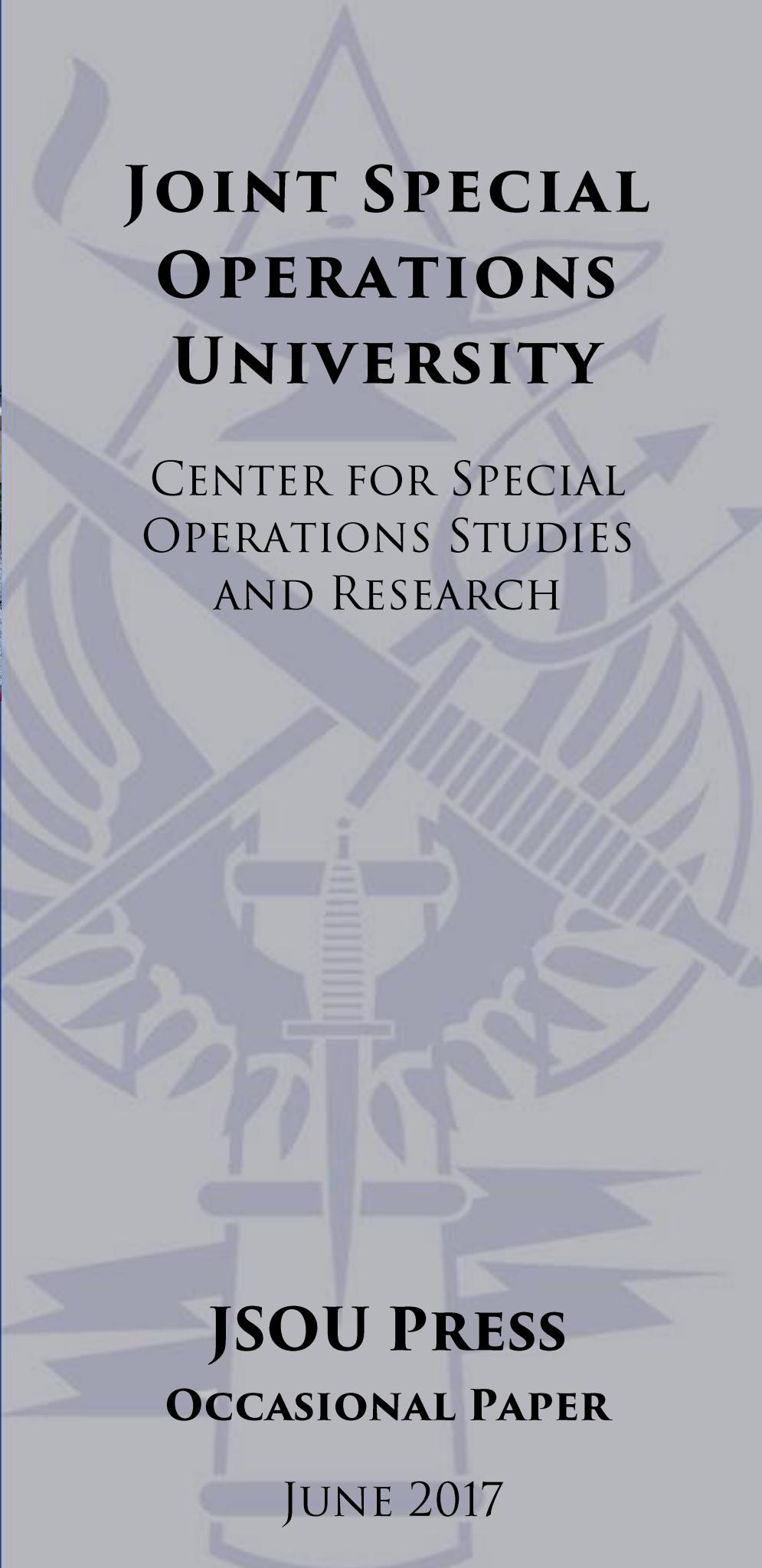# Joint Special Operations University

Center for Special Operations Studies and Research

Preserving Sovereignty in a Borderless World

by

Charles W. Ricks

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On the cover: Refugees in Greece demand the European Union (EU) borders be opened, during a protest against EU policy regarding refugee matters. SOURCE: GIANNIS PAPANIKOS/ SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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About the Author

Charles W. Ricks

Mr Charles (Chuck) Ricks is a non-resident senior fellow at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). He has worked in a variety of military and civil government positions during more than 45 years of public service in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the United States. He is an expert in political-military relations, security force assistance, governance, capacity building, strategic communications and public diplomacy, crisis and consequence management, the interagency process, economic development, and humanitarian assistance.

In 1992, while an active duty U.S. Army officer, Mr. Ricks traveled to Moscow as part of the first-ever NATO humanitarian assistance operation inside the former Soviet Union. After his retirement from active duty, He returned to Europe in 1999 to work in the NATO Information Cell during military operations (Operation Allied Force) in and around Kosovo. He also worked within the Defense Base Closure and Realignment process while serving as Deputy Mayor of Lawrence, Indiana, a community of some 45,000 people and the site of the former Fort Benjamin Harrison.

In recent years, Mr. Ricks has worked with representatives from more than 70 countries through Combating Terrorism and other programs conducted by JSOU, and has participated in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Partnership for Peace initiative. He has served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, Belgium, and, in 2015, worked on crisis management programs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He served two years in Afghanistan building governance capacity as a mentor, systems developer, and trainer for the Ministry of Defense (MOD) Social Relations, Parliamentary, and Public Affairs Office. He has been a mentor, in resource management and budget, for the Afghan General Staff and the MOD, as well as the Office of Disaster Response.

Mr. Ricks is a Distinguished Military Graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration, holds a master's degree from the University of Kentucky, and conducted advanced communications studies at the University of South Carolina. He taught at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point; the Defense Information School, where he was also the director of the broadcasting department; the U.S. Army Armor School; the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy; the Afghan War College in Kabul, Afghanistan; and the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany. He has conducted training and education programs around the world and facilitated programs for the U.S. Army War College, U.S. Air Force Air War College, and the National Defense University.

He has published numerous articles and has appeared on television. Some of his work includes: "Telling the Afghan Military Story…THEIR WAY!" published in *Military Review* (March–April 2006), and as a chapter in *Ideas as Weapons: Influence and Perception in Modern War* by G. J. David and T. R. McKeldin; *The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward*, published by the Strategic Studies Institute (1993); and his book *Crisis Coverage and*

Newsroom Credibility (1996). Mr. Ricks' JSOU publications include the first edition of the *Special Operations Forces Interagency Counterterrorism Reference Manual* (2009, revised in 2011 and 2013) and numerous reports of proceedings to include three Sovereign Challenge conferences, the Irregular Warfare and the OSS Model Symposium, and the JSOU and Office of Strategic Services [OSS] Society Symposium.

Preserving Sovereignty
in a Borderless World

In the wake of the failed Soviet coup d'état of August 1991, Army General John R. Galvin, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe and commander of the U.S. European Command at the time, shared his impressions of the events since the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989, and the implications of those events.[1] In response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, NATO had conducted its first operational crisis management response, called Operation Southern Guard. After decades of focusing on the singular threat of a massive Soviet and Warsaw Pact invasion across the European continent from the east, the Iraqi invasion introduced a fresh threat from a different direction.

In his memoir, Galvin captures the essence of those days: "Everything would be new and untried, and sixteen nations would have an extraordinary historical opportunity to improvise on the theme of crisis management."[2] But that experience was only part of what interested him the most during that time of lesson learning.

General Galvin spoke primarily of the uncertainties that had been unleashed by the upheavals leading to the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the ongoing disintegration of the Soviet Union. He drew a distinction between the concepts of nations and countries. Nations, he reminded his listeners, are distinguished by their unique cultures, language(s), religious beliefs, value systems, ways of interacting, political structures, traditions, and disputes, but not necessarily territory. In fact, a single country may hold within its borders representatives of multiple nations, and a nation or tribe may be spread over various neighboring countries or into distant states through a diaspora of its people. He presented a vision of upheaval and movement, of forgotten history returned to public view.

Galvin pointed out that the Cold War generated strong nationalist sentiments within countries, many of which were being redefined or collapsing completely at the time of his comments. He predicted that nations, no longer constrained by political boundaries, would likely spread across multiple borders and political frameworks. Countries would become increasingly diverse and potentially more unstable because of competing internal national interests. Instead of embassies, diaspora nations with no strong local political power would establish identity-based enclaves within which and from which they could assert influence and exercise their agendas.

Consequently, conflicts were likely to arise over both a reluctance to accept the 'other' or to assimilate into the 'existing.' The decades since have certainly fulfilled those predictions, especially during the ongoing migrations of peoples into Europe and the U.S. Galvin also spoke about issues of identity and long-ignored grievances that would begin to reemerge, and they have.

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[1] Author's personal experience attending one of these sessions as a member of the crisis management group, although the author does not recall the specific date.
[2] John R. Galvin, *Fighting the Cold War: A Soldier's Memoir* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 404.

The rest of the world may have forgotten about those long-suppressed concerns, if they ever knew about them at all, but those most directly affected remember them very clearly and have sought restitution for grievances, revenge for mistreatment, and justice as they understand its meaning.

For instance, to understand the upheaval in the Balkans that began in the 1990s, it is necessary to develop a sense of the importance of the battle between the Serbs and the Ottoman Empire that was fought near Kosovo in the Valley of the Blackbirds in 1389. This is because many of the parties to the contemporary violence in the region define their identities within the narratives that grew out of that battle 600 years earlier. Nationalist memories can be long and determined in their quest for restitution.

The full consequences of this dynamic were certainly not clear in the autumn of 1991, but the fragmentation within what rapidly became the 'former Yugoslavia' provided an early glimpse of what was to come. As independence movements, secession, and declarations of sovereignty spread from Slovenia to Croatia to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the rest, the crescendo of resistance and violence grew in intensity. Internal conflicts, based on ethnic distinctions, erupted both between and within the former Yugoslav republics. A common thread to those conflicts often involved scattered Serbian minorities

Serbian residents of a shelter for displaced persons located in Benkovac, Croatia, in March 1993. Thousands of people were displaced from their homes following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. SOURCE: UN PHOTO/M GRAFMAN

with their own national claims and grievances. Consequently, war and genocide returned to Europe.

During a February 1992 visit to Baku, Azerbaijan, NATO representatives asked what their hosts planned to do now that the Soviet Union was dissolved, the Red Army was withdrawing from their territory, and Azerbaijan had achieved a degree of independence. The response was predictive: "We shall now form our own army and go kill Armenians." Here was a clear example of the conditions General Galvin anticipated when discussing the consequences of the end to Cold War political and security structures. The ongoing changes would reveal long-simmering disputes and motivations for revenge. More than a quarter of a century later, the prediction in Baku remains an operational reality.
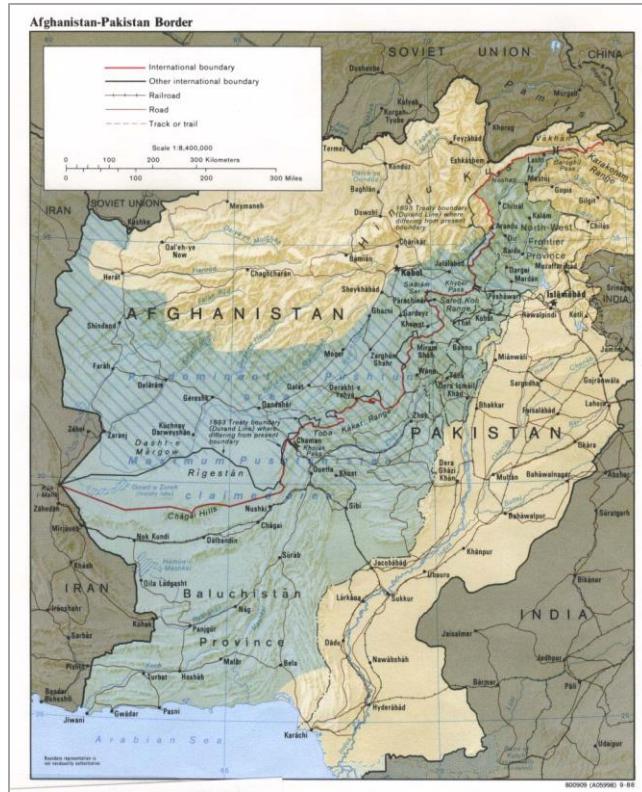
Pashtuns in Afghanistan often discuss their tribal homeland of 'Pashtunistan' as a geographic reality, not an abstract concept, that informs their world view. They acknowledge

foreign countries' concerns about the movement of Taliban and other insurgents back and forth across the Durand Line separating Pakistan from Afghanistan, but Pashtuns regularly reject the importance of that 'border.' At such times, Pashtuns often pose the question, "Am I a terrorist because I live in Kandahar and visit my uncle in Peshawar?"[3]

Map depicts, in red, the Durand Line border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. SOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PERRY-CASTAÑEDA LIBRARY MAP COLLECTION

More than an artificial—even illegitimate—border in their eyes, many Afghans also view the Durand Line as a barrier to what they regard as Pashtun territories in Pakistan. "This disputed land [the North West Frontier Province (NWFP)] was legally to be returned to Afghanistan in 1993 after the 100-year-old Durand Treaty expired, similar to how Hong Kong was returned to China. Kabul has refused to renew the Durand Line Treaty since 1993 when it expired … Kabul never accepted that line or the fact that the NWFP is part of Pakistan."[4] Similar sentiments are expressed in places like Syria, Iraq, West Africa, and elsewhere as consequences of post-colonial influences center on the drawing of borders.

Candid discussions with Afghans are very clear about the point that the country of 'Afghanistan' doesn't exist except when the tribes collectively feel threatened from the outside. Then, alliances of mutual interest and convenience come together, for as long as necessary, to address the problem. The best recent example is the jihad against the Soviet Union from 1979 to 1989. The Soviet intervention provided the impetus for unifying the various tribes of the country, providing them with the venerated cultural identity of 'mujahedeen,' which remains frequently more honored than that of 'Afghan.'

In recent years, USSOCOM has put together a visually compelling strategic planning process[5] that captures the interaction of various factors, to include four major trends animating the geopolitical landscape. These trends are migration, violent extremism, transnational crime, and 'open-source' networks. The threat natures of violent extremism and transnational crime are

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[3] One located in Afghanistan; one located in Pakistan, but both located in 'Pashtunistan,' the Pashtun nation's primary point of geographic reference and identity.

[4] "Durand Line," Afghanistan's Web Site, accessed 5 April 2016, www.afghanistans.com/information/History/Durandline.htm. This information and news aggregation site expresses concisely the Afghan view of the border as the author experienced regularly in candid conversations with Afghan leaders. It offers important insight into their view of the distinctions between countries and nations.

[5] USSOCOM, Directive 10-10: United States Special Operations Command Strategic Planning Process, 23 April 2013.

obvious. Migration and open-source networks, operating throughout the global community, can either reinforce sovereignty or undermine it.

Migration is perhaps the most visible dynamic because of intense media coverage of crowds of people fleeing danger and seeking new opportunities in countries far from their points of origin. Population flows also provide very public tests of local governing competence as officials, from border guards to national leaders, function under the constant scrutiny of the news media, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other groups with a vested interest in the situation.

While migration is not, by itself, a threat to sovereignty, the mass movement of large numbers of people in multiple directions can and does mask a variety of challenges and threats. Migrants and refugees bring with them baggage that is both visible and invisible. These include stress on limited government services, disease, assimilation challenges, foreign fighters, criminals, and other disruptive influences. Effectively addressing the challenges of migration and related flows and trends, both at their sources and final destinations, can mitigate those concerns. Failure to do so can present a challenge to credible governance and, in the worst cases, the sovereignty of a country.

The vision suggested by General Galvin has been on full display on the world's television screens in recent years: desperate groups of people fleeing from events beyond their control with

One of many emotionally charged images of refugees' plight: a young boy is pulled out of a newly arrived boat from Turkey on the shore of the Greek island of Lesbos. November 2015. SOURCE: ALEKSANDR LUTCENKO/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

no place to go and little to eat. Their plights have provided the international news media with a potpourri of emotionally charged images. One of the practices of the media has been to define roles and assign blame for such situations.

Essentially, there are three groups captured within the media narrative of such events: the victims, those who are the cause of the problems generating the victims, and those who seek to help alleviate the suffering of the victims. Governance initiatives at all levels should always find themselves portrayed in the role of helpers. After initial media praise in 2015 for the actions of European leaders who welcomed migrants with few limits, the coverage tone shifted to the negative as tighter screening standards were eventually put into place.

Responsibility for such crisis situations can be murky. In testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on 25 February 2015, Air Force General Philip Breedlove, Commander of U.S. Forces Europe, said, "Nations [sic] on Europe's Southern flank are concerned the focus on Eastern Europe may draw attention and resources away from their region, allowing for an unmonitored flow of foreign fighters, economic and political refugees, and unchecked illicit

trafficking of goods and humans from an arc of instability stretching across large parts of northern Africa through the Middle East."[6]

There is also the concern that the mass flows of people are not entirely spontaneous. General Breedlove has characterized the movement of migrants and refugees out of the Middle East as the "weaponization of immigration … Barrel bombs are designed to terrorize, get people out of their homes and get them on the road and make them someone else's problem. These indiscriminate weapons used by both Bashar al-Assad, and the non-precision use of weapons by the Russian forces, I can't find any other reason for them other than to cause refugees to be on the move and make them someone else's problem."[7]

Coping with the movement of huge numbers of people is, in itself, a significant challenge. The malicious scenario described by General Breedlove introduces a level of additional complexity that persistently tests government officials at all levels who are faced with the responsibility to respond. Both General Galvin's observations and the USSOCOM strategic planning process focus on the dynamic action that takes the form of movement across borders, no matter the inspiration for such movement. The sense of continuous motion and change, inherent in these world views, demands persistent interagency, whole-of-government attention in which the military, especially Special Operations Forces (SOF), can play precisely defined roles.

Domestic political debate clumsily tries to carve out an American role in an increasingly uncertain and confusing world. Political sloganeering, such as, "That's not our problem," rings increasingly hollow as 'their' problems have an increasing tendency to become ours. The good news is that collective problem solving has increasingly been practiced internationally by the United Nations, NATO, various coalitions and other structures, NGOs and multinational corporations, who can play influential roles in specific situations. Though skill sets, resources, and experience vary significantly among countries, the fact is that it is no longer necessary (if it ever was) for the U.S. to 'do it all.' But, it is almost always helpful for the U.S. to play some sort of a useful role. Whenever a situation or issue arises anywhere in the world, responsible governance demands that the interagency process identify and assess the potential consequences for the U.S.

Thus, it would seem that the preservation of sovereignty is a task that recognizes that challenges to U.S. sovereignty are no longer discouraged by either geography or political boundaries. Distance no longer provides assurance of non-involvement. It has been demonstrated that it is not possible to keep threatening conditions or 'bad guys' at a safe distance merely because of their physical location. Focusing issues of sovereignty on a grid of static political borders is insufficient. Measures of effectiveness, based on securing fixed geographical lines, are difficult to form and explain, and are almost impossible to achieve.

> *Focusing issues of sovereignty on a grid of static political borders is insufficient.*

At the same time, it is surely an exaggeration to characterize traditional borders as merely speed bumps to globalization and the movement of populations. But it is necessary for countries

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[6] General Philip Breedlove, Commander, U.S. Forces Europe, Testimony to House Armed Services Committee, 25 February 2015, 3.
[7] General Philip Breedlove, Commander, U.S. Forces Europe, Senate Armed Services Committee Transcript, 1 March 2016, 8.

and coalitions of countries to decide what roles borders will play moving into the future. Since 1989, there has been a general relaxation of the strict restrictions over movement within Europe that were, in large part, previously sustained by the Cold War. The establishment of the Schengen Area[8] in 1995, which essentially enabled free movement of almost anyone inside the area to almost anywhere inside the area, institutionalized freedom of movement throughout the European Union (EU). The challenge has now become to strike a balance between those extremes. It's the struggle to seek that balance that has been playing out in recent years throughout the EU, the Western Hemisphere, and other regions of the world.

Technology and the omnipresence of social media have extended the traditional reach of

A person no longer has to be at home to actually be home.

national groups, commerce, and, of course, nefarious characters far beyond established borders. Dispersed national populations with shared identities, cultures, languages, and religions now remain connected through instantaneous communications. Anyone with a mobile phone—very few don't have them—can be in almost continuous contact with families, friends, and networks, no matter where they are. A person no longer has to be at home to actually be home.

It has become useful to view the world as systems of shared governance challenges resembling geographic information system (GIS) maps that layer, rather than array, relevant data. GIS layers typically contain street grids, utility matrixes, and other relevant governance information, but they can also contain information about ethnic enclaves, school dropout rates, income levels, job distribution, and other data that presents a far more comprehensive governance picture about the makeup of communities. Such depictions also provide shared visions of whole-of-government response requirements that call for both lateral and vertical integration of domestic government services.

Because of globalization in all its forms, governance challenges are rarely limited to specific areas of the globe. Thus, it would appear reasonable to view areas of instability not as isolated pockets of crisis, but as points of origin from which common problems gather momentum and spread. Population flows transport the elements of culture that were part of their lives at their points of origin, scatter some along their ways, and, finally, settle down with the remainder in their new homes. The unfamiliarity with which hosting government officials view these new challenges rivals the discomfort new arrivals experience in their new surroundings.

The most severe consequences can take the form of significant movements of populations with embedded terrorists, transnational criminals, diseases, corruption, and communication networks (social media, for instance) that knit together these forces and increase their impacts as they spread. Containment of such problems, once assumed during the Cold War, has reemerged as a policy objective in the contemporary governance environment. But policy and practice should not be based solely on the security threats of population flows. Such realities make for catchy

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[8] "The Schengen Area and Cooperation," EUR-Lex: Access to European Union Law, accessed on 14 April 2016, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:l33020.

political slogans that generate public uncertainty and fear, but do little to enlighten decision makers on an effective way ahead.

In many cases, and certainly in those facing the greatest instability, countries have been artificially layered upon nations (who often live in tribal societies). The regeneration of national identities has rekindled internal tensions, grievances, rivalries, and, often, conflicts. Yoking together nations with others within or across political boundaries has resulted in significant instability. The former Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union, and areas of the Middle East and Africa are useful, but not unique, examples.

> *The regeneration of national identities has rekindled internal tensions, grievances, rivalries, and, often, conflicts.*

What are the consequences of becoming a borderless world, at least in traditionally understood terms? How can governments preserve sovereignty as globalization moves people, goods, influence, and issues with few or no limits? The transplantation of national cultures, guided by identity rather than assimilation, introduces a powerful sense of 'different' or 'other' into the domestic practices of governance. Urban neighborhoods especially become linked with the self-contained ethnic groups who live and work there, placing stress upon the social fabric of the wider community and country. The isolation of groups from each other creates friction and places a drag on political, social, and economic interaction. Perhaps most importantly, these conditions and their consequences are no longer confined to places far away.

The 2017 dispute between the Turkish president and the Netherlands provides a glimpse at the consequences of borderless sovereignty and the projection of influence. The Turkish decision to send government ministers to the Netherlands to rally voter support among the diaspora for government elections at home—and the Dutch resistance to that move—generated anger and unrest inside the Netherlands, Turkey, and elsewhere in Europe.

The very public disagreement reflected the importance of the Turkish diaspora to their country of origin. It would seem that immigrant communities within other countries are now seen as just another voting bloc to be visited and energized by office holders from their country of origin. Are there then expectations of shared sovereignty by which the host country owns the terrain and the country of origin owns the people who occupy that terrain?

Borders, Governance, and Sovereignty

Of course, it is not entirely accurate to speak of a borderless world. But it is necessary to acknowledge and understand that borders function differently than in the past. The difficulties associated with the assimilation of unfamiliar cultures, not exactly a new challenge, have taken on a different form because of the penetration of social media and cyber communications. There can be less motivation to adapt to new surroundings because of the ability to stay connected to familiar ways of living elsewhere that can now be transplanted to new surroundings.

Good governance is about the exercise and preservation of sovereignty. It is more than a political clash about the managing, securing, opening, and closing of borders. Challenges to

governance, and ultimately to sovereignty, presented by the trends and flows of the contemporary geopolitical environment, arise primarily from both unfamiliarity and scale. The arrival of large numbers of migrants from unfamiliar cultures or the discovery of a sophisticated international criminal cartel (or elements of a domestic gang from another part of the country) operating in a community can be disquieting at best. It's simply not practical to assume that local government units can competently and consistently deal with such demands without outside assistance and resources. But that doesn't mean that the default position is to have the federal and state governments take up the cause at each level.

To think domestically only in terms of state and federal governments is woefully inadequate. The number of governmental units in the U.S. is staggering. The last complete accounting by the U.S. Census Bureau (2007) identified 19,492 municipal governments, 16,519 township governments, and 3,033 county governments. There are also another 50,432 'special purpose' local government units. Some of the most important of these are 13,726 independent and 1,452 dependent public school systems.[9] It is, after all, the schools that are educating the children representing cultures, speaking languages, and following religious traditions that are often unfamiliar to the teachers and administrators. In fact, most of these local government units, properly engaged, can play important roles in the process of assimilation.

Among other things, citizens expect their elected and appointed government officials to provide security, government services, education for their children, strong economic activity, fair taxation, and responsible enforcement of the rules. Part of the process of assimilating immigrants is harmonizing their expectations with the established processes of governance they discover when they arrive. As population movements intensify, the unfamiliar nature of the new arrivals serves as a source of both uncertainty and opportunity. It's instructive to watch local government officials as they struggle to address unfamiliar expectations from new arrivals. Merely having someone on staff who speaks the immigrants' language is insufficient. Wider cultural literacy is essential.

Part of the process of assimilating immigrants is harmonizing their expectations with the established processes of governance they discover when they arrive.

In the immediate post-9/11 world, it became obvious that potential vulnerabilities spanned the country and that it was unreasonable to assume that the local public safety officials in the thousands of government units were trained, equipped, and experienced enough to address security issues. Subsequent initiatives by the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Defense (DOD), and others recognized that homeland

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[9] "Number of Municipal Governments & Population Distribution," National League of Cities, accessed 19 April 2016, http://www.nlc.org/build-skills-and-networks/resources/cities-101/city-structures/number-of-municipal-governments-and-population-distribution. A 2012 update by the U.S. Census Bureau documented only slight modifications, including 19,519 municipal governments and 3,031 counties. See "Local Governments by Type and State: 2012 - United States - States, 2012 Census of Governments," United States Census Bureau: American Fact Finder, accessed 19 April 2016, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=COG_2012_ORG02.US01&prodType=table.

defense begins with hometown security. The development and implementation of the interagency National Preparedness System[10] and the National Incident Management System[11] have served to provide a shared structure for preparedness and response that yoked together all the government units and many in the private sector. The process of national preparedness and these documents will always constitute a work in progress, but they have provided the tools for a shared national effort to secure and protect the homeland from attack.

Airmen from the New Jersey Air National Guard undergo hazardous materials and operations training so they can be integrated into the National Incident Management System. SOURCE: MASTER SGT. MARK OLSEN

No such strategic guidance for cooperation, coordination, resource generation, training, and interdependence exists for meeting the governance challenges of a borderless world. The primary goal of governance in such times should be to tear down domestic walls of separation and isolation and encourage assimilation by ensuring access to housing, jobs, healthcare, education, equal protection under the law, and all the other rights legally afforded those living within the U.S. It's a safe bet that the thousands of local government officials tasked with meeting these responsibilities are in need of similar kinds of the whole-of-government/whole-of-nation support that police and fire chiefs and first responders have benefitted from since the 9/11 attacks. An interagency, whole-of-government approach should take the form of expertise and resources made available to elected and other government officials without the compulsion to comply with the kinds of standards in place in the homeland security structure.

Effective governance at all levels is a serious business that requires the ability to multitask through the simultaneous management of a wide variety of issues in a prioritized manner. For state and local government leaders, national security and public safety typically lead the list, with other concerns following based on available expertise and resources. In military terms, effective governance requires simultaneous attention to multiple lines of operation or lines of effort (LOE). Failure, or even weakness, in one or two of those tends to discredit governance efforts in other areas. For instance, a perceived failure in providing swift justice can lead to others acting

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[10] Department of Homeland Security, *National Preparedness System* (November 2011), accessed 24 April 2016, http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1855-25045-8110/national_preparedness_system_final.pdf. This document and the National Incident Management System take their direction from Presidential Policy Directive 8. For more, see "Presidential Policy Directive/PPD-8: National Preparedness," Department of Homeland Security, accessed 24 April 2016, https://www.dhs.gov/presidential-policy-directive-8-national-preparedness.

[11] Department of Homeland Security, *National Incident Management System* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Homeland Security, December 2008), accessed 24 April 2016, http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/NIMS_core.pdf.

unilaterally to ensure the achievement of their definition of 'fairness.' The current national debate about immigration, migrants, and refugees reflects an example of just one of those LOE.

The movements of populations during recent years into Europe, North America, and elsewhere have challenged traditional notions of border management. To what extent can or should a government establish controls over who enters their country? What sorts of screening standards should be enacted to assess new arrivals? What are the implications for sovereignty as the movement of populations from multiple nations flows across borders and they establish themselves in new places? Though laws and procedures are often already in place to address many of these questions, there is no longer a consensus about the relevancy and usefulness of those laws or even whether they should be enforced. Today's heated political debates in Europe, the U.S., and other affected countries frequently churn over legal structures and enforcement. Arguments

Refugee children at a reception center in Rome, Italy, await a visit from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2015.
SOURCE: UN PHOTO/RICK BAJORNAS

rage about the distinction between legal and illegal immigration. During a USSOCOM conference, French Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière reminded attendees that "there is no crime without a law" that is in place and enforced.[12]

By necessity, governments are refining the meanings of borders and how they are managed. Another USSOCOM gathering, involving nearly 70 countries, concluded that, "the concept of a 'border' has evolved from a linear geographic or political limit to a border 'ecosystem' characterized by interdependency and interaction among all those with an interest in the border."[13] Thus, those seeking to cross a country's border for any reason affect the country's governing authorities, those who live and do business within the border region, and those who live and do business farther into the interior. To the extent that borders pose vulnerabilities to sovereignty, what can and should be done to secure them responsibly?

The presence of political borders on a carefully crafted and agreed-to map is no guarantee of stability or, for that matter, sovereignty. Effective governance, carried out within those borders, is the key component to the sustainment of the absolute, unchallenged authority that ensures sovereignty. Ineffective governance in any form creates both domestic and international doubt, instability, and loss of credibility.

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[12] *Report of Proceedings, 5th Annual Sovereign Challenge Conference: Regional Issues, Global Implications, 8–11 March 2010, Key West, Florida* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2010), 31.

[13] *Report of Proceedings, 6th Annual Sovereign Challenge Conference: Borders & Security: Similarities, Differences, and Shared Affinities, 7–10 November 2010, El Paso, Texas* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2011), 4.

In the world described by General Galvin and the USSOCOM strategic planning process directive, poor governance and mismanagement can pose major threats to sovereignty. With globalization, there are now other political, social, economic, and communication 'options' available, even within a recognized border. Newly arrived populations who perceive that their needs are not being met or that they are not being fairly treated tend to seek acceptance and certainty within their own cultural or ethnic groups. There is often talk about ungoverned or undergoverned spaces. In cases of cultural isolation, the issue is often one of 'differently governed.' Innovations in thinking and action, derived and executed through a whole-of-nation approach similar to that of homeland security, are essential and must be communicated to elected and appointed officials throughout the U.S. system of government. Local efforts to sustain effective governance at the community or municipal levels are the building blocks that ensure broader responsiveness, credibility, and resilience. National and international security initiatives provide the context, and local, regional, and state officials provide the content for effective governance and unchallenged sovereignty. If local government fails, strong borders lose much of their relevance.

> *In cases of cultural isolation, the issue is often one of 'differently governed.'*

At a USSOCOM conference on borders and security, Alan Bersin, commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, acknowledged the dynamic nature of the contemporary border environment and spoke in terms of dynamic "flows" of "goods, people, capital, ideas, and information" as a more useful way of thinking about security. More specifically, he noted the requirement for a "sustained effort to 'move the borders out … not in an imperialistic sense … not in a physical sense' but rather by creating protocols for the exchange of information and the coordination of activities."[14] For instance, the exchanges of airline passenger lists provide hours of time to scan for undesirable characters during the hours the aircraft are en route to their destinations. A similar tool allows for the prescreening of cargo containers prior to their departure from foreign ports.

The result of such efforts is a blending of overlapping areas of influence and cooperation that places yet another layer of activity onto the international political system. When obvious self-interest is engaged, varying levels of shared actions are possible. But the largely unregulated global commons environment (natural resources not controlled by any one country) continues to provide venues for competition and the potential for conflict. There are issues, such as access to resources, about which ownership and sovereignty are not clear.

In such cases, agreed-to protocols either do not exist or are ineffective. The United Nations Division of Environmental Law and Conventions refers to the "resource domains or areas that lie outside of the political reach of any one nation State" as being "the High Seas, the Atmosphere, Antarctica, and Outer Space."[15] The same report goes on to note that "access to some of the

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[14] *Report of Proceedings, 6th Annual Sovereign Challenge Conference*, 39.
[15] "IEG of the Global Commons," United Nations Environment Programme Law Division, accessed on 7 April 2016, http://staging.unep.org/delc/GlobalCommons/tabid/54404/Default.aspx.

Four nations participate in ICEX 2016 in the Arctic Ocean—an exercise designed to research, test, and evaluate operational capabilities in the region as melting ice has led to easier access and competition for control. SOURCE: U.S. NAVY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS TYLER THOMPSON

resources found within the global commons, except for a few like fisheries, has been difficult and these resources have historically not been scarce to justify the attempt for exclusive control and access." However, these things are changing.

The competition for increasingly scarce resources and access opportunities offered by melting ice caused by climate change has encouraged countries to move into previously inaccessible places to establish both presence and influence, with an eye on eventual control. By doing so, potential 'gray zones' for low-intensity confrontation and conflict have developed.[16] Thus, while countries seek to suppress threats to sovereignty domestically, they must simultaneously conduct expeditionary competition for resources in remote areas of the globe. Logically, at least for the foreseeable future, international cooperation within these areas will inevitably be uneven and unpredictable.

The Preservation of Sovereignty

The preservation of sovereignty relies on a mosaic of innovative, effective, and credible governance steps at all levels, from the smallest municipality to the federal government. It requires a whole-of-government effort that is not necessarily focused on specific issues or incidents. Anticipation has become a critical task. Governance today has become so complex that it requires a level of persistent attention that was not always the case in the past. It also requires international relationships to develop, employ, and enforce shared solutions.

Geoff Demarest has written about *Winning Insurgent War*.[17] His unique approach offers a variety of perspectives and suggestions for restoring order and stability, but his thoughts can also be read as a prophylactic approach to preventing instability in the first place. The rhetoric of modern political campaigning has taken on levels of grievance, discontent, and anger not familiar in recent American memory. In an interconnected world, there are other 'options' than the existing mayor, county executive, governor, or president. The street demonstrations—and the motivations behind them—of the Arab Spring were echoed in those of the Occupy Wall Street, Tea Party, Black Lives Matter, and other activist movements.

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[16] Joseph L. Votel, Charles T. Cleveland, Charles T. Connett, and Will Irwin, "Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 80 (2016): 101–105. This article lays out the concept of the Gray Zone and its role in unconventional warfare and other contexts. The consequences of Gray Zone activities frequently create the conditions that generate the movement of populations and other activities that generated challenges to governance at the points of origin and elsewhere.
[17] Geoff Demarest, *Winning Insurgent War: Back to Basics* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: The Foreign Military Studies Office, 2011).

Demarest argues: "If an entity besides the State can grant impunity to people who defy its rules, the State fails to that extent."[18] The self-serving granting of immunity by gangs, criminal organizations, or unassimilated populations poses direct threats of varying intensity to sovereignty. If groups, and individuals within them, can arbitrarily choose which rules to follow and which to ignore, then the exercise of power through the other aspects of sovereignty are also called into question. As an example, if a traveler on a road comes upon a checkpoint where armed individuals of uncertain affiliation are collecting money to allow them to pass, then the 'legitimate' ruling authorities are not truly in charge of what is going on.

> *"If an entity besides the State can grant impunity to people who defy its rules, the State fails to that extent."*

Someone placed those gunmen on the road to extort money from travelers without any concern that the state could or would interfere. Protection rackets in urban neighborhoods, operated by criminal gangs or various ethnic-based groups with little or no interference by authorities, can similarly cause a significant loss of trust in the state. Citizens find themselves confronted with choices or options. Whose rules should be followed: the government authorities who are remote or the threatening individuals on the road? If individuals and families don't feel protected by the authorities, then power transfers to those who would do harm, whether on a remote country road or in a drug-infested urban neighborhood.

A familiar domestic law enforcement problem involves the deaths of undocumented individuals. In a typical case involving two men attempting to sprint across a street, one was struck and killed instantly. The other man raced to his side, knelt down, and removed his wallet and any other form of identification. When police and paramedics arrived a few minutes later, they had no way to identify the fatality. The undocumented man had been rendered completely anonymous. It took several days of police work to find someone who was willing to identify him.

By all indications, the man in the street was an honest laborer, a migrant simply seeking a better life. In fact, he posed no apparent threat to anyone. But he and his fellow migrants felt compelled to live in the shadows of anonymity, which also provides a haven of safety for criminals and other, less innocent, characters. Simply put, bad guys, whatever their 'specialties,' don't want to be known, thus giving them the freedom to act with impunity and without consequence. Anonymity and impunity can breed parallel political, social, and economic systems that function within established political boundaries. The Panama Papers scandal[19] that emerged in 2016, which involved leaked documents from a Panamanian law firm that revealed large-scale corruption and tax evasion linked to a number of world leaders and criminal organizations, documented the consequences of anonymity when applied to the manipulation of wealth to

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[18] Geoff Demarest, *Winning Insurgent War*, 2.
[19] At this time, the investigation is ongoing, and the founders of the law firm were arrested in February 2017. I've included links to the BBC reporting on the scandal (http://www.bbc.com/news/world-35954224, accessed on 21 April 2016) and STRATFOR analysis of the scandal (accessed 21 April 2016, https://www.stratfor.com/search/site/Panama%20Papers%20Scandal), as well as CNN reporting on the recent arrest (accessed 21 March 2017, http://www.cnn.com/2017/02/15/americas/panama-papers-mossack-fonseca-arrested-trnd/), as examples of credible sourcing.

circumvent tax laws (tax collection being a characteristic of sovereignty), launder money, and leverage other corrupt practices.

Demarest advocates detailed record keeping as one practical governance approach to addressing anonymity. He argues that "records systems that tie specific physical locations to individual identities are especially relevant" and "careful record keeping helps make personal anonymity hard to maintain."[20] He explores the long history of record keeping as a tool for governance and stability by recalling the census and inventory of property completed under William the Conqueror in 1086. That extensive collection of information was organized into the so-called Domesday Book that can be reviewed on the Internet.[21]

The tradition of the Domesday Book and record keeping continues in the offices of municipal clerks, tax and property assessors, auditors, and other public servants at all levels of government. The International Institute of Municipal Clerks describes its role as "serving the needs of municipal clerks, secretaries, treasurers, recorders and other allied associations from cities and towns worldwide."[22] Such organizations have a practical role to play in improving the quality of governance. Demarest points out that stability can be achieved in a governed space if authorities "count everything in it … Everything belongs to someone and everyone has some kind of connection with someplace, something or someone else."[23]

The "If You See Something, Say Something™" campaign by the Department of Homeland Security relies on the need to combat anonymity.[24] The hope, of course, is that, when confronted by unfamiliar persons or suspicious behavior in their neighborhoods, citizens will not be intimidated and will feel comfortable enough to contact authorities.

A Department of Homeland Security campaign reminds people to contact authorities if they see something suspicious. SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

This measure of confidence and trust is not confined to faraway places and situations most Americans experience only on evening news programs. Even domestic systems of record keeping and accountability can become frayed. Land uses, codified in zoning ordinances, attempt to organize how property is to be used to provide a balance between desirable residential areas with other land designated for profitable commercial and industrial purposes. Zoning variances are a legitimate way to adapt those rules to accommodate specific uses or non-standard situations. Authorities must ensure both that the original zoning standards are enforced and that zoning variances are not manipulated to the benefit of a few. Failure to do so undermines the authority of the governing unit and sends the message that proper

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[20] Demarest, *Winning Insurgent War*, 3.
[21] Open Domesday, accessed on 15 April 2016, http://opendomesday.org/.
[22] "About Us," The International Institute of Municipal Clerks, accessed 21 April 2016, http://www.iimc.com/index.aspx?nid=268.
[23] Demarest, *Winning Insurgent War*, 4.
[24] "If You See Something, Say Something™," U.S. Department of Homeland Security, accessed on 15 April 2016, https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something.

land use is not an important concern. Loss of confidence in the process of land use, zoning rules, and zoning enforcement is sure to generate grievances that are difficult to address.

Governance responsibilities below the federal level are not necessarily restricted to domestic issues, although they are the most immediate. As noted, challenges to governance can originate in places far away and then spread through the movement of people, ideology, goods, and other forms of influence. Thus, any effort at a whole-of-government/whole-of-nation governance approach has to account for the international geopolitical environment. It is there that SOF and its interagency partners have major roles to play.

Interagency Approaches

There exists the oft-stated general agreement that whole-of-government/whole-of-nation approaches mark the most effective path to effective governance. This standard relies on a well-led mosaic of agencies, skill sets, resources, and effort to achieve consistent and effective governance in all areas of responsibility. It must be as animated, aggressive, and sustained as the challenges it is designed to address. Good governance demands high-quality problem solving. Contemporary grievances, provided visibility by the media and various other forms of agitation, can generate a loss of trust in government, business, and other social institutions, and result in instability. A quick scan of almost any morning's news headlines provides timely examples.

John Rendon regularly speaks about how governments must turn their attention to public engagement and dialogue by practicing "Streetcraft" rather than "Statecraft"[25] to maintain effective governance, credibility, and sovereignty. When the disenchanted take to the streets and voice their grievances and anger, they create venues for debate and, perhaps, negotiation, powered by social media. Social media serves as a force multiplier for such street populism because to 'go viral' on social media gains instant visibility that spreads far and wide through both new and traditional media.

Substantive programs to provide services, build interactive communities, and address grievances should be the goals of governance at all levels. Interagency efforts to assist in governance should assist in providing expertise, perspective, and necessary resources. They cannot and should not try to match the comprehensive structure of the National Preparedness and National Incident Management Systems. However, a whole-of-government/whole-of-nation structure can be built to which local government officials can turn to improve their own skills and the quality of life within their communities. The consequences of good governance are stability and confidence in the decision makers. Ideally, effective governance will build a level of public satisfaction so that, when extremist ideologies appear (as they surely will), their audiences will be smaller and less willing to listen than they might have been.

The consequences of good governance are stability and confidence in the decision makers.

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[25] John Rendon, "From the CEO: Personalized and Personal Democracy," The Rendon Group, accessed on 14 April 2016, http://www.rendon.com/from-the-ceo-personalized-and-personal-democracy/.

Dr. Boaz Ganor, a counterterrorism expert at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, said: "Combating terrorism is the most multi-disciplinary field of study that there is."[26] Disciplines and activities involved include military actions, law enforcement, rule of law and judicial systems, medicine and healthcare, forensics, finance, economics, intelligence, diplomacy, open-source information, anthropology, social sciences, and strategic communication. His view is important because the comprehensive menu of activities he identifies is helpful in shaping a whole-of-government approach for effective, multi-level governance. His list is not exhaustive, but he provides a broad outline for the kinds of expertise and resources that would be required both domestically and internationally to address instability.

> *"Combating terrorism is the most multi-disciplinary field of study that there is."*

A practical example comes from an unexpected source. Major James Love, in his JSOU monograph on Hezbollah, has written that "Hezbollah's overwhelming success … and subsequent political power in the Lebanese political system is attributed to its use of social services."[27] The Social Service Section of the organization "attempts to support every deficiency and grievance within the three Shi'a areas."[28] Obviously, the inclusion of Hezbollah here is because of the 'what' and 'how' of their activities, not the 'why.'

More specifically, its reconstruction group is focused on improving the living conditions of those living in poverty and repairing war damage in the region. As another way of asserting influence, Hezbollah "openly assists populations from other sects and religions."[29] This comprehensive approach to governance by Hezbollah serves to build strong support and loyalty by meeting the needs of the populations who are permanent residents or who find themselves, however temporarily, in the area. Love predicts that, because of the efforts of the Social Service Section, "Hezbollah will continue to gain influence through the political process and eventually dominate Lebanese politics."[30] There are surely lessons for effective governance in other places within the Hezbollah model.

Another case study that considers the role of comprehensive, population-centric governance in bringing about stability concerns the long-standing 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland. After long years spent searching for solutions, Dr. Thomas H. Henriksen argues that, in Northern Ireland, "Britain's nonmilitary responses to the paramilitary violence played the major role in the eventual pacification, far outweighing the counterinsurgency measures of small-unit foot patrols, intelligence gathering, and minimal use of force."[31] He notes that leadership of civic action

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[26] Dr. Boaz Ganor is the Dean and Robert Lauder Chair for Counter-Terrorism at the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy and the Founder and Executive Director of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the IDC in Herzliya, Israel (http://portal.idc.ac.il/faculty/en/pages/profile.aspx?username=ganor). Over the years, he has spoken frequently to international classes on combating terrorism for JSOU, and regularly includes this observation.

[27] James B. Love, *Hezbollah: Social Services as a Source of Power* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, June 2010), 37.

[28] Ibid., 22.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid., 37.

[31] Thomas H. Henriksen, *What Really Happened in Northern Ireland's Counterinsurgency: Revision and Revelation* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, October 2008), 30.

programs gradually shifted from military commanders to civil authorities and that "The Arsenal of Victory: Local Government, Jobs, Houses, and Education" was central to final success.[32]

He points out that the long-established hatred of the governing authorities was tamped down, if not totally eliminated, by a systematic effort that engaged different levels of the government. "By addressing the roots of Catholic discontent and discrimination, British governments siphoned off enough anger, enticed enough collaborators, and neutralized enough opposition that it undermined much of the minority's support for Irish Republican Army violence and led to a peaceful political resolution. The Sinn Fein leadership realized it could not win if its blood-loyal rank-and-file began drifting away to new homes, educational opportunities, and steady jobs."[33]

Specific situations will inevitably vary. The cases of Hezbollah and Northern Ireland illustrate how the various tools of governance can be applied to both established and newly arrived populations. Dr. Ganor's menu of disciplines and activities offers a glimpse of what is available to assist with assimilation, demonstrate effective domestic governance, and strengthen sovereignty by addressing needs and grievances. A related approach relies on the reverse engineering of current events to understand what is going on and provide a sense of the expertise and skill sets required. The consequences of such thinking—

> *The importance of assimilation efforts that accommodate identity cannot be overstated in this effort.*

facilitated by a comprehensive, whole-of-government effort to build public trust, loyalty, and investment in the process—can provide consistent, effective governance and ensure sovereignty. The importance of assimilation efforts that accommodate identity cannot be overstated here.

The persistent invocation of 'complex' is certainly an apt description of the contemporary geopolitical environment, but should not be tolerated as an excuse for inattention, inaction, or mismanagement. Clear thinking and appropriate tools exist for mitigating complexity. Clearly defined, whole-of-government/whole-of-nation approaches can provide the strategic direction and structure for those efforts. General Galvin and the USSOCOM strategic planning process provide us with ways of thinking about what is going on around us and helping us to understand the critical roles played by the constant flux within those environments. Bersin and Demarest present complementary and practical approaches for governance measures that simultaneously address security, stability, and sovereignty. There are more approaches out there to develop and employ.

What is required is an interagency, whole-of-government response that addresses both the domestic and international consequences of the dynamic geopolitical environment. They should be focused on three areas of activity, each presenting a different problem set in need of solutions. Each task must be addressed simultaneously:

1. Mitigate the conditions at the **points of origin** for the movement of populations to reduce the motivation of migrants and refugees to leave their homes and set out on an uncertain path;

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[32] Ibid.
[33] Henriksen, *What Really Happened in Northern Ireland's Counterinsurgency*, 47–48.

2. Manage the **transit points** to care for people and process them for onward movement or return to their original homes based on harmonized screening standards; and

3. Assimilate refugees and migrants who are accepted from the transit points into their **destinations**. Domestically, there are programs, which are too often viewed as pots of money that must be expended by the end of each fiscal year (30 September). What is too often lacking is a vision for the use of those funds and the plans to animate those funds toward a productive outcome.

Transitioning from task #2 to task #3 is perhaps the most challenging, as decisions have to be made about who will be allowed to continue onward and who will be returned to their point of origin. Essentially, the strategic goals should be to limit the motivation to leave, care for the people on their journey, and encourage assimilation upon arrival. The process must be efficient and effective. Those caught up in population flows have both needs and expectations about their opportunities to move on and establish lives in new places. Delays in meeting basic human needs or failing to fulfill those expectations can be very destabilizing.

Once again, the distinctions between what is happening internationally and domestically are increasingly blurred. Events elsewhere in the world are generating consequences for government officials in American villages, towns, cities, counties, and states. Mass movements of populations under stress offer compelling evidence that the quality of governance in places like Syria, Iraq, Southwest Asia, Africa, and Central and South America can affect governance practices and decision making in the U.S., Europe, and elsewhere. Thus, improving the quality of governance at home includes paying attention to events going on elsewhere in the world. Often it may be that the mitigation of conditions internationally becomes the best we can hope for.

The Role of Special Operations Forces

Having outlined the domestic and international challenges faced by government officials at all levels of responsibility, it's important to understand the various overseas capabilities to mitigate the trends and flows that find their way to the United States. SOF play important roles in wide-ranging interagency efforts to provide effective governance while addressing international challenges to U.S. sovereignty. When points of instability arise that could pose challenges to the U.S. domestic governance network, it becomes necessary to muster the necessary political will, skill sets, and resources to act in these areas of uncertainty and instability.

As with all interagency partners, SOF bring with them specialized skill and mission sets that can be applied at points of greatest need to create stabilizing effects. Among the most relevant to this discussion are foreign internal defense, security force assistance, foreign humanitarian assistance, military information support operations, and civil affairs operations.[34] Through these and related efforts, SOF can assist in shaping the conditions in areas of instability so that populations are less motivated to flee their homes and set off for new destinations. An important

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[34] *Special Operations Forces Reference Manual*, Fourth Edition (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, June 2015), 1-6.

goal of a governance interagency apparatus should be to reduce stress on domestic government units by making long, dangerous journeys for migrants unattractive and unnecessary. One way is by assisting local authorities at points of origin to stabilize their areas and mitigate grievances, tasks regularly performed by SOF.

Beyond doctrinal roles and missions, SOF also provide important value-added expertise, skills, and experience to the interagency governance process. First of all, SOF function as a tool for addressing uncertainty. They

The commander of Special Operations Task Force - South shakes the hand of the 8th Special Operations Kandak commander after opening a clinic to provide medical care to local villagers in Afghanistan. SOURCE: U.S. ARMY STAFF SGT. KAILY BROWN/RELEASED

provide the interagency process with a knowledgeable, experienced, and trusted presence on the ground, where such traits are most needed. With a broad range of SOF capabilities functioning at any given time in scores of countries, it is reasonable to assume that SOF teams are in or very near to places of greatest immediate concern. That persistent presence on the ground greatly reduces the response time between the interagency development of policy and strategy and the commencement of intended activities in the field. Obviously, not all of the tasks will be performed by SOF assets, but SOF can provide an anchor for the activities of other interagency partners.

Given a SOF presence and SOF cultural knowledge and insights, language aptitude, relevant skill sets, diverse expertise, and varied experience, the evolution from interagency discussion and planning to desired effects can move quickly. SOF also have established indigenous relationships and built levels of trust that can allow for both access to the host nation and, along with the country team, approval to act in a mutually agreed manner. An established, functioning, and effective SOF presence can add clarity by developing the situation, assessing immediate causes, and framing a common operating picture that enhances interagency understanding of the scope of the situation. SOF insights can also suggest specific steps to be taken to shape or create favorable conditions for success.

SOF can provide the interagency structure with an expanded strategic reach through the various relationships and networks that have developed over the last 15 or more years of intense interaction with similar forces from other countries. The ability to create effects is expanded by harmonizing and synchronizing efforts with those other SOF entities who share similar responsibilities.

While promoting the notion of civilian power, *The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (QDDR)[35] anticipated the whole-of-government efforts that are required in the international environment to address both uncertainty and instability and to shape the environments for success. The QDDR acknowledges the roles of the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, and the DOD in serving as the 'three pillars' of national security, and the critical roles played by other agencies from throughout the federal government and other government units engaged with the process.

Conclusion

As a rule, governance at any level is not simply a matter of choosing between a couple of options; it involves a menu of possibilities. The decisions and actions of thousands of elected and appointed officials combine to affect the quality of life, security, stability, and sovereignty of their citizens and others. Though strict consistency among countries is neither possible nor reasonable to expect, a coordinated international response to a shared concern is essential. Domestically, a government unit at any level that, for instance, offers unusually generous benefits and government services is likely to attract large numbers of individuals and families to its offices. A single grievance that receives public compensation in one township governance unit quickly generates a surge of identical complaints and demands for restitution throughout a region. That is rarely helpful.

From an international perspective, Afghan interpreters who came to the U.S. always had two specific destinations on their 'possible' lists: California, mostly because of established Afghan enclaves, and northern Virginia, because of what they perceived to be generous social services benefits. Piecemeal, uncoordinated management of need, wherever it exists, is a pursuit without end.

Recognizable results are essential. Because of its frequently amorphous nature, clear notions of interagency leadership and measures of effectiveness are basic requirements for achieving success. The perpetuation of process at the expense of a clearly defined governance outcome—the so-called 'self-licking ice cream cone'—is not a productive application of resources, no matter the worthiness of the cause. Randomness is not a virtue.

Neither is being overly sensitive to outside criticism. Politicians, celebrities, and even Pope Francis have travelled to places such as the Greek islands of Chios, Kos, Lesbos, and Kastellorizo to demonstrate their solidarity with the migrant victims. Frequently, they also find time to express criticism of the government authorities responsible for addressing the crisis.

Crises of the magnitude of the ongoing flows of people and materials across traditional borders require more than staking out political or ideological positions. They demand comprehensive domestic and international efforts that are coordinated among those most affected. Distance, geography, and national identity are not necessarily factors in deciding who can and should contribute.

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[35] U.S. Department of State, *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 2010).

Within a variety of scenarios, SOF can and have played important roles in managing the movements of peoples, from their displacement from home villages to final assimilation. SOF expertise and experience can assist the wider U.S. government interagency by serving as facilitators on the ground. Working with their various international partners, SOF provide an important presence at every stage of an unfolding migratory crisis.

A U.S. Army chaplain participates in a humanitarian aid mission meant to provide for families in need while deepening the cultural understanding between U.S. service members, the Afghan National Army, and the local populace. SOURCE: U.S. ARMY SPC. SARA WAKAI/RELEASED

It may be counterintuitive, but the body of knowledge derived from SOF retail-level expertise and experiences with individuals from different cultures can also provide value in educating mayors, county executives, and governors. These individuals have no such background, but it is their responsibility to build programs that facilitate assimilation of unfamiliar cultures into their own communities.

Events and experiences over the past decades have established that what happens in places like Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and Central and South America almost inevitably will have impact in other places, such as Europe, North America, and Australia. For government officials at all levels, events unfolding on the evening news now find expression in their own jurisdictions. That reality should no longer surprise anyone in a world where anticipation and visioning have become true imperatives.

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