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## NPS in the News Weekly Media Report - Dec 27, 2022 - Jan 9, 2023

Naval Postgraduate School (U.S.)

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# NPS IN THE NEWS

## Weekly Media Report – Dec 27- Jan 9, 2023

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### RESEARCH:

#### [It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's ... Time to Plan for Drones in Other Domains](#)

*(Modern War Institute 5 Jan 23) ... Zachary Kallenborn*

On October 29, Ukraine deployed a total of sixteen drones in an attack on the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The extent of the physical damage inflicted by the attack is unclear, though a Russian minehunter and a frigate appear to have been damaged. But the larger psychological effects were significant: Russia appears to have withdrawn many of its ships, moving them to more secure ports, which limits the firepower and presence they can provide. Russia also upgraded the defenses of those ports, adding numerous booms throughout the area. But that didn't stop another Ukrainian attack with unmanned vehicles on Novorossiysk a couple weeks later... States are increasingly connecting numerous drones into integrated drone swarms that may operate in multiple domains simultaneously. For example, Russia is developing multidomain swarms in which UAVs guide heavy UGVs. Likewise, the US Navy has developed small USV swarms, while the **Naval Postgraduate School** is exploring "super swarms" involving thousands of drones. That creates a dilemma for defenders: Which drones should be the priority? Is it better to blind the UAVs providing guidance to a UGV mounted with a cannon, or target the ground vehicle? Can weapons like high-powered microwaves transition between and fire from a sufficiently large range of angles to counter drones operating in multiple domains? The Sevastopol attacks show integration into a single system is not necessary to raise these dilemmas, though dynamic, AI-driven maneuver may exacerbate the dilemmas drastically.

### FACULTY:

#### [Joint Forces and Integrated Deterrence: Rebalancing China in the Western Pacific](#)

*(Small Wars Journal 31 Dec 22) ... Naval Postgraduate School Associate Professors Douglas A. Borer and Shannon C. Houck*

Since the mid-1970s, defending the Asia-Pacific Area of Responsibility has fallen primarily to the US Navy. Having no war to fight in theater since Korea and Vietnam, the conventional US Army and Marine Corp assumed a supporting role for intermittent troop surges in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, during the last twenty years, the U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) have been highly active in the counter-terrorism fight throughout Asia while simultaneously building foreign partnership capacity across the region. Today, in late 2022, with the rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a Naval power, the conventional US Army, Marine Corps, and SOF must all show their relevance to the Navy-lead Joint Force as it prepares for a peer-to-peer fight with a PRC that now has more ships than the U.S. Distributed and networked land-based forces, mostly consisting of very small units, should be seen as platforms of integrated deterrence in the same manner that surface ships, submarines, and aircraft are viewed today.

#### [An Honest Broker No Longer: The United States Between Turkey and Greece](#)

*(War On the Rocks 3 Jan 23) ... Ryan Gingeras*

Over the course of 2022, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has maintained a steady drumbeat of provocations targeting Greece. The year began with his foreign ministry issuing a statement threatening to declare Greece's sovereignty as "debatable" if it continued to "militarize" its Aegean islands. Since threatening to move against Greece's Aegean territories in September, Turkey's president has seized upon the unveiling of a new line of



ballistic missiles as an opportunity to up the ante. He boasted that the country's new Tayfun missiles had "driven the Greeks crazy" and noted that Athens could now be comfortably targeted. At the start of December, he echoed these sentiments again and added that Greece "should not stay comfortable." If Athens attempted to ship American weapons to its Aegean islands, "a country like Turkey," he enigmatically warned, "will probably not pick pears." American representatives have responded to these threats with public admonitions. State Department Spokesperson Ned Price recently reiterated Washington's "regret" over Erdogan's provocations. "All that an escalation of rhetoric will do," he emphasized, "is to raise tensions and to distract us from the unity of purpose ... that we need to confront any number of challenges," namely the dangers of a more aggressive Russia... Ryan Gingeras is a professor in the Department of National Security Affairs at the **Naval Postgraduate School** and is an expert on Turkish, Balkan, and Middle East history. He is the author of six books, including the forthcoming *The Last Days of the Ottoman Empire* (to be released by Penguin in October 2022).

## **How NATO Can Keep Pace With Hybrid Threats in the Black Sea Region and Beyond**

*(Atlantic Council 4 Jan 23)* ... Arnold C. Dupuy

Russian attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure in recent months have highlighted the devastating impact of twenty-first-century warfare and the resulting vulnerability of civilian life. A major component of modern warfare is the hybrid threat, in which Russia is a most aggressive perpetrator... Arnold C. Dupuy is a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council IN TURKEY, a faculty member of the US **Naval Postgraduate School**, and chair of the NATO Science and Technology Organization's SAS-183, "Energy Security Capabilities, Resilience and Interoperability."

## **STUDENTS:**

### **The United States Does Not Have a Principal-Agent Problem in Syria**

*(Small Wars Journal 5 Jan 23)* ... Sean W Dummitt

A principal-agent problem occurs "when the desires or goals of the principal and agent conflict and it is difficult or expensive for the principal to verify what the agent is doing." U.S. policymakers and members of the Special Operations community often present this problem when evaluating the relationship between the U.S. and its Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) partners in Syria. The principal-U.S. Special Operations Forces—and the agent-Syrian Democratic Forces—were once aligned in their objectives during large-scale combat operations to defeat the Da'esh physical caliphate until the group's collapse in 2019. Today, however, the landscape of the battlefield is starkly different, necessitating renewed deliberation. This article argues that a principal-agent problem still does not exist between the U.S. and the SDF in Syria. It will demonstrate that the SDF remain a dependable partner in ensuring the enduring defeat of Da'esh, countering the Iranian Threat Network, and avoiding escalation with Turkey. This assertion will be examined through three fundamental transformations in the military environment since the introduction of Special Operations advisors in 2015: the transition from combat operations to regional security, facing the Iranian Threat Network, and restraining from escalating with a NATO ally... Sean W Dummitt is a U.S. Army Special Forces Captain assigned to the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

### **Contemporary Need for Special Forces in United Nations Peace Operations**

*(Small Wars Journal 5 Jan 23)* ... Ernest Bosompem Darkwah

Conflicts in the world have taken a complex dimension which has affected the traditional approach to Peace Operations. Violent conflicts around the world have mostly been intra-state conflict with few inter-states conflicts occurring occasionally. The regionalization of modern conflicts, which interlinks political, socio-economic and military issues across borders, has seen many conflicts become less responsive to traditional forms of resolution. Time and again, civilians become the targets of violence in conflicts. In the last 30 years of internal armed conflicts, nearly one million civilians have been killed in deliberate attacks by armed groups. These conflicts require the deployment of a robust intervention force by the international community to prevent genocides and also protect the populace from the scourge of war... Lieutenant Colonel Ernest Bosompem Darkwah is a Ghanaian Military Officer who has participated in six different United Nation peacekeeping missions. He holds a postgraduate master's degree in Defense and International Politics from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. He is currently pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Defense Analysis (Irregular Warfare) at the **Naval Postgraduate School**, Monterey, California.



## ALUMNI:

### [Getting Down to Business](#)

*(Virginia Business 29 Dec 22)* ... Stephenie Overman

In the late 1990s, Jennifer E. Clift was working as a secretary when her supervisor encouraged her to continue her education. She began taking business classes at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg... These days, Clift, who graduated from UMW in 2000 with a business administration degree, is senior scientific technical manager and chief technology officer for the Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division in King George County. She holds a master's degree in engineering systems from the **Naval Postgraduate School** and is pursuing a doctorate in engineering at George Washington University.

### [iRocket Appoints Ret. General Stephen Lyons to Board of Directors](#)

*(City Biz 3 Jan 23)* ... K

On December 31, 2022, the Board of Directors of Innovative Rocket Technologies Inc. has appointed General Stephen "Steve" Lyons (U.S. Army, ret.) as a director... A native of Rensselaer, New York, Lyons graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the US Army in 1983. He holds two master's degrees, one from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in logistics management (1993); and a second from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in national resource strategy (2005).

### [Pravetz Sworn-In As New Virginia Beach Fire Chief](#)

*(VB Gov 3 Jan 23)*

Today, Kenneth A. Pravetz was officially sworn into office as the new Fire Chief for the Virginia Beach Fire Department at a ceremony held in City Council Chamber. Guest speakers included Mayor Robert M "Bobby" Dyer and City Manager Patrick Duhaney. The Oath of Office was officiated by Thomas R. Cahill, magistrate regional supervisor of Virginia... Chief Pravetz holds an associate degree in fire science, a bachelor's degree in health and safety, and a Master of Public Administration Degree. In 2019, Chief Pravetz completed a master's degree in security studies from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, Center for Homeland Defense and Security. He has a certificate from the Senior Executives in State and Local Government at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Chief Pravetz is nearing completion of the International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Service Executive Development Institute.

### [A Frank Discussion about Indian Removal](#)

*(Courier Journal 3 Jan 23)*

The Florence Indian Mound Museum is collaborating with the Alabama Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association to host a presentation series titled, "Southeastern Native Americans—Fact, Fiction, and Folktales." The series will focus on different aspects of southeastern Native American history and culture. Presentations will be in-person and recorded. Paul Matheny's presentation will be on Sunday, January 8 at 2pm at the Florence Indian Mound Museum... Commander Paul Matheny began his military career as a member of the United States Navy Reserve in 1981. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee, a Master of Education Degree from Middle Tennessee State University, and a Master of Science Degree in Business Management from **Naval Postgraduate School**.

### [10-7: Bill Benedict Calls it a Career](#)

*(Sequim Gazette 4 Jan 23)* ... Michael Dashiell

Bill Benedict said it was a run-in with the law of sorts that inspired his two-and-a-half decade career in law enforcement... Benedict, 72, was Clallam County Sheriff for 16 years. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Michigan and a master's degree, in applied physics (oceanography and meteorology) from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, Calif., before starting with the Clallam office in 1995.

### [One in Three Veterans Live in Areas With Psychiatrist Shortages](#)

*(KOAM 4 Jan 23)* ... Lori Solomon

More than one-third of TRICARE military beneficiaries live in communities with inadequate access to psychiatrists, according to a study published online Jan. 3 in JAMA Network Open.

Marigee Bacolod, Ph.D., from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, and colleagues assessed geographic variation in the availability of military and civilian psychiatrists within a 30-minute driving



time of TRICARE beneficiaries' communities. The analysis included 39,487 unique communities with at least one TRICARE beneficiary between Jan. 1, 2016, and Sept. 30, 2020.

## **UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:**

**Jan 16:** Martin Luther King's Birthday (Federal Holiday)

**Jan 23:** [LCSS: Leadership and Communication Program for Senior Supervisors](#)



## RESEARCH:

### **It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's ... Time to Plan for Drones in Other Domains**

*(Modern War Institute 5 Jan 23) ... Zachary Kallenborn*

On October 29, Ukraine deployed a total of sixteen drones in an attack on the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The extent of the physical damage inflicted by the attack is unclear, though a Russian minehunter and a frigate appear to have been damaged. But the larger psychological effects were significant: Russia appears to have withdrawn many of its ships, moving them to more secure ports, which limits the firepower and presence they can provide. Russia also upgraded the defenses of those ports, adding numerous booms throughout the area. But that didn't stop another Ukrainian attack with unmanned vehicles on Novorossiysk a couple weeks later.

Perhaps the most surprising thing is that only nine of the vehicles involved in the October attack were UAVs—unmanned aerial vehicles. The other seven were USVs, unmanned surface vehicles plying the waves as they approached their targets. The Novorossiysk attack was also conducted by a USV. The involvement of USVs might come as a surprise, given that the United States has just experienced two decades of warfighting that reinforced the habitual conceptualization of drone warfare as a phenomenon of the skies.

The attacks actually were not the first time USVs have caused harm. In January 2017, Houthis rebels used drone boats to cause serious damage to a Saudi frigate. Such attacks can be expected to increase in the future, because the technology is simply not that difficult. The Houthis fielded the technology as a nonstate actor (albeit a well-resourced, state-sponsored one), while the Ukrainian systems were simple modified jet skis. Plus, USVs are relatively low cost, can strike at sea level to encourage flooding in the target vessel, and can carry more explosives than a mine or torpedo. However, drone countermeasures are almost entirely focused on countering UAVs. A few references to countering nonaerial drones exist in the open-source literature, but they are fleeting.

The United States needs to think more deeply about how to counter drones operating across every domain. Although certain systems like jammers may still be effective, the details may vary. Different domains may also have unique defensive options, while also having different opportunity costs with existing defensive systems. An antiship missile may work fine against a USV, for example, but is it worth it?

#### **The Domain Challenge**

Before a drone can be defeated, it must be detected and tracked. Current best practices for detecting and countering UAVs emphasize defense in depth using different types of sensors attuned to different signatures, given range differences and detection trade-offs. Although nonaerial drones may give similar types of signatures, the details will be different. For example, acoustic detectors may pick up the unique sound of a UAV engine or whirring rotors, but the engine of a ground or surface vehicle may sound quite different. Plus, how do detection measures hold up when groups of drones attack from multiple angles across multiple domains at once? Only once the drone is detected can defenders respond.

Jammers that sever the control link between the drone and the operator or the drone's GPS links represent the most common form of drone countermeasure, accounting for over half the counterdrone systems on the market. A remotely piloted USV depends as much on communication links for control and navigation as a UAV. Those links can be jammed too. But the details will likely vary. Nonaerial drones may operate on different frequencies and at different ranges, while their generally larger sizes allow more power to be devoted to overcoming jamming signals, at least compared to smaller commercial drones. Likewise, unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs) may only minimally use the electromagnetic spectrum, given the challenges of underwater transmission, relying instead on acoustic signals. GPS jammers might still be useful as the UUV may use periscopes or buoys for GPS geolocation. Techniques like visual odometry may also decrease the need for GPS-based geolocation. And as unmanned systems become increasingly autonomous with humans playing smaller and smaller roles, communication links will also become less critical. But jamming is not the only option.



Nonaerial drones, of course, naturally share similarities with other vehicles operating in their respective domain: a USV is really just another boat. So, weapons designed to counter vehicles in those domains may be just fine. A prayer to Saint Javelin would offer the same prospects of salvation from a Russian Uran-9 unmanned ground vehicle (UGV) as from a Russian T-90 tank. However, what is less clear is the opportunity cost. Destroying a Russian tank would cause much more harm than destroying an Uran-9, especially because the Uran-9 performed quite poorly in its Syrian debut. The cost may be worth paying to defend a much more expensive asset, but may deplete resources over the long term, especially if cheap drones are used as munition sponges. That has long been a challenge with UAVs, such as when Israel used a multimillion-dollar Patriot missile to shoot down a homemade Hamas UAV. Different domains open up different options though.

Physical barriers aren't much protection from an aerial drone. Nets might protect narrow passages, but covering a whole building or military base in a net is unlikely to be a good idea. However, nets, fencing, booms, and bollards are quite viable for drones in other domains. Stopping a large UGV equipped with explosives is not too much different from stopping an attempted car bombing. Although UAVs can move dynamically through three dimensions, surface and ground drones are mostly restricted to two dimensions (except for the rare hybrid drone that can both fly and drive). UUVs are more flexible, being able to change depths, though ports with restricted entry and exit areas and relatively shallow waters might still be defensible with physical barriers. Plus, physical barriers do not require the drones to be detected first. The challenge with barriers is the risk of synchronous attacks. Multiple drones may strike in sequence with the first drone puncturing the barrier while follow-on drones flow through to the protected asset. Drones are relatively cheap, so massing them may not be an issue.

States are increasingly connecting numerous drones into integrated drone swarms that may operate in multiple domains simultaneously. For example, Russia is developing multidomain swarms in which UAVs guide heavy UGVs. Likewise, the US Navy has developed small USV swarms, while the **Naval Postgraduate School** is exploring "super swarms" involving thousands of drones. That creates a dilemma for defenders: Which drones should be the priority? Is it better to blind the UAVs providing guidance to a UGV mounted with a cannon, or target the ground vehicle? Can weapons like high-powered microwaves transition between and fire from a sufficiently large range of angles to counter drones operating in multiple domains? The Sevastopol attacks show integration into a single system is not necessary to raise these dilemmas, though dynamic, AI-driven maneuver may exacerbate the dilemmas drastically.

## Preparing the Defense

The challenge is the United States does not appear well prepared to tackle these challenges. Although countering UAVs has gotten extensive attention, far less has been paid to countering nonaerial drones. In fact, in the open-source literature, there is scant analysis that focuses on differences in domain, except for a **Naval Postgraduate School** capstone research project on a counter-UUV system architecture. Defense budget documents do suggest parts of the Pentagon are at least aware: the fiscal year 2019 defense budget included funding to improve USV situational awareness for the I-Stalker / Sea Sparrow missile system.

So what should the United States do? The obvious answer is to invest in researching, developing, testing, and deploying countermeasures specific to nonaerial domains. But the less obvious part is to consider which aerial drone countermeasures might be usable or adaptable to nonaerial threats. Falcons and net guns probably are not useful, but variable jammers able to target different frequencies might do just fine. Ordinary antiship, antitank, and antitorpedo weapons may work well too. The United States can look at approaches developed to counter Iranian small manned boat swarms for insights applicable to countering swarming USVs. But wargaming, modeling, simulation, and exercises will all be needed to explore system trade-offs, investigate how adversaries may integrate drones with manned vehicles, and develop and test concepts of operation. Sites threatened by drones across multiple domains will also need to integrate detectors and interceptors to the maximum extent possible to ensure defenders are not overwhelmed with data and response options.

Especially critical is that the United States assesses countermeasures as broadly as feasible. Just as UAVs span the gamut from tiny quadcopters to the MQ-9 Reaper's sixty-six-foot wingspan, nonaerial



drones could range from bombs strapped to radio-controlled cars to USVs larger than a corvette. The composition and scale of the drone threat needs to be considered broadly too: How might the Russian response have changed if Ukraine used ten USVs and five UAVs? Or five USVs, five UAVs, and five manned fast attack craft? Or twenty of each?

UAVs have garnered significant attention in recent years. Rightfully so. UAVs were a defining feature of the post-9/11 war on terrorism, and nonstate actors have more recently shown they could weaponize commercial UAVs. Both trends drove a pattern of thinking about unmanned platforms that centered on the air domain. But the Ukraine war shows drones operating in other domains can have major consequences too. The United States needs to think seriously about this threat and how to prepare. If not, the next conflict may see American ships doing what Russian ships have been forced to do—cowering in a safe harbor.

[It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's . . . Time to Plan for Drones in Other Domains - Modern War Institute \(usma.edu\)](https://usma.edu)

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## FACULTY:

### **Joint Forces and Integrated Deterrence: Rebalancing China in the Western Pacific**

*(Small Wars Journal 31 Dec 22)* ... Naval Postgraduate School Associate Professors Douglas A. Borer and Shannon C. Houck

Since the mid-1970s, defending the Asia-Pacific Area of Responsibility has fallen primarily to the US Navy. Having no war to fight in theater since Korea and Vietnam, the conventional US Army and Marine Corp assumed a supporting role for intermittent troop surges in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, during the last twenty years, the U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) have been highly active in the counter-terrorism fight throughout Asia while simultaneously building foreign partnership capacity across the region. Today, in late 2022, with the rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a Naval power, the conventional US Army, Marine Corps, and SOF must all show their relevance to the Navy-lead Joint Force as it prepares for a peer-to-peer fight with a PRC that now has more ships than the U.S. Distributed and networked land-based forces, mostly consisting of very small units, should be seen as platforms of integrated deterrence in the same manner that surface ships, submarines, and aircraft are viewed today.

'Geography is destiny' has driven military force planning for ages. On 7 December 1941, Japan launched its attack on Pearl Harbor, aiming to dismantle America's power-projection capability in the Pacific. The attack succeeded in destroying what was then perceived the premier strategic warfighting platform: the battleship. With the benefit of hindsight, we know that the main power projection platform was actually the aircraft carrier. Luckily, all the American carriers were at sea when the attack came. In the 'war of platforms' American industry simply overwhelmed the enemy, building over 100 carriers by end of the conflict. In comparison, Japan produced and lost 25 carriers before surrendering. This numerical imbalance, combined with similar ratios of airplanes and submarines (not to mention superior American intelligence and logistics) set the stage for the ultimate expression of superior American power: the two atomic bombs which ended the war on 2 September 1945. Aircraft carriers and submarines have since been the locus of American military strategy in the Pacific.

Fast forward to the present. On 14 April 2022, a tiny Ukrainian land-based military unit sank the Russian cruiser Moskva with a pair of land-based Neptune anti-ship missiles. The Neptune is a weapon produced by the Ukrainians by upgrading Soviet-era Kh-35 anti-ship missiles. The two missiles were launched from a TZM-360 transport truck combined with an RCP-360 mobile control vehicle. The Moskva was sunk despite being equipped with layered anti-missile defense systems. Reportedly, the Ukrainians distracted the Russians using a Turkish-built 'Bayraktar' drone – the same system that has been wreaking havoc on Russian armor, artillery, and other targets since the beginning of the war in February. The diversion may have worked, but a technical assessment is perhaps more persuasive in





explaining the success of the strike. In sum, the Neptune flies too low the water for the radars of Russian anti-missiles missiles to easily detect, and it moves too fast for the AK-360 Close-In Cannon to effectively counter (very much like the US Navy's Phalanx 20mm gatling gun). Bottom line: a pair of relatively low-cost land-based missiles destroyed the most advanced (and expensive) platform in the Russian Fleet. What does this mean for U.S. military operations in the INDOPACIFIC? Are U.S. Navy surface platforms similarly vulnerable?

The short answer is: Yes. In wargame after wargame and exercise after exercise in the Western Pacific, Joint-Force commanders are forced to weigh their surface warfare platforms' (e.g., carrier battle groups) likely survival against a growing arsenal of Chinese anti-ship missile systems and surface combatants that can disrupt the American kill chain. The kill chain is a process that occurs on the battlefield or wherever militaries compete. It involves understanding what is happening (intelligence); decision-making based on that intelligence; and taking actions that create desired effects (ranging from deterrence to destruction of enemy forces). While it is true that U.S. submarines are much less vulnerable than surface ships, the massive sunk cost in the surface fleet amounts to billions of dollars of investment – an investment which may rapidly go the way of the Moskova if war ever breaks out. The reality of their vulnerability was succinctly summarized by defense analyst Dr. Michael Noonan who referred to carriers as the “Fabergé eggs of the sea.” Noonan’s view is echoed in the best-selling book “The Kill Chain: Defending America in the Future of High-Tech Warfare.” The author, Christian Brose, former senior policy advisor to Senator John McCain, argues that America is at grave risk of losing a future war because the PRC is already a peer, and one that possibly holds the advantage in the areas of artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, and other emerging technologies. Indeed, these new technological capabilities may be poised to overwhelm the existing platform-centric American operational model for defending the Western Pacific. Brose observes, “What will be so essential about these technologies, taken together, is that they will transform the entire kill chain – not just in how militaries act but also the character of their understanding and decision-making.”

As a result, US Admirals must be hyper-focused on any first strike actions against their platforms. This is even more salient because of the growing “math problem” for the American side. The PRC is building ships, aircraft and missiles at a rate that is rapidly outstripping America’s traditional numerical advantage. Thus, as each year progresses, there is a growing “platform imbalance.” Historically the U.S. maintained both a quality and quantity advantage. That is no longer the case.

### **Solving the Math Problem: A Network of Small Teams**

One partial solution to the “math problem” is to rethink the potential deterrent capacity provided by elements of the US Army and Marine Corps. It has become widely known that Ukraine’s “surprise” success has been driven in part by ‘train, advise and assist’ efforts by the 10th Special Forces Group since 2014 (when Russia easily annexed the Crimea and occupied parts of the Donbas that are presently being contested by both sides). Likewise, conventional US Army and National Guard forces were deeply involved in training Ukrainians on weapons systems and battlefield maneuver prior to February 2022. Certainly, the Russians performed poorly during the first 100 days of the war due to chronic problems with training, logistics, equipment, and morale. However, those are the very same warfighting fundamentals that Ukraine has vastly improved on because of NATO assistance. In Asia, the basic “Ukraine Model” is one that 1st Special Forces Group has already been implementing in its Foreign Internal Defense (FID) activities for decades.

Furthermore, for several years the conventional Army has been developing a concept called Multi-Domain Operations, or MDO:

“MDO provides commanders numerous options for executing simultaneous and sequential operations using surprise and the rapid and continuous integration of capabilities across all domains to present multiple dilemmas to an adversary in order to gain physical and psychological advantages and influence and control over the operational environment.”

At its core, multi-domain operations are like playing chess on three boards at a time. It is highly complex and requires a significant amount of synchronization to achieve success. But because of the



centrality of joint operations in MDO, the Army is a potential greater contributor to solving the Navy's "math problem" than the Navy envisions today.

Likewise, the 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General David Berger, is reshaping the Marine Corps to become lighter, more lethal, and focused on enabling the Naval Force alongside SOF. His Concept for Stand-in Forces (SIF), describes a Marine Corps force that fill the gaps across the islands that SOF cannot cover:

"SIF are small but lethal, low signature, mobile, relatively simple to maintain and sustain forces designed to operate across the competition continuum within a contested area as the leading edge of a maritime defense-in-depth in order to intentionally disrupt the plans of a potential or actual adversary."

At present the Marine Corps is still working to find the right balance of command, control, and mass required to meet the requirements of a small but lethal force. However, the fundamental weakness of these efforts is that both joint and combined (those with partners and allies) are largely a sideshow in American planning for war with China. Green Berets do not plan and train with Marines, who do not actively plan and train with the big Army and Air Force. Many American ground units cannot even communicate directly with the Navy and Airforce, and neither can American allies and partners. Ground forces are not presently a significant component of America's deterrent posture.

Let's get back to the basics. Deterrence has three elements: capability, credibility, and communication. In terms of naval capability, the historic US advantage is now gone. As a result, deterrent credibility is eroded. President Biden has publicly stated the US will defend Taiwan from China, but what can militaries do to make this communication more credible? Certainly, the American side could simply shift combat assets directly to Taiwan, similar to what we do in NATO. However, such an escalatory act might result in the very war it was meant to deter. The challenge here is how to improve deterrence without triggering war.

We suggest the forward deployment in the Pacific islands of a widely distributed network of micro-sized joint units. These units (3 or more personnel) would be equipped with a communications capability to gather and share intelligence and call down remote strikes, but also be armed with weapons like those being used in Ukraine to threaten enemy ships and combatants. The ideal make-up of these units is yet to be determined, but we imagine some combination of SOF and SIF would be logical. Collectively, a hundred or more such units would give the PRC something new to worry about, and deterrence is all about making the other side worry.

If war does break out, like Russia's Moskva, many of America's primary warfighting platforms will be destroyed. But if we think of aggregate SOF units dispersed across the Pacific as a human platform, then unlike a carrier, it is an unsinkable platform. Certainly, these island-based land forces can be struck as well, but their survivability is much higher than any capital ship.

Dr. Douglas A. Borer is an Associate Professor in the Defense Analysis Department at the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, CA.

Dr. Shannon C. Houck is an Assistant Professor in the Defense Analysis Department at the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, CA.

[Joint Forces and Integrated Deterrence: Rebalancing China in the Western Pacific | Small Wars Journal](#)

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## **An Honest Broker No Longer: The United States Between Turkey and Greece**

*(War On the Rocks 3 Jan 23)* ... Ryan Gingeras

Over the course of 2022, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has maintained a steady drumbeat of provocations targeting Greece. The year began with his foreign ministry issuing a statement threatening to declare Greece's sovereignty as "debatable" if it continued to "militarize" its Aegean islands. Since threatening to move against Greece's Aegean territories in September, Turkey's president



has seized upon the unveiling of a new line of ballistic missiles as an opportunity to up the ante. He boasted that the country's new Tayfun missiles had "driven the Greeks crazy" and noted that Athens could now be comfortably targeted. At the start of December, he echoed these sentiments again and added that Greece "should not stay comfortable." If Athens attempted to ship American weapons to its Aegean islands, "a country like Turkey," he enigmatically warned, "will probably not pick pears." American representatives have responded to these threats with public admonitions. State Department Spokesperson Ned Price recently reiterated Washington's "regret" over Erdogan's provocations. "All that an escalation of rhetoric will do," he emphasized, "is to raise tensions and to distract us from the unity of purpose ... that we need to confront any number of challenges," namely the dangers of a more aggressive Russia.

Just what the United States would do in response to a Turkish assault against Greece is even more opaque. Time and again, U.S. officials have been steadfast in accenting the need for solidarity and coordination among NATO allies in the face of Russia's war on Ukraine. Publicly outlining the consequences of a Turkish attack on Greece undoubtedly would be interpreted as an admission that the alliance is weaker and more divided than it appears.

There is also a possibility that many pundits believe that they have seen this movie before. Animosity derived from a long line of wars and atrocities lie at the heart of Turkish-Greek relations. Since the first decade of the Cold War, Turkey and Greece have feuded over issues of sovereignty and security. The two countries have threatened to go to war on multiple occasions in recent memory, only to pull back from the brink. At several junctures, the United States played an instrumental role in soothing tensions. Given this history, one may be forgiven in believing that this current fever, too, will break. If a crisis does come to pass, history appears to endow the United States with the credibility to serve as a potential broker. Perhaps, then, there is no need for the Biden administration to be ahead of the curve.

A closer look at the historical record and present-day trends suggests that things may be changing. If one compares the past to the present, Washington's trilateral relations with Athens and Ankara has evolved considerably. This break in continuity has grown considerably in the last decade. Perhaps most importantly, contemporary Turkish views of both the past and present tend to cast its alliance with the United States in starkly negative terms. A desire to undo the perceived damage of U.S. involvement in the region is among the factors that inspire Erdogan's recent threats. To believe, therefore, that past precedent would aid the United States in successfully mediating a present-day Greco-Turkish crisis may be ill-founded. More pointedly, should events come to a head between Ankara and Athens, Washington may be left to make a series of unenviable choices.

### **A Partner and a Peacemaker: A Brief History of American Mediation in Turkish-Greek Affairs**

Washington's first direct foray into Greco-Turkish relations came at the conclusion of World War II. Before the close of the conflict, Allied representatives understood that something had to be done about Italian colonial possessions in the Mediterranean. Among the lands Rome governed were the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea. Amid the war, military bases on the islands had been used to interdict Mediterranean traffic. In agreeing to strip Italy of the Dodecanese, American negotiators believed the island would be best served under Greece's rule (Greek Orthodox Christian majorities dominated each of the 11 islands). The Soviet Union, however, initially demurred from granting the islands to Greece, leaving U.S. and British officials to suspect Moscow was wary of the islands' strategic potential — even though an earlier U.S. assessment believed the Dodecanese held "no significant value either for surface warships or for air bases." Despite Turkey's neutrality during World War II (which precluded it from Allied decision-making), American negotiators were sensitive to the history of tensions between Ankara and Athens. These factors led Washington to endorse a plan to "demilitarize" the islands. Per their reading of historical precedent, the Allies agreed that Greece would be allowed to maintain local security forces at the price of prohibiting permanent naval bases and fortifications (be they Greek or foreign). Such an arrangement, American officials contended, would help maintain regional stability.

Such strategic thinking continued to prevail in Washington as the Cold War began. Between 1950 and 1974, American relations between Greece and Turkey remained anchored to a policy of capacity building and amicability based on shared security interests. Until the 1970s, U.S. policymakers proved successful



in maintaining the peace between Ankara and Athens in spite of a series of crises. The focal point of these tensions, the question of Cypriot sovereignty, led both Greece and Turkey to threaten to deepen their ties to Moscow as a way of leveraging greater American support. When Ankara threatened to invade Cyprus in 1964, President Lyndon Johnson issued a strongly worded letter to Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inonu threatening a series of consequences should an attack commence. Johnson specifically intimated that a Cyprus invasion would force Ankara's NATO allies to reconsider their "obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union," who some feared would intervene on the island in the event of conflict. Even as Greco-Turkish relations worsened into the 1970s, American officials were sure they were capable of bridging the gap between the two sides. "Both states would like to be less dependent on the US," one intelligence estimate read in June 1974. Even in the worst-case scenario, it seemed likely "that Athens and Ankara would seek—undoubtedly through US mediation—to prevent larger-scale conflict."

Turkey's invasion of Cyprus in July 1974 tested the certainty of this assessment. Though American arbitration did help avert a full-fledged war between Greece and Turkey, Washington's ties with both Athens and Ankara weakened considerably. Greece, having felt betrayed by the United States, briefly withdrew from NATO's military command structure and sought closer relations with the Soviet Union. Despite having secured its goals in intervening into Cyprus, Turkish officials were left scarred after the U.S. Congress imposed a three-year arms embargo on Turkey. Nevertheless, the core assumption of the 1974 assessment appeared validated. Washington endured as the preferred mediator between Greece and Turkey after a string of territorial disputes in the Aegean in the 1970s and 1980s. As it had earlier in the Cold War, shared concerns over NATO's integrity provided a base for negotiations between Washington, Ankara, and Athens. U.S. officials equally understood that both Greek and Turkish leaders saw a need in currying American and European favor if they were to achieve their respected aims. Neither Turkey nor Greece, as one CIA analyst put it in 1978, "can afford to leave the field to its rival by bolting the West altogether." The personal rapport and engagement of senior American leaders also proved instrumental in easing tensions. Henry Kissinger negotiated directly with Greek, Cypriot, and Turkish leaders through the early 1970s. When Ankara and Athens came to the threshold of war over a dispute over their conflicting claims to an uninhabited island in 1998, Bill Clinton spoke directly to Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller late into the night in the hopes of avoiding conflict. This investment on the part of U.S. officials, however, did breed a certain amount of exasperation within senior circles. The enduring nature of Greco-Turkish tensions, as well as pressures to pick a side in their disputes, led to private expressions of cynicism. "The worst rat race I have ever been in," Dean Acheson once chirped, was denying "Greeks and Turks their historic recreation of killing one another."

### **Changing Times and Perceptions: Recent Turns in America's Relationship with Greece and Turkey**

The threat of a Greco-Turkish rupture subsided considerably as Washington's Global War on Terror began. As U.S. officials slipped more into the background, U.N. mediation efforts in Cyprus, as well as intermittent bilateral efforts at improving ties, led to expressions of hope that the threat of conflict had subsided. Below the surface, however, there were significant changes in the ways in which Turkish policymakers perceived both Greece and the United States. Central to this change was the establishment of a new ethos with respect to foreign policy. The architect of this new outlook, Ahmet Davutoglu, counseled then-Prime Minister Erdogan to take a more assertive, ambitious approach to both regional and global relations. In addition to reimagining Turkey as a leader within the wider Islamic world, Davutoglu asserted that Turkey possessed a historic right to play a more hegemonic role in its near broad (going so far as to use the Nazi term "lebensraum" in describing Ankara's strategic imperatives). As for Greece, Davutoglu suggested that Turkey "had grown too accustomed" to tensions with Athens even though Ankara's handling of Greek relations was like "a heavyweight wrestler training with light weights." The West, he argued, had habitually used Greece to intimidate Turkey, thus preventing it from opening "its horizons to action-oriented, large-scale and global policies."

For many Turks, including Erdogan, events in the last decade have confirmed Davutoglu's broader assessment. Cyprus's decision in 2011 to commence drilling for natural gas off its southern shore reignited long-standing antagonisms over Turkish, Greek, and Cypriot maritime rights in the



Mediterranean and Aegean. Despite Ankara's standing commitment to "zero problems" with its neighbors, Erdogan vowed to resist international pressure when it came to Turkish interests at sea. "From now on," he declared in 2011, "we will continue to implement whatever our national interests require without hesitation." It was in the wake of this pronouncement that the term "Blue Homeland (Mavi Vatan)" began to take its place within the Turkish lexicon as a way of describing Ankara's maximalist interpretation of its maritime rights. Erdogan's stewing belligerence was further nurtured as a result of Turkey's growing rift with the United States. As Washington drew closer to Syria's Kurdish militants after 2014, boosters of the Blue Homeland policy began to accuse the United States of plotting to close off Turkey from the sea with the aid of Greece, Cyprus, and Syria's Kurds. Although Turkish officials were initially hesitant to back the accusations publicly, such sentiment echoed Erdogan's declaration in 2017 that there was a "project to besiege our country" led by Turkey's foreign and domestic enemies.

This conspiracy theory became more mainstream as a result of deepening U.S.-Greek relations. In the fall of 2017, President Donald Trump welcomed Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras to Washington in the hopes of expanding military and political ties with Athens. A number of incentives push American officials in this direction. With Greece only beginning to emerge from a near-decade-long depression, both Tsipras and the Trump White House saw mutual economic benefits in expanding American energy and trade interests. Perhaps more importantly, increased tensions with Ankara after the 2016 coup attempt encouraged many in Washington to see Greece as a potentially more stable security partner in the eastern Mediterranean. For commentators in Greece, building stronger bonds with the United States was an ironic but necessary turn. Profound historical misgivings regarding American interests still pervaded Greek society (particularly as a result of U.S. support for Greece's Cold War-era dictatorship). Yet the changing geopolitical environment in the region, particularly as a result of a more aggressive Russia, compelled Tsipras's government to seek "the familiar, warm 'embrace' of the traditional historical ally across the Atlantic." It was in this spirit that Athens and Washington arrived at a mutual defense cooperation agreement in the fall of 2019. The accord, which entailed expanded training opportunities and basing rights for U.S. forces in Greece, was hailed as a breakthrough that aided both countries. Greek officials, however, remained careful not to promote the agreement as an explicit anti-Turkish arrangement. Americans, one Greek columnist observed in 2018, "do not wish to 'lose Turkey' and on this it seems that Athens and Washington agree. Few serious decision-makers in the Greek capital would wish for an economic collapse of the neighbor or its attachment to the Russian sphere, an element that would automatically turn our country into a border between the West and the Middle East."

Turkish responses to the signing of the U.S.-Greek defense accord have been uniformly negative and suspicious. Since the fall of 2019, Turkish media outlets have regularly depicted the agreement as a Greco-American pact aimed at war with Turkey. Evidence for these misgivings have ranged from provocative news reports of U.S. arms transfers to Greece, accusations of joint Greek-U.S. support for Kurdish terrorist activities, and misleading maps illustrating an ominous string of "U.S. bases" spanning Greece, Cyprus, and northern Syria. With the country's currency swooning, and his hopes for reelection in doubt, Erdogan has endorsed these conspiratorial views. He has consistently misconstrued the demilitarization status of the Aegean Islands in arguing that the United States intends to use to use Greece to undermine Turkey. "America currently has [nine] bases in Greece," he declared last May. "Against whom are these bases established? ... 'Against Russia' is the thing that they say ... It is a lie, they are not honest. In the face of all this, their attitude towards Turkey is obvious."

### **Towards a Moment of Catharsis? American Policy and the Implications of a Greco-Turkish Crisis**

Erdogan's provocative allegations are not purely the product of domestic anxieties or personal paranoia. One may say that his views represent a broad consensus on the history of America's relationship with Turkey. It is widely believed, even among Erdogan's opponents, that the United States has consistently sought to bridle or demean Turkey since the early stages of the Cold War. When the Trump administration publicly threatened to evict Turkey from the F-35 program, pundits in Turkey likened the ultimatum to the embarrassment brought on by Johnson's 1964 letter warning Ankara not to invade Cyprus. Widespread suspicions of U.S. complicity in the July 2016 coup attempt echo a commonly held belief that the United States aided the formation of a military junta in 1980. It is not



uncommon for pundits and former officials to suggest that the destruction of Turkey had always been a part of an American-led Western project. This premise is arguably central to how Erdogan himself sees the past, present, and future of U.S.-Turkish relations. His “new Turkey,” as it is often described, differs from the old precisely because he has successfully untethered the country from any patron or broker. “Turkey is not the old Turkey,” Erdogan’s director of communications declared. “Now there is a Turkey that protects its interests at all costs and demands eye-level relations with every interlocutor and on every stage.”

Aaron Stein recently posed that “there is no broad rapprochement in the making for Turkish-Western relations.” With Ankara poised to expand its cooperation with Russia, and perhaps widen its footprint in northern Syria, there is, he argues, “little — if anything — that can be done to manage Turkey and its foreign policy aspirations.” If this is indeed the case, America’s position between Turkey and Greece appears especially grim. In spite of the past, Erdogan’s positioning appears to negate Washington’s place as a mediator between the two neighbors. While it is possible that Brussels may be more successful in closing the divide, the possibility exists that even European mediation may have only limited success. Although some have argued that Erdogan’s posturing may be an election ploy, there appears to be little room for compromise between Greece’s sovereign rights and Ankara’s strategic designs. Moreover, as one Turkish pundit recently mused, the wind now may be at Turkey’s back. With war raging in Ukraine, the West may be compelled to stomach a Turkish attack, for the sake of NATO unity, as it had during Turkey’s 1974 invasion of Cyprus. These fundamental conditions may very well push Ankara towards war with Athens within the foreseeable future.

Where does that leave the United States? The threat of a Turkish attack upon Greece compels Washington to contend with several undesirable scenarios. If Erdogan intends to wage war, the façade of balancing between Athens and Ankara may become impossible to maintain. For Washington, maintaining peace may come down to two unfavorable choices. U.S. officials could pressure Athens to cede aspects of its sovereignty. Further still, the Biden Administration could abruptly abandon its mutual defense cooperation agreement with Greece. Otherwise, it is more likely the U.S. may be left with the no other alternative but to act as the de facto guarantor of Greece’s territorial sovereignty. Embracing that role, even if it deters Ankara in the short term, puts American policymakers in the contradictory position of having to plan for a possible military conflict with an allied state. The mere suggestion that the United States anticipates a clash with the Turkish military undoubtedly would raise questions regarding the integrity of the NATO alliance — let alone Turkey’s future as a U.S. partner.

If the United States is obliged to come to Greece’s defense, policymakers in Washington may be forced to do something even more profound: Reimagine Turkey as a direct competitor or adversary. Adjusting to such a reality would certainly be a significant challenge for American policymakers. U.S. security planning, as well as NATO’s defense strategy as a whole, depends upon Turkey’s support as an ally in both Europe and the Middle East. To reconceive of Turkey in antagonistic terms would therefore result in a broader geostrategic reassessment for American planners. Like an aggressive Russia, a belligerent Turkey potentially jeopardizes the free flow of traffic through the Black Sea and Mediterranean. Countering this possible threat would lead to new defense commitments, such as expanded security ties to Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt. While few in the United States may wish to see these changes come to pass, circumstances may demand that Washington recognize Turkish hostilities as a destabilizing force in the world.

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## How NATO Can Keep Pace With Hybrid Threats in the Black Sea Region and Beyond

*(Atlantic Council 4 Jan 23) ... Arnold C. Dupuy*

Russian attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure in recent months have highlighted the devastating impact of twenty-first-century warfare and the resulting vulnerability of civilian life. A major component of modern warfare is the hybrid threat, in which Russia is a most aggressive perpetrator.

Indeed, the Kremlin effectively implemented hybrid warfare in the 2014 annexation of Crimea and continues to use similar tactics to influence political outcomes in Moscow's favor. Hybrid warfare, which includes cyberwar and malign influence, allows states and non-state actors to impact the political stability of adversaries with limited or no use of conventional military forces. This is significant as it gives states, as well as terrorist and criminal organizations, a low-cost method to influence the politics and policies of other states or even capture territory.

An important aspect of hybrid warfare is the ability to attack and disrupt civilian infrastructure—in particular the power grid and fuel distribution systems that form the backbone of a country's energy sector. One only has to remember the persistent Russian attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, starting with the December 2015 cyberattack using the BlackPower malware. More recently, the Colonial Pipeline ransomware hack in the United States in May 2021 also served as a glaring example of this phenomenon.

The battlefield setbacks in Ukraine notwithstanding, Russia's cyber-military dominance looms over the wider Black Sea region, particularly among the smaller states of NATO and its Partnership for Peace (PfP) program that have limited resources and vulnerable energy infrastructures. The Russian war in Ukraine has created conditions that demand greater NATO attention to this dynamic, particularly in what is called operational energy—the energy needed to perform military operations.

It is imperative that national security experts continue to analyze this vital field and concentrate on developing NATO's operational energy capabilities, resilience, and interoperability.

- Capability refers to the requirements NATO must focus on to meet its objectives and operate more effectively and efficiently in an energy-constrained environment. Enhanced capabilities can take the form of strengthening NATO's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as its cyber defense. This includes advanced warning technologies and streamlined strategic communications. This concept aligns closely with the NATO Defense Planning Process, an analytic framework that matches capabilities to mission requirements.
- Resilience is the ability of NATO member states collectively or individually to deter, detect, withstand, and recover from a variety of hybrid tactics launched against their energy infrastructure. Greater resilience would allow NATO members to take a blow to the energy sector and recover in a timely manner. They should consider hardening energy sector assets as much as possible, as well as creating alternate supply chains. Additionally, this should entail a deeper assessment of malign influence in the energy sector.
- Interoperability permits member states to interact seamlessly in different environments, conditions, and platforms. It allows member states to work more efficiently together and operate under an agreed set of NATO standards, with the aim of building familiarity and a common operating picture. This is accomplished through continual interaction between Alliance members and PfP members, notably through joint exercises and NATO/PfP engagement.

### Preparing for the future

In October, the NATO Science and Technology Board authorized the formation of Systems Analysis and Studies (SAS)-183, entitled "Energy Security and Building Capabilities, Resilience and Interoperability." I serve as chair of this effort. It is a continuation of the predecessor study, SAS-163, "Energy Security in the Era of Hybrid Warfare," which concluded in December. The new study, scheduled to commence this month, will concentrate on cross-cutting analyses highlighting the themes of capability, resilience, and interoperability with a focus on the Black Sea, Baltic Sea, and Arctic Sea.



Attention will be particularly devoted to the Black Sea, which is at the center of the current military conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and which deserves priority focus.

Another area of concentration in SAS-183 is advanced early warning cyber defense, whereby the study's cyber team will create a prototype to improve maritime security by protecting critical energy infrastructure from cyberattacks. The study will integrate exercise results into its final analysis. The study's authors recognize the importance of exercises as cost-effective ways to prepare for and respond to a variety of kinetic and non-kinetic contingencies, and for this reason, we anticipate more reliance on exercise results. For instance, in the previous study, SAS-163, team members contributed to several NATO and PfP member state exercises, and those of us working on SAS-183 anticipate continuing this activity.

SAS-183 will include numerous subject matter experts representing nearly a dozen NATO members, PfP states, and organizations, indicating the importance with which the Alliance and its partners view the growing challenge. Ultimately, the study will provide enhanced regional analysis, greater insight into cyber early-warning technologies, and a deeper assessment of the continued threat posed to NATO member state security by the threat of hybrid warfare on the energy sector.

As the Kremlin and other NATO foes look to evolve their hybrid warfare practices, especially given the Alliance's superior capabilities in the traditional military sphere, such forward-looking research is vital. Russia's shifting tactics in Ukraine, as seen by its deliberate attacks on energy infrastructure, offer a window to the future of warfare. NATO must stay several steps ahead.

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## STUDENTS:

### **The United States Does Not Have a Principal-Agent Problem in Syria**

*(Small Wars Journal 5 Jan 23)* ... Sean W Dummitt

A principal-agent problem occurs "when the desires or goals of the principal and agent conflict and it is difficult or expensive for the principal to verify what the agent is doing." U.S. policymakers and members of the Special Operations community often present this problem when evaluating the relationship between the U.S. and its Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) partners in Syria. The principal—U.S. Special Operations Forces—and the agent—Syrian Democratic Forces—were once aligned in their objectives during large-scale combat operations to defeat the Da'esh physical caliphate until the group's collapse in 2019. Today, however, the landscape of the battlefield is starkly different, necessitating renewed deliberation. This article argues that a principal-agent problem still does not exist between the U.S. and the SDF in Syria. It will demonstrate that the SDF remain a dependable partner in ensuring the enduring defeat of Da'esh, countering the Iranian Threat Network, and avoiding escalation with Turkey. This assertion will be examined through three fundamental transformations in the military environment since the introduction of Special Operations advisors in 2015: the transition from combat operations to regional security, facing the Iranian Threat Network, and restraining from escalating with a NATO ally.

### **The First Transformative Challenge: From Combat Operations to Regional Security**

From November 2015 until March 2019, USSOF fought alongside SDF partners to liberate cities from Da'esh fighters and destroy the remainder of the Da'esh physical caliphate. The Battle of Baghuz Fawqani was the last SDF-led offensive backed by U.S. forces to rid the Islamic State of its final stronghold in Eastern Syria. After the month-long battle, captured Da'esh fighters were moved to various detention centers across Northeast Syria, effectively securing the caliphate in detention. The transfer of





Da'esh fighters to detention facilities led to a pivotal moment in the U.S. campaign to defeat Da'esh as major combat operations along the Middle Euphrates River Valley subsided. The mission then took on the renewed focus of securing the caliphate in detention and preventing Da'esh reconstitution. Fortunately, the SDF remained just as committed to the new effort as they had been to prior combat operations.

To illustrate their commitment to the new challenge, the SDF reorganized by transitioning many combat troops into Internal Security Forces (InSF). These forces would guard detention facilities, protect critical petroleum infrastructure, and secure Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. Filling nearly half of the InSF ranks with Arabs from neighboring tribes ensured the SDF maintained an ethnic balance as policing efforts began to outpace military operations. Specialized InSF units, such as the Hêzên Antî-Terror (HAT) forces, were created to provide surgical strike capabilities, like SWAT teams. These units conducted their operations from intelligence supplied by the newly formed InSF General Services Bureau (InSF-GS). Under this model, the HAT effectively became the premier C.T. force in Northeast Syria, leading to a reasonably stable security environment.

U.S. Special Operators advised the transformation from a combat-oriented force into a regional security apparatus. Still, the SDF largely spearheaded the endeavor on its own. The SDF adapted fluently to the changing military landscape and demonstrated continuity in the objectives of the principal and the agent throughout the first transformation. The second transformative challenge, however, would entirely test the SDF's allegiance in a new way.

### **The Second Transformative Challenge: Facing the Iranian Threat Network (ITN)**

At the core of its military strategy, the Government of Iran leverages the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—Qods Force and the Ministry of Intelligence and Security to build an alliance of surrogates, proxies, and partners to counter U.S. regional influence in Syria. Iran's strategy is supported by clandestine networks that protect the Government of Iran's regional investments. These networks also provide Iran with its most potent tool to influence its agenda. Along the Middle Euphrates River Valley in the province of Dayr az-Zawr, the ITN uses Iranian Aligned Militia Groups (IAMGs) as its proxy network of choice. The under-governed nature of Dayr az-Zawr is a flashpoint for IAMG activity as it allows freedom of movement and provides a sanctuary from which to project attacks on U.S. forces in the region. An increased frequency of indirect fire attacks from IAMGs on Special Operations Forces challenged U.S. resolve in the area. A new question arose out of this emerging dilemma: Will the SDF remain an attractive agent in competition with Iran and its proxies? This question is the foundation of the second transformative challenge in the U.S.-SDF relationship.

The answer to this question is three-fold. First, from a military perspective, the SDF remain committed to helping secure U.S. outstations in the Middle Euphrates River Valley. Specifically, the SDF have played a vital role in the collective self-defense of U.S. outstations by functioning as a Quick Reaction Force and providing Battle Damage Assessments after attacks from IAMGs. Second, from a political standpoint, SDF senior leaders have condemned Iran for the recent killing of Masha Amini, displaying the same ideology as the West's for advancing women's rights globally and advancing rhetoric against the Iranian Regime. Third, the SDF remain committed to U.S. regional objectives despite uncertainty in future U.S. involvement in Syria. The SDF have long feared the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Northeast Syria; a fear largely predicated on previous diplomatic statements from Washington. Yet despite this fear and knowing the ITN will attempt to fill the vacuum upon a U.S. withdrawal, the SDF continue to hedge their bets and side with U.S. forces. If, however, the ITN is threatening the resolve of U.S. forces in the south, the determination of the SDF is tested to a much greater extent from a NATO ally to the north.

### **The Third Transformative Challenge: Restraining from Escalating with a NATO Ally**

Turkish bombings of SDF positions in Northern Syria led to the third transformative challenge—though the threat has loomed over the SDF for many years. These airstrikes promote the danger of escalation between the SDF and a longtime NATO ally in the region, birthing a dichotomy in regional interests for the U.S. Turkey claims that many senior leaders of the SDF are members of the Kurdistan



Workers Party (PKK), which is a designated terrorist organization within Turkey. This designation motivates Turkey to target SDF positions, usually along the northern border near a deconfliction zone. The U.S. response has been to denounce Turkish airstrikes and call for de-escalation while simultaneously attempting to mediate on behalf of the SDF to display solidarity.

The risk of escalation with Turkey on the northern border is greater than with IAMGs in the south along the MERV. Still, the SDF have refrained from escalating beyond mere skirmishes. The SDF's knack for diplomacy and understanding of strategic red lines should not be discounted; the SDF have honed these skills over the years while surviving the geopolitics of the Middle East. Thus, the SDF's restraint from escalating with a NATO ally is calculated, and senior leaders wholly understand the consequences within the SDF. Given this context, the actions of the SDF as agents in northeast Syria should be seen as non-escalatory and rational responses, given their circumstances.

To conclude, upon viewing the adaptation of the SDF across three transformative challenges in northeast Syria, a principal-agent problem does not exist. The SDF are attuned to U.S. strategy and regional interests and remain committed to supporting U.S. objectives over our competitors despite ambiguity in U.S. policy. Senior leaders of the SDF have also admonished recent actions of the Iranian Regime, siding ideologically with western values beyond those restricted to simple warfighting. The SDF's understanding of NATO commitments also demonstrates an uncommon level of professionalism when evaluated against previous U.S. regional partners. U.S. investment in the SDF has paid dividends thus far and will continue to do so through the next transformative challenge.

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## Contemporary Need for Special Forces in United Nations Peace Operations

*(Small Wars Journal 5 Jan 23)* ... Ernest Bosompem Darkwah

Conflicts in the world have taken a complex dimension which has affected the traditional approach to Peace Operations. Violent conflicts around the world have mostly been intra-state conflict with few inter-states conflicts occurring occasionally. The regionalization of modern conflicts, which interlinks political, socio-economic and military issues across borders, has seen many conflicts become less responsive to traditional forms of resolution. Time and again, civilians become the targets of violence in conflicts. In the last 30 years of internal armed conflicts, nearly one million civilians have been killed in deliberate attacks by armed groups. These conflicts require the deployment of a robust intervention force by the international community to prevent genocides and also protect the populace from the scourge of war.

Traditional peace operations are characterized by unarmed or lightly armed troops with limited mandates. The regular peacekeepers encounter challenges that restrict them in the conduct of their duties. These challenges include; limited strength, operating in bad weather conditions, inadequate logistics, and lack of requisite skills for reconnaissance amongst others. The evolving nature of modern conflicts necessitate an intervention force with the requisite skill, and training that is capable of operating in difficult environments in support of regular peacekeepers.

The United Nations has so far deployed Special Forces to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Sudan and Mali. It is worth noting that, not all United Nations missions are deployed with Special Operations Forces. The deployment and use of robust peacekeepers in the form of Special Operations Forces will be able to limit harm and protect non-combatants. This will give the populace of war-torn areas protection and confidence to go about their daily activities without fear of being attacked.



## **Mandate of Peace Operations**

The mandate given to peacekeeping missions are mostly not robust enough to achieve the needed effect. Protection of civilians has become a prominent part of mandates given to peace operations by the United Nations Security Council. Providing strong enforcement mandate to peace operation missions could end violent conflict within a short time. Such mandate could best be carried out by Special Operations Forces. Patrols in most United Nation missions are conducted through a Joint Verification Monitoring Mechanism. This is practiced in missions such as United Nation Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and United Nation Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Peacekeepers are often restricted by belligerent forces if patrols are conducted without the liaison officer from the warring factions. The peacekeepers are only required to send denial of access report through to United Nations Headquarters after negotiations have failed.

Peacekeepers are hence restricted from accessing certain parts of the conflict zone to assist civilians. Special Forces provide a highly accurate tool for special reconnaissance, special tasks and military assistance. Tasks such as Long range patrols by Special Forces will not hinge so much on road network as they can be inserted by air or move on foot to conduct successful operations. The small size of Special Forces and their unique capabilities, coupled with self-sufficiency can provide a Force Commander additional option for military response. Their use may not entail the risk of escalation normally associated with inherently larger or more visible regular peacekeepers.

## **Reaction of Traditional Peacekeepers to Threats**

Traditional peacekeepers are mostly deployed in cities and towns where they can have access to air or sea ports for resupply. Resources available to force headquarters in peace operations do not always allow wide deployment of units. Most of the atrocities in war torn countries however take place in the hinter lands and places with poor road network. Reactions to incidents are hence slow due to distance and inaccessibility to troubled areas. The traditional peacekeepers are therefore unable to provide the needed protection for civilians. Special Forces are best suited for such engagements as they are task organized for such operational environment. They are generally composed of land-based forces, air and maritime. Special task forces could also be deployed where the requirement for such capabilities are identified in the Statement of Force Requirement.

## **Inadequate Strength of Peacekeepers**

The strength of forces in most United Nations Missions including missions in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) has been reduced in a drawdown program. Even though the implications of these drawdown and withdrawals are context specific, the forces in these missions are however expected to undertake same tasks they were doing before the drawdown and withdrawal if not more. This creates a daunting challenge for the missions at a time that “violence against civilians had reached new levels of cruelty, marked by a rise in ethnic cleansing, genocide, rape, forced displacement and the use of chemical or other banned weapons.”

United Nations missions hence need a force that is versatile and can be employed against the various threats faced by it. Special Operation Forces defies conventional wisdom by using a small force to defeat a much larger or well-entrenched opponent. Special Forces will hence complement the regular peacekeepers in collecting information at national level and the theaters of operations. Special Operations Forces are trained to survive and operate in remote, undeveloped areas, and behind enemy lines. They are able to obtain information when there are constraints dictated by weather conditions, difficult terrain, and hostile countermeasures. They have the skills to provide timely analysis using their own method of evaluation in a way that other technical procedures are not possible. They can use advance techniques and equipment, which are sometimes supplemented by indigenous means to collect data and information.[8]

## **Likely hindrance to deployment of Special Operations Forces**

Host nation consent solidifies the principle of legitimacy which is critical to the success of any Peacekeeping Missions. They are likely to question the deployment of Special Forces with the perception



that its employment is excessive and exceed the United Nation Mandate.[9] UN Mission commanders must be aware of this challenge and be prepared to communicate the legitimate use of UN Special Operations both prior to and during UN Special Forces employment.[10]

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

The mandate for Peacekeeping missions should be robust enough to justify the inclusion of Special Operations Forces. This will clear the doubts of host nations on the use of the asset.

Missions Commanders must be prepared to justify the use of Special Forces prior to and during deployment. Care should be taken in the use of Special Forces for it not to appear as conducting espionage in the host country.

Conventional Forces should be used jointly with Special Forces in peacekeeping missions. Special Forces should not be made to perform tasks such as quick reaction or guard duties meant for Armored or the Infantry. The high-readiness asset should hence be controlled at the highest appropriate level to ensure employed in an optimal manner.

## Conclusion

The dynamics in modern conflicts keep changing and require a corresponding response in peace operations. The type of forces deployed for peace operations needs to be looked at critically as atrocities continue to occur at areas where United Nation traditional peacekeepers have been deployed due to their limitations. The conventional military contingents are sometimes reluctant or incapable of performing certain tasks assigned them. The inclusion of Special Forces in all United Nations peacekeeping missions will fill the gap created by the conventional military contingents. A robust Special Forces unit that is well equipped and maintained will provide the needed protection and intervention to build a durable peace in conflict situations. Special Forces will provide the Force Commander a technologically advanced and high-readiness asset.

Lieutenant Colonel Ernest Bosompem Darkwah is a Ghanaian Military Officer who has participated in six different United Nation peacekeeping missions. He holds a postgraduate master's degree in Defense and International Politics from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. He is currently pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Defense Analysis (Irregular Warfare) at the Naval **Postgraduate School**, Monterey, California.

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## ALUMNI:

### Getting Down to Business

*(Virginia Business 29 Dec 22)* ... Stephenie Overman

In the late 1990s, Jennifer E. Clift was working as a secretary when her supervisor encouraged her to continue her education. She began taking business classes at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg.

“I wasn’t in a settled place,” she says. “I was not a traditional student. I was working full time, plus pretty much going to school full time. I was a young mother. For a while, I was arriving at 8 a.m. for classes, then I went to work, then I went back to school in the evening.”

UMW’s professors, she says, were very understanding of her needs and “so encouraging and supporting. They were not going to let me give up.”

These days, Clift, who graduated from UMW in 2000 with a business administration degree, is senior scientific technical manager and chief technology officer for the Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren



Division in King George County. She holds a master's degree in engineering systems from the **Naval Postgraduate School** and is pursuing a doctorate in engineering at George Washington University.

In the years since Clift graduated, the university's business education program has advanced as well. Though Mary Washington has been offering business studies for the last 100 years, its College of Business was not established until 2010.

"It's a startup and a growth story in and of itself," says Brian Baker, executive director of the business college's Center for Economic Development (CED), which focuses on topics such as entrepreneurship, small business development and innovation and competitiveness.

UMW's College of Business, he says, grew out of "a vision for discovering how the university could better engage with the broader community."

Founded in 1908 as a normal school, or an institution for training teachers, the University of Mary Washington has a long history of teaching business and related subjects.

In 1919, at the direction of a state education board, the Fredericksburg campus began specializing in teaching "commercial" subjects. It graduated its first business teacher in 1924, the same year that commercial courses were offered in the evening to "interested townspeople."

Over the next century, business education at the university evolved to meet the changing needs of both students and the community, school officials say.

Provost Tim O'Donnell says one reason the College of Business was established "was because our alums told us we weren't doing enough to prepare them. Work is different now, more competitive."

Students "need to learn to talk in the language of employers. They need to be real-world problem solvers," says O'Donnell, who became UMW's permanent provost in June 2022.

He praises the strong relationships that the College of Business has built with the local business community through the CED and the college's Center for Business Research (CBR), which researches topics including issues impacting the Fredericksburg region's economy.

"Faculty often are doing research projects in cooperation with Fredericksburg Regional Alliance," O'Donnell says. For example, a CBR project for the alliance and the Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce assessed the growth and decline of jobs across industry sectors in the region over a 10-year period.

The CBR, which is headed up by David Henderson, an associate professor of accounting, also has conducted a study on the demographics of commuters living in the Fredericksburg region and an analysis of the costs imposed on commuters by area traffic congestion on Interstate 95.

Entrepreneurial perspective

CED programs include the EagleWorks Business Incubation Center and StartUpUMW, an entrepreneurial education program.

"Everything we have added has made sense from an entrepreneurial perspective," says Baker, the CED's executive director.

EagleWorks offers business development services to local startups and early-stage companies. Entrepreneurs have access to professional networks, office facilities, consulting services, peer engagement opportunities and other business resources.

StartUpUMW is designed to teach students how to start and run a business. Students have access to research databases, business consultants and office space to grow their own business ideas. They're given tools to write their business plan and guidance from the CED team. Students can receive an experiential learning credit or internship experience for participating.

UMW's College of Business has helped place 776 interns into the community workforce over the last five years, with 223 of those interns coming directly from the CED through initiatives like StartUpUMW.

"Those interns are doing some pretty heavy lifting in the areas of accounting, marketing, sports management, strategic planning and business analytics," Baker says. For example, several years ago, Baker and a team of students partnered with the Stafford Regional Airport to produce a written strategic marketing plan. The process included hands-on work with the Stafford Regional Airport Authority.

Taking part in StartUpUMW, "students will understand the process of preparing an idea to go to market. They will be able to do it forever. It's like riding a bike, but it's a tough bike to ride," Baker says.



The CED also sponsors Eagle Innovation, a business pitch competition open to all UMW and Germanna Community College students. Three winning teams receive seed capital for their company or startup, Baker says. The grand prize is \$2,000.

Through the various College of Business programs, “students benefit, faculty, businesses, the community — everybody benefits in some way. They synthesize together well,” Baker says.

The CED is also home to the U.S. Small Administration’s regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC), which serves the greater Fredericksburg area, the Northern Neck and the Middle Peninsula. This SBDC served 2,436 business clients over the past five years and “4,587 jobs have been created and retained” by those clients, says Baker, who started at UMW in 2002 as executive director of the SBDC’s forerunner. The center has also provided management education to 2,467 entrepreneurs in the region.

Recognizing that a large part of the business conducted in the Fredericksburg area is driven by federal contracting, the SBDC hosts one-on-one personalized government contracting assistance consultations with advisers from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance and the Central Virginia Procurement Technical Assistance Center.

The university has a strong partnership with one of the biggest employers in the area, the Naval Surface Warfare Center, notes O’Donnell. “We were tasked about a dozen years ago to build an education center for on-base individuals,” he says. Today, UMW’s Dahlgren Campus delivers science- and engineering-focused postgraduate courses taught locally and via distance learning from Virginia’s state universities. The campus hosts a broad spectrum of training events for the Navy, local government and private industry.

### **Success stories**

Nehemia Abel, who graduated from UMW’s College of Business in 2020 with a bachelor’s degree in marketing, says students benefit from the college’s emphasis on internships and hands-on projects. During his senior year, Abel collaborated with a team of classmates to assist an environmental and education research center with communications, marketing, business development and operations services.

Now, Abel is a U.S. Agency for International Development Payne International Development Fellow and is pursuing a master’s degree at Georgetown University’s Walsh School of Foreign Service. Also a policy and advocacy fellow for the International Rescue Committee, Abel plans to work at USAID when he graduates from Georgetown in May.

Abel says he continues to benefit from lessons he learned about critical thinking and project management from UMW’s College of Business. He’s especially glad that the business college placed an emphasis on writing, noting that it’s a skill that comes in handy for the many policy memos, reports and case studies he produces.

As a UMW undergraduate, Abel, a Burundian refugee born in Tanzania, was involved with UMW’s James Farmer Multicultural Center, which promotes awareness and knowledge of diversity issues. He also co-founded an organization to assist Burundian refugees in the Fredericksburg region pursuing higher education and preparing for the workplace. The university honored him with its 2019-20 Citizenship Award for Diversity Leadership. Since graduation, he has remained involved in promoting diversity and mentoring students at UMW. “When I go back,” he says, “I try to make sure those students are taken care of and have a voice.”

UMW’s business teachings also made a difference in Jennifer Clift’s career at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, she says.

“I work in a science and engineering organization, where there’s a lot of technical work. I’m unique at Dahlgren. A lot of scientists and engineers don’t have a business background,” she says. “I got a strong foundation with the business lessons at Mary Washington. The path that I took has been very beneficial. It’s allowed me to look at things differently.”

In particular, Clift recalls her senior capstone program. Students were tasked with profiling a business, and she chose Southwest Airlines Co. “I interviewed the businessmen and women there about



what made their business successful. It was very hands-on,” she recalls. “Getting students out of the classroom is extremely beneficial. ... I remember a lot of the things I learned 20 years ago.”

Last October, Clift was inducted into the UMW College of Business Hall of Fame. “An innovator and technology expert,” the college said in recognizing Clift, “she drives advancement of [Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division’s] technical capabilities through investments, partnerships and education, including academic partnering.”

In helping the Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division forge partnerships with UMW, Clift, not surprisingly, says, “I started at the College of Business,” but she’s also helped established partnerships with UMW’s College of Education and College of Arts and Sciences. Last October, the NSWCDD sponsored its second robotics competition for high school students, in partnership with the university.

“It’s a well-integrated university,” says Clift, who also stays involved with UMW through efforts such as sharing her career experiences with women business students. “It’s not a stovepiped organization. We bring in everybody’s perspective.”

[Getting down to business - Virginia Business](#)

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## **iRocket Appoints Ret. General Stephen Lyons to Board of Directors**

*(City Biz 3 Jan 23)*

On December 31, 2022, the Board of Directors of Innovative Rocket Technologies Inc. has appointed General Stephen “Steve” Lyons (U.S. Army, ret.) as a director.

General Steve Lyons, joins the Board following more than 38 years of distinguished military service, culminating in his service from 2018 to 2021 as the 13th commander of US Transportation Command (TRANSCOM), one of 11 DOD combatant commands responsible to deploy and sustain military forces globally, provide humanitarian assistance, and integrate the Department’s multibillion-dollar joint deployment and distribution enterprise. He retired from the United States Army in 2021.

“General Lyons’ deep understanding of defense and broad experience in military operations and matters of national security will be of great value to our Board,” said iRocket Chairman and CEO Asad Malik.

In May 2022, General Lyons was appointed by the White House to be the new Port and Supply Chain Envoy to the Biden-Harris Administration Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force. General Lyons works with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the White House National Economic Council (NEC), ports, rail, trucking and other private companies across our supply chains to continue to address bottlenecks, speed up the movement of goods, and help lower costs for American families.

Retired General Lyons Bio:

Retired General Stephen R. Lyons took command August 24, 2018, becoming the 13th commander of U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), one of 11 Combatant Commands in the Department of Defense. USTRANSCOM’s mission is to project and sustain military power globally in order to assure our friends and allies, deter potential adversaries, and if necessary respond to win decisively. Lyons’ experience spans 36 years of military service in positions of progressive leadership responsibility.

A native of Rensselaer, New York, Lyons graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the US Army in 1983. He holds two master’s degrees, one from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in logistics management (1993); and a second from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in national resource strategy (2005).

His numerous awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster) and the Defense Superior Service Medal.

Lyons is married to Maureen Lyons and they have two children, Kara, and Dylan.

[DVIDS - News - Carderock Profile: Eric Simon, SEAFAC Deputy Site Director \(dvidshub.net\)](#)



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## **Pravetz Sworn-In As New Virginia Beach Fire Chief**

*(VB Gov 3 Jan 23)*

Today, Kenneth A. Pravetz was officially sworn into office as the new Fire Chief for the Virginia Beach Fire Department at a ceremony held in City Council Chamber. Guest speakers included Mayor Robert M "Bobby" Dyer and City Manager Patrick Duhaney. The Oath of Office was officiated by Thomas R. Cahill, magistrate regional supervisor of Virginia.

Prior to being appointed as Fire Chief, Pravetz served with the Virginia Beach Fire Department since February 1999. Chief Pravetz has 35 years of career fire experience. He is an U.S. Air Force Veteran. Chief Pravetz has worked for Virginia Beach for 23 years. As he progressed through the ranks, Chief Pravetz held many challenging assignments. His current assignment is the Deputy Chief of Services responsible for personnel, finance, training, logistics, planning, and community risk reduction. As a member of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Urban Search & Rescue Virginia Task Force 2, homebased out of Virginia Beach, Chief Pravetz has deployed to several National Disasters as a planning team member and task force leader.

"Pravetz has the proven leadership and communication skills needed to be successful across our organization, in collaboration with our community partners and through a wide range of public safety emergencies," City Manager Patrick Duhaney said. "His decades of diversified management experience will help Virginia Beach continue to be a national leader in public safety for many more years to come."

Chief Pravetz holds an associate degree in fire science, a bachelor's degree in health and safety, and a Master of Public Administration Degree. In 2019, Chief Pravetz completed a master's degree in security studies from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, Center for Homeland Defense and Security. He has a certificate from the Senior Executives in State and Local Government at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Chief Pravetz is nearing completion of the International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Service Executive Development Institute.

Chief Pravetz stated, "The VBFD exists to protect the citizens and guests of our great city. As we begin to celebrate the 60th anniversary of this community, I reflect on the firefighters and officers that have established the fire department as an international leader in emergency services. Because of this foundation, we strive for excellence every day. I am excited about the future and truly humbled to be selected as the next fire chief."

Chief Pravetz is very active in the fire service; he serves on three NFPA technical committees and the IAFC Terrorism and Homeland Security Committee. He also represents the IAFC on the Department of Homeland Security Emergency Services Sector Coordinating Council Executive Committee.

His appointment became effective January 1, 2023.

[Pravetz Sworn-In As New Virginia Beach Fire Chief :: Articles :: VBgov.com - City of Virginia Beach](#)

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## **A Frank Discussion about Indian Removal**

*(Courier Journal 3 Jan 23)*

The Florence Indian Mound Museum is collaborating with the Alabama Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association to host a presentation series titled, "Southeastern Native Americans—Fact, Fiction, and Folktales." The series will focus on different aspects of southeastern Native American history and culture. Presentations will be in-person and recorded. Paul Matheny's presentation will be on Sunday, January 8 at 2pm at the Florence Indian Mound Museum.





The presentation will examine the reasons for the removal of the southeastern Native Americans to Indian Territory. It will focus on the major events leading up to removal such as the Louisiana Purchase, the War of 1812, the Indian Removal Act, and eventually, the Trail of Tears. The removal of the southeastern Native Americans from the east to the west of the Mississippi River was a plan long in the making. This presentation will help to develop the context during which this horrendous event occurred.

Commander Paul Matheny began his military career as a member of the United States Navy Reserve in 1981. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee, a Master of Education Degree from Middle Tennessee State University, and a Master of Science Degree in Business Management from **Naval Postgraduate School**.

Commander Matheny and his wife, Victoria, are natives of McMinnville, Tennessee. He has authored two books, "Gypsies, Beasts and Indian Chiefs" and "A River Rat Goes to Ayers Hall," and is a frequent lecturer on the Trail of Tears and American Indian Culture. Both Paul and Victoria are members of the Alabama and Tennessee State Trail of Tears Associations. His interest in the Trail of Tears is based on his Great, Great, Great, Grandfather, James Campbell, who was part of the Trail of Tears to Oklahoma.

This program is a collaboration between the city of Florence Department of Arts and Museums and the Alabama Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association and sponsored by the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area. The Florence Indian Mound is located at 1028 South Court St. in Florence. Call 256-760-6427 for more information.

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## 10-7: Bill Benedict Calls it a Career

*(Sequim Gazette 4 Jan 23)* ... Michael Dashiell

Bill Benedict said it was a run-in with the law of sorts that inspired his two-and-a-half decade career in law enforcement.

At the time, Benedict — a former U.S. Navy pilot and high school teacher — and his wife Kathy were living on a houseboat while their Sequim-area home was being built.

One day, he recalled finding a ticket on their boat. That led to a conversation with the ticketing deputy, who explained the infraction ... and then offered a ride-along.

"I thought, 'Hell, this is for me'," Benedict recalled last week to a room packed with friends, family, colleagues past and present, as they celebrated the retirement of their Clallam County Sheriff.

Benedict drew praise and well-wishes at the Clallam County commissioners' meeting and retirement party on Dec. 27 as he ended his fourth four-year term, after serving the longest tenure of any Clallam County sheriff.

"What a journey," he said.

Benedict, 72, was Clallam County Sheriff for 16 years. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Michigan and a master's degree, in applied physics (oceanography and meteorology) from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, Calif., before starting with the Clallam office in 1995.

He first was elected in 2006, defeating incumbent Joe Martin before running unopposed in 2010 and 2014. In 2018, he won with a large majority against Jim McLaughlin in 2018.

He then backed Chief Criminal Deputy Brian King, who won election to the post in November.

"We have basically been training him for this job for the past eight years," Benedict said in praise of King.

"As you can tell by the election results, the community is very comfortable bringing him in as sheriff-elect."

Super support

Benedict said he was fortunate to work with a large number of key support staff. His job, he said was to take care of "externalities" — the county commissioners, the public, the politicians — so staff could get their work done.



In particular he praised three “Rons” (undersheriff Ron Cameron, former undersheriff Ron Peregrin and Chief Corrections Deputy Ron Sukert) as well as administrative manager Lorraine Shore and Chief Civil Deputy Alice Hoffman.

“You put so much trust in us. We’re going to miss you,” Cameron said. “Thank you for making this the best agency in the state.”

“I’ve truly been blessed,” Benedict said. “It truly makes my head want to swell.”

Benedict’s retirement drew dozens of current and former colleagues, including former Clallam County Sheriff Joe Hawe, as well as a number of sheriff’s office volunteers.

“We couldn’t do what we do [without them],” Benedict said.

The retiring sheriff received accolades from several community leaders including W. Ron Allen, chairman and CEO of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, who lauded Benedict for his efforts to work with the tribe to help provide law enforcement coverage at and around the tribe’s Blyn campus.

“Nothing is more important than public safety,” Allen said. “That partnership was a big deal; it works.

“It provided us the comfort ... of public safety. Not a lot of people understand Indian law [but] your team does.”

Benedict also received praise and well-wishes from police chiefs Brian King (Port Angeles) and Sheri Crain (Sequim), Clallam County prosecutor/coroner Mark Nichols and David Neupert, Clallam County District Court I Judge.

“I’ve known Bill as a friend, and I’m better off for having known you,” Neupert said.

“You’ve been able to attract and retain really good people. You’ve left the sheriff’s office in better shape than when you got there.”

Sequim Police Chief Sheri Crain pointed out that the sheriff’s office is one of less than 70 accredited law enforcement agencies in the state and one of the few accredited jails, adding that this shows the level of respect people have for him.

Benedict said he and Kathy, his wife of about 44 years, plan to head out on a long trip to San Diego and then Florida in early 2023.

In presenting Benedict with some keepsakes, Clallam County Commissioner Mark Ozias noted: “It’s my honor to acknowledge your service to the county and the county. I hope you and your family can enjoy a little relaxation that is so well deserved.”

Peach praised

Colleague also paid thanks at the Dec. 27 commissioners meeting to Bill Peach, a Forks Republican who lost his re-election bid this November to Democrat Mike French of Port Angeles.

Peach had served since 2014 representing District 3, which includes the West End and western Port Angeles.

“This is one time I’ve been looking forward to and not looking forward to,” Ozias said. “There has been one constant and that has been you. I’ve been longer with you than with anyone else in my professional life.

“We might have different letters after our names but we share interests and priorities.

“You have a heart bigger than anyone I’ve met. It’s been an absolute honor and a pleasure to be your colleague.”

Said Allen, Jamestown S’Klallam tribal chairman and CEO: “Public service is a special calling and you’ve risen to it. I know you care. You’ve been an amazing leader.”

Peninsula Trails Coalition president Jeff Bohman said, “I thank you very much for the [Olympic Discovery Trail] and all your other leadership.”

Former Legislative District 24 representative Jim Buck of Joyce said Peach’s service has been “exemplary.”

“The county’s future is in good hands because of the quality of its people,” Peach said.

[10-7: Bill Benedict calls it a career | Sequim Gazette](#)

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## One in Three Veterans Live in Areas With Psychiatrist Shortages

(KOAM 4 Jan 23) ... Lori Solomon

More than one-third of TRICARE military beneficiaries live in communities with inadequate access to psychiatrists, according to a study published online Jan. 3 in JAMA Network Open.

Marigee Bacolod, Ph.D., from the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, and colleagues assessed geographic variation in the availability of military and civilian psychiatrists within a 30-minute driving time of TRICARE beneficiaries' communities. The analysis included 39,487 unique communities with at least one TRICARE beneficiary between Jan. 1, 2016, and Sept. 30, 2020.

The researchers found that 35 percent of TRICARE beneficiaries lived in communities with a shortage of both military and civilian psychiatrists, and 6 percent lived in communities with no access to military or civilian psychiatrists. Compared with average income communities without high income inequality, low-income communities with high income inequality were 1.64 times more likely to have inadequate access to psychiatrists and 2.59 times more likely to have no access to psychiatrists. Additionally, low-income communities without high income inequality were 1.37 times more likely to have inadequate access to psychiatrists and 1.93 times more likely to have no access to psychiatrists. Compared with urban communities, rural communities were 6.65 times more likely to have inadequate access to psychiatrists.

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