Strategy is Not Enough: Why Bush Administration Efforts Failed to Integrate the Interagency

A Monograph

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For President George W. Bush and his team, the solution to interagency integration issues was presidential guidance. Yet, in the eyes of the Government Accountability Office, Bush efforts to integrate the interagency had failed. To determine why, it was first necessary to identify what actions were taken by the administration. The next step was to review and compile the White House, agency and congressional actions in response to the published directives and strategies. Since many actions taken by the departments were internal, it was next necessary gain insight into those internal activities using the memoirs of senior administration members, academic journals discussing the presidency, Congressional Research Service reports, and reputable books. By comparing the accounts from these sources, a plausible list of obstacles to interagency integration emerged. The research identified three primary obstacles to interagency integration during the Bush presidency. First obstacle was competition due to the United States government's constitutional organization and related authorities. This competition led to the second obstacle to integration, namely, unclear priorities and misallocated resources. Finally, the relationships between key leaders within the White House and the departments undermined the efficacy of organizational structures. Thus, in and of themselves, overarching national strategies were unable to mitigate these integration obstacles in the labyrinth of overlapping authorities, disparate resourcing procedures, and departmental personalities and independence.

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Abstract

Strategy is not Enough: Why Bush Administration Efforts Failed to Integrate the Interagency, by COL Glen E. Clubb, US Army, 47 pages.

For President George W. Bush and his team, the solution to interagency integration issues was presidential guidance. His administration produced legions of strategic and Presidential guidance. Yet, in the eyes of the Government Accountability Office, Bush efforts to integrate the interagency had failed. Why did President Bush and his team fail?

To determine why, it was first necessary to identify what actions were taken by the administration. The next step was to review and compile the White House, agency and congressional actions in response to the published directives and strategies. Since many actions taken by the departments were internal, it was next necessary gain insight into those internal activities using the memoirs of senior administration members, academic journals discussing the presidency, Congressional Research Service reports, and reputable books. By comparing the accounts from these sources, a plausible list of obstacles to interagency integration emerged.

The research identified three primary obstacles to interagency integration during the Bush presidency. First obstacle was competition due to the United States government's constitutional organization and related authorities. This competition led to the second obstacle to integration, namely, unclear priorities and misallocated resources. Finally, the relationships between key leaders within the White House and the departments undermined the efficacy of organizational structures.

Thus, in and of themselves, overarching national strategies were unable to mitigate these obstacles to integration in the labyrinth of overlapping authorities, disparate resourcing procedures, and departmental personalities and independence.

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Acronyms

APNSA	Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CORDS	Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NSC	National Security Council
NSPD	National Security Policy Directive
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ORHA	Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance
PCC	Policy Coordination Committee
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PNSR	Project on National Security Reform
S/CRS	Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Introduction

Despite the lessons of those that have gone before, some challenges do not ever seem to go away. In a 1933 lament on a young military officer's lack of historical and intellectual curiosity about the conduct of war, T.E. Lawrence noted, "with 2,000 years of examples behind us we have no excuse, when fighting, for not fighting well."[1] One could easily lay an analogous expectation on administrators within the US government. Few government-related topics have had as much study and analysis as the synchronization and integration of the various departments and agencies. Yet, one administration after another seems to struggle without learning the lessons of those that came before. The 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush and his team had a number of modern examples to study when they decided how to integrate the US interagency. Both the 1947 European Recovery Program (a.k.a., the Marshall Plan) and the Vietnam-era Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program provide copious lessons on government-wide responses to national security issues. Even Bush's immediate predecessor provided valuable insights into interagency integration, particularly in contingency operations. In 1997, President William J. Clinton issued Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56, Managing Complex Contingency Operations. Issued in large part in response to American operations in Somalia, Rwanda and Haiti, PDD 56 modified the National Security Council (NSC) framework to enhance interagency cooperation. Using the Deputies Committee and interagency working groups, PDD 56 required development of political-military implementation plans and management of a government response to contingencies. This framework did not apply to domestic disaster relief, small-scale operations, or any number of military operations such as counter-terrorism or international armed

[1] Jeremy Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia: The Authorized Biography of T.E. Lawrence* (New York: Antheneum, 1990), 908.

conflict.[2] Among a host of implementation challenges, PDD 56 did little to integrate Clinton-era agencies, specifically the Departments of Defense (DoD) and State (DoS). President Clinton relied on a structural solution and it proved insufficient to the task. Yet, one of President Bush's first actions was to make only minor modifications to the NSC structure and processes. Immediately after taking office in 2001, President Bush issued National Security Policy Directive (NSPD) 1, Organization of the National Security Council System.[3] In addition to the existing Principles and Deputies committees, NSPD 1 established six regional and eleven functional Policy Coordination Committees (PCC) to integrate national security policy across the agencies.[4] With only slight modification, this organizational construct remained in place through both of President Bush's terms in office. Having adjusted the NSC, the Bush team then attempted to solve the interagency integration challenges that frustrated their predecessors.

For President Bush, the solution to interagency integration issues came down to presidential guidance. Thus, in addition to routine documents such as the National Security Strategy, the Bush NSC published a variety of government-wide national strategies and directives. In 2003, the NSC published the National Strategy for Combatting Terrorism. In December 2005, they published NSPD 44, Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Stability and Reconstruction. Then in 2006, the NSC updated the Strategy for Combatting Terrorism and published the National Strategy

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[2] Bernard Carreau, *Transforming the Interagency System for Complex Operations* (National Defense University, 2007), 5-6, accessed August 19, 2017, http://ctnsp.dodlive.mil/files/2006/12/Case-6-Transforming-the-Interagency-System.pdf.

[3] The White House, *National Security Policy Directive 1, Organization of the National Security Council System* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2001).

[4] The regional PCC's were Europe and Eurasia; Western Hemisphere; East Asia; South Asia; Near East and North Africa; and Africa; the functional PCC's were Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations; International Development and Humanitarian Assistance; Global Environment; International Finance; Transnational Economic Issues; Counter-Terrorism and National Preparedness; Defense Strategy, Force Structure, and Planning; Arms Control; Proliferation, Counterproliferation, and Homeland Defense; Intelligence and Counterintelligence; and Records Access and Information Security.

for Pandemic Influenza. Also in 2006, the NSC published NSPD 46, War on Terror. In 2007, the NSC also published a National Strategy for Homeland Security. Coupled with the NSPD 1 organizational construct, these strategic documents represent executive branch efforts to integrate the US interagency towards priority national security challenges. Yet, in 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a study, GAO 09-904SP that said mechanisms to integrate the interagency were insufficient to address modern national security challenges.[5] In the eyes of the GAO, the Bush Administration's efforts to integrate the interagency had failed, why? From the perspective of the GAO, "U.S. efforts [had] been hindered by multiple agencies pursuing individual efforts without an overarching strategy."[6] This is neither a shocking nor a novel observation. The GAO alone has published over 500 reports since 1970 focused on agency collaboration. However, as the list of strategies above indicates, the Bush administration had staffed and published numerous strategies. Creating strategies did not seem to address the issue. Thus, the question remains, why did the Bush Administration's guidance fail to achieve interagency integration?

To determine what prevented the Bush administration from significantly improving interagency collaboration, it was first necessary to identify what actions were taken by the administration in response to its strategies and directives. In addition to the many various national strategies, the National Security Council published two Presidential directives aimed directly at improving interagency collaboration in stability operations and counter-terrorism, NSPD 44 and NSPD 46. Those directives provided guidance to the departments. Thus, the next step was to review and compile the White House, agency and congressional actions in response to the published

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[5] US Government Accountability Office, *Interagency Collaboration: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight of National Security Strategies, Organizations, Workforce, and Information Sharing*, by Janet St. Laurent and Jacquelyn Williams-Bridgers, GAO-09-904SP, 2009, 1, accessed August 8, 2017, http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-09-904SP.

[6] GAO-09-904SP, highlights.

directives and strategies in order to determine the effectiveness of published guidance and identify inconsistencies. Since many actions taken by the departments were internal, it was next necessary gain insight into those internal activities. Because internal department communications are not readily available, identifying internal actions was sought by searching the memoirs of senior members of the administration, such as Defense Secretary's Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA) and Secretary of State, Dr. Condoleezza Rice. Additionally, academic journals discussing the presidency, Congressional Research Service reports, and reputable books also documented interagency efforts. By comparing the accounts from these sources it was possible to identify what was done; what was ignored; and what effect these actions had. Ultimately, a plausible list of obstacles to interagency integration emerged.

The research identified three primary obstacles to interagency integration during the Bush presidency. First obstacle was the US government's constitutional organization and related authorities. Competition between the executive and legislative branches over control of government agencies, coupled with inefficient processes in both the White House and Congress served to confuse and disrupt interagency coordination. This competition set conditions for the second obstacle to integration, namely, unclear priorities and misallocated resources. To determine their tasks, departments had to sort through overwhelming numbers of strategies, policy directives, executive orders, speeches, hearings, and interviews from both the White House and Congress. The resulting set of requirements, both specified and implied, levied on the departments ranged from vague to contradictory. Often adding insult to injury, agency budgets and related capabilities were not congruent with expectations, leaving the interagency unable to accomplish even those tasks that were clearly identified. Finally, the relationships between key leaders within the White House and the departments undermined the efficacy of organizational structures. Senior leader disagreements negatively affected staff interactions at various echelons across each department, often reinforcing

historical conflicts and stereotypes. Thus, in and of themselves, overarching national strategies were unable to mitigate these obstacles to integration created by a labyrinth of overlapping authorities, disparate resourcing procedures, and departmental personalities and independence.

Organization and Authority

The US government is large and diverse, consisting of a myriad of departments, offices, and agencies each with its own competing interests and equities. The government's inherent complexity requires both the executive and legislative branches to delegate decision-making authority to the various departments. With delegation, however, also come the contentious issues of control and oversight. Professor William West notes that Bush-era executive, legislative, and judicial branches sought to extend their control over government agencies, typically at each other's expense. Government competition, particularly between the executive and legislature, was a direct result of constitutional language. "The US Constitution is highly ambiguous concerning bureaucracy's place in our tripartite system . . . law scholars and judges have not discovered a coherent and broadly accepted legal theory for assigning institutional oversight roles."[7] In the absence of constitutional clarity, competition between the Bush White House and Congress was a seemingly never-ending chess match with an evolving set of rules. President Bush clearly saw cabinet-level departments as under his control, a perspective that met with mixed reactions in the halls of Congress. According to Representative Bill Delahunt (D-MA), "There has been a clear acceleration, which began with Nixon . . . to bring the bureaucracy within the political influence of the White House . . . I see this as institutional combat, if you will. We've got to be prepared to go to

[7] William F. West, "Presidential Leadership and Administrative Coordination: Examining the Theory of a Unified Executive," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (Sep 2006): 438.

war."[8] This decidedly aggressive view pervaded political discourse and exacerbated competition for agency control. As case in point, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Rebecca Hersman noted that congressional sanctions on foreign governments effectively prevented the DoS from planning the long-term stability operations expected by the White House.[9] Such executive and legislative competition pervaded not only the halls of governmental offices, but increasingly included the nation as a whole. Unable to score an enduring victory over each other, both the White House and Congress sought to enhance their influence over departments by overtly fostering discontent among the American citizenry. In reviewing public opinion surveys on policy initiatives of that time, Dr. Gary Andres found that due to Democratic Party rhetoric, simply mentioning the president's name had a polarizing effect on the electorate.[10] Because of public competition between the White House and Congress, Professor Terry Moe argues the modern day president is under intense pressure to control government departments and processes.[11] The executive branch under President Bush used four key mechanisms to exert authority vis-à-vis both the agencies and Congress: loyal political appointees, classified directives, liberal interpretation of the constitutional "take care" clause, and the budget process. These efforts precipitated a tug-of-war with Congress that ultimately left the agencies as the loser instead of the prize.

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[8] Melissa Harris, "White House power grab seen by the Democrats," February 16, 2007, accessed November 22, 2017, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2007-02-16/news/0702160079_1_guidance-documents-white-house-agencies.

[9] Rebecca K.C. Hersman, *Friends and Foes: How Congress and the President Really Make Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 51.

[10] Gary Andres, "The Contemporary Presidency: Polarization and White House/Legislative Relations: Causes and Consequences of Elite-Level Conflict," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (December 2005): 764-766.

[11] Terry M. Moe, "The presidency and the bureaucracy: The presidential advantage," in *The Presidency and the Political System*, 5th ed., ed. Michael Nelson (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1998), 239.

The first Bush administration control mechanism, appointment of loyal political appointees, was not as effective as the White House would have liked. The limited effectiveness of this mechanism stemmed from the fact that there was no clear answer to who ultimately controlled political appointees. The president appointed individuals in large part on their willingness and ability to support his political agenda. According to Professors Anthony Bertelli and Christian Grose, however, these individuals had to balance their presidential support with desires of those legislators who played key roles in policy development and agency budgets.[12] When serving as President Reagan's National Security Advisor, Colin Powell refused to testify at congressional hearings focused on presidential guidance to respective agencies.[13] He had no such latitude when serving as President Bush's Secretary of State.

The second control mechanism, classified presidential directives to the agencies, further exacerbated congressional conflict. Presidential control over the classification and release of national security directives often left Congress unaware of a directive's content until many years after their publication.[14] Using such classified directives limits congressional oversight because agency heads cannot reveal the guidance they are following, especially when that guidance is contrary to the will of Congress.

The third presidential control option, use of the Constitution's "take care" clause took many shapes and was at the core of most congressional conflicts. Professor Jason MacDonald notes that by using the "take care" clause, President Bush was able to adjust congressional policy decisions

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[12] Anthony M. Bertelli, and Christian R. Grose, "Agreeable Administrators? Analyzing the Public Positions of Cabinet Secretaries and Presidents," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (June 2007): 228, 233, 244.

[13] Vikki Gordon, "The Law: Unilaterally Shaping U.S. National Security Policy: The Role of National Security Directives," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (June 2007): 353.

[14] Ibid., 366.

while "faithfully executing the laws."[15] The president did so by issuing executive orders to preempt congressional policy mandates, as well as issuing presidential signing statements that contained implementation instructions with each piece of signed legislation. Elaborating on this control technique, Professor Richard Waterman asserts that President Bush's signing statements functioned much like a line-item veto. Bush signing statements "allowed the president to sign a particular bill and then . . . ignore certain provisions of the bill with which he disagreed."[16] Such presidential ignorance was particularly germane in regards to budget expenditures. Thus, the signing statements were tied closely with another shining example of the president's application of the "take care" clause, namely regulatory review. Though the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is widely understood to supervise executive rule making, Professor West notes that OMB extended its authority to agency rulemaking that Congress delegated directly to agency leadership. What began as a modest initiative in the Nixon administration dramatically expanded under President Reagan and has been maintained to a lesser degree with every administration until George W. Bush. Bush's aggressive oversight exceeded all of his predecessors back to the early Reagan years.[17]

The fourth and most obvious control mechanism with direct impact on a government agency's ability to integrate planning and action with other departments or agencies was the budget process. Congress has long been concerned with executive encroachment, primarily into its budgetary turf.[18] Accordingly, Congress clarified its constitutional power over the purse through

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[15] MacDonald, "Congressional Power over Executive Branch Policy Making," 524.

[16] Richard W. Waterman, "The Administrative Presidency, Unilateral Power, and the Unitary Executive Theory," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (March 2009): 6-7.

[17] West, "Presidential Leadership and Administrative Coordination," 441-444.

[18] US Congress, *Organization of the Congress. Final Report of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress*, December 1993, accessed August 5, 2017, http://archives.democrats.rules.house.gov/archives/jcoc2.htm.

core budgetary legislation in 1921 and 1974, and multiple supporting acts in the years since.[19] In light of the fact that precious few bills are ever enacted into law, the budget authorization and appropriation process are Congress' most potent means by which to provide guidance and exert control.[20] However, though Congress appropriates money to the bureaucracy, the president, primarily through the OMB, controls each agency's budget submission. In response, Congress has shaped its oversight and appropriations processes to counterbalance executive branch ambitions. Professor MacDonald's research shows that riders attached to appropriations bills were especially effective throughout the Bush administration. This policy tool allowed Congress to annually review agency decisions and countermand those with which they disagreed.[21] With each of the preceding presidential control options, the department or agency had to choose between or mollify the White House and the Congress' expectations. Thus, White House efforts to limit Congressional influence over the departments added unnecessary friction to an already complicated environment.

Technically, presidential authority was subject to the ability and willingness of Congress and the courts to constrain it.[22] In practice, throughout the Bush years the Congress was in many ways its own worst enemy. Congressional internal oversight processes stymied not only congressional efforts to limit presidential control, but also confused the very agencies they sought to oversee. According to a 2001 Congressional Research Service report, "oversight refers to the review, monitoring, and supervision of federal agencies, programs, activities, and policy

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[19] Congressional Research Service, *The Congressional Budget Process: A Brief Overview*, by James V. Saturno, Congressional Rep. RS20095 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2004), 1.

[20] Congressional Research Service, *The Role of the President in Budget Development*, by Bill Heniff Jr., Congressional Rep. RS20179 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2003), 1.

[21] MacDonald, "Congressional Power over Executive Branch Policy Making," 524.

[22] Gordon, "The Law: Unilaterally Shaping U.S. National Security Policy," 349.

implementation. Congress exercises this power largely through its standing committee system."[23] As this section will show, the standing committee system prevented Congress from exerting the control it desired over the departments and limited its impact on presidential action. One significant issue was the mix of implied and explicit guidance to the departments. Implied guidance, though not binding, foreshadowed impending legislation, and astute agencies should treat such guidance akin to that contained in formal directives. Hearings, reviews, investigations, and speeches provided an overwhelming deluge of insights into the various intentions of elected leaders. How much credence the departments gave to congressional rhetoric varied based on the context of each issue. Explicit congressional guidance came in the form of enacted legislation. In large part a logical extension of the often-dysfunctional committee system, legislation was simultaneously prescriptive and prohibitive, often contradictory and vague. The mass of both implied and explicit directives stemming from this system is at the heart of what Secretary of Defense Gates lamented as unnecessary bureaucratic barriers to effective national security. Citing issues with budget flexibility and personnel restrictions, Gates noted, "America's national security apparatus, military, and civilian needs to be more adept in operating along a continuum involving military, political, and economic skills . . . Bureaucratic barriers that hamper effective action should be rethought and reformed."[24] In addition to muddy guidance, the standing committee structure was also inefficient. As noted in the 2008 Commission Report on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Proliferation and Terrorism, "Congress should reform its oversight both structurally and substantively to better address intelligence, homeland security, and crosscutting 21st-century

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[23] Congressional Research Service, *Congressional Oversight*, by Frederick M. Kaiser, Congressional Rep. 97-936 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2001), 1.

[24] Robert M. Gates, "Landon Lecture," Remarks as delivered by US Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS, November 26, 2007, accessed August 5, 2017. https://www.k-state.edu/media/newsreleases/landonlect/gatestext1107.html.

national security missions."[25] Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, for example, noted that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reported to over 100 congressional committees and subcommittees.[26] The Bush administration also addressed committee inefficiencies in the 2007 National Strategy for Homeland Security. That strategy acknowledged that homeland security lies within the purview of both the executive and legislative branches, but that congressional committee structure impeded effective governance. Specifically, "The current committee structure . . . creates competing initiatives and requirements and fails to establish clear and consistent priorities or provide optimal oversight. Accordingly, both houses of the Congress should take action to further streamline the organization and structure" of the standing committee system.[27]

While congressional oversight of the DoD was relatively straightforward during the Bush administration, oversight of DoS activities was similar to oversight of the DHS. As directed in NSPD 44, reconstruction and stabilization activities were core missions for the DoS. Yet, there was no single congressional committee responsible for oversight able to address as a whole this multi-faceted and complex DoS mission.[28] DoS initiatives were stalled by the need to coordinate with and through multiple congressional committees. Additionally, DoS oversight committees functioned in stark contrast to those overseeing DoD. Dr. Gordon Adams noted that size of the defense budget and the associated constituency gave those oversight committees additional power. Furthermore,

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[25] Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism, *World at Risk: The Report of the Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism* (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 2008), xxv.

[26] David Olive, *Tom Ridge on DHS Congressional Oversight (again), His Suggestion Deserves Support*, September 21, 2010, accessed August 3, 2017, http://securitydebrief.adfero.com/2010/09/21/tom-ridge-on-dhs-congressional-oversight-again-his-suggestion-deserves-support/.

[27] The White House, *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007), 51.

[28] US Senate, "Committees," accessed August 7, 2017, https://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/committees/d_three_sections_with_teasers/committees_home.htm.

the defense budget avoided deficit cuts better than other foreign operations accounts.[29] Case in point, Congress consistently reduced budget requests that supported NSPD 44. The administration requested $17.2 million in its Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 supplemental request. Congress only funded $7.7 million, restricted how DoS could spend the funds, and acted similarly with the FY 2006 budget.[30] Congressional standing committee structures and authorities confused government agencies and increased the potential for unnecessary friction throughout both Bush terms in office. No amount of national strategy development was able to compensate or mitigate the impact of disparate instructions from a host of committees. However, congressional organization was not the sole reason the failure of agencies to integrate. White House structures were also not helpful.

In any organized endeavor, from youth sports to national government, effective solutions to subordinate coordination issues often start at the top. Analysis of national challenges during the Bush administration shows that government responses were plagued with coordination challenges. The 9/11 commission noted that while "the agencies cooperated, some of the time . . . no one was firmly in charge . . . responsibility and accountability were diffuse."[31] According to the 2008 Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism, "The greatest threat to our nation is managed across many offices, rather than by one high-level office dedicated to this single issue."[32] In like manner, lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina concluded, "We must transform our approach for catastrophic incidents from one of bureaucratic coordination to proactive unified

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[29] Gordon Adams, *Politics of National Security Budgets* (The Stanley Foundation, 2007), 6, accessed September 2, 2017, https://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/pab07natsecbudget.pdf.

[30] Nora Bensahel, "Organising for Nation Building," *Survival* 49, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 69.

[31] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 399-400.

[32] Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism, *World at Risk*, xxv.

command that creates true unity of effort."[33] In 2004, General Peter Pace, then Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, noted that no one under the president is effectively integrating the various departments. General Pace observed that once the president made a decision, each department or agency went back into a stovepipe for execution.[34] The net result of top-level ineffectiveness was a continued lack of departmental integration.

In many respects, senior Bush administration officials were ineffective due to disagreements over individual expectations, roles, and responsibilities. Professor George Krause notes that as an individual, the president wields considerable discretion in executing his duties. The aggregate administration, however, includes scores of individuals whose policy views routinely differ from the presidents.[35] When President John F. Kennedy asked Robert McNamara to serve as Secretary of Defense in 1960, McNamara replied, "I am not qualified." Kennedy's immediate response was that there were no schools for defense secretaries and no schools for presidents either.[36] This simple yet profound statement strikes at the heart of any discussion on the expectations of elected leadership. On the one hand, senior leaders may bring fresh perspectives that are unencumbered by organizational culture and ingrained bureaucracy. On the other hand, it may also mean that senior leaders are unaware of the role they play in the functioning of subordinate organizations, or, perhaps, they chose a role that differs from their subordinate's expectations. Professor Krause uses two high profile examples to show how conflict between the White House and subordinate agencies resulted in lack of effective integration. The first was

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[33] The White House, *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina Lessons Learned* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 70.

[34] US Department of Defense, *Pace Proposes Interagency Goldwater-Nichols Act*, September 7, 2004, accessed August 8, 2017, http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=25384.

[35] George A. Krause, "Organizational Complexity and Coordination Dilemmas in U.S. Executive Politics," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (March 2009): 77.

[36] Robert S. McNamara and Brian VanDeMark, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lesson of Vietnam*, 7th printing ed. (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1995), 15.

Environmental Protection Agency chief, Christine Todd Whitman's highly publicized disagreements with the White House on power plant regulations and global warming initiatives. These disagreements pitted agency actions against Bush's opposition to government regulations. The second was conflict between the White House and the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel over DoD, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) surveillance authority. This series of internal policy disagreements ultimately supported groups opposed to the administration's increased domestic and international surveillance operations. In summation, Dr. Christopher Lamb and Ms. Megan Franco assert that Bush administration decision making benefited from ample number of options and alternative views. [37] However, absent agreement on roles and responsibilities, the options and alternatives did not produce coordinated implementation.

According to expectations in NSPD 1, the Bush administration's National Security Council was responsible for reconciling departmental disagreements. Congress created the NSC in 1947 "to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security."[38] While the structure and authority of the NSC had changed through successive administrations, the NSC's formal role in reconciling agency conflict has remained relatively constant. In NSPD 1, President Bush tasked the NSC to coordinate between departments and agencies to develop and implement national security policies.[39] Congress realized the national security apparatus was not functioning as needed, and in 2008 mandated a study of the interagency system by an independent, non-profit, non-partisan

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[37] Christopher J. Lamb and Megan Franco, "National-Level Coordination and Implementation: How System Attributes Trumped Leadership," in *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, ed. Richard Hooker, Jr. and Joseph Collins (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2015), 187.

[38] National Security Act of 1947, Public Law 235, 80th Cong., 1st sess. (July 26, 1947), § 101.

[39] The White House, *National Security Policy Directive 1*, 2.

organization.[40] To that end, the Secretary of Defense contracted the Project on National Security Reform (PNSR) to conduct the study. The final PNSR report, *Forging a New Shield*, said the fragmented and ad hoc processes in the executive branch prevented effective agency integration and were unable to learn from failure or success.[41] In testimony before Congress, the projects director, Dr. James Locher further noted that NSC products were so ambiguous, that if their related contingency actually materialized, all associated issues had to be renegotiated with each of the departments. The result was a reactive government constantly taking emergency action.[42] To put a finer point on NSC effectiveness in the Bush years, Dr. Stewart Patrick and Ms. Kaysie Brown noted, "The NSC has failed to bring together the different departments in an effort to harmonize efforts and bridge differences."[43] The NSC was the primary White House entity empowered to reconcile agency differences. Its inability to do so, however, meant that the Bush administration lacked an effective structural solution to agency conflicts.

Thus, the labyrinth of overlapping executive and legislative branch authorities as well as organizational inefficiencies rendered government departments unable to solve national security challenges. This first obstacle to interagency integration, organization and authority, also set the stage for the other two. The constitutional tug-of-war between the White House and Congress was, in a sense, the pyramid's base. No mitigating efforts further up the pyramid could fix conflicts at the bottom. The resulting organizational dysfunction left the agencies to operate with conflicting expectations and mismatched resources.

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[40] National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, Public Law 110-181, 110th Cong., (January 28, 2008), § 1049.

[41] Project on National Security Reform 2008, *Forging a New Shield* (Arlington, 2008) 176, 254.

[42] James R. Locher, III, Statement for the record before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 12 February 2009.

[43] Stewart Patrick and Kaysie Brown, *Greater than the Sum of Its Parts? Assessing "Whole of Government" Approaches toward Fragile States* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007), 49.

Tasks versus Capabilities

The Bush administration relied on national strategies to synchronize agency tasks and capabilities. Despite the voluminous amount of published strategies, however, departments and agencies were often left questioning what they were expected to do and how their actions linked to other efforts. Many of the strategies were more useful as political tools and information mediums directed toward the public-at-large than they were as guidance to the departments.[44] Dr. Lamb and Ms. Franco elaborated on this point, noting that despite the massive effort to create national strategies, the strategies served more as public policy consensus products but were ultimately ignored by the departments.[45] Attempts to make national strategies serve both the administration and the citizenry resulted in products that fell well short of strategic utility. As the government continued to adjust to the realities of the modern digital age, there was increased competition to gain and maintain public attention. The result was often flowery language sufficient for evening news soundbites and speech quotes, not specific expectations supported by policy and resources. Without a clear task and purpose for each department, it is no wonder the administration failed to link departmental priorities and resources to achieve strategic goals. Two example strategies bear this out. The 2006 National Strategy for Combating Terrorism claims the government took tangible action against terrorist threats by creating the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center and the National Proliferation Center. Yet, the document failed to tie the overarching elements of national power to action required by the departments and agencies. It noted the State Department's diplomatic efforts in repositioning staff to have more direct local and regional impact, but the repositioning of staff was not supported by policies linking those

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[44] Lew Irwin, "Filling Irregular Warfare's Interagency Gaps," *Parameters* 39.3 (Autumn 2009): 74-75.

[45] Lamb and Franco, "National-Level Coordination and Implementation," 168.

assignments to the other diplomatic counterterrorism efforts.[46] Likewise, the 2007 National Strategy for Homeland Security was a cohesive description of strategic ends and ways, designed to integrate homeland security efforts. It required the federal government to work as a team, focusing on such areas as border security, intelligence, and WMD. State, local, and tribal governments would provide first response capabilities, with the private and non-profit sectors focused on innovation, supply, and citizen support. It also noted that to achieve success, the government needed to use all instruments of national power, namely: diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement. Throughout its rather extensive list of strategic ends, however, there were few specific references to either a national instrument of power or a particular department. The text implies that the agencies will participate in incident management coordination centers, and specifies that DoD will respond to and recover from man-made and natural disasters. Yet, only the collective we will secure the homeland at home and abroad.[47] Using what ways? The military is an obvious choice, but what other element? What will offensively secure the homeland? What links these efforts together? The strategy left these questions unanswered.

In addition to coping with unclear national strategies, departments had to address the voluminous additional guidance from both Congress and the White House. The White House published ninety-one policy directives[48] and 290 executive orders.[49] There were also speeches, interviews and various sundry interactions. The US Attorney General's office concluded that all policy directives and executive orders were legally binding, as it is "the substance of the

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[46] The White House, *National Strategy for Combatting Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 20-21.

[47] The White House, *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, 1, 13, 51.

[48] Federation of American Scientists, *Intelligence Resource Program*, (n.d.), http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/direct.htm (accessed August 10, 2017).

[49] The National Archives, *The Federal Register*, August 18, 2017, accessed August 21, 2017, http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/disposition.html.

presidential action that is determinative, not the form of the document conveying that action . . . Both remain effective upon a change in administration, unless otherwise specified in the document [or] subsequent presidential action is taken."[50] In addition to earlier presidential directives not rescinded by President Bush, executive orders alone totaled 13,488 separate documents during his administration.[51] Due, in large part, to the mass of guidance documents, departmental expectations remained vague throughout the Bush years. Compounding the issue of clear expectations, most national challenges did not reside within the purview of a single department. Thus, platitudes, vagaries, and conflicting guidance led to execution questions that went unanswered in the organizational setting described above.

Vague expectations also led to a near-constant debate over departmental budgets. After all, it was impossible to allocate scarce resources within departments if the departments held conflicting views of departmental responsibilities. According to the 2008 Project on National Security Reform, the government must change how it manages national security resources, particularly in the budget process. "Today's more complex challenges impose qualitatively more demanding resource allocation choices, even in good economic times. . . . [T]he current system's gross inefficiencies risk collapse under the weight of the protracted budget pressures that likely lie ahead."[52] Professor Lew Irwin noted that Bush administration strategies failed to recognize budget realities because those documents did not grant the authority for any single department to control the resources or personnel of another department.[53] Even when an agency fully embraced the tasks assigned in national strategies, they were loath to allocate funds to tasks outside the department's traditional

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[50] US Department of Justice, *Legal Effectiveness of a Presidential Directive, as Compared to an Executive Order* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2000), 29, accessed September 4, 2017, https://www.justice.gov/file/19436/download.

[51] The National Archives, *The Federal Register*.

[52] Project on National Security Reform 2008, *Forging a New Shield*, Executive Summary.

[53] Irwin, "Filling Irregular Warfare's Interagency Gaps," 69.

core missions.[54] The government's handling of reconstruction and stabilization operations and funding for those operations is a case in point.

NSPD 44's purpose was to improve interagency coordination, planning, and execution of reconstruction and stabilization operations. NSPD 44 directed the DoS, through the newly created Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), "to coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all US Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities." In accomplishing this task, S/CRS was to identify fragile states, develop detailed contingency plans for those states and regions, and coordinate with the DoD to ensure operations were integrated with ongoing US military activities. Recalling the earlier discussion about the limited authority of presidential directives, S/CRS was to do all of this despite the explicit authorities of the Secretary of Defense, Director of the CIA, Director of National Intelligence, or the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance. NSPD 44 also did not alter the authorities of the OMB Director relating to budget, administrative, and legislative proposals.[55] According to the GAO, S/CRS efforts failed due to a host of reasons, first among them was funding.

Despite NSPD 44's extensive requirements and shortcomings, Congress only provided strong verbal backing but neglected financial support. Against a near $100 million S/CRS annual request, Congress provided only $12.8 million in fiscal year 2005 and $16.6 million in fiscal year 2006 for operations and personnel.[56] Congress disagreed with how S/CRS planned to use their requested funds, and justified limited financial support by stating contingency funds were available

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[54] US Government Accountability Office, *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps*, by Joseph A. Christoff, GAO-08-39, 2007, 21, accessed September 27, 2017, https://www.gao.gov/assets/270/269087.pdf.

[55] The White House, *National Security Policy Directive 44*, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 2.

[56] Bernard Carreau, *Transforming the Interagency System for Complex Operations*, 13.

elsewhere in the Foreign Operations budget. The Congress chastised the DoS for not reallocating any of its own funds.[57] Just as NSPD 44 had simply tasked the departments to work together, Congress also avoided using its authority to arbitrate department budget priorities. The Congress simply deferred to the department's authority to internally allocate resources and to choose whether to support the stability operations of other departments. Doing so reinforced long-standing differences between the DoS and DoD. Section 1206 of the 2007 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) gave the DoD authority to train and equip foreign military forces to "conduct counterterrorist operations; or participate in or support military and stability operations in which the United States Armed Forces are a participant."[58] This verbiage provided an opportunity for the DoD to fund a broad array of stability operations, seemingly under the S/CRS planning and coordinating purview. Congress stipulated that either DoD or DoS could request 1206 funds, but both departments had to approve the expenditure. This undercut any potential authority within S/CRS as it gave the DoD a large say in DoS missions. In like manner, Section 1207 of the 2007 NDAA allowed the DoD to transfer up to $200 million in defense articles and services to the DoS for reconstruction, stabilization, and security activities in foreign countries. Though annually reauthorized throughout the Bush years, this program had minimal positive effect because the departments failed to cooperate on programs and activities.[59] According to Dr. Rice, much of the disagreement between DoS and DoD remained a mismatch in resources that led DoS to rely on

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[57] Derek Chollet, Mark Irvine, and Bradley Larson*, A Steep Hill: Congress and U.S. Efforts to Strengthen Fragile States* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2008), 39.

[58] National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, Public Law 109-364, 109th Cong., (October 17, 2006), § 1206.

[59] Walter Pincus, "Taking Defense's Hand Out of State's Pocket," *Washington Post*, July 9, 2007, accessed September 13, 2017, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/08/AR2007070801066.html?nav=emailpage.

DoD assets but it also gave DoD a large voice in foreign policy.[60] The budgeting systems led to constant friction between Bush administration departments and served as a direct impediment to interagency effectiveness. By simply empowering the departments to work out their own differences, both the White House and Congress failed to address long-standing obstacles to effective cooperation.

The departments of the US government do not possess the same capabilities for planning and execution. The imbalance between department capabilities and the department's assigned tasks further served to minimize interagency effectiveness. Professors Robert Axelrod and Michael Cohen assert that the composition and skills of assigned personnel define an organization's ability to operate effectively in a complex environment.[61] Within an article on the irregular warfare and the interagency, Professor Irwin observed that other government agencies lacked the capabilities and leaders resident within the DoD. If Axelrod and Cohen are correct then the scope of interagency dysfunction becomes clearer.[62] Even if executive oversight and guidance met agency needs, and the respective budgets and authorities aligned with expectations, the Bush-era departments would still be unable to synchronize effectively. Long before execution shortfalls became evident, the GAO noted that departmental deficiencies started during mission planning. "[W]e found that DoD and non-DoD organizations do not fully understand each other's planning processes, and non-DoD organizations have limited capacity to participate in DoD's full range of planning activities." The GAO further characterized the DoS reconstruction and stabilization planning capability as "cumbersome and too time consuming for the results it has produced."[63] Simply put, DoS

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[60] Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* (New York: Broadway Paperbacks, 2011), 15-22.

[61] Robert Axelrod and Michael D. Cohen, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 153.

[62] Irwin, "Filling Irregular Warfare's Interagency Gaps," 67.

[63] GAO-08-39, 7, 52.

contingency planning efforts were unable to meet DoD planning expectations.[64] In addition to the S/CRS funding issues discussed in the last section, planning efforts were inadequate and would ultimately result in execution challenges. During post-Iraq invasion planning, both Secretary Powell and Ambassador L. Paul Bremer lamented DoD's unwillingness to support their requested troop levels, all the while knowing that DoS lacked the quantity and quality of deployable civil governance personnel needed in Iraq.[65] In execution, interagency efforts functioned as one might predict. In Kabul, Afghanistan, the US Embassy had the responsibility to oversee development of Afghan national and provincial governing entities. Embassy personnel, however, proved incapable of developing governance at the national, provincial, and local levels.[66] Further, Provincial Reconstruction Teams failed to meet expectations due to bickering over which department should lead and who should provide personnel. Often the teams were de facto DoD organizations because only it had the ability to fully man them.[67] Equally troubling, both DoD and DoS senior staff doubted that civilian capacity and resources would ever match the levels desired.[68] In 2008, Congress addressed this personnel mismatch with the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act.[69] In language similar to NSPD 44, this legislation tasked the DoS to lead interagency stabilization preparation and to continue developing a civilian counterpart to the US military, an effort that began in 2004. To this end, S/CRS worked to create the Civilian Response

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[64] Chollet, Irvine, and Larson*, A Steep Hill*, 54.

[65] L. Paul Bremer, III, and Malcolm McConnell, *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006); 125-126, 225-226.

[66] Irwin, "Filling Irregular Warfare's Interagency Gaps," 72.

[67] Lamb and Franco, "National-Level Coordination and Implementation," 236.

[68] GAO-08-39, 7.

[69] Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2008, Public Law 110-417, 110th Cong. (March 5, 2008), Title XVI.

Corps with three components: Active, Standby, and Reserve.[70] The Active force would contain 250 interagency personnel able to deploy within seventy-two hours of notification and remain deployed for up to one year. Their focus areas included assessment, planning, management, administration, logistics, and resource mobilization. The Standby force was projected to contain 2000 interagency personnel, who were to train for two to three weeks a year, deploy within thirty days of notification, and remain deployed for up to 180 days. The Reserve force would contain 2000 non-government personnel who would need forty-five to ninety days of post-mobilization training and who would deploy for up to a year. In 2008, after four years of funding and recruitment issues, the DoS had only filled and trained sixty-two of the 4250 positions authorized.[71] This fact led Defense Secretary Gates to conclude, "If we are to meet the myriad challenges around the world in the coming decades, this country must strengthen other important elements of national power both institutionally and financially, and create the capability to integrate and apply all the elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad."[72] Despite clear recognition of the problems at hand, both the Congress and White House continued to give lip service to interagency challenges while tacitly relying on DoD to fill planning and execution gaps.

Government agencies proved incapable of overcoming the cumulative effects of unclear tasks, misallocated budgets and wildly disparate operational capabilities. The departments were unable to integrate effectively to solve pressing national security issues. These dynamics led Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy to conclude, "It is a simple fact that today, US operational capability rests almost entirely in the Department of Defense. Enhanced

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[70] US Department of State, "Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS)," July 15, 2008, accessed September 2, 2017, https://2001-2009.state.gov/s/crs/66427.htm.

[71] US Department of State, *FY 2008 Performance Report* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 57-58.

[72] Gates, "Landon Lecture," November 26, 2007.

coordination, planning and outreach among non-DoD agencies are of little use until they can be translated into operations."[73] As with the first obstacle, any solution to these issues would ideally start at the top. Unfortunately, like the friction between Congress and the Bush White House, relationships among senior administration personnel further separated the departments, preventing meaningful integration.

Humans in the Loop

According to Secretary Gates, effective governance depends on personal relationships.[74] Despite, and perhaps because of, their individual qualifications and accomplishments, key leaders across the Bush team were at odds with each other from the very start and the disagreements only worsened with time. According to Dr. Melvyn Leffler, memoirs from Bush administration senior leaders illuminate open hostility between the DoS and DoD. Within the White House, the Office of the Vice President habitually sided with DoD, further limiting Dr. Rice's and her aides' ability to reconcile differences. This dynamic severely limited executive decision-making processes.[75] Disagreement or conflict among senior leaders, while inevitable, had a decidedly negative effect on collective synchronization. This was especially true in times of national crisis, and even more so when facing an existential threat. In the Bush administration, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, served as a catalyst to both strengthen positive relationships and weaken those under strain.[76] Strains in senior leader relationships remained a part of government deliberations throughout President Bush's time in office. Observing how these personal relationships evolved both before

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[73] Clark A. Murdock and Pierre Chao, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era. Phase 2 Report* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2005), 8.

[74] Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 92.

[75] Melvyn P. Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy." *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 2 (April 2013): 213.

[76] Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration," 194.

and after the attacks clearly demonstrate why these senior leader conflicts strengthened the obstacles discussed previously.

Upon assuming office in January 2001, the domestic agenda, not foreign policy, had been the top Bush administration priority. From stem cell research to empowering faith-based organizations to the "No Child Left Behind Act," the DoS and DoD garnered minimal attention from the White House. In fact, the President reduced by half the requested DoD budget increases. One notable exception was America's ballistic missile defense program. However, since progress required integrated efforts from the NSC, DoS and DoD, Secretary Rumsfeld noted that by the summer of 2001 he was unable to fully implement the President's plans.[77] This lack of unified senior leader effort towards early foreign policy objectives left the administration ill positioned to cope with the challenges ahead.

The collection of foreign policy leaders were already splitting into factions before 9/11. President Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Powell, Attorney General John Ashcroft, and National Security Advisor, Dr. Condoleezza Rice memoirs show they did not assign high priority to a prospective terrorist attack against the homeland.[78] As such, they did not prepare their organizations to deal with such contingencies. However, most of the intelligence community, particularly Central Intelligence Agency Director George Tenet and Dick Clarke, the administration counterterrorism lead, held a polar opposite view of the threat. When challenged by Secretary Rumsfeld on the veracity of the CIA's Osama bin Laden warnings, Director Tenet emphatically maintained that the threat was real, and the US was going to get hit.[79] In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, these disagreements consumed national media attention.

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[77] Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 332.

[78] Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration," 192-193.

[79] George Tenet and Bill Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 154.

Investigations into what the administration did and did not know highlighted the many disagreements between senior leaders and created additional obstacles to effective collaboration. Even more damaging, the process used to determine and implement the government's reaction to the attacks strained the collective leadership in a way that caused the underlying tensions to evolve into overt rifts. These rifts created de facto barriers between their respective organizations.

During a meeting at Camp David the weekend after 9/11, President Bush was publicly irritated at Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz' insistence on an Iraq policy focus even after the assembled group identified Afghanistan as a higher priority.[80] Over the following weeks, President Bush, after giving initial guidance on Al Qaeda and Afghanistan, grew increasingly angry over the war planning squabbles between Dr. Rice, Secretary Rumsfeld and Director Tenet.[81] Such disagreements would even find their way into the department's internal processes. In a classic case of what Deputy Assistance Secretary of Defense for Plans Janine Davidson called a mismatch in expectations,[82] General Tommy Franks, commander of US Central Command, grew so frustrated with Secretary Rumsfeld's Afghanistan planning modifications that he threatened to resign.[83] As it turned out, commencing Operation Enduring Freedom did little to improve relations among key

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[80] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 80, 86-88; Hugh Shelton, Malcolm McConnell, and Ronald Levinson, *Without Hesitation: The Odyssey of an American Warrior* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010), 444-445; Richard Myers and Malcolm McConnell, *Eyes on the Horizon: Serving on the Front Lines of National Security* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 165-168; George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010), 189-190.

[81] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 90-96; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 371-378, 392-393; Tenet and Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm*, 207-220; Douglas J. Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 106-107.

[82] Janine Davidson, "The Contemporary Presidency: Civil-Military Friction and Presidential Decision Making: Explaining the Broken Dialogue," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (March 2013): 133.

[83] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 371; Myers and McConnell, *Eyes on the Horizon*, 174-175; Tommy Franks and Malcolm McConnell, *American Soldier* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 276-277.

leaders. In fact, pre-existing leadership factions broke down into even smaller groups, making interagency integration all but impossible.

After Operation Enduring Freedom, Administration senior leaders remained consumed with preventing another attack on the homeland. The views of Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Tenet on topics such as prisoner treatment, terrorist disposition, and noncombatant casualties aligned directly. The views of Powell, Rice and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers on those topics were directly opposite.[84] Homeland defense also reenergized discussions about Iraq, because in November 2002, senior leaders began to focus attention on Iraq's capability to support terrorists. Disputes between military action versus a diplomatic approach, coupled with the lack of serious discussion on the imminence of an Iraqi threat, served to reinforce the ever-growing divide among senior leaders.[85] During a 7 February 2003 presentation to President Bush on planning options post-hostilities in Iraq, General Franks made clear he was only providing general concepts that needed additional work to be of real value. When the presentation concluded, the President gave no specific guidance. He merely generally concurred with the assessment that the force levels would most likely exceed those used in Afghanistan. Secretary Rumsfeld departed the briefing believing that the entire concept could be refined, particularly by using a smaller force and an accelerated timeline. Vice President Cheney, like Rumsfeld, believed the current options gave the enemy too much reaction time and the military would adjust accordingly. Perhaps hearing a different brief entirely, Secretary Powell understood that the operational concept was not yet executable and diplomatic efforts would remain paramount in US-Iraqi relations for the indefinite

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[84] Bush, *Decision Points*, 169-171; Richard B. Cheney and Liz Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Threshold Editions, 2011), 355-362, 520–523; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 564-565; Tenet and Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm*, 253-257.

[85] Feith, *War and Decision*, 223, 341-342; Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 186; Cheney, *In My Time*, 391-396; Myers and McConnell, *Eyes on the Horizon*, 229-231; Franks and McConnell, *American Soldier*, 369, 390; Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 457; Tenet and Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm*, 305; Bush, *Decision Points*, 250–52.

future. After the meeting, each principal instructed their staffs to develop plans based on their respective interpretations.[86] This set the stage for years of interagency conflict that consumed the US government and exacerbated the organizational and resource issues already discussed.

Once committed to military action, postwar Iraq planning increased the divide between senior leaders. As one might expect, this divide also negatively affected how subordinate leaders and staffs interacted. Secretary Rumsfeld resented both the DoS and NSC, while Dr. Rice felt dismissed by SecDef and the President. President Bush's appointment and direct communication with Ambassador Bremer, the Coalition Provisional Authority lead, incensed the NSC, DoD and DoS alike.[87] President Bush noted that his Secretaries of Defense and State "were like a pair of old duelers who kept their own pistols in their holsters, but let their seconds and thirds fire away."[88] Dr. Rice further noted that the personal distrust between Secretaries Rumsfeld and Powell "made the levels below the secretaries largely incapable of making decisions."[89] Vice President Cheney near universally sided with the DoD over the NSC and DoS.[90] Secretary Rumsfeld had little respect for how Dr. Rice managed the NSC, stating, "She studiously avoided forcing clear-cut decisions that might result in one cabinet officer emerging as a winner and another as a loser."[91] Secretary Powell, along with senior flag officers from DoD, perpetually found themselves at odds with both Cheney and Rumsfeld.[92] Dr. Rice, for her part, believed Rumsfeld actively sabotaged the NSC's efforts toward interagency consensus and problem solving, and she remained frustrated by an inability to

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[86] Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 103-104.

[87] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 485-497; Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 189-190; Bremer and McConnell, *My Year in Iraq*, 12-13.

[88] Bush, *Decision Points*, 87-88.

[89] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 15-22.

[90] Ibid., 208.

[91] Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 326.

[92] Karen DeYoung, *Soldier* (New York:Vintage, 2006), 365-372.

harmonize between Rumsfeld and Powell.[93] The level of trust between CIA Director Tenet and the Bush White House eventually fell which prevented cooperation.[94] Though group relations improved when Secretary Rice replaced Secretary Powell in 2005 and Secretary Gates replaced Secretary Rumsfeld in 2006, lasting damage had been done. These key personnel changes, though positive, were insufficient to overcome most of the challenges during the previous five years

Senior leader challenges all but prevented subordinate leaders and staffs from cooperating during planning or execution. Even more damaging, senior leader positions reinforced existing agency cultures. In 2007, Assistant Secretary of State James Dobbins noted that the influence of key leader personalities on interagency cooperation far outweighs the effects of executive orders or presidential directives.[95] Furthermore, while disagreement does not always equal dysfunction, when an organization perceives a lack of value proportional to their effort, members tend to "withdraw from contacts which were painful reminders of the lack of status."[96] Such was often the case between two of the most influential Bush administration agencies, the Departments of Defense and State. The 2008 Project on National Security Reform asserted that members of interagency working groups tended to view themselves as in competition for power, influence, and resources. While they were adept at representing their respective agencies, they rarely stepped outside their assigned roles to reach true interagency solutions.[97] The GAO noted similar findings, reporting that departmental personnel systems only rewarded those with agency-centric behaviors.[98] With these traits in mind,

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[93] Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 16, 192.

[94] Lamb and Franco, "National-Level Coordination and Implementation," 202.

[95] James Dobbins, "Who Lost Iraq? Lessons From the Debacle," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 5 (Sep/Oct 2007): 70.

[96] Richard E. Walton and John M. Dutton, "The Management of Interdepartmental Conflict," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (March 1969): 76.

[97] Project on National Security Reform 2008, *Forging a New Shield*, 176.

[98] GAO-08-39, 20.

GAO investigators concluded that truly effective coordination between the Departments of State and Defense might require decades of cultural change.[99]

From the start of Iraq planning, the DoS and DoD disagreed over how to approach reconstruction and stabilization operations. In February 2003, Secretary Rumsfeld appointed retired US Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner as Director of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA). ORHA was tasked to form an interagency team to develop a single post-war Iraq stabilization plan from the many department-centric plans currently in existence. OHRA also deployed to Iraq and served as the initial US governance entity during the transition from military invasion to civilian control. Indicative of the animosity between DoS and DoD was ORHA's decision not to use many of seventy-five personnel selected by Secretary Powell for the project, despite having only two months before deployment. Though General Garner later regretted his decision he also chose to ignore the thirteen-volume *Future of Iraq Project* that DoS had spent over a year developing. He rejected the DoS report because it was not considered a valid planning document by either DoD or senior White House executives.[100] Executive disunity had dire consequences for coalition operations in Iraq, and ultimately led President Bush to publish NSPD 44 in December 2005 in an attempt to rectify long-standing differences.

DoS and DoD responses to NSPD 44 were predictably in line with their respective cultures. By assigning the S/CRS responsibility for NSPD 44 actions, but not clearly defining the relationship between the powerful regional bureaus, country desk officers, the Director of Foreign Assistance and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the DoS all but

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[99] US Government Accountability Office, *Actions Needed to Improve DoD's Stability Operations Approach and Enhance Interagency Planning,* GAO-07-549, 2007, 2, accessed August 10, 2017, https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-07-549.

[100] Jay M. Garner, interview by Martin Smith for the PBS *Frontline* Special "Truth, War and Consequences" on July 17, 2003, accessed September 4, 2017, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/truth/.

guaranteed the project's failure.[101] Though Secretary Powell, and later Secretary Rice, met with the S/CRS coordinator a couple times each month for updates and guidance, daily oversight of S/CRS activities was delegated to Ms. Henrietta Fore, the Director of Foreign Assistance. Since her department was responsible for all foreign aid distributions, this meant that S/CRS had to compete for resources across a broad array of DoS activities, often outside the purview of the Secretary of State. Complicating matters further, Ms. Fore was also the USAID administrator. This meant that in addition to resources, S/CRS also had to compete for project execution authority that historically belonged to USAID. On a broader scale, S/CRS was not in a position to keep up to date on the country-specific conditions and events; a key aspect of effective planning. Just as the Foreign Assistance bureau viewed resource management as its exclusive responsibility, the regional bureaus doggedly protected control over activities within their respective areas. The consequence of all these factors in the internal structure of the Department of State was the S/CRS' functional isolation which left it unable to accomplish its assigned tasks. With such minimal regard within the State Department for one of its own organizations, it is little wonder that DoD acted in line with historical precedent.

DoD did not embrace S/CRS as the entity with which to synchronize interagency efforts. According to historian Russell Weigley, the uniformed military has a "deep-seated and long-standing distrust of civilians'[sic] judgments on military issues."[102] This is at least partially in line with military doctrine dating back to World War II. Army doctrine then argued every occupation and stability operation should have two distinct phases. The first was military-led to establish security and military-controlled governance. The second phase was civilian-led to establish an

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[101] Bensahel, "Organising for Nation Building," 45.

[102] Russell F. Weigley, "The George C. Marshall Lecture in Military History: The Soldier, the Statesman, and the Military Historian," *The Journal of Military History* 63, no. 4 (October 1999): 810.

enduring government. The second phase required military capability only to ensure basic security.[103] That was DoD's perspective in response to NSPD 44. DoD Memorandum 3000.05 defined Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction Operations as "activities that support US Government plans for stabilization, security, reconstruction and transition operations, which lead to sustainable peace while advancing US interests."[104] Newly published Joint doctrine seemed to support that view and the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review committed the government to financially support development of the S/CRS Civilian Reserve Corps. Thus, DoD 3000.05 seemed to align the DoD fully with NSPD 44's integration goals.[105] In application, however, that was far from the case. Though all military plans were required to integrate capabilities from other government agencies, non-government organizations, and indigenous governments, Secretary Rumsfeld also established plan development timelines that exceeded the ability of other agencies to participate in the planning. Perhaps more telling, DoD 3000.05 required military forces to "be prepared to perform all tasks necessary . . . when civilians cannot do so." This effectively made the Department of Defense a competitor to S/CRS as opposed to the partner envisioned in NSPD 44. In sum, the third obstacle, inter-department leadership relations trump all other factors when it comes to interagency integration and cooperation.

It is important to note that patriotic citizens within the White House and departments wanted what was best for the country. At the same time, they were charged to look after the best interests of their organizations. The difference between what is best for the country and what is best

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[103] Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Should Soldiers Be Governors* (Washington, DC: US Army, Center of Military History, 1992), 21.

[104] US Department of Defense, *DoD Directive 3000.05, Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 2.

[105] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication 3-08, Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006).

for various departments and agencies is often a matter of individual perspective; a perspective intrinsically shaped by historical organizational cultures. When agency cultures reinforce and magnify existing barriers to cooperation among the leadership, there is little hope the departments will effectively integrate. As evidenced by the Department of Defense and the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act, unity of effort is not always a natural process.

Conclusion

The Bush team accomplished a great deal. Thus, the research here is not an assessment of failure or success. The system relied on agency heads to make decisions within their respective areas. The system further required the President to update guidance during times of uncertainty. This will always be the case. However, the US governmental system is structured to divide authority and responsibility. The government is not set up for coordinated action. Presidential initiatives encounter the inertia of policy making procedures when adapting to crises. The Bush Administration attempted to integrate the departments by developing national strategies. However, the strategies, no matter how well written, were unable to overcome three key obstacles: governmental organization, a fragmented funding process, and dysfunctional inter-departmental executive relationships.

The first obstacle to integration was organizational. The Constitution of the United States divides power to protect civil liberties. In so doing, the Constitution avoids giving any single branch complete control over government functions. The division of authorities results in competition between the White House and Congress. The President's authority to nominate agency heads went up against Congress' responsibility to provide advise and consent. Congress' control over the federal budget is not subordinate to the White House's OMB control over departmental budget submissions. Government complexity required both the executive and legislature to delegate authorities to the departments. However, the tools used left agencies the victim of a tug-of-war between two masters. Mass media stirring up a polarized electorate made things worse. The

standing committee system in Congress further hindered integration. This system provided a near steady stream of guidance from multiple committees with overlapping jurisdictions. The guidance raised questions that the interagency could not answer. This was particularly true with the Department of Homeland Security and Department of State. Within the executive branch, the National Security Council was as ineffective as the Congress. The NSC was generally unable to reconcile competing views or force agency action without personal involvement from the president. This further politicized even the most basic departmental interactions.

Prioritizing and allocating resources was the second obstacle to integration. For the most part, there was little agreement on departmental responsibilities. National security strategies were largely political and public information tools. Speeches, hearings, policy directives, and executive orders combined into an overwhelming amount of disjointed guidance. Even clearly defined tasks were often unrealistic and rarely supported by either the White House or the Congress. Congressional budget authorizations were not tied to integrated national strategies. Although the entire government was committed to success in Iraq, operations in Iraq were not the sole objective of any US department. Resources were needed for other tasks. In addition, departments typically lacked the authority to control resources of another department. In some cases, Congress gave the departments authority to transfer funds among themselves. In these instances, DoD usually chose to prioritize its own core functions. In the case of stability operations, the shared responsibility for funding between DoD and DoS gave DoD a larger voice in DoS missions. In addition, DoD exceeded peer departments in operational capability. Everything from budget, to personnel, to equipment gave DoD, and the defense oversight committees in Congress, an advantage over all others. Lack of congressional funding and recruitment issues derailed even legislated solutions to DoS shortfalls in stability and reconstruction capacity.

Conflict between departmental leaders was the third obstacle to integrated policy execution. From the start of Bush's first term in office, Vice President Chaney and Secretary Rumsfeld

routinely took positions opposed to Secretary Powell. Key flag officers within the DoD often sided with Secretary Powell over Secretary Rumsfeld. Dr. Rice, as APNSA, proved unable to integrate the DoD and DoS. Tracing the evolution of these relationships throughout government responses to 9/11 showed a progressive decline in key leader cooperation despite the urgent need for solutions. Overnight the 9/11 attacks shifted priorities from a domestic to foreign policy focus. A shift for which the government was not prepared. Senior leader conflict quickly translated into poor relations among lower leaders and staff. Interagency participants viewed themselves as representatives of their organization and remained in constant competition with each other. Department personnel systems reinforced conflict through recruitment and promotions based largely on team loyalty. Observing DoD and DoS actions starting from post-Iraq reconstruction planning to NSPD 44 implementation shows the culturally significant conflicts between these two powerful departments.

The collective result of these obstacles was inefficient and unsynchronized government responses to national security issues. The Bush administration did not risk failure due to the nature of their strategic system. It did, however, endure avoidable friction and controversy. Their efforts to create and implement national security strategies were laudable and required if the United States was to effectively use every element of national power. However, the strategies alone cannot be effective unless the government environment mitigates the obstacles that plagued the Bush team.

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