

Canadian
Forces
College

Collège
des
Forces
Canadiennes



MECHANISM WHICH RCAF CAN EMPLOY TO DETER, MITIGATE AND COUNTER THE GROWTH OF HYBRID WARFARE

Lt Col. Salem Alblooshi

JCSP 46

Service Paper

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2020.

PCEMI 46

Étude militaire

Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2020.

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 46 – PCEMI 46
2019 – 2020

SERVICE PAPER - ÉTUDE MILITAIRE

**MECHANISM WHICH RCAF CAN EMPLOY TO DETER, MITIGATE AND
COUNTER THE GROWTH OF HYBRID WARFARE**

Lieutenant-Colonel Salem Alblooshi

"This paper was written by a candidate attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfillment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is an academic document, and thus contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defense. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defense."

Word Count: 2359

“La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.”

Nombre de mots: 2359

Aim

1. In recent days, there have been increased instances and cases of irregular warfare which have been reported across the world. Indeed, hybrid warfare has largely altered the overall security landscape while at the same time, posing new forms of conflict across the globe. In fact, the norm comes with immense security threats to various institutions. Thus, this paper will aim at analyzing the hybrid warfare in line with the case study of the United Arab Emirates and the approach which their Air force used to curb the problem. Further to this, the paper will also expand and elaborate on how the Canadian Air force can utilize the lessons obtained from the case study in enhancing their RCAF systems when it comes to dealing with the hybrid warfare.

Introduction

2. Over the past decades, the Air Force has played a fundamental role when it comes to dealing with irregular warfare. The United States of America Air Force defined irregular warfare as a deduced violent struggle existing among states as well as portrayed by the non-state actors. The two key factors and contributors to irregular warfare are influence and legitimacy over a population. Further to this, it is essential to note that Both the asymmetric and indirect approaches have favored irregular warfare in most cases. However, in some cases, the norm tends to require the deployment of the full military and other relevant capabilities for it to be active and fully capable.

3. Fundamentally, the contribution of Airpower in curbing irregular warfare has been immense and cannot go unnoticed. For instance, Airpower has successfully helped in fighting irregular warfare in the Middle East. However, it has been argued by different authors that irregular warfare can be fought, and success is achieved with airpower alone. Thus, it has been proposed by different personalities such as John Warden III that airpower should be combined with other forces mores, so the ones in the ground to achieve victory¹. However, there has been a loophole since most scholars have not stated what the airpower can add as well as contribute as far as the hybrid warfare is concerned.

Discussion

Definition of Hybrid Warfare

4. First and foremost, it is essential to note that the war has evolved over the past decades. In essence, it has transformed from the ancient to modern to hybrid or conventional. In addition to this, hybrid warfare is described as complex, diverse as well as unpredictable. There are specialized literatures which have often discussed and described the hybrid warfare as both social and historical phenomenon. This means that the war represents the sophisticated virulent quintessence forms depicting political relations between the inconsequential economy and

¹ John Boyd and John Warden Air Power's Quest for Strategic Paralysis DAVID S. FADOK, Major, USAF School of Advanced Airpower Studies February 1995

militarily structured groups of people². In the typical encounter, war can be described to have both the crude threat mixture and coercive instruments. These elements tend to have a political background, which poses a challenge to the overall world security. Further to this, hybrid war has become part and parcel of today's encounter when it comes to warfare. It is considered to bring new war-waging and new manifestation form in the military conflict. Conversely, the hybrid war has been considered to be compounded with the desperate made-up elements, and it also lacks harmony in most cases.

Characteristics of Hybrid Warfare

5. There are different characteristics which are attached to the hybrid warfare. The hybrid warfare has not been given a clear description. This followed the quite sudden and forced annexation of Russia Crimea conducted in 2014³. In the process, the Western embarked on developing the strategic approach for adopting the hybrid war concept. However, no clear definition has been officiated for the term hybrid. In essence, most of the scholars have purported that it may exist between irregular and conventional war. Others have deduced that it could be considered to exist between the non-symmetrical and asymmetrical one. Notably, at the operational levels, the overall features attached to such wars can be considered to consist of different and complex maneuvers. In this case, the norm focuses on the deployment and concentration of the parametric combatant forces. On the other hand, the hybrid war is considered to be conventional conglomerate instruments at the tactical level. It also emphasizes on the adjustments of the current and modern technological context. Preferably, the main characteristic attached to the hybrid war is a coding element. In most cases, the hybrid wars do not have either the war declaration or the diplomatic talk. Most of the events tend to take irregular shape with the happenings, in most cases being unpredictably and illogically. Thus, both the symbols and codes are considered to be the critical plays in the building of the background war. In addition to this, the hybrid wars tend to focus on the state economic environment, and this is often supported by different propaganda. The message of the propaganda, in most cases, is always a religious message. The message could be on Catholicism against Orthodoxy, Islam versus Christianity, or Islam opposing Hinduism⁴. Subsequently, hybridity is defined as an analogy that uses all the listed norms against a state. In many occasions, it is compounded on the conventional forces, Special Forces, government destabilizing, cyber, intelligence agents, criminal, terrorists' activities as well as paramilitary. In this context, the goal of the war is always offensive and global, one which works against the state, organization, and institution.

² Hoffman, Frank G. *Hybrid warfare and challenges*. National Defense Univ Washington DC Inst For National Strategic Studies, 2009.

³ Batyuk, Vladimir I. "The US concept and practice of hybrid warfare." *Strategic Analysis* 41, no. 5 (2017): 464-477.

⁴ ȘTEFĂNESCU, Daniel-Cornel, and Alina PAPOI. "Hybrid War as a Modern Instrument of Military Art." *Scientific Research & Education in the Air Force-AFASES* (2018).

UAE Hybrid Adoption

6. It is important to note that the United Arab Emirates often than not, has adopted the hybrid concept in dealing with irregular warfare. The process in the UAE mission began with the use of conventional training, which took place between the 1980s and 1990s. However, airpower shifted the gears in the 2000s. In May 2007, the UAE established the (AWC) air warfare center to build a military to military relationship and interoperability with the USA and other parties in the world. Having this center in the UAE allowed the air force to conduct their own training in the country. The training was and still being taught according to the new challenges and the new war concepts to allow the pilots to plan, command, and execute missions in a realistic scenario⁵. The incorporation and adoption of the hybrid concept of warfare commenced by the UAE air force, sending their troops to the United States of America for training. In this case, the UAE air force started upgrading his fleet to meet the requirements such as changing most of the aircraft sensors and pods, and in some cases changing the whole concept of some aircraft from civilian use to full military use by adding some equipment like the latest pods systems and ammunitions such as Cessna Caravan, Bell 407, Arch Angel and DHC-6/8⁶. they did send their pilots to gain experience on how to operate the F-16 fighting falcon and the Apache, which is one of the most powerful attack helicopters. The training offered in this case mainly comprised both the ground and airmen controller. The controllers were picked from the Irregular Warfare, which the United Arab Emirate Air force participated in Afghanistan. This came as a result of the coordination of air support, which was required at the International Security Assistance Force or ISAF, and this resulted in the development of the JTAC School. The school was established in Abu Dhabi and is considered as one of the largest in the area.

7. As part of dealing with the hybrid war, the United Arab Emirate Air force noted the need to have a technology which is not expensive and cost-effective in terms of the purchase and maintenance. Thus, the decision to use the F-16-block 60 instead of the Iomax AT-802i, and this was because of the low cost as well as high technology, which the gadgets had in the long term⁷. However, this did not offer a permanent solution to the UAE air force, and thus, the decision to purchase UAV from the United States of America and China. Their main objective, in this case, was on how to enhance surveillance as well as have an approach of dealing with the counter EW. The UAE also spent billions of dollars in ensuring that the soldiers gathered the required skills from the combat capabilities and training. The UAE's participation in the mission of Operation

⁵ <https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/380th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Display/Article/1937190/al-dhafra-welcomes-new-air-warfare-center-commander/>

⁶ Goure, Dan. "Why The Light Attack Aircraft Is So Important To The Air Force". *The National Interest*. January 12, 2019. <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-light-attack-aircraft-so-important-air-force-41322>.

⁷ "Special Ops Aircraft Come Out Of The Shadows." *Aviation International News*. November 22, 2013. Accessed October 27, 2019. <http://www.ainonline.com/aviation-news/defense/2013-11-22/uae-special-ops-aircraft-come-out-shadows>.

odyssey down was mushrooming support of ensuring that there was endured freedom in operation enduring freedom in Afghanistan. The participation in real sense helped the airpower of UAE in gaining experience on how to tackle the coin operation. In essence, it was noted that the UAE Air Force was the pacesetters in the war, and this helped them in developing and enhancing their unrivaled reputation across the Arabian Gulf Region.

8. The Yemen UAE involvement and participation largely described as the Decisive Storm. Indeed, it could be discussed as the collation part, which was led by the Saudi Arabia KSA. In the mission, the UAE Air Force engaged in the war with at least 30 fighters as well as other relevant platforms⁸. All this aimed at supporting the operation. The operation resulted from the Yemen War against Houthis. This could be described as collation intervention, which resulted from the request made by the elected government. It followed the attempts by ex-president (Ali Abdhulla Salah) and Iran to over through the elected government. Thus, the collation was conducted by the UAE Air Force, who major on the air campaign to achieve air superiority and focus on the strategic targets. The operation was successful since the Air Force got the opportunity to attain all the stated objectives in line with the air campaign.

9. In addition, to this, one can deduce that the Airpower can assist in attaining and winning the population supports. This can be seen from the operation which liberated the Aden from the Houthis terrorist group control. This helped in enhancing and fostering both the courage and operational skills. There was a team that landed in Crater and comprised both the UAE presidential Special Force and Yemenis. "This was an important area as it was marked as one of the key notch coalition-controlled section in Aden⁹." The first section of the operation in the area encompassed the air campaign, and this shaped an extensive battlefield for the overall rebels. After that, the UAE used the amphibious approach to land in Aden. The theory which the UAE Air Force used in the scenario was "Winning Hearts and Minds," and this aimed at defeating the Saleh Forces and Houthis terrorist group or insurgents. However, the forces also had the objective of supporting the rebels alongside the co-Hadi Forces. Notably, the joint operation conducted by presidential guard and UAE Air Force resulted in the sophisticated Aden Battle win.

10. Nonetheless, there are those who will argue that the Air Force only had the chance to win the rebels and Special Forces but did not win the overall population support. However, the effects and presence of native individuals can be measured. Although the statements are true to a larger extent, it is worth noting that the airpower did a lucrative job in this operation. Indeed, they helped by providing firepower intelligence, precise attacks as well as surveillance. These roles ensured that there were fewer cases reported as far as the casualties were concerned. It also ensured that the operation duration was shortened. Subsequently, collateral damage was a key

⁸ Salem, Ola. "UAE military intervention in Yemen was 'inevitable'." The National. March 26, 2015. Accessed October 27, 2019. <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-military-intervention-in-yemen-was-inevitable>

⁹ Press, Associated. "In Yemen, UAE Troops Push Toward Rebel-held Capital." VOA. September 14, 2015. Accessed May 06, 2017. <http://www.voanews.com/a/yemen-emirati-troops-push-toward-houthi-held-sanaa/2963400.html>

aspect which the planners, as well as the executors of the operations, indeed took into consideration. This aimed at gaining population support. In essence, the air power was able to gain population support as a result of this and their earning respect from the native individuals and insurgents. This helped them in changing their tactics and approaches they later applied in Tazz and Marib.

11. A new concept was adopted when the UAE air force embarked on the mission in Marib battle. In this case, the collation decided to use the Mao Attrition Theory as per the irregular warfare. In this operation, the collation prioritized human life and was not willing to lose any and thus, adapted the Attrition Approach¹⁰. Indeed, they had the objective of winning the population support. In this process, they decided to cut supply lines coming from the Houthis insurgents. Also, they worked on cutting any daily air strikes targeting their overall trenches. On the other hand, the Houthis decided to change their tactics regarding their insurgent operations after losing in Aden. Thus, in Marib, the encompassed on utilizing the attrition warfare alongside tactical missile attacks, and in the process, they got the opportunity to strike and killed 52 soldiers of UAE¹¹. However, the loss did not destroy the collation of UAE but rather gave them an opportunity to deploy a team of air Defense who fostered on protecting the forces on the field. This enables the UAE Air Force to take their warfare to a notch higher as far as the counterinsurgency was concerned.

12. The use of the center of gravity as the attacking focus by the combined forces is also another essential aspect that helped the mass air firepower to obtain victory. Indeed, attacking the center of gravity played a fundamental as it helped in paving the way for the final Almukalla liberation. The liberation was conducted using the heavy air strikes on 24th May 2016. The UAE Air Force backed the UAE Special Forces, and they gained access to Almukalla and liberated the city from Al-Qaida Militia¹².

CONCLUSION

13. The hybrid warfare concept is one of the most things to be considered in the enrolment and training of nowadays soldiers, especially pilots they need such training to be implemented in their training as early as they join the air force. Using modern aircraft with the proper technology of sensors and weapon systems to be very cost effective and at the same time, achieving the mission objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

¹⁰ Dunn-Lobban, Andrew. "Hybrid Warfare, Hybrid Threats and the Demarcation of Conflict." (2016).

¹¹ Qalisi, Mohammed Al. "Yemen forces tighten siege on Marib." The National. September 15, 2015. Accessed October 28, 2019. <http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/yemen-forces-tighten-siege-on-marib>

¹² "Sun Tzu Quotes, The Art of War Quotes." Sun Tzu Quotes and Quotations - The Art of War Quotes. Accessed October 27, 2019. <http://www.military-quotes.com/Sun-Tzu.htm>

14. RCAF should start using and considering the use of hybrid warfare concepts in their training and missions, maybe also to consider establishing a training center to conduct the job for that, and this will increase the efficiency and will be very cost-effective. Besides this RCAF should start thinking of upgrading or buying new platforms that helps to make it happen.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Sun Tzu Quotes, The Art of War Quotes." Sun Tzu Quotes and Quotations - The Art of War Quotes. Accessed October 27, 2019. <http://www.military-quotes.com/Sun-Tzu.htm>

380th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs. "Al Dhafra Welcomes New Air Warfare Center Commander". *U.S. Air Forces Central Command*. 2019. <https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/380th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Display/Article/1937190/al-dhafra-welcomes-new-air-warfare-center-commander/>.

Batyuk, Vladimir I. "The US concept and practice of hybrid warfare." *Strategic Analysis* 41, no. 5 (2017): 464-477.

Dunn-Lobban, Andrew. "Hybrid Warfare, Hybrid Threats and the Demarcation of Conflict." (2016).

Goure, Dan. "Why The Light Attack Aircraft Is So Important To The Air Force". *The National Interest*. January 12, 2019. <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-light-attack-aircraft-so-important-air-force-41322>.

Hoffman, Frank G. *Hybrid warfare and challenges*. National Defense Univ Washington DC Institute For National Strategic Studies, 2009.

John Boyd and John Warden Air Power's Quest for Strategic Paralysis David S. Fadok, Major, USAF School of Advanced Airpower Studies February 1995

Press, Associated. "In Yemen, UAE Troops Push Toward Rebel-held Capital." VOA. September 14, 2015. Accessed October 28, 2019. <http://www.voanews.com/a/yemen-emirati-troops-push-toward-houthi-held-sanaa/2963400.html>.

Salem, Ola. "UAE military intervention in Yemen was 'inevitable'." *The National*. March 26, 2015. Accessed October 28, 2019. <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-military-intervention-in-yemen-was-inevitable>

Special Ops Aircraft Come Out of the Shadows." *Aviation International News*. November 22, 2013. Accessed October 27, 2019. <http://www.ainonline.com/aviation-news/defense/2013-11-22/uae-special-ops-aircraft-come-out-shadows>.

ȘTEFĂNESCU, Daniel-Cornel, and Alina PAPOI. "Hybrid War as a Modern Instrument of Military Art." *Scientific Research & Education in the Air Force-AFASES* (2018).

Qalisi, Mohammed Al. "Yemen forces tighten siege on Marib." *The National*. September 15, 2015. Accessed October 28, 2019. <http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/yemen-forces-tighten-siege-on-marib>.