

# SO/LIC SPECIAL OPERATIONS/ LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT DIVISION NEWS



Volume 21, Number 3

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIVISION CHAIRMAN

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIVISION CHAIRMAN



**Ms. Irene H. Sanders**  
**Chairman**  
**SO/LIC Division**

To all members, friends and staff of the NDIA SO/LIC Board:

We're off to a great start! It's been a busy three months. Under the leadership of Jim Gavrilis and Glenn Ayers, we are well on our way to solidifying our commitments from Keynote speakers and panel participants for our annual symposium. (Special thanks to our Panel Coordinators, as well!)

This year's theme is, *"Defense, Diplomacy, and Development: Translating Policy into Operational Capability."* Save the dates of February 8-9, 2011 and spread the word! We will have a stellar line-up and, as always, the event will be a superb networking opportunity!

Thanks to Professional Development Chair, Tim Davidson's efforts, we've had three wonderful Guest Speakers: our own Giles Kyser; Lt Gen Eric Fiel, USAF, Deputy Commander, USSOCOM; and Dr Carl Hunt. More to come: Colonel Jim Gferrer, USMC, Commander of Marine Corps Information Operations Command at Quantico will be our December presenter. (PLEASE NOTE: to have a larger venue, the December 7 monthly Board Meeting will be held at Lockheed Martin's Washington Operations location at 2121 Crystal Drive (Suite 100). Be sure to register online!)

Our Outreach Chairs, Otto Perotto and Mike Ecker, organized a successful no-host social at Champp's Sports Pub in Pentagon Row on October 21. We invited local and visiting Joint, Inter-agency, and Industry SOF personnel and their guests to attend and interact with local colleagues, and almost 40 folks participated. This was the inauguration of a quarterly event which we will rotate around the DC area. Watch for specifics on our January event!

Everyone's ops tempo seems to be intensifying, and it's often difficult to carve out a few hours a month, but I encourage you to make that effort to stay informed and connected. We're making every attempt to make it worth your while, and we can make it even more meaningful if you let us know how you can contribute and what you'd like us to substantively address.

Many thanks,  
Irene

Chairman  
SO/LIC Division

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### SO/LIC EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

GUEST SPEAKER: COL JIM GFRERER, USMC,  
DIRECTOR, MARINE CORPS IO COMMAND,  
QUANTICO

DECEMBER 7, 2010  
LOCKHEED MARTIN  
WASHINGTON OPERATIONS  
ARLINGTON, VA

### DETAILS AVAILABLE ONLINE!

[HTTP://WWW.NDIA.ORG/MEETINGS/1880](http://www.ndia.org/meetings/1880)

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### 22nd ANNUAL SO/LIC SYMPOSIUM & EXHIBITION

FEBRUARY 8-9, 2011  
MARRIOTT WARDMAN PARK  
WASHINGTON, DC

### DETAILS AVAILABLE ONLINE!

[HTTP://WWW.NDIA.ORG/MEETINGS/1880](http://www.ndia.org/meetings/1880)

## WOUNDED WARRIORS RANGE DAY

Members of the NDIA SO/LIC Board assisted in putting together a Range Day at the Stoney Creek Fishing & Hunting Club in Pasadena, MD on October 23, 2010. Over 50 Warriors and some of their spouses or care-givers enjoyed a day at the rifle, pistol and Trap ranges. Weapons, ammunition and ear protection were provided by Team One Network; ESS provided 50 sets of shooting glasses for the shooters; and Stoney Creek provided sandwiches, french fries and the associated range control and ranges. NDIA members acted as weapons trainers and event facilitators. While we expected 3 hours of shooting, the Warriors stayed for 6 hours! Several Warriors expressed their appreciation and added that the Range Day was some of the very best therapy they had received.



## MARSOC: Global Perspective on Securing a Nation

**The U.S. Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) is tasked as the nation's Marine Corps representative for special operations actions critical to execution of the U.S.-led Global War on Terror.**

*Submitted by MARSOC Public Affairs.*

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### EMERGING FORECAST

The decision to create a MARSOC comes after several years of considerable effort on the part of SOCOM, the Marine Corps and the Pentagon to build a Marine contribution to a community that has been heavily used since the war on terrorism began. In our ongoing efforts to build a command with long-term relevancy that USSOCOM can employ across the spectrum of SOF engagement methods, MARSOC's top priority is to select and train Marines who will eventually be capable of conducting missions that can help shape the long-term strategic environment using capabilities to separate reconcilables from irreconcilables.

### MISSION GWOT

MARSOC is part of SOCOM's goal to be the premier team of special warriors, thoroughly prepared, properly equipped, and highly motivated: at the right place, at the right time, facing the right adversary, leading the Global War on Terrorism, accomplishing strategic objectives of the United States. The Global War on Terror has dramatically expanded our requirement for SOF. MARSOC has created a new group of mature, experienced, and combat tested men who add both special operations capacity and capability – a strong positive step in protecting our way of life.

Our two part mission is clear. One is to “plan, direct, and execute the Global War on Terrorism” as the lead combatant command. The other is “train and equip” Special Operations Forces. With energy, focus, skill and determination, we will take the fight to the enemy and win. The future of this Nation demands it. MARSOC brings the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) mentality to SOF.

The Marine Corps is inherently expeditionary in nature and regularly organizes its units so that they have the ability to work in austere environments with very little reach back requirement. MARSOC incorporates fused intelligence capabilities, combat support (CS), and combat service support (CSS) directly into our units at the lowest level so that they are specifically task-organized and self-sustaining. We simply took the MAGTF mindset inherent in the Marine Corps, compressed it into a smaller team, and trained and equipped that team exclusively and specifically for special operations missions.

### TRAINING FOCUS

Future training will continue to focus on honing our core competencies and capabilities and our language and cultural depth, in order to develop regionally-focused Marine Special Operations Companies with land and littoral capabilities that redefine the “clear, hold, build” concept through persistent engagement. These primary areas of work include:

- ▶ Foreign Internal Defense (FID), which is a critical program to assist in nation building and participation by civilian and military agencies of a government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.
- ▶ Direct Action (DA), which involves short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions by special operations forces or special operations-capable units to seize, destroy, capture, recover, or inflict damage on designated personnel or materiel.
- ▶ Special Reconnaissance (SR), which are reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted by special operations forces for information collection on actual or potential enemies. It also includes target acquisition, area assessment, and post-strike reconnaissance.
- ▶ Counterterrorism (CT), which are offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism.
- ▶ Information Operations (IO), which is the use of offensive and defensive information means to degrade, destroy, and exploit an adversary's information-based process while protecting one's own.

## **SOCOM MARINE ARM**

MARSOC's role within SOCOM has expanded in that MARSOC is better able to assist SOCOM in stabilizing fragile governments so that they can defend their sovereignty, not only territorially, but economically and culturally as well. MARSOC does this by maintaining an enduring 1-SOTF and 2-MSOC presence while still allowing the command the flexibility to support additional SOCOM requirements as they arise. In our ongoing efforts to build a command with long-term relevancy that USSOCOM can employ across the spectrum of SOF engagement methods, the top priority remains in selecting and training Marines into regional experts who can operate in an area and work by, with, and through the native population. We must continue to develop our Marines and Sailors who will eventually be capable of conducting missions that can help shape the long-term strategic environment.

MARSOC's outstanding requirements to support our current mission set have been or will be addressed through the USSOCOM Acquisition Program process. This applies to Special Operations Forces (SOF) peculiar items only. If we require specific SOF peculiar equipment that is not resident or not compatible with our "service common" USMC equipment, then, we take steps to pursue a SOF solution to meet mission requirements from the current USSOCOM Program of Record equipment inventory.

The recognition that MARSOC would require SOF Peculiar equipment to conduct the SOCOM directed missions was instantaneous with our establishment in 2006 and into 2007. Presently, we have over 100 various SOF peculiar equipment items that are currently Programs of Record at USSOCOM. Our top four areas of emphasis in order for equipment to support our assigned SOCOM missions are: Persistent Intelligence - Surveillance - Reconnaissance (ISR)/Biometrics/Command, Control, Communication and Computers (C4)/Counter IED.

## **SOF INITIATIVES**

As previously stated, MARSOC has or is in the process of fielding over 100 Programs of Record items that are SOF peculiar pieces of equipment. This equipment covers the following mission support areas of the SOF community:

- ▶ Target Engagement Systems (VAS, Weapons, and Ammo/Demolition).
- ▶ Soldier Systems (Special Operations Forces Personal Equipment Advanced Requirements [SPEAR] includes Body armor, Ballistic Plates, Load Carriage Systems, VAS Mounts, Packs, Protective Combat Uniforms, Modular Glove System, SOF Eye Protection, and Modular Integrated Communication Helmet [MICH] and MICH Communications), SOF Tactical Combat Casualty Care kits, and SOF Tactical Advanced Parachute System (SOFTAPS).
- ▶ Family of SOF Vehicles (MRAPS, GMVs, LTATVs, and Non-Standard Commercial Vehicles). Additionally, MARSOC receives a large portion of its equipment through the USMC. This "service common" equipment represents the vast majority of items we have in our inventory. Currently we use over 175K of various line items of equipment covering Communications, Engineering, General Supply, Motor Transport, and Ordnance.

## **PEOPLE DRIVEN**

As with any new organizations, and as we continue to grow to our authorized strength and continue to support SOCOM missions as directed, there are inevitably some challenges but none that cannot be overcome. Our focus is on our most precious asset – our people. Whether it is recruiting, screening, assessment or selection of the right Marines and Sailors serving in MARSOC, we remain committed to taking care of them as our most critical component of our mission. We identify the right people to do special operations; we make sure they have the very best equipment and the right training so that they can do the things that SOCOM and the Geographic Combatant Commanders ask of them.

We ask an awful lot of our people. They operate in small groups in remote areas beyond the front lines. They're tasked with forging relationships that cross national and cultural barriers. This integration into and acceptance by local populaces allows long-term impacts on the stability of a region. And, regional stability is the key to reducing the effects of religious fundamentalism and economic crises. MARSOC will continue to expand its role in developing and deploying Marines and Sailors with the critical skills that allow them to embrace irregular warfare and integrate all of their capabilities to achieve success on the unconventional battlefield. Our Marines and Sailors epitomize the adage of ... "No Better Friend; No Worse Enemy."

The number of names on the MARSOC memorial reflects our commitment to our country and the commitment of MARSOC families to our service. There are debts you can repay and debts that you cannot. We can never repay our families for their sacrifices but we can support them to the very best of our abilities.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *LtCol Jim Diehl, USMC (Ret)*

Whether through a flash of youthful insight or by old age and experience, most of us in this business realize that our country's responses to crises usually involve the Special Operations community and/or their brethren in the Intelligence Community—usually both.

Thus, while we all have insights and opinions on how events went down, our insights are frequently limited by the level at which we served (tactical/operational/strategic), geography, and by the time in which our part of the national effort(s) took place. This review is intended to present a broad spectrum of authors, each of whom can add to your understanding of our early post-9/11 engagements within Afghanistan.

For those who were part of the fight against terrorism being used as a weapon against the United States in the decades before 9/11, Robert Baer's **See No Evil** will be an enjoyable and informative read, offering insights into the functioning of the CIA in response to unfolding events and emerging threats and personalities.

If you are looking for a higher level perspective on what was going on in the years leading up to 9/11, Richard Clarke has written **Against All Enemies** to describe his eight years as the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism. Clarke tries mightily to convince the reader that, even though Bill Clinton was President during multiple terrorist attacks and offered only ineffectual responses, the fault for 9/11 was everyone else's—and should be placed mostly on George Bush. It is an unpersuasive book.

I would recommend that the serious reader invest his or her time in the more comprehensive, scholarly work authored by Steve Coll: **Ghost Wars**. Coll connects Afghan, Pakistani, Saudi, and U.S. personalities and events over the preceding quarter century to help the reader understand the flow of cause and effects—including unintended ones.

For those willing to pick up the story on 9/12, Gary Schroen's **First In; An Insider's Account of How the CIA Spearheaded the War on Terror in Afghanistan** presents an interesting and detailed timeline of the CIA's actions, dealing principally with the Northern Alliance. It also makes a strong case for a robust human intelligence service in which individuals can build decades of trust based on repeated assignments. The book's weakness, however, is attributing the slower pace of USSOCOM's response principally to an excess of caution.

To balance the scale, I recommend reading **Kill Bin Laden** by Dalton Fury (a pseudonym). Fury is a Delta troop leader who provides a readable account of the early deployment forward (and subsequent rotations) working by, with, and through local tribes to provide the forces chasing Usama bin Laden through Tora Bora. For those practiced in unconventional warfare, the tales of tribal jealousies and other agendas will ring true.

My strongest endorsement goes to Sean Naylor's **Not a Good Day to Die**, an exceptionally well-written account of the planning leading up to, and the execution of, Operation Anaconda in the Shah-i-Khot Valley. Naylor's work encompasses the roles played by conventional and special operations forces, as well as that envisioned for friendly tribesmen backed by U.S. SOF advisors. This book belongs on the shelf of serious students of the type of warfare with which we will have to deal for the foreseeable future. While Naylor skillfully takes on Operation Anaconda in his book, he cannot get into details with specific engagements. Filling in with first person accounts of two notable engagements from that period are **Two Wars** and **Lone Survivor**.

The author of **Two Wars**, then-CAPT Nate Self, commanded the Ranger QRF which was launched to assist any surviving SEALs on Takur Ghar, a peak overlooking the Shah-i-Khot Valley. Self's work provides an hour-by-hour description of the assault, the impact of extant capability gaps, e.g. the restrictions on gunship support in daylight, and the challenges which arise when remote commanders without ground combat experience take over control of a prolonged ground fight. This is Self's story of commanding a small number of tenacious Rangers, AFSOC pararescuemen, and Nightstalker crewmembers facing over 200 attackers. In hindsight, there is much that could have been done differently—and hopefully, will be corrected before the situation arises again. (*Another aside: The sterling professional dedication and the unique capabilities of the 160th SOAR came through in every account I read.*)

**Lone Survivor** tells the story of a four-man SEAL team on Operation Redwing. The tale of their discovery by Afghan shepherds and decision to release them—but still press on with their mission (in lieu of requesting extraction)—is well-known. Details of their subsequent engagements with more than 100 fighters, however, are less publicized. The book is informative, but its utility to students of warfare is limited by security restrictions, limiting the author's freedom of topics, as well as the depth to which key issues are addressed. The book does, however, absolutely highlight the need for human geography—not polygons on an overlay to tell you which tribes live where, but who trusts whom (or not) and why. Knowledge of customs and values is perhaps even more important than insight into politics—especially in a region where values endure for centuries, but allegiances can shift with the prevailing wind.

Finally, to complete your understanding of the SEAL mission in inserting onto the peak of Takur Ghar, read **Robert's Ridge** by Malcolm MacPherson. Principally through interviews with participants and access to the after action reports, MacPherson pieces together the story of the initial failed insertion attempt, the repeated attempts to go back to rescue Petty Officer First Class Neil Roberts, and the heroic fighting which ensues after attempts to land the CH-47s in the face of hostile fire results in numerous losses of both men and helicopters. The lessons of that day underscore the need to push for the very best intelligence available.

*Note: The views expressed above are solely those of the author. Jim Diehl is a Marine with long ties to the Special Operations community. Since his retirement from active duty, he has been a member of the Intelligence Community. These opinions are his own and do not represent endorsement by NDIA, DoD, or the IC.*

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## GOT AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

As a service to the community, we would like to include an events calendar in this Newsletter. If you know of a Change of Command, event or other function and would like to get the word out to our various components, please send the date, location and particulars to NDIA SO/LIC Board Members, Gene Russell or Jim Diehl. We will work to include your information in the next Newsletter.

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