



The Sharp End



The Strange Psychology of CentCom

Muslim terrorists, citizens of the world have become acquainted with the US Army regional headquarters known as CentCom. CentCom is a regional command charged with controlling US military forces operating in the Middle East, East Africa and Central Asia. In other words, the 3,000 generals, colonels and lesser mortals at CentCom control the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Who are those “bad” boys? Are they effectively protecting the land of the free and the home of the brave?

CentCom commands deployed troops within its geographical purview but it does not control its own standing armed forces, it must borrow them from other military commands. That process of borrowing combat units takes place through negotiations with the Pentagon’s Joint Chiefs of Staff, another confused piece of work hidebound by institutionalized effeminacy and capable of producing only Frankensteinian by-products.

CentCom’s deputy commander, Lieutenant General Michael DeLong, spent three weeks studying the Koran and the Muslim religion under the tutelage of a bigoted Egyptian general. How much time did he spend studying the Christian religion? Probably not much. The US military does not approve the use of duty time for Christian religious activity.

Are the CentCom generals America’s toughest, smartest and bravest war fighters? Are they warriors who deserve to lead other warriors to victory? NO! Actually, the generals who manage CentCom perceive themselves as diplomats who, “discourage hostilities, balance a military presence with diplomacy, and make sure that foreign aid goes where it’s supposed to go.” Without going into why so many US military generals have morphed themselves into diplomats, we have to face the facts. That self-defining statement is the basis for examining the strange psychology of CentCom.

The 3,000 man bloated staff of CentCom gives work to the thousands of US military generals and admirals who have no troops to command. That strange group of gold braid has created its own bizarre world for running US military operations in twenty-five mostly enemy nations. Its "raison d'être", its psychology, its way of doing things refutes logic. The stuff that is in the heads of CentCom generals is a twisted rats nest of incompetence, disloyalty and timidity.

The best way to begin to understand the psychology of CentCom is to examine what its generals value. We are discussing values that are translated into policies and regulations governing the behavior of subordinates. From those values, which are crammed down the throats of every combat force that CentCom controls, we may see how that institution thinks, and thus predict its behavior.

The Values of CentCom

Micromanagement: CentCom has tons of sophisticated high tech gear and communications equipment dedicated to the proposition that every action on the ground, no matter how far away, can be watched over and managed by the fat cats at CC headquarters in Tampa. They do not trust the junior commanders of US combat forces.

Lawfare: CentCom follows all the stupid, bigoted politically correct dictums of America's leftist dominated legal establishment. That establishment has strict criteria regarding who is the victim and who is the victimizer. For example, most leftist lawyers perceive blacks as victims and whites as victimizers, Christians as victimizers and Muslims as victims, multiculturalism as victim and American working families as victimizers, Muslim terrorists as victims and the US as victimizers...They evaluate all legal decisions through that distorted prism. They fervently believe that who they perceive as victims are to be given every leeway and special privilege. The victimizers that they hate so righteously are only worthy of quick suppression. They will crush and ruin the lives of professional soldiers who insult a Muslim terrorist killer, and at the same time they will insist that Muslim terrorist killers get more rights than those afforded to law-abiding taxpaying Americans. Early in the Afghanistan war, a CIA rocket armed Predator UAV could have blown away the Taliban's main terrorist leader. The Centcom commander, Tommy Franks, ran it by his organizational lawyer a fresh, female leftist law school graduate Captain. She started warning Franks about collateral damage, the laws of land warfare and whatever else. He hesitated and the enemy got away. Franks made those micromanagement decisions from 6,000 miles away.

Rules of Engagement: To constrain and contain the junior commanders of US military forces CC institutes rigid Rules of Engagement (ROE). Basically ROEs protect the enemy and endanger American troops. CentCom defines ROEs as: "...we go out of our way to spare civilian lives...even at the expense of risking our own soldier's safety. We do this by creating strict rules to which our soldiers must adhere. These rules govern when they can fire, when they cannot; what type of force they can use, what type they cannot; what they can do in particular situations and what they cannot." ROEs have already cost hundreds of American marines', sailors' and soldiers' lives. ROEs are why American marines and sailors have watched enemy trucks and boats loaded with explosives drive right up to American ships and barracks, and then detonate.

Collateral Damage Management: Another way to control untrustworthy American frontline troops is used by CentCom in military planning. It is called Collateral Damage Management (CDM). CentCom Lieutenant General Michael DeLong has described that process:

"...When planning a war, one of the first things you have to decide is the acceptable level of collateral damage: high, medium, or low. This decision is based on many factors, including the number of civilians in the area, the number of religious institutions (such as mosques), the number of hospitals, the number of women and children in the vicinity, the number of Red Cross facilities, and the sheer number of people. Whether you choose a low, medium, or high collateral damage war has a great impact on the way you plan, strategize, and execute the entire war.

Our decision for Afghanistan was that it had to be a low collateral damage war. That meant that every time we wanted to hit a medium or high collateral damage target, we would have to get personal clearance from the secretary of defense. That would be extremely time-consuming.

This forced us to "mitigate" targets, which meant going through our list of targets and asking how we might take a high or medium collateral damage target and convert it to a low-level target. There are many ways to do this: hitting a target at a different time of day, when there were fewer people inside; hitting it with a different type of weapon, or from a different angle of attack, which would force the blast to go in a different direction and minimize damage and civilian exposure; or using a more precise weapon. Figuring out how to mitigate each of these targets took time, and we scrambled as the days drew closer..."

Bureaucracy: CentCom is a grotesque bureaucracy that is run like a law firm. Everything plan takes months to conceive, develop and present. Then the lawyers can veto it. It is nothing like a military

headquarters any where in the world. CentCom generals take months deciding: "... what the operation will look like; what the follow-up plan will be; what our exit plan is-how we would get our troops out of the country if need be; and at what time we would recommend to the president to call up the reserves. Then we have to study the options, the potential courses of action, and war-game them against an opposition force. It's mostly done on computers, either at CentCom or in Washington. We then have to submit our plan to lawyers to ensure it does not violate the International Law of Armed Conflict. Finally, it must be run through the Joint Staff at the Pentagon for their changes or approval. We had fifteen people at CentCom dedicated around the clock to updating the Iraq plan. Even with so many staffers, a war plan typically takes **three years** (ed. emphasis) to fully update."

Delayed decision-making: Although CentCom generals are micromanagers; they hesitate to make sound decisions rapidly. They pass it up the ranks. For example, when an Al Qada motorboat was observed escaping on the ocean, CentCom had to ask the Secretary of Defense if it was "OK to fire at it." After due reflection, he acquiesced.

Diplomacy: CentCom commanders and other generals there spend most of their time jet-setting off to visit foreigners, where they attempt to bribe them to cooperate. It is called diplomacy.

Jointness: Both the Joint Chiefs of Staff and CentCom are jointness-fixated. They require that every operation include generals from every service, Air Force, Navy, Army, and Marines. Beyond that, they are currently emphasizing the placement in command slots of general with much flight experience. As a result they put an Air Force general who spent his life in air transport in as commander of an elite special forces reconnaissance task force. CentCom has enunciated the requirement that generals of Army air Force and Navy aviation be appointed as commanders and vice commanders of as many combat units as possible, even units for which they have no knowledge or experience.

Refugee Assistance: CentCom includes precise planning for feeding and taking care of enemy civilians in every operation. They get more delight and satisfaction out of that than they do from combat planning and orchestration.

Conventional Warfare Fixated: CentCom does not like Special Warfare operations and personnel. Robin Moore gave us one example of that bias:

"...Franks knew he didn't have enough cruise missiles, smart bombs, and ammunition to back a conventional war like Desert Storm. George W Bush wanted exactly what the rest of America wanted, revenge, and he wanted it quickly. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wanted the same thing Bush wanted-except he also wanted bin Laden's head on a stake. *Franks knew it would be political suicide to tell the White*

House and Rumsfeld he wasn't ready for war. Besides, the Green Berets insisted they were ready for war.

'We're under funded, underpaid, under equipped, and undermanned. Unleash one hundred of our Dogs of War with no rules and no orders, and we'll bring down the whole fucking Taliban and Al Qaida Afghan empire in just a hundred days,' said a gruff Green Beret officer from New York, who took a private call from the White House during the briefing.

With Rumsfeld demanding the military quit talking and start fighting, General Franks reluctantly accepted Miller's briefing as the only option that made sense: the Green Berets would be the ones to take on the brunt of the war in Afghanistan."

The Reality of CentCom

CentCom's values both reflect their thinking and shape their decision-making. So what kind of decisions do the CentCom generals make? We will dissect many of their boondoggles in future editions of this report series. One of their worst CentCom decisions was to embed left wing anti-military journalists with combat troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Such journalists, as they had done in the Vietnam War; preached sedition to troops; spied on troop commanders and troops, and tried to get them in trouble; reported lies substantiated only by the authority of "being there"; and so far, have caused dozens of crises and embarrassments to the military in Afghanistan and Iraq. They have lowered military morale and bred distrust within units. CentCom's attitude was amazingly stupid: "... Another big (CentCom) decision was to embed reporters. The idea originally arose in a discussion between myself (General DeLong), Franks, Rumsfeld, and Pentagon spokeswoman Tori Clarke. We studied the concept. We went back to Ernie Pyle days, and we saw that when reporters became part of the unit, they better understood what we were doing. But the U.S. military had not allowed embedded reporters since Vietnam, and the decision was controversial. Many of the senior generals in the armed forces were concerned that this would be a problem. Despite the flak, we decided to take our chances and go ahead with the idea." Why? CentCom actually thinks that modern leftist propagandists are the same as Ernie Pyle and the patriotic journalists of the WWII era?

We've got our eyes on CentCom.

Rod "Breaker" McCoy