Changing Army Intelligence from Lessons Learned in Afghanistan

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Abstract

Lieutenant General Michael Flynn’s paper, “Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan” introduced and emphasized the importance of “white activity” (population-centric) and “green” (government-centric) information over “red activity” (enemy-centric). It was meant to support an overall population-centric approach for Afghanistan. Most analysts in Afghanistan presented a tendency to overemphasize detailed information about the enemy at the expense of the political, economic, and cultural environment. To combat this Lieutenant General Flynn illuminated the issue as he served as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence (CJ2), for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

This paper looks at LTG Flynn’s initiatives in light of doctrinal guiding principles, the historical context of society, government, and past conflict in Afghanistan and elaborates on any significant changes to intelligence assessments following LTG Flynn’s departure as the lead intelligence officer in country. Also, this project endeavors to shed light on the inner workings of intelligence analyst’s business by highlighting their intelligence estimate. The intelligence estimate, and more specifically the portion where civilian considerations are addressed is the crux of the matter. LTG (Ret.) Flynn sought to, and was successful in, inspiring amplification of the estimate to place increased emphasis on white and green activity. A statement of whether he was right in doing so, wrong in doing so, or somewhat both is covered in the remaining pages. As these remaining pages unfold it is the author’s desire that the greater intelligence community will learn a lasting lesson from this project that can be used in future doctrinal publications.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. 1

Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. 2

Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 4

Literature Review .................................................................................................................. 8
  Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 8
  Methodology for the Literature Review ........................................................................... 9
  History ............................................................................................................................. 10
  Current Affairs ................................................................................................................. 14
  Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis ............................................................................ 20
  Summary .......................................................................................................................... 26

Analysis & Critical Application ......................................................................................... 27

Conclusion ........................................................................................................................... 34

References ........................................................................................................................... 36
Introduction

Does the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) current doctrinal intelligence process account for population centric and governmental information in addition to enemy activity? This question pertains to core function of what intelligence analysts are chartered to do when they describe a part of the world or an organization or people in that specific part of the world. The head coalition intelligence officer in Afghanistan in 2010, LTG (Ret.) Michael Flynn, increased awareness of this topic. He, along with a Marine Captain and a Senior DoD Civilian, wrote an article about this called, “Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan”. He contended that in most cases of tactical, operational, and strategic intelligence reporting in Afghanistan’s Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) that the analysts were missing population and governmental information in their analyses. This, in turn, was not giving leaders at the strategic level an accurate and well-informed estimate with which to align their strategies and policies.

The problem of inadequate population and governmental information reporting was exacerbated by the fact that much of the reporting revolved around enemy-centric activities that, although interesting, were not necessarily compelling in terms of the strategic level audiences that were monitoring OEF and the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Units reported tactical-level enemy actions, and analysts rolled those up into intelligence summaries without considering the implications on government and population-centric entities. Thus, when leaders consolidated reports and looked at them strategically, the reports lacked key pieces of information which would place enemy actions into context within the country and its governmental and population-centric institutions.
The purpose of this project is to determine if DoD’s intelligence community needs to qualitatively alter its doctrine to incorporate what LTG (Ret.) Flynn said forces in Afghanistan were missing in his January 2010 Paper, “Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan.”

This project focuses on the United States DoD’s analytical models for intelligence gathering. This analysis compares the recent war in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) and specifically LTG (Ret). Michael T. Flynn’s findings with the textbook answer, as delineated by joint and Service doctrine, of what an intelligence staff estimate should include in a given situation in the world today. The project is significant, as it is based on the fundamental principles of intelligence. The structure of the intelligence estimate, which is the current textbook solution in question here, is the main focus of the project.

The significance of this Applied Capstone Project (ACP) is grounded in the fact that the templates DoD uses for intelligence may be validated or invalidated in light of LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s paper. Also, the ramifications for intelligence doctrine across DoD are significant in that the very make-up of the intelligence gathering processes need to account more for the governmental and population-centric information in both their estimates and their ongoing assessments. This relates to the precise fabric of what analysts look for and incorporate in their products. In the future, every analyst from the most senior to the student just learning his or her craft may need to follow LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s advice regarding the inclusion of population-centric and governmental information into intelligence estimates.
Background and Project Description

Lieutenant General Michael Flynn’s paper, “Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan” introduced and emphasized the importance of “white activity” (population-centric) and “green activity” (government-centric) information over “red activity” (enemy-centric) information. It was meant to support an overall population-centric approach for analyses done on Afghanistan. Most analysts in Afghanistan showed a tendency to overemphasize detailed information about the enemy at the expense of the political, economic, and cultural environment. To combat this Lieutenant General Flynn illuminated the issue as he served as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence (CJ2), for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. This paper looks at LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s initiatives in light of doctrinal guiding principles, the historical context of society, government, and past conflicts in Afghanistan, and describes significant changes to intelligence assessments following LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s departure as the lead intelligence officer for the U.S.-led coalition.

The author investigated the research question in a qualitatively-based manner using specific case studies of intelligence gathered and used in Afghanistan involving Department of Defense organizations, including the US Army, US Marine Corps, US Air Force, and US Navy. The author gave special consideration to intelligence gathered that is exclusive to enemy actions and those assessments that include governmental and population-centric reporting. I am consulting the Center for Military History and organizations like the Center for Army Lessons Learned to find specific feedback from participants on the intelligence that they used while deployed.
Expected Results

The author suspects that the analysis and results show a differentiation between intelligence gathered exclusively on enemy activities, as opposed to the intelligence gathered that comprehensively incorporates population-centric and governmental information. The analysis addresses that the analysis will address a central problem. Although the construct of intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination allows for the incorporation of population, government, and enemy activity into existing analytical models, the actual combination of these elements becomes all too easily skewed primarily toward collection of enemy activity in both conventional and irregular warfare. While conventional warfare allows an analyst a greater ability to include population-centric and governmental activity, the preponderance of reported information is of enemy activity. As LTG (Ret.) Flynn stated in his article, information on red (enemy-centric) activity overshadows information on green and white activity in Afghanistan. This focus on enemy-centered intelligence collection should be re-examined to balance the information for U.S. leadership.
Relevancy to Strategic Security

The research is relevant in the realm of strategic security for three reasons. First, it serves to validate or invalidate the current doctrinal intelligence analysis templates in use by DoD. LTG (Ret.) Flynn argued that the intelligence analyses being produced were not adequate (Flynn, Pottinger, Batchelor, 2010). This infers that either the doctrinal template that the analysts were using was only partially correct, or that the analysts were simply missing portions of the intelligence picture, or both. This project analyzes the standard, doctrinal intelligence estimate approved by DoD and determine if it is on the providing the correct intelligence for decision makers or not.

Second, the research shows that either LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s ideas or initiatives were both sound and doctrinally based, or that he shifted the analytical paradigm in OEF to meet the needs of our strategic leadership.

Lastly, my research highlights a common flaw of intelligence analysts. That flaw is to focus too myopically on the enemy activity in a given area to the detriment of the gathering information in the government and population-centric areas.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The following literature is organized by themes. The first aspect of the literature review focuses on the history of Afghanistan. By considering both a cultural and political history, a holistic picture of the country can be developed. The second area covered in the literature review speaks to current affairs and recent events in Afghanistan and provides a look at near-term progress or regression in intelligence analysis in the country as it relates to U.S. involvement there. Following this, the literature focuses on information gathering and intelligence analysis. Finally, a review of doctrinal literature regarding intelligence and intelligence analysis provided the background for the training and education of those involved in intelligence analysis.
Methodology for the Literature Review

The sources used during the research included books, assorted military and military-affiliated organizations’ publications, several non-profit organizational databases, military journals, military doctrinal portals, and newspapers. The search for sources centered on the information contained in the references to this project’s key article, “Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan”, from the Center for a New American Security. After reviewing that key source, search words used to search for related content were Afghanistan, Operation Enduring Freedom, intelligence, intelligence analysis, and intelligence estimate. The joint and various services doctrinal portals were then used to access doctrinal literature. Once a key word search turned up a prospective source, that source was reviewed in relation to the topic area of intelligence analysis in general and as it relates to the deficiencies that LTG (Ret.) Flynn found in Operation Enduring Freedom’s intelligence prior to 2009. The information from each source is organized by theme: history, current affairs, intelligence and intelligence analysis, doctrine, and summary.
History

In speaking of the history of Afghanistan the author’s work spanned from descriptions of the land, peoples, and political authority to talking specifically about the country’s checkered past with conflict and war. Eight sources are referenced below which speak to the tumultuous history of the country of Afghanistan and give the reader a backdrop from which to place LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s analysis on Operation Enduring Freedom analysis in context. The first two authors who strike a chord of similarity in their works are Barfield and Tanner.

Barfield’s book, Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History, provides a general outline of Afghanistan’s land and peoples. It examines the pre-modern patterns of political authority and the groups that wielded it. It focuses on how (and what kinds of) territory was conquered, how conquerors legitimated their rule, and the relationships of such states with neighboring peoples and states. Barfield also examines the erosion of traditional elite authority and new models of state building in the nineteenth century. Barfield then analyzes the fates of Afghan rulers and their regimes in the twentieth century. He breaks his examination down into three distinctive periods: 1901-29, 1929-78, and 1978-2001. Barfield concludes his work by discussing the first decade of the twenty-first century in Afghanistan. (Barfield, 2010). Like Barfield, Tanner paints a picture of Afghanistan but he goes further to describe it as a vital crossroads for major conflict between civilians and armies. Tanner’s (2003) book, Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the War Against the Taliban, shows that for over 2,500 years the forbidding territory of Afghanistan has served as an essential location—not only for armies but also for clashes between civilizations. An understanding of the military history of
this blood-soaked land has become essential to every American. Afghanistan's military history provides lessons for us today. (Tanner, 2003).

The remaining six books that focus on Afghanistan’s history all have a similar vein of lessons learned that they impart upon the reader. Dr. Lester Grau is present in four of the six while Cordesman and Skeen round out the last two. The books describe the harsh realities of the country and each characterizes these realities for the specific individual time frame upon which it focuses. In his look at the twenty-first century, *The Lessons of Afghanistan: War Fighting, Intelligence, and Force Transformation*, Cordesman notes that the problem of drawing lessons from the Afghan conflict is complicated by the fact that the war is not finished. He goes on to say that improved intelligence operations require improvements in all five areas of intelligence production: technical collection, processing and fusion, human intelligence, signals intelligence, and operations. (Cordesman, 2002). Cordesman focuses on intelligence analysts and their part in deciphering Afghanistan, but he also discusses the tactics of the war in Afghanistan. Similar to Cordesman is another instructional text. Skeen’s *Passing it On: Fighting the Pashtun on Afghanistan’s Frontier*. It shows that while warfare has evolved over thousands of years, in many aspects, it has remained the same. This is particularly true in the mountainous regions along the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the region that the British named the North-West Frontier. The hill country and mountains of this region present a difficult and often deadly battlefield for forces unfamiliar or untrained in fighting in this rugged and inhospitable terrain. Today, United States and NATO coalition forces are engaged in a conflict in Afghanistan and along the border of the Pakistan tribal area that poses many of the same challenges encountered by the British in the nineteenth and first three decades of the twentieth century and again by the Soviet Union during its nearly decade-long conflict in Afghanistan (1979-1989). As in previous
conflicts, modern weapons provide a “tactical edge” but it is still the individual soldier engaging in combat on the ground that wins battles and consolidates victory. (Skeen, 1932).

Next, Dr. Lester Grau’s well-known work, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, captures the lessons tactical leaders learned in Afghanistan and explains the changes in tactics that followed. The Frunze Military Academy compiled this book for its command and general staff combat arms officers. It is a book dealing with the starkest features of the unforgiving landscape of tactical combat: wounds, death, adaptation, and survival. (Grau, 1991). In a work even more specific than *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, the authors of *The Campaign for the Caves: The Battle for Zhawar in the Soviet-Afghan War*, Grau and Jalali state that the battles for Zhawar were fought to cripple guerrilla logistics, but they evolved into tests of the legitimacy of the Afghan communist regime and the Mujahideen resistance. They go on to say that the battles for Zhawar exposed serious deficiencies on both sides as the guerrillas conducted a fixed, positional defense and the Soviets and Afghans attempted a major mechanized assault more in keeping with European terrain than the rugged mountainous terrain around Zhawar. (Grau and Jalali, 2001).

Dr. Grau’s next book, *The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan: Lessons to Frame Success and Avoid Failures*, discusses how the gamut of complex issues that affect present-day Afghanistan’s stability are too many to deal with. However, a study of the Soviet and post-Soviet history of security and conflict in Afghanistan is seen as useful in terms of deriving some lessons learned from the Soviet experience. The Soviet experience could be used to guide US and western leaders today regarding framing successes and avoiding failures in the coming US withdrawal from Afghanistan. (Grau and Wilhelm, 2011).
The last book consulted with Dr. Grau was written with Nawroz (1995). Titled *The Soviet War in Afghanistan: History and Harbinger of Future War*, it relays many lessons learned during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. According to General Nawroz, the Afghan-Soviet War was a rare confrontation in history as it helped trigger the collapse of the greatest empire of modern times. Whatever else these lessons may show, the most fundamental of them is that no army, however sophisticated, well trained, materially rich, numerically overwhelming, and ruthless, can succeed on the battlefield if it is not psychologically fit and motivated for the fight. The force, however destitute in material advantages and numbers, which can rely on the moral qualities of a strong faith, stubborn determination, individualism, and unending patience will always be the winner. (Nawroz and Grau, 1995).
Current Affairs

There are nine writings regarding current affairs and intelligence production. The first, *Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan* critically examines the relevance of the U.S. intelligence community to the counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan. For example, at the time Lieutenant General (Ret.) Flynn was writing this, General (Ret.) McChrystal said that “Our senior leaders – the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, Congress, the President of the United States – are not getting the right information to make decisions with. The media is driving the issues. We need to build a process from the sensor all the way to the political decision makers.” This is a need that spans the 44 nations involved with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Focusing on ISAF and the security of Afghanistan through a message, the *ISAF Counterinsurgency Guidance: Key Points* (Hall and McChrystal, 2009) conveys that the Afghan people are the objective of counterinsurgency efforts. These key points direct counterinsurgents to note that—

Protecting the population is the mission.

They should focus 95% of their time building relationships with Afghans and, together with the Afghan government, meeting their needs.

They should get rid of the conventional mind-set. This means that they should focus on the people, not the militants.

By earning Afghans’ trust and helping an accountable Afghanistan gain the support of the people, counterinsurgents can take from the enemy what he cannot afford to lose - the control of the population.

They should partner with ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces).

They should build governance capacity and accountability.
Theoretically similar to Hall and McChrystal’s guidance, Partlow’s article (2010), *Military Launches Afghanistan Intelligence-Gathering Mission*, states that on their first day of class in Afghanistan, new U.S. intelligence analysts were given a homework assignment. The conclusion they were expected to draw: the important information would be found in a magazine story versus a classified product. The scores of spies and analysts producing reams of secret documents were not producing adequate intelligence.

"They need help," Capt. Matt Pottinger, a military intelligence officer, told the class. "And that's what you're going to be doing." At that time, Maj. Gen. Michael T. Flynn, the top U.S. military intelligence officer in Afghanistan, published a scathing critique of the quality of information at his disposal. Instead of understanding the nuances of local politics, economics, religion, and culture that drive the insurgency, he said, the multibillion-dollar industry devoted nearly all its effort to digging up dirt on insurgent groups. (Partlow, 2010)

Regarding LTG Flynn’s initiative, he proposed teams that were to, “work in new units he called, Stability Operation Information Centers (SOICs) that would be located at the regional command headquarters throughout the country.” SOICs were brought under a new umbrella organization, called the Civil-Military Integration Program along with the Human Terrain System and the Atmospherics Program. (Katz, 2013)

In a review published in June 2012, 30 months after the publication of *Fixing Intel*, the Department of Defense Inspector General asked whether SOICs were doing their jobs. The IG found that the SOICs had managed to improve the ability to provide the type of information that Flynn had called for in his article. However, there were problems as well, the kind that are common for such ad hoc initiatives launched in the middle of a high-tempo combat operational environment. The IG recommended doctrinal and organizational changes together with
adjustments to the training for analysts assigned to collect and analyze population-centric information. The IG report suggested that the effort to report more on the population was successful as far as it went but that significant institutional changes needed to be undertaken in order to maintain such capabilities in the future. (Katz, 2013).

Author Ben Connable also noted the SOIC’s institutional inertia and went further to state that it was one reason why its products are ill-suited to support counterinsurgency. In his 2012 Rand Study, *Military Intelligence Fusion for Complex Operations: A New Paradigm*, Connable argues that intelligence organizations are failing to provide commanders and policymakers an effective understanding of the complex insurgency environment. He went on to say that their products give an intelligence picture that artificially deconstructs the environment and the people and groups within it and does so in ways that simplify matters while distorting their interrelatedness. Connable is particularly bothered by approaches involving color-coding people and groups and treating those in the different categories as distinct: as enemy (red), friend (blue or green) or neutral (white). He said that this scheme fails to accommodate the reality of persons having multiple identities, sentiments and affiliations, often simultaneously. Connable felt that putting them into color-coded bins may satisfy a nearly unquenchable need for clarity but it introduces distortion and artificial simplicity. (Katz, 2013).

Connable proposes a new paradigm, what he calls a behavioral intelligence analysis that eschews channelization through color-coding and focuses on factors critical to inducing behavioral change. Connable sees a need for counterinsurgents to have information that can be used to change the attitudes and behavior of all persons in the environment and for this purpose he discounts the relevance of treating persons in the enemy (red) category differently from those put into the other color-coded bins. Flynn, on the other hand, proposes a shift to an approach for
counterinsurgency intelligence on the environment and population which involves modifying the five components of the kinetic targeting approach F3EA (find, fix, finish, exploit, and analyze) into something like, “find, feel, and understand”. (Katz, 2013).

In a simplistic explanation on the differences between the two men, Flynn directed organizational reforms he saw as necessary to make intelligence relevant for the type of campaign being waged in Afghanistan. On the other hand, Connable called for reforms that focused on shifting the ways that analysts think in order to improve their capability to generate material useful for altering behavior of target populations. (Katz, 2013).

Staying with the current events theme, Davids, Ritjens, and Soeters’ article, *Measuring Progress in Afghanistan* (2010), provides new insights and an understanding of reconstruction activities in Afghanistan through quantitative analysis. This contributes to the development and use of progress and performance-based measurements in nation building and reconstruction more broadly. It provides an overview of our understanding of progress and performance measurement in the public sector in general and in nation building and reconstruction projects in particular. The article outlines the authors’ analysis methodology and provides descriptive and explanatory analyses of the Afghanistan campaign dataset. The article ends with conclusions and ways of improving both intelligence data and its use in policy evaluation in the future. This ties in with the views of General Dempsey in that they both speak to U.S. Army intelligence imperatives.

In General Dempsey’s address (Dempsey, 2009) he speaks about the 9th year of war that the U.S. had endured and discusses a few of the major initiatives the Army was undertaking in TRADOC [U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command] to address them. General Dempsey describes these initiatives as—
The Certainty of Uncertainty. We must acknowledge the certainty of uncertainty as we build our Army for the future.

The Pace of Change. The second trend is the pace of change. As an institution, we’re coming to recognize that the pace of change also requires us to look at the future differently than we have in the past.

Decentralization. That leads me to the next trend—decentralization. We are increasingly an organization that is empowering lower and lower echelons of command. Yet we have to figure out how to balance decentralization with the ability to aggregate information from that empowered edge.

The Strategy Paradox. We could certainly design an Army that is state-of-the-art, that is extraordinarily effective for one thing, and that’s built to last. However, if the tides of uncertainty move our world, we could become irrelevant.

The Army Capstone Concept. The Army Capstone Concept, scheduled for publication in December, 2010 articulates how the Army thinks about future armed conflict under these conditions of uncertainty, change, competitiveness and decentralization.

Meeting the definition of GEN Dempsey’s “decentralization” above, in Afghan War, Officer Flourishes Outside the Box (Gray, 2009), LTC Gukeisen's superior calls him one of the brightest officers he has met. Gukeisen has implemented what he calls an "extreme makeover" of counterinsurgency techniques. Rather than rigidly applying the current mantra of "Clear, Hold, Build," he has held back from trying to clear large, Taliban-influenced swaths of territory, focusing instead on areas he believes are ripe for change, and then injecting aid where it counts most. This tribal-focused portrait of Afghanistan is continued in the next book.

In Empires of Mud, Giustozzi (2009) analyzes the dynamics of warlordism in Afghanistan within the context of such debates. He approaches this complex task by first analyzing aspects of the Afghan environment that might have been conducive to the fragmentation of central authority and the emergence of warlords. He then accounts for the emergence of warlordism in the 1980s and subsequently the majority of this book consists of an in-depth analysis of the systems of rule--political, economic, and military—which developed under Afghanistan's two
foremost warlords, Ismail Khan and Abdul Rashid Dostum. Both Khan and Dostum still wield considerable power even after the intervention of Allied forces in Afghanistan in 2001.

Similar to the systems of rule discussed above, *Establishing Law and Order after Conflict* by Jones, Wilson, Rathmell, and Riley (2005) contains the results of research on reconstructing internal security institutions during nation-building missions. It analyzes the activities of the United States and other countries in building viable police forces, internal security forces, and judicial structures. This study examines in detail the reconstruction efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo, three of the most important instances in the post–Cold War era in which the United States and its allies have attempted to reconstruct security institutions. It then compares these cases with six others in the post–Cold War era: Panama, El Salvador, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and East Timor. Finally, the study draws conclusions from the case studies and analysis, and it provides recommendations to help the United States and other international actors improve their performance in the delivery of post-conflict security. The authors believe it provides a useful set of guidelines and recommendations for a wide range of military, civilian, and other security practitioners.
Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis

In the book, *Analytic Culture in the US Intelligence Community*, the Center for the Study of Intelligence at the Central Intelligence Agency states that researcher Johnston’s conclusions are not what many in the world of intelligence analysis would like to hear. He reaches those conclusions through the careful procedures of an anthropologist—conducting literally hundreds of interviews and observing and participating in dozens of work groups in intelligence analysis—and so his conclusions cannot easily be dismissed as mere opinion, still less as the bitter mutterings of those who have lost out in bureaucratic wars. His findings constitute not just a strong indictment of the way American intelligence collectors perform analysis, but also a guide for how to perform analysis more effectively.

Johnston identifies the needs for analysis of at least three different types of consumers—cops, spies, and soldiers. The needs of those consumers produce at least three distinct types of intelligence—investigative or operational, strategic, and tactical. He recommends that, together, the analytic agencies should aim to create “communities of practice,” with mentoring, analytic practice groups, and various kinds of on-line resources, including forums on methods and problem solving.

The opportunity to do this research presented itself, at least in part, as a result of his participation in a multiyear research program on medical error and failure for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). The DARPA surgical research was followed up by a multiyear study of individual and team performance of astronauts at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) Johnson Space Center. Johnston mentions surgical and astronautical studies for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most telling connection is
that, because lives are at stake, surgeons and astronauts experience tremendous internal and external social pressure to avoid failure. The same often holds for intelligence analysts. In addition, surgery and astronautics are highly selective and private disciplines. Intelligence analysts share many of these organizational and professional circumstances.

The conflict between secrecy, a necessary condition for intelligence, and openness, a necessary condition for performance improvement, was a recurring theme Johnston observed during this research. In addition, there has been an appreciable increase in the use of alternative analyses and open-source materials. This is not to say that a body of intelligence literature does not exist, but rather that the literature that does exist has been focused to a greater extent on case studies than on the actual process of intelligence analysis. The literature that deals with the process of intelligence analysis tends to be personal and idiosyncratic, reflecting an individualistic approach to problem solving.

This individualistic approach to analysis has resulted in a great variety of analytic methods—Johnston identified at least 160 in the research for this paper—but it has not led to the development of a standardized analytic doctrine. That is, there is no body of research across the intelligence community asserting that method X is the most effective method for solving case one and that method Y is the most effective method for solving case two.

In his search of the intelligence literature, Johnson found no taxonomy of the variables that affect intelligence analysis. Readers find the working definitions in the first chapter. The second chapter highlights the broader findings and implications of this ethnographic study. The taxonomy that grew out of this work was first described in an article for the CSI journal, Studies in Intelligence, and is presented here as chapter three. The chapter by Dr. Judith Meister
Johnston that follows offers an alternative model—more complex and possibly more accurate than the traditional intelligence cycle—for looking at the dynamics of the intelligence process (Johnston, 2005).

The following chapters, prepared by her and other able colleagues, were developed around other variables in the taxonomy and offer suggestions for improvement in those specific areas. One of them—chapter five, on integrating methodologists and substantive experts in research teams—also appeared in *Studies in Intelligence*. Chapter nine contains several broad recommendations, including suggestions for further research. This text, then, is more a progress report than a final report in any traditional sense (Johnston, 2005).

Similar to Johnston’s slant on analytics, but definitely more to the point, Hammes states in “*Dumb-dumb Bullets: As a Decision-making Aid, PowerPoint is a Poor Tool*” that every year, the services spend millions of dollars teaching our people how to think. Unfortunately, as soon as they graduate, our people return to a world driven by a tool that is the antithesis of thinking: PowerPoint. (Hammes, 2009).
Doctrine

Doctrine is the fundamental principles of the Services. Doctrinal literature includes publications that list the fundamental principles with their supporting tactics, techniques, procedures that the DoD uses to instruct Servicemembers. Doctrinal literature also includes the terms and symbols used for the conduct of operations and the literature which the operating force uses to guide their actions in support of national objectives. Doctrine is authoritative, but it requires leaders to use judgment in its application. For this research, both joint doctrinal literature and Army doctrinal literature were consulted.

The first doctrinal publication consulted for this project was Joint Publication (JP) 2-0, *Intelligence*. It establishes joint doctrine to govern the activities and performance of the Services when gathering intelligence. JP 2-0 provides the doctrinal literature for U.S. military coordination with other U.S. agencies and for involvement in multinational operations. JP 2-0 also provides joint intelligence doctrine for training, operations, and education of Servicemembers. JP 2-0—

- Describes the nature of intelligence.
- Presents the principles of joint intelligence.
- Describes intelligence organizations and responsibilities.
- Explains intelligence support to planning, executing, and assessing joint operations.
- Addresses joint, interagency, and multinational intelligence sharing and cooperation.

(Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2007)

Subordinate in doctrinal hierarchy to JP 2-0, JP 2-01, *Joint and National Support to Military Operations* (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2012) states that the format and guidance for
annex B (Intelligence) is contained in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3122.03C, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System, Volume II, Planning Formats*.

As for doctrine below the joint level, Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 2-0, *Intelligence*, (Department of the Army, 2012) provides a common construct for intelligence. This publication describes the key aspects of intelligence support to unified land operations and establishes the doctrinal foundation for Army intelligence. It also serves as a reference for intelligence personnel who are developing doctrine, leader development, materiel and force structure, and institutional and unit training for intelligence. (Department of the Army, 2012).

Subordinate and linked to ADP 2-0, ADRP 2-0, *Intelligence* (Department of the Army, 2012) discusses intelligence in unified land operations, the purpose and role of intelligence, intelligence core competencies, the intelligence warfighting function, the intelligence enterprise, the intelligence process, and intelligence capabilities. ADRP 2-0 also states that an intelligence estimate is the appraisal, expressed in writing or orally, of available intelligence relating to a specific situation or condition with a view to determining the courses of action open to the threat and the order of probability of the threat adopting these courses of action. The intelligence staff officer (the G-2 or S-2) or the intelligence staff develops and maintains the intelligence estimate. The primary purposes of the intelligence estimate are to determine the full set of courses of action open to the threat and the probable order of their adoption, to disseminate information and intelligence, and to determine requirements concerning threats and other relevant aspects of the operational environment. (Department of the Army, 2012).

Comparatively similar to Army Service doctrine is *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 1, Warfighting*. This publication describes the philosophy which distinguishes the U.S.
Marine Corps from other Services. This publication provides the authoritative basis for how the U.S. Marine Corps prepares for combat and how it fights. MCDP 1 also provides broad guidance in the form of concepts and values. Chapter 1 describes the U.S. Marine Corps’ understanding of the characteristics, problems, and demands of war. Chapter 2 derives a theory about war from that understanding. This theory provides the foundation for how the U.S. Marine Corps prepares for war as described in chapter 3. In chapter 4, MCDP 1 describes how the U.S. Marine Corps wages war. (Secretary of the Navy, 1997).

The companion manual to MCDP 1 is *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 2, Intelligence*. It describes the theory and philosophy of intelligence as practiced by the United States Marine Corps. It provides Marines a conceptual framework for understanding and conducting effective intelligence activities. (Secretary of the Navy, 1997).
Summary

Based on the information in the literature review, the article, *Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan*, specifically states the deficiency in intelligence in regards to population and governmental information; however, only a small portion of an intelligence estimate as described by ADRP 2-0 focuses on civil considerations. Likewise, JP 2-01 describes a template of an intelligence estimate presumed to have the missing information that General Flynn requires for senior leaders, but the reference is no longer available for analysts to refer to. Further doctrinal literature expands on the history, current events, doctrine, and intelligence analysis details to effectively show the intelligence requirement to expand the intelligence estimate with more governmental and population information.
Analysis & Critical Application

In terms of what was done for this project the author has a working knowledge of the article, “Fixing Intel”. As an intelligence officer of some 16 years the author thought back to the time of the publication of the article and used his knowledge of doctrinal principles and templates as a backdrop in determining the context for what LTG (Ret.) Flynn was proposing. The author “put himself in their boots” (speaking of the intel officers in theater at the time) to compare and contrast the proposal and get a sense of the changes that LTG (Ret.) Flynn was asking for in terms of doctrinal correctness and the required information of those with “boots on the ground.” Finally, the author asked two questions: 1) is there a difference in standards of analytical work here, and 2) is there something to learn here and share with a greater community of professionals?

In codifying how the author did the work on this project the lion’s share of the work was simply researching the actual “Fixing Intel” article and tracing its sources and associated texts. Furthermore, the author worked to determine the background history that led to the publication of the article. The author also researched associated intelligence doctrine for intelligence estimates.

The findings and results of the analysis show that doctrinal literature agrees with LTG (Ret.) Flynn in the desire to have more analysis of new information; however, his desire to alter the design of the then-current analytical construct in Afghanistan is not doctrinally-based. LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s antagonist in this matter, Ben Connable, mostly agrees with Flynn in his desire to alter the collection of information for analysis; however, he diverges from his agreement when
Flynn uses color-codes for population groups. Connable proposes analytical mind shifts rather than making or altering new analytical constructs.

In terms of historical significance the literature review shows that many of the circumstances present in Afghanistan and Pakistan have existed for centuries. Although the conflict in which LTG (Ret.) Flynn found himself caused him to develop different analytical information requirements the need for these requirements was present when the British and the Soviets were fighting in Afghanistan in past wars. Also, in speaking of current affairs, the literature review showed that there were different and competing views to those found in, “Fixing Intel” and that those views, as LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s were, that are doctrinally-based. The doctrinal portions of the literature review shed light on the presence of the civilian population, including governmental information, in the doctrinal intelligence estimate. Finally, the intelligence collection and intelligence analysis portions of the literature review show that analysis is for the most part standard across the board in its levels as operational, strategic, and tactical with consumers as cops, spies, and soldiers.

The Stability Operations Information Center (SOIC) concept was the solution that LTG (Ret.) Flynn recommended to better analyze and incorporate population and government-centric information into analysis. Similar, yet still distinct in its application, Connable’s new recommendation was to expand the analyst’s scope in terms of population and government information without color-coding groups in order to artificially deconstruct the groups, environment, or the people as a whole.

The observations made point to the fact that doctrine as written stopped short of Flynn’s recommended solution, and that analysts approved of Connable’s solution in theory but not in
application. The DoD Inspector General noted that Flynn’s change in analytic structure needed to be institutionalized. Patterns showed that analysts are typically enemy-centric and tend to marginalize population and government-centric information in their assessments. LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s whole premise of fixing intelligence is drawn from this pattern. Two constant themes were that short-sighted analysis was not enough in counterinsurgency and that analysts must do more to provide better assessments. The two analytic structures are connected in pure theory and show that doctrine, Flynn, and Connable are all tied together. However, it is the limit to which they apply their analysis that then separates them once again. The relationship of Flynn and Connable’s work to doctrine is doctrinally standard where Flynn and Connable extend analytic fervor but Flynn goes on to recommend organizational changes to implement this change in thinking. On the other hand, Connable believes that change in intelligence thought processes is suitable enough to get the job done. A current trend is that the current military emphasis on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have focused intelligence analysis further than doctrinally represented and that irregular warfare in light of doctrinal analytical constructs may be altered for the foreseeable future due to this trend.

The result of this project shows that the Department of Defense’s current doctrinal intelligence process does in fact account for population and governmental information in addition to enemy activity. It is the fact that the population and government-centric information is at times marginalized when compared to enemy activity that answer this projects research question further. The results substantiate LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s focus on having these two areas expanded upon so that more holistic intelligence assessment can be provided.
Analysis & Critical Application - History

The literature regarding Afghanistan’s history means that in terms of culture, politics, location, lessons learned, tactics, intelligence, force transformation, key battles, future war, and the avoidance of failure that the country’s history is a major prelude to its future. New ways of thinking along with solutions and recommendations discerned from the research are that the politics of the region and those powers wishing to influence Afghanistan will always be the variables that change in the country’s dealings. The culture and topography of the land are so old and staid that they remain constant through the ages.

Key findings and the description of the outcome regarding Afghanistan’s history center on the fact that the area is a vital crossroads for major conflict between civilians and armies. That in itself portends future conflict for the area and region in the upcoming century or possibly even in the coming decades. Surely, conflict remains in the country at the time of this writing. This finding and description falls in line with the dominant patterns, themes, or observations made. Simple enough, it seems that the pattern historically in relation to Afghanistan, is that countries get involved militarily and politically in the country (Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States) with a pre-determined expectation of completed hostilities and exit and end up with a prolonged presence in the country well after the time that they intended to exit. This means that Afghanistan is complex in many ways and that countries should pay heed to the history of the region before coming decisively engaged in military or political discourse with the nation and its inhabitants.

These results and outcomes advance the field of strategic security by their time-tested, codified stance in historical fact. As well, the history points to potential futures of existence as
three nations have found extended periods of involvement in the region where they didn’t intend to play a part. Afghanistan, in short, is analogous to quicksand in this respect.
Analysis & Critical Application - Current Affairs

In regards to current affairs, the literature surrounding Afghanistan means the country is used to harboring conflict. The recent trends of terrorism, skewed intelligence, and political rebuilding overshadow many other topics such as economic good tidings and infrastructure improvements. New ways of thinking specific to this project center of Fixing Intelligence’s pointing to the inclusion of populace and governmental information along with threat reports. Also, due to the recent occupation of the country by the United States and ISAF, new ways of thinking also center around the leadership’s counterinsurgency guidance and other like-minded informational programs used to characterize the happenings in the country to the outside world.

Key findings most definitely center on LTG (Ret.) Flynn’s self-guided research in which Flynn found that analysis was deficient of population and government metrics by which to give a more well-rounded perspective of the situation in the country. Also, the setting up of the Stability Operation Information Centers is a huge dynamic by which the new reporting was intended to come from. This construct became the basis for enhanced reporting from Afghanistan in this regard.

Connections, relationships and trends associated with these facts point to the Department of the Inspector General’s recommendation to make the personnel and organizational changes permanent in the U.S. Army. It is by this measure that the author has intended to trace the change in tenor of reporting in light of process as well as the content that complements it. These outcomes advance the field of strategic security by setting the standard for future reporting to ensure that it’s inclusive of population and governmental data in addition to enemy/threat reporting.
Analysis & Critical Application – Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis

The literature on intelligence and intelligence analysis means that analysts should pay heed to those like CIA researcher Johnston who has done the hard, grueling work to determine the best ways that American intelligence collectors should perform analysis, that is, basically, how analysts do their jobs. This correlates with Flynn’s desire to incorporate population and governmental information into analysis. Johnson teaches how to incorporate that knowledge better.

Johnston’s new recommendations discerned from research are that together, analytic agencies (investigative/operational, strategic, and tactical) should aim to create, “communities of practice,” with mentoring, analytic practice groups, and various on-line resources, including forums on methods and problem solving.

This outcome advances the field of strategic security by giving credible reference to what LTG (Ret.) Flynn is asking for. Researchers can look back and know that their work to find white and green information, in addition to red information, will not be useless.
Analysis & Critical Application - Doctrine

In terms of doctrine, the literature suggests that the construct for what Flynn was asking for was present prior to the publishing of the “Fixing Intel” article. No new ways of thinking, new solutions, or recommendations have been discerned from research. Key findings center of the presence of a category in the standard intelligence estimate labeled as civilian considerations as an area by which to report Flynn’s requested population and governmental information.

This theme means that this information can be used DoD-wide to garner the information that LTG (Ret.) Flynn asks for in regards to Afghanistan situation reporting. The relevance to strategic security lies in the fact that a reporting deficiency in the future may be in the areas of population and governmental reporting. Analysts can refer back to the work done here and present in the civilian consideration portion of the intelligence estimate to verify that they can and should include this information in their analysis.
Conclusion

The author started with the research question of, “Does the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) current doctrinal intelligence process account for population centric and governmental information in addition to enemy activity?”

- The answer to that is, “yes it does.” Civilian considerations is the doctrinal category that was given short shrift at the onset of hostilities by intelligence analysts in Operation Enduring Freedom.

- From the inception of this project research has shown that the answer isn’t that easy, though. LTG (Ret.) Flynn wanted intelligence analysis to be better and he used white (population) and green (governmental) activity as a forcing function to make the assessments coming from Afghanistan better for our country’s most senior leaders. Flynn’s efforts aren’t totally in vain but they haven’t been accepted without criticism and this project has shown that.

- Initially, it was believed that all that needed to be done was to expand an intelligence estimate template in the area of civilian considerations and we could call it good; however, writers like Connable have shown that people and institutions can’t be easily categorized into color groupings.

- That in itself could imply that civilian considerations as a term could be further defined to include population and government-centric information. It is in that statement that pathways of future research can made to delve into and profess either for or against changing doctrine.
References


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