

UNDERSTANDING FOURTH GENERATION WARFARE AND IT'S RELEVANCE TO PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The history of war is divided into five distinct eras starting from the mid 1640s. Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW), though as old as the history of war itself, has acquired a new character with the introduction of new technology that could hardly be conceived before the 1980s. 4GW is an umbrella term used by military thinkers to describe conflicts at the end of the 20th century. It is characterized by a blurring of the lines between war and politics, soldier and civilian, conflict and peace, battlefield and safety. The incident of 9/11, the resultant US response and the counter strategy adopted by the Taliban and other militant groups opened a Pandora's Box for Pakistan and Afghanistan making them the most vulnerable targets of 4GW. The threat posed by militants to Pakistan was so serious that its army had to be called in; the onslaught of the 4GW militants was beyond the capacity of the paramilitary forces to handle. The current and potential threats of 4GW to Pakistan warrant that it must evolve a comprehensive strategy involving the entire nation while taking into account regional and international factors. The main objective of the proposed strategy should be to asphyxiate the promoters/propagators of 4GW against Pakistan.

Key words: Fourth Generation Warfare, Relevance, Pakistan.

Introduction

When one traces the history of warfare, one can easily divide it into five distinct eras starting from the mid-1640s. The First Generation Warfare (1st GW) runs roughly from 1648 to 1860. This was a war of line and column tactics, where battles were formal and the battlefield was orderly, which created the military culture of that period. The

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Second Generation Warfare (2nd GW) was developed by the French Army during and after World War I, which focused on centrally-controlled mass fire power, using detailed, specific plans and orders, for the infantry, tanks, and artillery. The Third Generation Warfare (3rd GW) was also the product of World War I, developed by the German army, and is commonly known as “blitzkrieg.” It is based not on firepower and attrition but speed, surprise, and mental as well as physical dislocation. Instead of “close with and destroy,” the motto was “bypass and collapse.”¹

The terms “low intensity conflicts” and “irregular war,” used interchangeably, have always remained a part of military history. But the Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW) is an umbrella term used by military thinkers to describe conflicts at the end of the 20th century. It is an extremely effective method of warfare that the countries would find very difficult to defeat. Characteristics such as “decentralization” and “initiative” continued to move from the third to the 4GW, but in other respects, the 4GW marks the most radical change since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. 4GW is also marked by a return to a world of cultures, not merely states, in conflict.²

4GW includes all forms of conflict where the other side refuses to stand up and give a fair fight. What distinguishes 4GW from earlier generations is that typically at least one side is something other than an organized military force, operating under the control of a national government, and one that often transcends national boundaries. The propagators’ survival lies in public support because they have to swim in the sea of people in order to survive and grow. 4GW threats are unpredictable, uncertain and unconventional. In this war, the distinction between war and peace gets blurred to the vanishing point. It will be nonlinear, possibly to the point of having no definable battlefields or fronts. The distinction between “civilian” and “military” may also disappear.³

4GW aims at achieving victory by exploiting the opponents’ weaknesses and undermining the writ of the government. The warriors apply standard guerilla tactics including terrorism, psychological and information/media war. Use of box cutters, aircraft, and improvised explosive devices—IT-based high-tech “wonder” weapons, suicidal missions and banging of explosives-laden

¹ William S. Lind, “Understanding Fourth Generation War,” *Anti War*, January 15, 2004, <http://antiwar.com/lind/?articleid=1702> (accessed February 4, 2012) and Colonel T. X. Hammes, USMC (ret), “Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges,” *Military Review* 87, no. 3 (May-June 2007).

² William S. Lind, *ibid.*, and David W Szelowski, “Fourth Generation Warfare Minus Five,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 87, no. 5 (May 2003): 1.

³ “Fourth Generation Warfare,”

http://www.tradeobservatory.org/library.cfm?filename=Fourth_Generation_Warfare.htm (accessed February 12, 2012).

vehicles against intended targets is a recent phenomenon.⁴ Modern technology and globalization have enabled even small groups to have a trans-national reach. They have a variety of reasons for conflicts with states and their acceptance in society.⁵

Beyond 4GW, the potential threat of a 5GW to the international community involving only a few people cannot be ruled out. This threat may consist of the manufacture and use of high-yield explosives, viruses, biotechnology and even nanotechnology. Its targets could be unsecured fiber-optic cables to shut down internet traffic, major ports to shut down world trade, or various other targets which are almost impossible to protect.⁶

Pakistan has faced a number of 4GW challenges since the early 1970s. Among them the most prominent was the secession of East Pakistan and the insurgencies that have erupted in Balochistan from time to time. The Karachi language and ethnic riots may also fall in the same category. But since the awesome strikes of 9/11, the new range of tactics and technology used by asymmetric 4GW to create an impact has taken the world by surprise. That was both unimaginable and unprecedented in history. The event of 9/11 was followed by a series of terrorist acts using a variety of tactics including suicide bombings by militants across the Pak-Afghan border in reaction to the US offensive in Afghanistan.

The threat to Pakistan was so grave the Civil Armed Forces (CAFs) were neither prepared nor equipped to respond to the militants' actions backed domestically and internationally in terms of finances and equipment. The Pakistan army had to be called in. Its operations in Swat, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Sui were conducted with success. Taking the lead from Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Sri Lanka, Pakistan army made effective use of its aviation and air force to take out the militants from their well protected hideouts. Another ongoing struggle that the law enforcing agencies are making is against urban terrorism in Karachi and Quetta. The army has not been involved in this effort so far. However, though these encounters of the Pakistan armed forces with the highly motivated and well-equipped 21st century guerillas are regarded as classical stories of success, it is believed that Pakistan army has just been able to contain them. The ultimate success is still far away as the Army has been unable to deprive the militants of the oxygen that they still have and are using successfully to promote their agendas. The 4GW is a long drawn affair therefore; Pakistan's CAFs will have to be geared up to take over the lead role.

⁴ Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Fourth-Generation War and Other Myths* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, November 2005), <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub632.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2012).

⁵ Hammes, "Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges."

⁶ Ibid.

In the above backdrop, this brief paper focuses on: One, understanding 4GW theoretical framework; two, current and impending 4GW threat to Pakistan; three, Pakistan's potential to confront the current and potential threats and finally, the suggested way forward. The opinions expressed in this paper are that of the authors' own and do not necessarily represent government or institutional views.

Understanding 4GW: Theoretical Framework

The third-generation warfare concept, characterized by “maneuvers” continued to dominate for over six decades and it is still largely valid.⁷ The concept of 4GW was introduced in 1989 in an article published simultaneously in the US *Marine Corps Gazette* and the *Military Review*. But it did not get due attention till 9/11 happened. The apparent early victories of the US in Afghanistan and in Iraq seemed to vindicate US reliance on modern technology warfare. However, the US paid serious attention to 4GW only when it found its forces stuck in operations against militants and insurgents in the two countries. The 4GW concept continues to evolve like all previous forms of war.⁸ Its simplest definition would be any war in which one of the major participants is not a state but a violent ideological network. It is characterized by a blurring of the lines between war and politics, soldier and civilian, conflict and peace, battlefield and safety.⁹

There is a general perception that in 4GW, the nature of war has fundamentally changed with a whole set of new tactics. However there is no generally agreed definition of 4GW. William Lind defines it, “Fourth Generation Warfare is not novel but a return, specifically a return to the way the wars were fought before the rise of the state...”¹⁰ Definitely; the different

⁷ Arjun Subramaniam, “Strategies to Tackle Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW): An Aerial Perspective,” *Strategic Analysis* 34, no.5 (September 2010): 756.

⁸ Hammes, “Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges,” Simon Murden, “Staying the Course in ‘Fourth-Generation Warfare:’ Persuasion and Perseverance in the Era of the Asymmetric Bargaining War,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 28, no.1 (April 2007), <http://www.contemporarysecuritypolicy.org/assets/CSP-28-1-Murden.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2012), and Tim Benbow, “Talking Bout Our Generation? Assessing the Concept of Fourth-Generation Warfare,” *Comparative Strategy* 27, no. 2 (March 2008): 149.

⁹ “Modern warfare,” *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_warfare (accessed February 9, 2012), Don Eijndhoven, “Cyberspace and 4th Generation Warfare - A Marriage of Convenience,” *Infosec Island*, August 26, 2011, <http://infosecisland.com/.../16109-Cyberspace-and-4th-Generation-Warfare-A-Marriage-of-Convenience.html> (accessed February 13, 2012).

¹⁰ Lind, “Understanding Fourth Generation War” and Michael J. Artelli & Richard F. Deckro, “Fourth Generation Operations: Principles for the Long War,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19, no. 2 (June 2008): 226, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592310802061372> (accessed February 13, 2012).

tools of this war indicate a major change towards modern technology. It had become “broader than any technique,” and, in effect, amounted to the “greatest change in war since the Peace of Westphalia.”¹¹ There are three key developments in 4GW: One, a strategic shift “from military campaigns supported by information operations to strategic communications campaigns supported by guerrilla and terrorist operations;” two, a change in organization from hierarchies to networks and coalitions; and third, a change in the participants to encompass a wider range of actors focusing on various aims.¹²

According to Hammes, “Fourth generation warfare uses all available networks—political, economic, social, and military—to convince the enemy’s political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is an evolved form of insurgency.”¹³ The propagators of the 4GW theory think that modern war has evolved in its fourth generation transition as the power of the state is declining, conventional war is losing its importance and likelihood and the number of violent non-state actors is rising. The primary focus of modern and future warfare would be on media manipulation and insurgency like tactics.¹⁴ In 4GW, the “battlefield” is highly dispersed and includes the whole of the enemy’s society. It is a conflict characterized by a blurring of lines between war and politics; it is nonlinear, having no definable battlefields or fronts. The core feature of 4GW is that it is really about people, more a battle of minds than of steel.¹⁵

The fourth generation warfare can also be defined as an “asymmetrical warfare which uses traditionally non-military means to achieve military objectives.”¹⁶ It may adopt hybrid tactics combining terrorism, high technology, a non-national or transnational base such as an ideology, direct attack on enemy’s culture, bypassing the military and the state itself and highly sophisticated psychological warfare.¹⁷ Hammes observed in *Strategic Forum* in January 2005 that, “advances in communications technology and the growth

¹¹ William S. Lind, “Fourth-Generation Warfare’s First Blow: A Quick Look,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no. 11 (November 2001): 72.

¹² Tim Benbow, “Talking Bout Our Generation?,” 155.

¹³ Hammes, “Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges,” Timothy J. Junio, “Military History and Fourth Generation Warfare,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 2 (April 2009): 245, and Thomas X. Hammes, “4th-Generation Warfare: Our Enemies Play to Their Strengths,” *Armed Forces Journal*, (November 2004): 40-44.

¹⁴ Junio, “Military History and Fourth Generation Warfare,” 245-246.

¹⁵ Fred, “Evolving Threats and the Fourth Generation Warfare Problem here at Home,” June 4, 2010, <http://lesc.net/blog/evolving-threats-and-fourth-generation-warfare-problem-here-h...> (accessed February 12, 2012).

¹⁶ “Fourth Generation Warfare Urban Dictionary,” <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?...fourth%20generation%20warfarePakistan> (accessed February 4, 2012).

¹⁷ William S. Lind et al., “The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 1989, 26.

of formal and informal networks have greatly increased the ability of the insurgents to attack the will of enemy decision-makers directly”.¹⁸ Psychological operations may become the dominant operational and strategic weapon in the form of media/information intervention. The fourth generation adversaries will be adept at manipulating the media to alter domestic and world opinion to the point where skillful use of psychological operations will sometimes preclude the commitment of combat forces.¹⁹

There is yet another approach to define 4GW as suggested by John Robb who states that “4GW is a method of warfare that uses the following to achieve a moral victory: Undermines enemy strengths (...). Exploit enemy weaknesses and the use of asymmetric operations (...).”²⁰ The proponents of 4GW operate at four tiers—political, strategic, operational and tactical. At the political level, it involves transnational, national and sub-national organizations and networks to convey its message to the target audience. At the strategic level, it focuses on breaking the will of the decision makers. At the operational level, it delivers those messages in a variety of ways and at the tactical level, 4GW forces avoid direct confrontation to the extent possible. This warfare contains characteristics of its own: One, battlefield is likely to include the entire society of the enemy; two, minimum dependency on centralized administrative supports; three, a smart, highly mobile and alert force and finally, it aims at the internal collapse rather than physical destruction of the enemy.²¹

Information war which has been part of all generations of warfare is more pronounced in 4GW because of modern technology. Television news may serve as a more powerful operational weapon than an armoured division. Roughly speaking, 4GW uses all kinds of tactics where the other side refuses to stand up and fight. However, as highlighted by Hammes, four case studies of China, Vietnam, Nicaragua, and the West Bank, each confirm that fourth generation tactics are rarely employed exclusively, rather they exist side by side with the tactics used in the earlier generations of war.²²

¹⁸ Murden, “Staying the Course in Fourth-Generation Warfare.”

¹⁹ Lind et al., “The Changing Face of War,” 22-26.

²⁰ Fred, “Evolving Threats and the Fourth Generation Warfare.”

²¹ Lind et al., “The Changing Face of War,” and Thomas T. X. Hammes, “War Evolves into the Fourth Generation,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 26, no.2 (August 2005).

²² Fred, “Evolving Threats and the Fourth Generation Warfare,” and Andy Jones MBE et al., “Everything You Wanted to Know about Information Warfare but Were Afraid to Ask, Part 1,” *Information Systems Security* 11, no. 4 (November, 2002): 9-20, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1201/1086/43322.11.4.20020901/38841.3> (accessed February 15, 2012), “Fourth Generation Warfare,” Greg Wilcox, “Fourth Generation Warfare and the Moral Imperative,” October 2, 2003, www.dnipogo.org/fcs/pdf/4gw_and_the_moral_imperative.pdf (accessed February 14, 2012); Joe Katzman, “4GW: What is 4th Generation Warfare?,” *Winds of Change*,

Martin van Creveld thinks that insurgents, revolutionaries, and terrorists have been learning this new style of war than militaries. Thus, conventional militaries and high-tech weapons are likely to become irrelevant.²³ Robert J. Bunker also expresses similar views.²⁴ Wilcox thinks that if 4GW has any form at all, it is like that of an amoeba. It appears amorphous, adapts easily, and transitions rapidly. It can be a terrorist group one day and a guerrilla group the next. The targets are the civilians, the infrastructure, and the political and social systems.²⁵ Hammes has come up with yet another form of warfare. He says that while the old generations of warfare continue to exist, the new ones are also emerging; it is time for a 5th GW to make an appearance.²⁶

In the opinion of the present writers, the 5th GW had already made its appearance on 9/11 because a very small number of militants could trigger change in the global approach towards security. The incident forced the US to evolve a comprehensive strategy to enhance security so as to protect national interests inland and across the globe. The October 2001 anthrax attack on Capitol Hill, the potential to use Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) like biotechnology and nanotechnology are some of the characteristics of this 5th GW. The use of radiological devices may also be included as it would have long-term psychological impact which would need colossal economic and technological resources to clean the affected areas.

The “dispersion and democratization of technology, information, and finance” brought about by globalization has given the terrorist groups greater flexibility and access worldwide. 4GW attempts to directly attack the minds of the enemy’s decision makers. The only medium that can bring about change in people’s thinking is information. It is therefore a key element in any 4GW strategy. Accordingly insurgents build their plans around a strategic communication campaign designed to bring about the desired change in enemy views. Here, globalization seems to aid the non-state actors more than the state, but states still play a central role in the support or defeat of terrorist groups or insurgencies. Media is an important tool of 4GW.²⁷

But insurgency as a method of waging war is not a new strategy but actually dates back to classical antiquity, and thus, predates the so-called

June 4, 2002, <http://windsofchange.net/archives/002736.html> (accessed February 16, 2012); and Lt. Col. Thomas X. Hammes, “The Evolution of War: The Fourth Generation,” 35-44.

²³ Col. Thomas X. Hammes (ret), *The Sling and The Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (Minneapolis: Zenith Press House, 2006), 7.

²⁴ Robert J. Bunker, “Unrestricted Warfare: Review Essay I,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 11, no.1 (Spring 2002): 116, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592310008423265> (accessed February 15, 2012).

²⁵ Greg Wilcox, “Fourth Generation Warfare and the Moral Imperative.”

²⁶ Hammes, “Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges.”

²⁷ *Ibid.*, and Katzman, “4GW: What is 4th Generation Warfare?.”

second and third generations (firepower and maneuver) as described by 4GW theorists. It is to be expected that non state actors—whether insurgents, terrorists, guerrillas, street gangs, or other similar characters—would try to use the increased mobility that has come about through globalization to pursue their ends. The literature on globalization now is quite extensive, and while scholars will continue to debate certain aspects of it, there is at least a growing consensus that it has dramatically increased the mobility of people, weapons, and ideas. It was, therefore, almost inevitable that a marriage of sorts would develop between terrorism and globalization. It may not be out of place to say that insurgencies have networked, transnationalised and even become trans-dimensional.²⁸

The 4GW threat focuses on soft targets. It intends disrupting social and political systems through fear and intimidation. Thus, the regular armies which are trained and designed to fight a war in a well organized manner against the armed forces of other state[s], would find themselves handicapped in dealing with the initiators of 4GW, not because they lack resources, but because their resources and tactics are not tailored according to the environment. What "wins" at the tactical and physical levels may lose at the operational, strategic, mental and moral levels in a 4GW situation.

To plan and fight a 4GW is a complex job that requires both mental and physical flexibility. The military leadership even with large forces at its disposal may not be able to come to grips with 4GW enemies, no matter what they do unless they are prepared to follow the strategy of going slow and be flexible while dealing with the enemies. Following a rigid timeline and applying 3rd GW tactics might give them instant success but strategically they may fail because of the expanded nature of their battlefields. The conduct of 3rd GW at times undermines the role of locals who can be a great help in a successful outcome of the war, provided they are appropriately involved. Nonetheless, if the nature of the threat is immediate and limited, a prompt and quick response might serve the purpose better. The US failure in Afghanistan and Iraq after successful invasions, are examples for military thinkers to learn from.

At the end, we would like to include a Pakistani perspective of the 4GW. Farzana Shah, defines 4GW as “very different from an actual armed conflict as its (sic) entirely based on asymmetrical warfare and tactics and the major front is physiological (sic) not physical as in a real conflict. Putting in altogether, it can be said that national cohesion becomes a primary target of such warfare model.” She believes that the importance of destroying national

²⁸ Hammes, “The Evolution of War: The Fourth Generation,” Murden, “Staying the Course in Fourth-Generation Warfare,” and Hammes, “Fourth Generation Warfare Evolves, Fifth Emerges.”

unity and creating mistrust becomes more relevant when the enemy is an ideological state like Pakistan.²⁹

From the perspective of the present writers, conceptually, there is nothing new in 4GW. However, because of the improved technology, its scope has been enhanced but it should also not be forgotten that in relative terms, the states' capacity in terms of tactics and technology including Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) have also improved. Therefore, propagators of the 4GW don't get any extraordinary advantage over the states. The 4GW warriors are still vulnerable to the state's mighty military power. Nonetheless, if non-state actors and other militant groups have the backing of a strong outside power, they can continue to fight for a long time. The militants pitched against Pakistan are a case in point. Their fight against the well organized Pakistan army is being sustained by foreign help.

The authors think that if the insurgency is against foreign occupants with strong military might, it will still be called a war of liberation applying 4GW with the full or partial support of the people of the country. In such a situation the occupying forces even with the latest technology are likely to fail when a nation is determined to fight a long and protracted war. The Japanese defeat by China and the US defeat in Vietnam are recent examples of successful struggles against well placed armies of the world. The Palestinians, Kashmiri and Chechen freedom fighters and the Taliban in Afghanistan are similarly battling well advanced armies of the world. Therefore, whether or not the 4GW warriors would succeed depends upon the kind of enemy they are fighting and the motivation behind the cause.

This theoretical approach to 4GW notwithstanding, this study does not wholly subscribe to the arguments that kinetic forces have lost their relevance in the outcome of future wars. It is believed that conventional forces based on 3rd GW are still relevant and in a position to achieve results against 4GW. From the perspective of the present authors the perception that states would lose their relevance in 4GW is an exaggeration and distortion of realities to a great extent. States would continue to exist and survive against non-state actors and other militant groups unless such groups are encouraged and fully supported by a powerful state or states especially when they have contiguous borders. Echevarria supports this view and says that while globalization has indeed strengthened non-state actors, the state remains central to the international system.³⁰ The emerging trend of projecting 4GW warriors as the

²⁹ Farzana Shah, "Building Response to 4GW (4th Generation warfare)," *Pakistan Defence*, <http://www.defence.pk/.../54642-building-responses-4th-gen-warfare.html> (accessed February 4, 2012).

³⁰ Echevarria II, "Fourth-Generation War and Other Myths," 3; Michael Evans, "Elegant Irrelevance Revisited: A Critique of Fourth Generation Warfare," *Contemporary Security Policy* 26, no. 2 (August, 2005): 247, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13523260500211140> (accessed February 11, 2012).

ultimate winners is dangerous in the context of nuclear weapons states. In the Pakistani situation especially such a view would have long term implications because the projected strength of the 4GW who are operating in Pakistan, partially or wholly supported by outside actors, can be used as a pretext to coerce Pakistan on alleged vulnerability of its nuclear assets.

Other theorists and scholars also support the views of the present authors. They claim that the 4GW proponents have exaggerated the idea of the decline of the state. Dr. Antulio J. Echevarria II holds this theory to be bankrupt. It is more realistic to retain the traditional concept of insurgency, while modifying it to include the greater mobility and access afforded by globalization. Michael Evans thinks that 4GW represents a little more than a form of military dilettantism. Colin S. Gray says it is an effort to rediscover the obvious. Lawrence Freedman thinks that 4GW is best viewed not as an evolution from earlier, more conventional types of war but reflects strategies that the weak have long adopted in conflict with superior military powers. David W Szelowski has expressed similar views. To him a more realistic analysis of 4GW is that war has again shifted to an older style as a practical response to overwhelming conventional military strength.³¹ And finally, as earlier quoted in Michael Evans' apt words, as a theory it is military dilettantism.³²

Current and Potential 4GW Threats to Pakistan

What Hammes said in "The Evolution of War: The Fourth Generation," about social and political changes driving this evolution, is true of Pakistan more than any other country. Some of the factors that he mentions and which reflect the situation in Pakistan are:³³

- Expanding mega cities like Lahore and Karachi.
- Worsening income inequities combined with general decline in standards of living, especially in mega cities.
- Growth of worldwide connectivity and the impact of global actors on underdeveloped societies.
- Ease of global transportation.

³¹ Benbow, "Talking Bout Our Generation?," 152; Antulio Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy*, 3; Lawrence Freedman, "War Evolves into Fourth Generation: A Comment on Thomas X. Hammes," *Contemporary Security Policy* 26, no.2 (August 2005): 254, [http:// dx.doi.org/10.1080/13523260500211199](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13523260500211199) (accessed February 12, 2012); Szelowski, "Fourth Generation Warfare Minus Five," Greg Wilcox, "Fourth Generation Warfare and the Moral Imperative," October 2, 2003, http://www.dnipogo.org/fcs/pdf/4gw_and_the_moral_imperative.pdf (accessed February 18, 2012); and Benbow, "Talking Bout Our Generation?," 152.

³² Evans, "Elegant Irrelevance Revisited," 247.

³³ Hammes, "The Evolution of War: The Fourth Generation."

- Explosion in drug trafficking, with associated money flows and corruption.
- Ready availability of small arms and other weapons and
- Resurgence of violent transnational ideological groups.

In addition to these factors that encourage 4GW warriors to take a stand and win against the state, there are some other that are relevant to Pakistan and which though noted and highlighted by scholars and academia have been overlooked due to poor governance. These factors do help the non-state actors and militants to exercise their influence on the neglected sections of society to a great extent: these are:

- Injustice or delayed justice.
- A society divided on sectarian and ethnic lines.
- Economic meltdown and the resultant unemployment especially among the youth.
- Corruption that undermines democracy, retards economic growth and may be a major contributing factor to 4GW.
- Directionless education system.
- Absence of social amenities including healthcare and clean drinking water.
- Poor leadership and bad governance and the resultant price hike.
- Foreign interference and
- Prolonged war in Afghanistan and its fallout on Pakistan.

Pakistan is confronted with the same security challenges that the US faced in Iraq and continues to face in Afghanistan. But the main difference is that people see the US as an invader. Though, the security environment in Pakistan was not good even before 9/11 but the resultant US response opened a Pandora's Box for Pakistan making it the most vulnerable target of 4GW alongside Afghanistan. Organizationally, the militants in Pakistan are evolving into an ever increasing variety of armed groups linked into a coalition of the willing. They continue to change their locations but their presence in mega cities like Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar presents a big challenge to the government. The proliferation of the bands with different motivations and merging of ideological, reactionary, and opportunist groups makes it increasingly difficult to tell who is fighting whom and why. The mass of neglected, unemployed and radicalized youth in mega cities is the most cheaply available commodity to the proponents of 4GW. Some of them have already drifted into their folds and many of them are fence sitters, looking for an opportunity to fall to the other side. The fence sitters and those who are in queue need to be brought back, before they become a strength to those who have already crossed over to the other side.

The above factors notwithstanding, Farzana Shah reveals that at the beginning of the current war on terror, it was viewed that this was just an insurgency of disgruntled elements against the state policy of allying with the US, but with the passage of time, it became clear that it was not just an armed insurgency which undermined Pakistan's national security but a direct foreign meddling in almost all state affairs ranging from media to education and economics to foreign policy. From a larger perspective, Pakistan was facing these big challenges and threats not only from within but at the micro level all these challenges were interconnected and strongly bonded with each other, which was a fundamental feature of what we call 4GW.³⁴

It may be said that the promoters of 4GW in Pakistan have partially succeeded in achieving their objectives. They have already seriously harmed the economy by causing it massive losses of over \$70 billion. The loss in human lives is even alarming. Due to security environment foreign investment is not coming. As a result Pakistan's economy is unlikely to take off any time soon. The present regime seems either unwilling or incapable of improving governance. The nation is in a state of shock. The poor masses have no food, no electricity, and no water and above all they see no hope for improvement in the near future.

However, it is encouraging to note that the promoters of 4GW have failed to break the will of the Pakistani nation. The people of Pakistan including the tribals of FATA have resisted and shown resilience against the 4GW warriors. However, Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) of Pakistan who have operated against the militants in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) are still struggling and looking towards the political elite to use "soft power" to defeat these forces.

Over the period of time, the international media has taken a very hard stance against Pakistan and projects Pakistan as the most dangerous place and threat to world peace.

Despite the best possible security and safety mechanism that could be put in place to safeguard its nuclear defence system, Pakistan's ability in that respect is constantly being subjected to doubts. Farzana Shah sees foul in the on-going media offensive against Pakistan and suspects manipulation by buying elements in all the notable media outlets of Pakistan. She mentions a huge sum of \$50 million in this devious scheme. The Indian media is also said to be in the loop.³⁵

Precise targeting in 4GW is difficult as collateral damage if any could lead to further problems. Currently, Pakistan is confronted with the serious challenge of isolating the terrorist groups especially in cities like Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar. It makes the LEAs ineffective. The military, if it

³⁴ Shah, "Building Response to 4GW."

³⁵ Ibid.

chooses to enter the fray, is unable to make full use of its might because large-scale kinetic (that is, physically destructive) operations can't be conducted in mega cities. In congested environs of big cities even satellite and reconnaissance sensors might find it difficult to separate terrorists from ordinary citizens. The recent attack by militants on a Police Thana in Peshawar demonstrated the limitations of the LEAs.³⁶

Similarly, Balochistan, a strategically important province, has also become a target of 4GW though the threat is not so intense. Yet it appears that a few hundred militants have managed to challenge the writ of the state in towns and cities. Sectarian strife in Balochistan engineered by outside actors has added another perturbing dimension to the insurgency.

The 4GW, especially in case of Pakistan, has turned into a kind of "hybrid warfare," which incorporates different modes of warfare involving conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and terrorism. The militants have shown the will to stand and fight against the Pakistan army on conventional lines especially in FATA, Swat and Bajour. Nonetheless, the 4GW threat has focused on soft targets—police stations, patrol offices on streets, isolated Frontier Constabulary and Frontier Corps posts and even isolated army posts and pickets. Resultantly, the CAFs, especially the police, have remained the victim of such attacks. This situation is likely to continue because segregation of the militants in mega cities would remain problematic.

Efficacy of Pakistan's LEAs to Deal with 4GW Threats

Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) had the experience of dealing with the insurgency in East Pakistan and Balochistan during the early 1970s. While they failed in East Pakistan because of political reasons, they were able to contain the militants in Balochistan. Yet the core issue of resolution could not be tackled on a permanent basis as it was not followed by political process. Pakistan is currently confronted with threats on two fronts. While there are serious domestic issues with external linkages, the country's real time security threats come from both eastern as well as western borders. The presence of foreign fighters and intelligence operatives in FATA, the insurgency in Balochistan supported by Afghanistan, India and other anti-Pakistan forces, the involvement of al Qaeda with local militant groups and the nexus of all these agents with the narcotic mafia all combine to shape the complex threat to Pakistan's national security.³⁷ Moreover the growing radicalization and religious extremism in society, patronage of banned militant groups and

³⁶ Javid Aziz Khan, "4 Cops Die as Terrorists Storm Police Station in Peshawar," *News International* (Islamabad), February 25, 2012.

³⁷ Mariana Baabar, "Evidence of External Involvement in Balochistan Exists, Says FO," *News International* (Islamabad), February 25, 2012.

criminal mafia by political parties together with the presence of millions of Afghan refugees over stretch the LEAs ability to perform their job effectively.

The armed forces of Pakistan were not designed or trained to fight such two-front wars. But now they are forced to think in both kinetic and non kinetic terms to deal with conventional and sub-conventional threats simultaneously. But the country's fragile economy is unable to support such a war. Dependency on foreign aid has its own limitations. Pakistan did achieve great successes in its war against terrorism though at a very heavy cost. But "soft power" could not be employed effectively due to various reasons. There is no visible exit strategy of the armed forces that would be contingent upon the capacity of the CAFs and civil institutions. Protracted engagements in large scale operations result in depletion of logistic stamina and also involve wear and tear of the equipment that needs immediate replacement which is important since Pakistan can't risk lowering its guards against external fronts. Given the present weak condition of the national economy fighting a protracted 4GW could be very destabilizing.

The 4GW warrants a comprehensive approach to precision engagement capacity that includes armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAVs), attack helicopters and precision guided missiles. Aerial mobility and assault capability is vital for quick redeployment of forces to engage the militants. Pakistan army lacks compatibility due to the shortage of the most needed equipments, whereas the CAFs have no capacity to engage the proponents of 4GW.³⁸ It is believed that probably it is because of the shortage of aviation support that Pakistan army is avoiding opening up multiple fronts against the militants including action in Balochistan. The decision to raise light commando battalions by the army is a step in the right direction. It would reduce the extraordinary pressure on the already overstretched Special Services Group units.

Due to the poor state of preparedness of the CAFs to undertake their primary role, Pakistan army has had to be dragged into a situation where it is expected to fight a two-front war. Thus, in the current security environment, the division of the forces into two groups might be one option. This demands new modalities of thinking in re-educating the troops. However, Pakistan army's conventional capabilities can't be diluted which are just equal to meet the external threats especially in the context of fighting a projected conventional war in nuclear environment. Therefore, unless, Pakistan's CAFs are fully equipped and prepared to take on their primary role, Pakistan army would continue to be dragged into divergent fronts and would remain under stress for a considerable duration.³⁹

³⁸ Afifa Kiran, "Conceptual Framework of Homeland Security: A Case Study of Pakistan," *NDU Journal* XXV, (2011): 205-207.

³⁹ Ibid.

Suggested Way Forward

- Successfully engaging 4GW warriors would require all the elements of national power to come into play to create synergy between the various organs of the state. At the political level as pointed out by Marks, governance is critical to protect and end civil wars and insurgencies.⁴⁰ Military at best can create space for the political process to reassert the government writ, while government cannot do much about 5th GW on its own. However, 4GW requires a “comprehensive-government” response, whereas the 5th GW requires a “comprehensive-society” response including all internet users.⁴¹
- The primary responsibility of homeland security lies with political leadership. To win the 4GW, it is imperative to eliminate all the root causes and supporting environment to ensure that moral victory is denied to the enemy. A top down approach to the macro-decision making and bottom up approach with initiative and flexibility with compatible resources is the most viable approach to this war. The political leadership of Pakistan has daunting tasks ahead including bringing the FATA into the national mainstream, reintegration of the sub-national elements of Balochistan, de-weaponisation and counter radicalization of the society at large, bringing the economy back on track, introducing education and social reforms, promoting and protecting national culture, and strengthening the legal instruments by plugging the gaps being exploited by proponents of 4GW. All this can't be done overnight. Evolving an immediate, mid-term and long-term strategy is a must to tackle the gigantic task step by step.
- Externally, our diplomatic circle is also confronted with a host of challenges which may be dealt with effectively through diplomatic strategies. The “friends of Pakistan” must be persuaded to come forward and support the country's depleting economy that has suffered badly because of its committed role in the “war on terror.” Pakistan's diplomatic circle should also strive to reduce the trust deficit between Pakistan and the US as well as between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is time for Pakistan to present a strong case at the world forums regarding its efforts and sacrifices in combating terrorism to promote world peace and must also reject the mantra

⁴⁰ Thomas A. Marks, “Mao Tse-Tung and the Search for 21st Century Counterinsurgency,” *Combating Terrorism Center* 12, no. 10 (October 2009).

⁴¹ Hammes, “The Evolution of War: The Fourth Generation.”

of “Do More.”⁴² Opening up of the route for NATO supply might help in creating goodwill in over forty eight countries. Pakistan should also seek Afghan government’s cooperation in border control measures and denying the use of Afghan territory to anti-Pakistan terrorist groups. Afghanistan must also be asked to repatriate its citizens from Pakistan.

- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) are most important in this fight. To enable policy makers to take correct and timely decisions based on real time information and to communicate their decision to the relevant quarters for execution, UAVs and satellite facilities would be the primary source to continuously monitor the activities of the non-state actors and other terrorist groups. As suggested by Fred, what lesson LEAs must learn and apply is to stay ahead in the decision making cycle to detect, deter and disrupt, prevent or respond to the unpredictable, uncertain and unexpected and unconventional threats.⁴³ Coordinated effort between all intelligence agencies is a paramount requirement to penetrate in the fog of uncertainties characteristic of 4GW. Unfortunately, Pakistan’s intelligence agencies have not succeeded in synergizing their efforts in the past but they must not have excuses in future.⁴⁴
- Pakistan must learn from the experiences of the US in Iraq and Afghanistan. The counter 4GW operations in future will have to be largely political in nature and the military should be properly integrated into a much broader portfolio of means. 4GW warriors are not invincible; they can be beaten, but only by coherent, patient actions that encompass all agencies of the government and elements of the civil society. It is once again emphasized that Pakistan’s current and future warfare should encompass all elements of national power including diplomacy, defense, intelligence, law enforcement, and economic and social dimensions.
- We have recently seen Balochistan being discussed elsewhere which is an alarming signal and a blatant interference in Pakistan’s internal affairs. Such trends need to be curtailed through offensive diplomacy at all levels. Nevertheless, an amicable resolution of Balochistan problem and development in FATA are the most important steps to discourage the involvement of non-state actors and other militant groups. Pakistan’s 3 D’s (Dialogue, Development and Deterrence) long awaited policies are yet to be realized.

⁴² Shah, “Building Response to 4GW.”

⁴³ Fred, “Evolving Threats and the Fourth Generation Warfare.”

⁴⁴ Kiran, “Conceptual Framework of Homeland Security,” 213 & 215.

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- Pakistan should also take the lead from the US and should not stick to its hard and rigid stance against negotiating with the terrorists. This may be the recipe for endless conflict. The US faced the same dilemma in Afghanistan and was ultimately forced to interact with the Taliban. Though the bargaining processes are likely to be long, continuous engagement with the proponents of 4GW is important to break the deadlock, though such engagement should be from a position of strength. Since 4GW involves prolonged low-intensity attrition, it is vital to have the ability to persevere. Therefore logistic stamina and will to sustain pressure of the enemy is vital to win such wars.
 - The resolution of 4GW crises must lie in preventing the causes of the trouble. While the use of the military might be essential in certain circumstances, a comprehensive 4GW strategy identifying clear goals/objectives with timeline should be evolved on priority. The strategy should also cater for the best use of “soft power” with a view to winning the hearts and minds of the people. The proposed strategy must lay emphasis on avoiding open-ended military employment. Kinetic means be used sparingly. However, once used, their impact must be felt and seen without provoking a backlash. Thus, in order to tackle 4GW threats, alert minds might prove more effective than advanced technology.
 - Revitalization of counter 4GW doctrine would mean better cultural and linguistic education and greater coordination of political, military, social, and economic efforts. Additionally, it is also vital to understand the differing motivations of the insurgents that may include reactionary, opportunistic and ideological objectives. While it is comparatively easy to deal with the first two, it is difficult to control the third one because of it’s no limits approach to the conflict. Therefore, the doctrine must cater for this factor.
 - The army succeeded in containing and defeating the terrorists in Swat and other parts of FATA only when it received the total backing of the nation. Therefore, continuous national support is vital for the armed forces to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country.
 - To fight and win over the 4GW enemies, the following important factors may be considered:
 - Unity of command.
 - Flexibility in plans.
 - Flexibility of minds is more important than muscles.
 - Compatible mobility.

- Physical endurance vis-à-vis the enemies.
 - Integration of locals in planning and operational phase.
 - Strategic intelligence including cultural intelligence.
 - Isolation of the enemies.
 - Cutting their logistic bases.
 - Effective foreign policy
 - Cordial relations with neighbouring countries.
- Since Pakistan army is likely to continue to play the lead role in confronting 4GW for quite some time, therefore, it would need to train and maintain at least 20 to 25 percent of its army in counter-insurgency operations employing non-traditional and non-kinetic means while ensuring conventional strategic balance. The current and the projected threat scenarios warrant that Pakistan should immediately focus its energies in developing its CAFs to undertake their primary role while 20 to 25 percent army will be available as a back up support and employed if needed.
 - Ungoverned and under-developed parts of the mega cities provide “safe havens” to the 4GW warriors. The militants feel protected and also find recruitment from the areas which lack the attention of the LEAs. While the large scale dispersion of the forces in mini pockets would increase their vulnerabilities, nonetheless, at no stage, under-developed areas be left unattended. Thus, the militants should be kept engaged in such a manner so as to keep them under constant pressure. At no point, the insurgents should be allowed to have a stronghold anywhere. Area domination by employing various means is a key factor in weakening and ultimately defeating the 4GW warriors.
 - Counter strategy to deal with 4GW would succeed only when it caters for better operational preparedness vis-à-vis the enemy. Following factors would contribute towards enhancing the capacity:
 - One, state of the art ISR capability.
 - Two, precision engagement capability especially when counterinsurgency operations are to be launched in urban or built-up areas.
 - Three, aerial mobility, selective use of air force and gunship helicopters, night fighting capability, protective equipments including bullet proof jackets/helmets, and vehicles and continuous logistic supports are essential for the proposed strategy to succeed and

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- Lastly, the strategy to fight 4GW warriors in urban areas will have to be different from that used in most parts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KPK) and FATA.
 - Terrorists and insurgents especially while operating in built up areas or mega cities are not likely to be defeated by the LEAs alone. The civil society at large has a special role in isolating the militant groups by being the eyes and ears of the government agencies. Fighting 4GW would need special emphasis on the following factors:
 - One, ownership of the outcome of the war must be taken by the political leadership. Thus, military and the political components must converge and develop consensus.
 - Two, shape the environment before undertaking the operations. Perception management through skillful use of media is vital to expose the ulterior motives of the terrorists.
 - Three, legitimacy and public support is a pre-requisite to achieve the objectives while avoiding collateral damage. However, to win against the militants applying 4GW, it is very important to implement a strategy and tactic that reflect the moral, mental and physical dimension of the conflict.
 - Four, population protection should remain central to the policy while planning and executing the plans. It will help in achieving the unity of efforts both among and between military forces and civilians present in the affected areas.
 - Five, contingency plans of employing “soft power” must be drawn before undertaking the operations. Requisite resources must be earmarked for implementation of the “soft power” when the military has created conditions for political solution.
 - Six, the planned strategy must also cater for the requisite support in terms of arms and equipment including communication and ground and aerial mobility for the force being employed. The strategy must ensure reduction of own vulnerabilities and exploitation of the militants’ weaknesses to maintain moral ascendancy and initiative.
 - Pakistan army has learnt the hard way during the initial stages of the ongoing war on terror. Mistakes committed then should not be repeated now. The army can’t be kept deployed in urban areas after the operations which must be pulled out at the earliest. Therefore, CAFs should be in position to take over their primary responsibility.

It is only possible when their war fighting capacity especially in the context of 4GW is enhanced. Pakistan can't afford to repeat the operation like Liari (Karachi) in future.

- In order to prevent terrorist acts at the tactical and operational level, Pakistan army and its CAFs must have the ability to stay oriented to its surroundings by having accurate information and awareness of the cultural make up of the areas. In addition to human intelligence, technical gadgets needed to meet 21st century requirement are important for implementing the planned strategies effectively, especially in case of mega cities. Tracking of cell and satellite phones, use of drone technology, night surveillance capabilities remain critical to these operations. Technical means like GPS trackers would enhance the ability to target enemy's hideouts and finally, Pakistan must build state of the art forensic facility in the country which would facilitate investigating criminal cases to a great extent.
- To reinforce the LEAs, local friendly militias may be organized in rural environment which should be fully backed by the state forces. In the urban environment, a second tier of national defence needs to be created from among educated urban youth. Compulsory military and civil defense training at the college/university level be re-introduced and made mandatory to support security forces in urban environment.
- Finally, there is no alternative to better training. The commonly known terminology in the army that, "The sweat saves blood and the blood saves honour," needs to be implemented in its true spirit while undergoing the training process. Pakistan army has gone a long way in attaining proficiency in counterinsurgency war and continues to enhance its capacity but it cannot remain deployed internally for an indefinite period. Therefore, it is necessary that Pakistan focuses its energies in bringing its CAFs to the level where they can take over their primary role by training and enhancing their capacity.

Conclusion

The fact of the matter is that changes in the political, social, economic and technical spheres are making it possible for a small group bound together by a cause to use new technologies to change the nature of the nation-state. We cannot roll back those changes, nor can we prevent the evolution of war. Pakistan has been successful in dealing with the storm of 4GW for a decade now, but clearly Pakistan seems ill prepared to counter the upcoming challenges, especially because of two main reasons: one, Pakistan will have to

tackle the next phase of the war single handedly; secondly, the upcoming challenges would be multidimensional and unrestricted. The messages are very clear when one province of Pakistan is being exclusively debated elsewhere, which is a blatant violation of international norms. It has serious ramifications on Pakistan's future course of action while dealing with the sub-nationalist elements in Balochistan.

We have reached the understanding that 4GW is non-linear, multidimensional and multilateral with no defined boundaries and no clear battle lines. The changed character of sub-conventional wars under the umbrella of 4GW warrants that Pakistan should be prepared to adopt a strategy involving the entire nation. In addition, principles of 4GW that include all the principles of joint operations as explained by Artelli and Deckro be applied appropriately. The principles include: clear objective, be offensive, economy of forces, maneuver, mass concentration, unity of command, security, surprise, simplicity, restraint, perseverance, legitimacy and population perception.⁴⁵

No one is there to help Pakistan. It is time for Pakistan to start preparing not only for the next phase of 4GW but also be ready to deal with 5th GW which has already entered in its domain. And finally, a major overhaul in foreign policy is also more than necessary to bring an end to the present master-slave relationship between Pakistan and its western allies. As pointed out by Eric Ouellet and Pierre C. Pahlavi, history never repeats itself fully, but there are a few constant features that are worth keeping an eye on.⁴⁶ ■

⁴⁵ Artelli and Deckro, "Fourth Generation Operations," 233.

⁴⁶ Eric Ouellet and Pierre C. Pahlavi, "Institutional Analysis and Irregular Warfare: A Case Study of the French Army in Algeria 1954-960," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34, no. 6 (December 2011): 822.