though the Green Berets were met with disappointment, they would always go and look for the POWs whenever they had the opportunity to do so.<sup>36</sup>

The Green Berets were not successful in rescuing POWs but they were successful in counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare. These operations that they carried out, many of which at the same time, shows that these types of units are needed in the field, not just for one war, but a permanent unit to fight around the world at any time.<sup>37</sup> As the war was winding down in the mid 1970's the future of Special Forces was uncertain. Special Forces had proven that they are very flexible and can perform many different types of operations, rather than just unconventional warfare, which was their main goal in the Vietnam War. Also the question was raised: should there be a permanent Special Forces unit, rather than just a temporary unit during times of war?<sup>38</sup> The Vietnam War had proven that the need for Special Forces to be a permanent unit by demonstrating their vast knowledge of weapons and training, as well as their ability to perform a multitude of operations such as unconventional warfare. Special Forces after the Vietnam War would take their training and apply it across the globe in the 1980's, from the jungle of Central America, to the mountains of Afghanistan.

The following two maps show where the ethnic groups that lived in Vietnam during the war and where the Green Berets were stationed.

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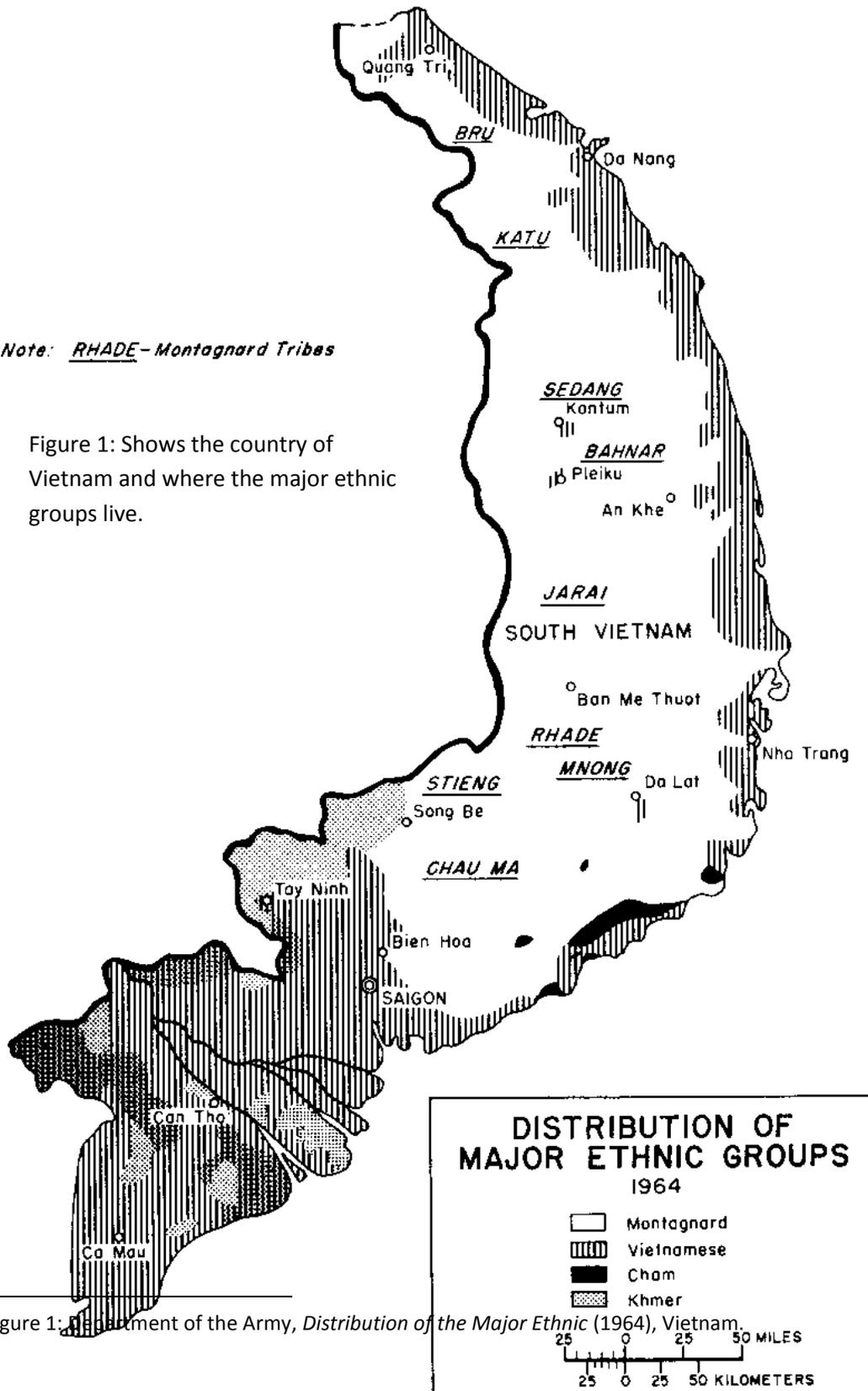
<sup>36</sup> Department of the Army. 148

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Department of the Army. 173

Note: RHADE—Montagnard Tribes

Figure 1: Shows the country of Vietnam and where the major ethnic groups live.



<sup>39</sup>Figure 1: Department of the Army, *Distribution of the Major Ethnic (1964), Vietnam.*

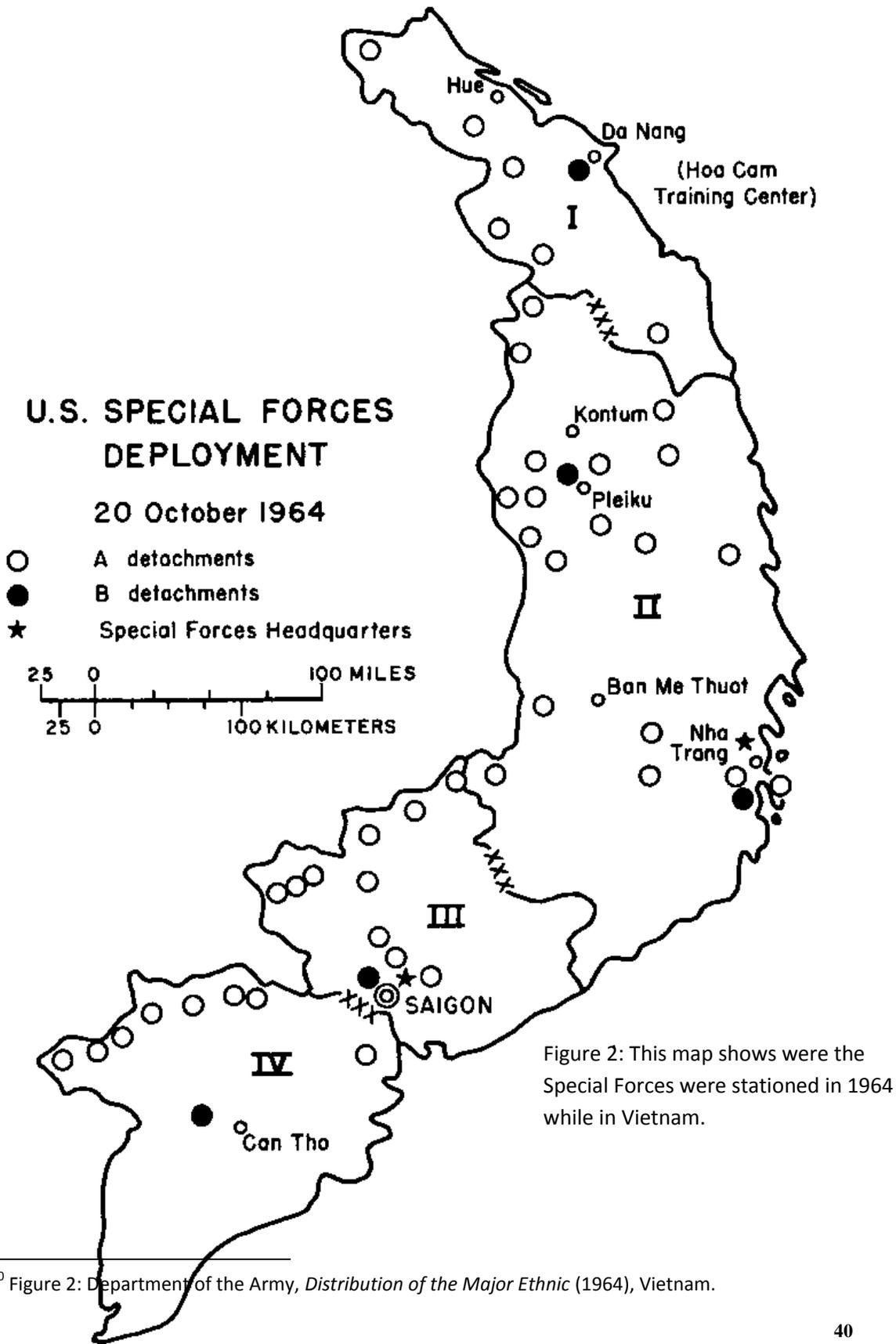


Figure 2: This map shows where the Special Forces were stationed in 1964 while in Vietnam.

<sup>40</sup> Figure 2: Department of the Army, *Distribution of the Major Ethnic (1964), Vietnam*.

## **The 1970's and 1980's the Troubled Times in the Irregular Warfare Community**

### **Delta Force and Operation Eagle Claw**

The elite of the elite, the premier counter-terrorism unit in the American military, are called Delta Force. Delta was formed in 1977 and is official called 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta.<sup>41</sup> Delta was created after many numerous terrorist incidences during the 1970's and the US military saw the need for an irregular unit that could be deployed at a moment's notice to either perform a direct action mission or hostage rescue. Not much is known about the unit and its activities around the globe, but one well known incident that Delta was involved in was known as Operation Eagle Claw.

Operation Eagle Claw was a failed rescue attempt of the American hostages that were held hostage in Iran from 1979-1981. The new radical government of Iran in the 1979 revolution stormed the American Embassy and held 53 Americans hostage. From the beginning, a rescue mission was planned and Delta force would be involved in the operation. Delta would be the ground unit that would go in and rescue the American under Iranian control.

On April 24, 1980 the mission was authorized and the units took off for the designated landing zones in Iran. The landing site was codenamed Desert One, that is the site in which the Delta Operators would be dropped off via air transportation, as well as the refueling stage for the helicopters used in the operation. But there were complications with the mission from the very beginning. For one thing the units that were involved in the mission (Delta, Air Force, and Marines) had never all practiced the mission together; they rehearsed their own parts of the

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<sup>41</sup> Eric L. Haney, *Inside Delta Force: the Story of America's Elite Counterterrorist Unit* (New York: Delacorte Press, 2002).

mission without ever working together to learn from each other or problems that could arise during the operation itself.<sup>42</sup> However all the units involved in the operation felt confident that they could accomplish their mission.

Another problem that arose in the mission was that some of the helicopters failed to make it to Desert One, due to mechanical failure, and were forced to return to base. But no one else involved in the operation knew about this because of radio silence during the operation (meaning no communication between helicopters). Also while the pilots were flying towards Desert One they encounter what is known as a “haboob”. A haboob is essentially a dust wall that occurs in the deserts in Iran, in which clouds the vision of anything in the area. With the pilots unable to see clearly out of the helicopters, they were forced to fly low and the pilots did not know how to fly low in this type of weather. Due to this situation two planes crashed, killing eight men that were part of the rescue team.<sup>43</sup> With all the delays, missing helicopters due to mechanical failures, and the crashing of two planes, the mission had to be scrubbed on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1980.

There were major fallouts from Operation Eagle Claw. The first was that all the hostages were scattered across Iran, making it virtually impossible to attempt a second rescue. Second was that the planes that had crashed were left there in the desert without being properly cleaned (all US markings being cleaned off the aircraft). Thirdly, the list of all Iranian assets that were helping the American was left at the crash site, giving the Iranians valuable intelligence, leaving

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Kamps, “Operation Eagle Claw: The Iran Hostage Rescue Mission,” <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/apjinternational/apj-s/2006/3tri06/kampseng.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

the Americans without assets in the region of Iran.<sup>44</sup> This was seen as a monumental failure in the eyes of the Special Forces community in the United States.

After the failed mission in Iran a commission was put together in under to find out what went wrong with the operation. It was known as the Halloway Commission, and it outlined 23 problems that occurred in the mission.<sup>45</sup> The problems ranged from training to organization to the helicopter pilots themselves. Due to the mishaps of the operations, a new aviation wing of the military was need, a unit that was skilled in flying in any type of weather. The unit that was created out of the failed operation in Iran was called the 160<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne). Their primary role was the fly the special operation forces to their destination, many of these missions occurred at night in order to hide the appearances of the helicopters. This is who they got their nickname “The Night Stalkers”.<sup>46</sup>



Figure 3: Plane crash at the Landing Site of Desert One

<sup>44</sup> Charles Kamps, “Operation Eagle Claw: The Iran Hostage Rescue Mission,” <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/apjinternational/apj-s/2006/3tri06/kampseng.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

<sup>45</sup> *Halloway Commission* (Washington D.C.: US Government, 1980).

<sup>46</sup> “160th Soar(a) Overview,” U.S. Special Operations Command, <http://www.soc.mil/160th/160th%20Overview.html> (accessed December 12, 2012).

<sup>47</sup> Figure 3: *Plane Crash at the Landing Site of Desert One*. (1980), Iran.

## **Boland Amendment Iran-Contra Scandal and the Tower Commission**

In the 1980's the American Government had been funding the Contras of Nicaragua. The Contras were a guerilla force that was fighting the left-wing Sandinista government for control of Nicaragua. The Boland Amendment was a series of amendments made from 1982 to 1984 aimed to limit the amount of U.S. government assistance to the Contras. The first amendment was passed in 1982 that stated the CIA and DOD (Department of Defense) would be prohibited from using funds to support the Contras.<sup>48</sup> The second amendment passed in 1983 limited the amount to be spent for military purposes in Nicaragua. Also this amendment prohibited covert assistance for military operations in Nicaragua.<sup>49</sup> The third and final amendment passed in 1984 prohibited funds available to the CIA and the DOD from being used in Nicaragua for military purposes.<sup>50</sup> This made it difficult for the CIA and the DOD to fund the Contras of Nicaragua. This is what led up to what is known as the Iran-Contra.

The Iran-Contra was a scandal that occurred in the mid 1980's in which many members of the United States government were involved, including the president, Ronald Reagan. What the scandal was all about was the sale of arms to Iran (such as missiles) and then using that money from the sale of missiles to fund the Contras of Nicaragua. But with the Boland Amendments set forth in 1982 to 1984 the sale of arms and training the Contras was made illegal. But senior officials in the government and the United States military continued to assist

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<sup>48</sup> Congress, House, Boland Amendment 1982-1984, 96<sup>th</sup>-97<sup>th</sup> Cong. H.J. RES.631 and S.UP.AMDT. 1541.

<sup>49</sup> Congress, House, Boland Amendment 1982-1984, 96<sup>th</sup>-97<sup>th</sup> Cong. H.R. 4185, H.R. 2968.

<sup>50</sup> Congress, House, Boland Amendment 1982-1984, 96<sup>th</sup>-97<sup>th</sup> Cong. H.J.RES.648

the Contras. One of the main people behind the scandal was Lieutenant Colonel Colonel Oliver North.<sup>51</sup>

The Iran-Contra scandal was made public when an Iranian informed the press about the scandal in late 1986. The operation was discovered after a arms shipment was downed in Nicaragua in which two people were alleged to be working for the Central Intelligence Agency in Nicaragua. After the Iranians confirmed the story, the United States Government went into crisis mode and had to cover its tracks.<sup>52</sup> The scandal would not have been a big deal if it were not for Oliver North. North was alleged to have hid or destroyed documents in the days following the investigation into the scandal. Also, another member in the scandal, Admiral John Poindexter, may have destroyed the only signed evidence of the President authorizing the CIA to fund the Contras and the sale of arms to Iran.<sup>53</sup>

Due to the scale of the cover up of the scandal, President Ronald Reagan set up the Tower Commission, a three person panel to find out how the scandal was created and who was all involved in the scandal. There were 13 people that were indicted, including Oliver North and John Pointdexter. President Ronald Regan, while somewhat connected to the scandal was never indicted in the scandal. Eventually all members who were indicted and convicted were pardoned later by George H. W. Bush, who happened to be Vice President during that time.<sup>54</sup> The Iran-

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<sup>51</sup> Ben, Bradlee. *Guts and Glory: The Rise and Fall Oliver North*. New York City: General Publishing Company Limited, 1988.

<sup>52</sup> John, Edmund Muskie and Brent Scowcroft Tower, *Tower Commission Report* (New York: Bantam Books (Mm), 1987).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

Contra scandal was a huge black eye for the Intelligence community as well as for the President himself. The United States was selling arms to terrorists in Iran as well as illegally funding a guerrilla movement in Nicaragua. This was the biggest scandal of the 1980's, but the next funding of guerrillas would prove to truly haunt the Americans in the years to come.

### **Afghanistan: Helping or Hurting the United States?**

While the Iran-Contra scandal was going on, there was another secret war raging in the mountains of Afghanistan. In 1979, the Soviet military invaded Afghanistan. This invasion was at the height of the Cold War and the United States needed to provide support to the Afghan guerrilla groups known as the Mujahedeen. President Reagan was also the president for a majority of this conflict and he came up with the Reagan Doctrine. The aim of the Doctrine was to halt the advance of Soviet advances across the globe. Even though the Doctrine was only in place for about a decade, it was the key component to the United States foreign policy in the 1980's and into the 1990's.<sup>55</sup>

The funding of the Mujahedeen was known as Operation Cyclone, which the CIA supported. The operation was one of the longest and most expensive CIA-funded operations in the organization's history.<sup>56</sup> The CIA would provide training and weapons to the Mujahedeen in order to fight the Soviet Red Army. One person that played a crucial role in the operation during the campaign was a young CIA paramilitary officer, Michel Vickers. Vickers came up with the idea to use multiple modes of warfare to combat the Soviets. With the funding from the CIA and Vickers training the Mujahedeen, the Americans had a force that could perform guerilla

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<sup>55</sup> Ronald Reagan, *The Reagan* (Washington D.C.: The Reagan Administration, 1985).

<sup>56</sup> Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele, "The Oily Americans," *Time Magazine* (May 13, 2003) <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,450997-2,00.html> (accessed December 13, 2012).

tactics to defeat the Soviets.<sup>57</sup> After nine long years of fighting the war in Afghanistan, the Red Army pulled out in 1989. Just three years later, the Soviet Union would cease to exist and the cold war would come to an end.

Many people could look at the outcome of this war and say that the United States helped end the cold war by fighting an irregular war in Afghanistan, without having to amass a huge army and fight World War Three against the Soviets. But in fact by helping the Afghans (the Mujahedeen) we in fact help support a future terror network. With the massive amounts of money and arms provided to the Mujahedeen, they had a stockpile of weapons that be used to fund their own agenda. In the coming years, the Taliban, funded by Osama Bin Laden, a former fighter in the war in Afghanistan, would seize control of the government in Afghanistan. Also with that same training and weapons they would turn against the American who helped them win the war and wage a war against the American in the 2000's with the terror attacks on America. By helping out the Mujahedeen in the 1980's, the American government essentially funded a terror network that would attack America in the future.

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<sup>57</sup> George Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War: The Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003)

## **Modern Day Irregular Warfare: 2001-2012**

### **9/11: the beginning of the War on Terrorism**

When 9/11 happened, any American that was above the age five knew what was happening. I knew exactly where I was, I was in third period cooking class in 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Lombardi Middle School in Green Bay when they made the announcement over the intercom at the school. Arriving upon home after school, all that was on the television was news reports of the attack on the World Trade Center, The Pentagon, and the down airplane in Pennsylvania. No one knew what the events on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2001 would lead to in the future, but it would lead to 12 plus years of war on terrorism and the re-vamping of the irregular warfare units within the United States Military Community.

Days after the attacks, American was in shock, the World Trade Towers was lay on the ground in New York City, and the Pentagon, America's Defense Center, had a huge hole in the side of it. As Americans and the world mourned at the loss of the thousands of innocent Americans, the intelligence community was ready to strike back at the heart of the terrorist network. President George Bush vowed to knock on the doors of the terrorists that were responsible for the attacks on America, which turned out to be the Taliban that had their base of operations in Afghanistan, the very groups that we helped in the 1980's fight the Soviet Army.

There were several key doctrines and a piece of legislature that was passed during the early years on the war on terrorism. The first key doctrine to the new war on terrorism is the Bush Doctrine. There are four key components to the doctrine and they are.

- Make no distinction between the terrorists and the countries that harbor them.
- Take the fight to the enemy, before they can strike us at home.

- Confront the threat before it comes fully materialized.
- Advance freedom across the globe.<sup>58</sup>

The next key doctrine was the Rumsfeld Doctrine, named after Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. His doctrine relied on the use of airpower over the use of large conventional troops. But troops would still be used to fight the ground war. This Doctrine called for small units to fight the ground war.<sup>59</sup> This is where irregular warfare units come in handy, this type of warfare. The units (CIA, Green Berets, and Navy Seals) can be inserted in the country without reinforcements and conduct raids, reconnaissance, and direct action mission on HVTs (high value targets). This is the type of warfare that the United States has been fighting for the past 11 years. Using small units of US troops behind enemy lines link up with local resistance groups and use airpower to destroy the enemy.

The last piece of key legislature is the Patriot Act. The Patriot Act was passed in 2001 just a few weeks after the attacks on 9/11. The bill began to take effect in February of 2002 and there are several key features to this bill that are different from the two doctrines mentioned above (Bush and Rumsfeld). Those differences include:

- Reduced restrictions of law enforcement to gather intelligence within the United States.
- Regulation of financial transactions of suspected terrorists.
- Deporting Immigrants suspected of having terrorist ties.
- Redefining the term domestic terrorism, to include broader terms.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Geogre Bush, *The Bush Doctrine* (Washington D.C.: The Bush Administration, 2001).

<sup>59</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, *The Rumsfeld Doctrine* (Washington D.C.: The Bush Administration, 2001).

<sup>60</sup> "Bill Summary 107th Congress (2001 - 2002) H.r.3162 (the Patriot Act)," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d107:H.R.3162>: (accessed November 26, 2012).

This may be seen as an invasion of privacy to some Americans but when it comes to the safety of this country, the government cannot be too careful after what happened on 9/11. The two doctrines and Patriot Act passed in 2001 have shaped this country's foreign policy for the past 11 years. These policies will be put to the test as the American people and its military embark on two wars and countless other small, low-intensity wars from 2001-2012. The first test of the doctrines and the Patriot Act are the wars in Afghanistan (2001-present) and the war in Iraq (2003-2011).

## **Iraq vs. Afghanistan: case studies of Irregular Warfare**

Since the attacks of 9/11, the United States has been involved in two separate, large irregular warfare campaigns, in Iraq and in Afghanistan. The goal of irregular warfare is different than that of total war. In total war, the objective is to destroy both the enemy, but also its infrastructure. But in irregular warfare you want to destroy the enemy and their will to fight, but also help out the local population and help repair their local infrastructure, such as by building roads, school, adequate water and power supplies and so on. This section will look at the efforts of the US forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan to see how effective they have been in their efforts in irregular warfare.

Shortly after the attacks on the World Trade Center, US troops landed on Afghani soil. Many of the first troops that were to be deployed to the mountains of Afghanistan were irregular warfare troops, such as the CIA's Special Activities Division, Delta Force, and the US Army Green Berets.<sup>61</sup> Their goal was to link up with the local warlords and then train and fight the Taliban alongside the local warlords to defeat the enemy.<sup>62</sup> While good in principle, a key battle that could have ended the war quickly changed the course of history for Afghanistan: that battle was the battle of Tora Bora.

The battle of Tora Bora began in late 2001, and this battle could have changed the course of the war. Osama Bin Laden, the man behind the 9/11 attacks, was located in that region of Afghanistan, being tracked by America's Delta Force. The commander of the Delta Force,

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<sup>61</sup> Gary Schroen, *First In: an Insider's Account of How the Cia Spearheaded the War On Terror in Afghanistan*, Reprint ed. (New York, New York: Presidio Press, 2007)

<sup>62</sup> Ibid

Dalton Fury, was tasked with linking up with the local warlords and kill Bin Laden.<sup>63</sup> Fury had several ideas on how to kill Bin Laden, but they were all struck down by higher command (one idea of his was to airdrop mines into the mountain passes so Bin Laden could not escape).<sup>64</sup> In the course of this battle a cease-fire was called, and both parties put down their weapons. But when the US forces would attempt to move in and search the caves of Tora Bora, the Afghan troops fighting alongside Delta, drew their weapons and threaten to fire if the US troops advanced.<sup>65</sup> The United States had relied on local forces too much and that cease fire had allowed Bin Laden to escape the caves of Tora Bora and into Pakistan where he would remain until his death May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 when Seal Team Six would kill the world's most wanted man. This is just one incident of U.S. troops in irregular warfare, but if the U.S. troops fought alongside local warlords, the U.S. troops on the ground could have advanced on their own and potentially killed Bin Laden in 2001, not 2011, a decade later.

With the war in Afghanistan continuing into 2003, the United States invaded Iraq in March of 2003. The goal of this war was similar to that of Afghanistan: remove Saddam Hussein from power and create a new democratic government. Once again the America would have to rely local forces to help the American Forces defeat the regime of Saddam Hussein. A key component to the irregular warfare in Iraq was the Sons of Iraq, also known as SOI.<sup>66</sup> The SOI consists of approximately 100,000 armed volunteers that patrol the cities and neighborhoods of

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<sup>63</sup> Dalton Fury, *Kill Bin Laden: a Delta Force Commander's Account of the Hunt for the World's Most Wanted Man*, Reprint ed. (New York: St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2011)

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> William, McCallister. "Sons of Iraq: A Study in Irregular Warfare." *Small Wars Journal* (2008): 1-5.

Iraq. They have been credited by the Coalition Forces for helping changed to the tide of war against the al-Qaeda in Iraq.<sup>67</sup> There is another factor that plays into irregular and the success of that type of warfare. That is the geography of that country and where the people live in that country. Iraq has the upper hand on both of those areas.

When looking at the terrain of geography of a country, the ideal country would be relatively flat, so that your nation's troops could move quickly across the terrain and capture the key targets and win the war quickly and efficiently. There is a difference in the terrain between Iraq and Afghanistan. While Iraq is mainly flat and a desert in many areas, Afghanistan is a country that has many mountains. Having mountains can make it difficult to move large number of troops and supplies from region to region within a country. The second component to the geography of irregular warfare is the transportation network of the countries. Having an effective transportation network (such as roads and highways) can make troop movement more effective and can get troops to battle faster and in larger quantities than by air. According to the CIA World Factbook, Iraq's road network consists of 84% paved roads compared to Afghanistan's road network where only 29% of its roads are paved.<sup>68</sup> Having paved roads is key to the transportation of troops and supplies to the forefront of battle. In irregular warfare, speed can be the key to winning or losing the war.

The third and last but crucial component to irregular warfare in geographic terms is where the population lives within the country. Simply put, rural vs. urban. Irregular warfare is

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<sup>67</sup> William, McCallister. "Sons of Iraq: A Study in Irregular Warfare." *Small Wars Journal* (2008): 1-5.

<sup>68</sup> "Cia World Factbook," The Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html> (accessed November 23, 2012).

easier when the local population is centrally located in bigger cities rather than in small communities that are harder to reach. In Iraq 66% of the population lived in urban cities, whereas in Afghanistan, only 23% of the population lived in urban areas.<sup>69</sup> Having an urban population is crucial to winning an irregular war, it is easier to control and maintain the urban population, molding them into troops and security forces, rather than having to travel to remote regions to train the troops.

When looking at the wars in Iraq and in Afghanistan, it comes down to geography and the people living in the country. Iraq's geography is more suited for faster movement of troops, with a more complete road network and flatter terrain, made it faster not only to move troops, but also faster to engage the enemy. When it comes to the local population, the more urban the population, the easier it can be to train and mobilize a home defense force. Out of the two countries, Afghanistan and Iraq, Iraq's geography and the SOI helped the United States win that irregular war.

With the lessons learned from World War Two (the OSS) and the creation of permanent irregular warfare units (CIA, Seals, and the Green Berets) the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan prove that the use of these forces are still relevant today with the war on terror and the many conflicts that are currently going on around the world.

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<sup>69</sup> "Cia World Factbook," The Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html> (accessed November 23, 2012).

## Modern Films Depicting Irregular Warfare

Films have always been focused on war. But when you can tell the stories of extraordinary men, going far behind enemy lines, and coming back from what could have been the toughest mission they have ever been on, people want to hear about that story and the people behind the operation. This section will talk about the modern films, as a way to show the world what irregular warfare looks like through the lens of the operators themselves.

The first movie that will be mentioned in this section is *Blackhawk Down*, produced by Ridley Scott and released in 2001. This movie talks about the events that unfold in Somalia in 1993. What happened was two US Blackhawk helicopters were shot down in Somalia, during a mission to capture high ranking Somali officials. The battle that ensued resulted in the death of 19 US soldiers, all members of the US special operations (rangers, delta and 160<sup>th</sup> aviation wing). This event was broadcast on the television and Americans saw firsthand Americans being beaten in the streets of Somalia. This was humiliating to the Americans, and President Bill Clinton withdrew the American Troops later that year. Media coverage of the two day attack changed the view of the war as in that Americans were dying in vast numbers and that the President was concerned that this conflict would take too long to resolve, so it was best for the troops to leave.<sup>70</sup>

The next film to be mentioned is a recent movie about the tales of United States Navy Seals and the missions that they go on. The movie is called *Act of Valor*; it was produced by Mike McCoy and released in 2011. The big draw to this movie was that its stars in the movie

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<sup>70</sup> Ken Nolan, *Blackhawk Down*, DVD, directed by Ridley Scott (Columbia Pictures, 2001).

were not A-list celebrities, but real, active duty Navy Seals. As soon as I saw the preview for this movie, I immediately wanted to see what the Navy Seals did. This movie shows what type of missions that the Seals do, with real tactics and gunfire shown in the movie. But on a tactical standpoint, having real Navy Seals star in a movie is not a good idea. Now the whole world knows what their face looks like. Even though their names were not mentioned in the credits of the movie, they are part of Seal Team 7. The movie sheds light on the hardships that the Navy Seals go through but using right Seals endangers them when there are deployed overseas next.<sup>71</sup>

Thirdly, a more recent movie came out in 2012. It is titled *Seal Team Six*, directed by John Stockwell and released on November 4, 2012, just two days before the Presidential Election in the United States. This movie was all about the mission to kill Osama Bin Laden and the Seal team that killed him. This movie did not contain real Seals but actors portrayed the Seals. While watching this movie, there is a character that sticks out to me. It is the rapper Xzibit.<sup>72</sup> If anyone wants to watch a movie that has significant historical implications to it, make a movie that has real soldiers in it. Also the U.S. government will never release the actual intelligence or layout of the compound that Bin Laden was staying in. Another down fall of this movie was the fact that the units name was mentioned. Shortly after the raid, it was found out that Seal Team 6, the Navy's elite Seal Team, was that unit behind the attack. The men that carried out the raid should remain faceless in time. The men of Seal Team 6 deserve to remain faceless and continue their role in the fight against terror around the world.

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<sup>71</sup> Kurt Johnstad, *Act of Valor*, DVD, directed by Mike McCoy (Bandito Brothers, 2011).

<sup>72</sup> Kendall Lampkin, *Seal Team 6: The Raid On Osama Bin Laden*, directed by John Stockwell (National Geographic Channel, 2012).

Lastly is a television show that aired on CBS from 2006 to 2009. The show is about an US army unit named “*The Unit*” nothing else, because it does exist in the normal ranks of the United States Military. This unit in the show is to resemble Delta Force, America’s Elite counter-terrorism force. The show uses actors; most famous of them is Dennis Haysbert, the Allstate commercial voice. “The Unit” does a good job detailing the types of missions that the force deploys for, from training troops to direct action missions to hostage rescue. It gave the viewer an insight as to what the elite troops of America encounter every day. The show also covers another side to the war, the home. Many of the unit operators have wives, and the show talks about their daily life and how they struggle without their husbands close to them, but thousands of miles away on clandestine missions.<sup>73</sup> While this show is not grounded in any facts about the real Delta Force, it is none the less interesting to watch and is in fact one of the authors favorite television shows to date.

Television and films will be forever fascinated with irregular warfare. Millions of people have watched the films mentioned above and have taken interest in the stories and missions of the irregular warfare units. Journalists have been embedded with these units and report back to the world of what these units do. Media in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century shapes how the world views this type of warfare and the units that are involved in the forefront on the war on terror.

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<sup>73</sup> David Mamet, *The Unit*, season 1-4, DVD, directed by (CBS, 2006-2009).

## **Conclusion**

From the shores of Normandy of World War Two, to the mountains of Afghanistan, to the sands of Iraq, irregular warfare has been at the forefront of American Warfare since 1942. The policy behind the warfare has changed over time, creating and dissolving units, but since 1947, the United States has a constant maritime irregular warfare unit (the CIA). As times change and more wars are fought not between two countries, but between the government and its people, this low-intensity type of war will continue to grow. These special units, Seals, CIA, Green Berets, and Delta Force, units that are created in darkness, shrouded in secrecy, are finally coming into light to the American people due to media coverage of the wars. Despite what Americans know, or want to know about these units, it is best for the units themselves and the people of America; never learn about their missions and who the operators are themselves. Irregular warfare is war that should remain in the darkness to protect American and her people from the terror that is scattered across the globe.

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Talks about the patriot act and the effects on the war on terrorism.

Bush, Geogre. *The Bush Doctrine*. Washington D.C.: The Bush Administration, 2001.

The doctrine the President Bush used to talk about his views on the war in Afghanistan and the terror threats across the globe.

“Cia World Factbook.” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html> (accessed November 23, 2012).

Covers the information on Afghanistan and Iraq. Such as population, terrain and road network.

Congress, House, Boland Amendment 1982-1984, 96<sup>th</sup>-97<sup>th</sup> Cong. H.J. RES.631 and S.UP.AMDT. 1541.

Congress, House, Boland Amendment 1982-1984, 96<sup>th</sup>-97<sup>th</sup> Cong. H.J.RES.648

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