

UNITED STATES ARMY

Adaptability of Strategic Landpower to the Digital Domain

Effectively maintain Strategic Landpower through the Guise of a Digital Landpower

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Photo Credit: U.S. Army. Lt. Col. Tina Blom participates in Deployed Digital Training Campus new equipment training at Fort Eustis, Va., in December 2010. DDTC provide Soldiers with a way to continue their professional military development while deployed. <http://www.army.mil/media/197517/>

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Adaptability of Strategic Landpower to the Digital Domain

by

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Strategic Landpower: Winning the Clash of Wills defines Strategic Landpower as having key elements of “human objectives, defined as actions taken to influence people, be they government and military leaders or groups within a population.”¹ During the outset of the Operation Iraqi Freedom, a key aspect to the overall operation was a concept encapsulated by the phrase “winning the hearts and minds” of the population. When the United States first engaged in the War on Terror over twelve years ago, terms such as show of force, influence, and partnerships were forged through the use of significant ground forces. Now in 2014, the idea of Strategic Landpower has begun to adapt to the newest battlefield, the cyber domain, and significantly influence the way we recruit and train our Soldiers. The cyber domain is reshaping and redefining land forces, which must adapt to this new battlespace.

The evolution of the current battlefield into a digital domain is redefining the way that the Army leverages Strategic Landpower on the battlefield and ultimately the size and type of force that the Army recruits, trains, and develops. The Soldier, on average, that is entering our Army is smarter, more adaptable, and more equipped to play a vital role in the technical aspect of Strategic Landpower. This allows the physical presence of a force on the ground to be exponentially smaller, yet backed with significantly greater force and connectivity, giving it a

¹ GEN Amos, James F. and ADM McRaven, William H. and GEN Odierno, Raymond T. (2013), *Strategic Landpower: Winning the Clash of Wills - Strategic Landpower and the Inherently Human Nature of Conflict*, 20MAY2013, retrieved on 13FEB14 at <http://www.ausa.org/news/2013/Documents/Strategic%20Landpower%20White%20Paper%20May%202013.pdf>

larger, more effective support structure. Subsequently, the unit is then able to leverage a much larger mission with fewer lives placed at immediate risk.

The Army is analyzing Soldiers for significantly more than just their physical ability or trainability to accomplish this fast-paced, ever changing mission. There are aspects of analytical and decision-making skills and mental and emotional resiliency that the Army must evaluate and prove strong, beyond the traditional war-fighting and physical abilities. From the first time a potential Soldier enters an Army recruiting office, the recruiter must evaluate that potential recruit's adaptability and resilience. This type of ground-level analysis will be the first step of vetting the force for the highest quality Soldier that the current and future missions require.

The evolving role of Strategic Landpower in the digital battlefield also allows for an effective reduction of force, coinciding with the Army's present mission of reshaping the current force to a smaller, more effective and more efficient warfighting organization. This ultimately allows the Army to be able to meet the top mission requirements of the command. The present force will also adapt to the cultural change required of a more cognizant force able to manage greater mission sets at a lower level. Additionally, the Army will select precisely the best, because the smaller number required will allow for greater selectivity of those entering the force.

At the initial entry training level, the mission will adapt to sharpening the analytical and resiliency skills of the warriors going through training – both enlisted and officer. The enlisted training will have to focus on a larger picture, ensuring that the skills young Soldiers develop within their respective military occupational specialties (MOS) are ones that will enable them to handle an array of situations and issues that arise in the normal boundaries of their jobs. Each Soldier's conceptual understanding must go beyond their skill-set and be applicable to several

areas of expertise, as well as across force boundaries, enabling them to work in a more joint environment, as the Army's sister services do the same.

Officer training will have to focus on adapting leadership skills that incorporate full understanding of the mission as it applies to echelons above a lieutenant's scope, while still balancing their own ground-level operations and Soldiers. This will also necessitate the Army to commission officers that have significantly greater management skills and comprehension ability to ensure they are able to effectively understand their Soldiers' key attributes and skills, effectively placing them in the right positions that will leverage the highest output for mission success. Requiring our most junior officers to conduct efficient and effective talent management will groom them to understand the need for succession planning at each level as they progress through their careers.

Ultimately as the battlefield transforms to the digital domain, the forces the Army will enlist will come with greater selectivity, giving the force a sharper edge for a more educated, resilient, and adaptive force. Our future Soldiers will have to understand the mission from a higher level, and skills to rapidly adapt that mission to immediate needs, both within the Army as well as across the sister services. We must commission and train officers that can quickly adapt and assume a significantly higher level of responsibility with significantly higher consequences for their actions. Such officers must realize the need for higher understanding, within the parameters of their ground-level scope of responsibility. The force will ultimately adapt to one that will effectively maintain its strategic landpower through the guise of a digital landpower, creating a scope of responsibility that rises above the previously understood physical landpower, into one of a significant digital presence.

References:

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