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ABSTRACT

Title: A model for permanent reconstruction teams- Developing the organic capability within the Department of Defense

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Thesis: There is a deficiency in the United States' ability to conduct stability operations. In viewing the contemporary operational environment (COE) there exists both current and future requirements for creating standing stability operations units. This research proposes creating, organizing, training, equipping, and sustaining a provincial reconstruction team (PRT) oriented branch within the DOD on a permanent basis. The proposed stability mandate and scope of responsibilities would be significantly broader than the current United States Army Civil Affairs branch's mandate and the PRTs must be trained, skilled, and have the ability to coordinate operations with the various United States Government departments, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and with Allies and Coalition Partners.

Discussion: Providing aid to failing and post-conflict states poses one of the greatest national and international security challenges for the United States and the world community today and in the foreseeable future. Failing states are the breeding grounds for terrorism because they have vulnerable populations that can be exploited by anti-American and anti-Western organizations both transnational terrorist and state sponsored. Failing states threaten their populace, neighbors, the region, our allies, and the United States. The United States military is currently ill equipped to plan for both combat operations and Phase IV & V stability and support operations and the current combat focused forces should not have to divert training and assets to governance operations. The United States military cannot afford to lose its superior military edge in specialization of conventional, special, and air operations. In order to sustain advantages afforded a world power DOD must develop and maintain a governance specialization. The current United States military structure is completely inadequate for conducting stability and support operations.

Recommendation: The United States Army should initiate efforts to research, develop, and maximize military capabilities to conduct stability and support operations through a standing DOD organization. Creating a governance branch within the Army would fundamentally expand the nation's power projection and strategic capabilities. Within such a proposed governance branch, individuals would be able to coordinate across United States Government departments such as the DOS and USAID, as well as NGOs, such as the UN, IFRC, CARE, WHO. Furthermore, the proposed permanent PRT trained individuals would also be trained and accustomed to working outside the borders of the United States with elements such as with U.S. Allies, Coalition Partners, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), etc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Disclaimer.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
Introduction.....	1
Assumptions.....	3
Department of State reconstruction & stability model.....	3
CORDS the genesis of the current PRT model.....	6
Current PRT model.....	7
Proposed model.....	9
Conclusion.....	15
Endnotes.....	19

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1 – <i>Proposed PRT support to Principal Commands at the Levels of War.....</i>	10
Figure 2 – <i>Proposed PRT-A, the operational element of PRT organization with 41 assigned personnel.....</i>	11
Figure 3 – <i>Proposed PRT Company organizational chart with 6 operational PRT teams.....</i>	14
Figure 4 – <i>Proposed PRT Group level organizational chart.....</i>	14
Figure 5 – <i>Proposed PRT Battalion organization.....</i>	15

Introduction

The United States has a long history of reconstruction operations. Since the end of the United States Civil War with the reconstruction of the south, the United States has conducted reconstruction programs in a myriad of countries including the Philippines, Germany, Japan, Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan,¹ and Iraq. Some operations loom larger than others as success or failures in the United States reconstruction experience. Given the United States' expansive experience with reconstruction operations, why isn't the United States consistently successful at reconstruction? Is there a model or lessons learned from these examples that can be useful in determining the way ahead?

The Department of Defense (DOD) can ill afford to wait for a Goldwater-Nichols type act to integrate all elements of national power to fuse reconstruction efforts. President George W. Bush signed the National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD 44 in December 2005, "the purpose of the Directive is to promote the security of the United States through improved coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for foreign states and regions at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife."² In September of 2005, DOD Deputy Secretary England directed a study team to examine organizational changes needed for DOD to manage the implementation of DOD policies and improve the Department's ability to conduct and support stability operations. The result of the study is DOD Directive 3000.5 Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations.³ Defense Department Directive 3000.05 addresses how DOD will coordinate with the Department of State (DOS) its responsibilities under the NSPD 44. The Department of

Defense must develop the capacity to deploy and defeat a conventional threat and then transition seamlessly to stability and support operations with existing organizations within the DOD without having to create ad hoc teams. The United States cannot conduct conventional operations while simultaneously adequately conducting stability/support operations. The DOD civil affairs capability is not sufficient nor suited for the strain of current or future operations. Conventional warfare, counterinsurgent warfare, and stability and construction operations all require different force structures, training, and equipping. United States combat forces, as currently educated and trained, are not the correct personnel resource for stability operations. Future military operations must be carefully planned around political concerns and timing of reserve call-ups.

Political considerations should now be at the forefront in planning as another element of terrain. The different departments of the United States Government do not have shared doctrinal definitions of nation building, peacekeeping operations, stability and support operations, etc. The United States Government has not designated an agency within the United States Government to lead the reconstruction efforts.⁴

There is a deficiency in the United States' ability to conduct stability operations. In viewing the contemporary operational environment (COE) there exists both current and future requirements for creating standing stability operations units. This research proposes creating, organizing, training, equipping, and sustaining a provincial reconstruction team (PRT) oriented branch within the DOD on a permanent basis. The proposed stability mandate and scope of responsibilities would be significantly broader than the current United States Army Civil Affairs branch's mandate and the PRTs must be trained, skilled, and have the ability to coordinate operations with the various United

States Government departments, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and with Allies and Coalition Partners.

Assumptions

The United States will continue to project forces and conduct stability and support operations, for “another bloody century,”⁵ creating no change in the COE. DOD will continue to take the lead for planning Phase IV and V operations. The United States will continue to export American values and the world will remain interconnected globally through economic trade. The Department of State will be unable to fix in a timely manner internal problems to effectively deploy and conduct nation building on the grand scale required in operations such as Afghanistan and Iraq. Future military operations will continue to require compartmentalization and classification of information resulting in the limiting of State Department participation in planning of future operations.

Department of State reconstruction & stability model

In August 2004, Secretary Powell announced the creation of the Office of the State Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) with the mandate to enhance the “nation's institutional capacity to respond to crises involving failing, failed, and post-conflict states and complex emergencies.”⁶ S/CRS is tasked to lead, coordinate and institutionalize United States Government and civilian capacity to respond, prevent, and prepare for post-conflict situations. S/CRS mission is “to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy.”⁷

S/CRS's 2004 edict is only four years young and mandates 15 permanent positions while providing an initial fix from the old ad hoc fashion.⁸ The S/CRS has 12

interagency positions to be filled by the various departments as well as an additional 48 non-permanent positions funded by State.⁹ The 48 non-permanent positions will be staffed on a full time basis only when a crisis arises. The 48 temporary positions will be vacated upon conflict resolution. Following the creation of the S/CRS, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2007, introduced by United States Senator Richard Lugar; this “bill authorizes the creation of a federal response capability to address post-conflict situations with active and standby components as well as a civilian reserve”¹⁰

Senator Lugar's bill gives statutory status as well as funding to the State Department's Office of the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization. The funding is for the set-up costs associated with the recruiting, training, and equipping of a newly formed office. The bill approved S/CRS to have funding for the sustainment of a 250-person active duty corps. The bill also mandates a 2,000 person standby component drawn from DOS, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other federal agencies.¹¹ While the S/CRS is a noteworthy starting point, its meager stability operations budget, manpower shortages, corporate culture, inadequate deployment lengths, and demanding security requirements make this office ineffective in fulfilling the required tasks in either Iraq or Afghanistan. The program will not be able to meet the nation's needs in the future with respect to a robust standing support and stability operations capability. The S/CRS program, even coupled with current DOD Civil Affairs capability, will not fill the gaps in current or future stability requirements.

The DOS is awarded less than 1% of the United States Government's annual budget¹² and has less than 19,000 permanent employees for all the functions that the

DOS provides.¹³ The 19,000 permanent employees are comparable to the number of Department of Defense personnel working in the Pentagon alone. With the current norm of deployment lengths for DOS employees less than three months per rotation, it will take time, possibly decades to change the corporate culture of the DOS to work in high security risk areas such as those found in Iraq and Afghanistan whose operational environment require a longer deployment length for measurable progress. The DOS does not have the same security clearance requirements as the military and therefore, assigning DOS employees to the military for joint Phase IV and V planning before, during, and after execution of operations has complications. The groups that the small standing S/CRS call upon in crisis are still ad hoc such as the Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG), the Integration Planning Cell (IPC), and the Advance Civilian Team (ACT). All of these groups are stood up ad hoc when requirements arise and remain active on a non-permanent basis.

The CRSG, as well the as the other State Department organizations, all deactivate when national objectives are met. The Crisis groups are formed quickly from full time positions within DOS and perform crisis action until disbanded and returned to full time positions. Highlighted in numerous after action reviews (AAR) are the inadequacies of preparedness for stability operations and the limit of State's ability to provide staff effort to develop effective civil-military cooperation. "With only a thousand Foreign Service Officers worldwide, USAID was forced to rely on Personal Services Contractors to staff PRTs. USAID fielded a team of dynamic representatives, but none possessed career-long expertise and all had to learn on the job."¹⁴

CORDS the genesis of the current PRT model

The current PRT model being utilized in both Iraq and Afghanistan was derived from the Vietnam reconstruction model- the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS)¹⁵ CORDS was initiated in 1967 with the purpose of coordinating the United States civil and military pacification programs. CORDS' hybrid design was created to fuse civil and military actors that included DOS, USAID, the United States Information Agency (USIA) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).¹⁶ "U.S. military or civilian province senior advisers were appointed, and CORDS civilian/military advisory teams were dispatched throughout South Vietnam's 44 provinces and 250 districts."¹⁷ This configuration is similar to what PRTs are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan today. Strategically, from the national level down, CORDS was fully integrated with both civilian and military teams.

According to the new COIN manual, CORDS "by 1972 had largely uprooted the insurgency ... and forced the communists to rely more heavily on infiltrating conventional forces from North Vietnam and employing them in irregular and conventional operations."¹⁸ From reading the successes of the CORDS program out of the new COIN manual, what happened to the expertise of the CORDS program? What happened to the lessons learned from the Vietnam stability and support operations? "Unfortunately, the unique and effective CORDS capability did not survive the post-war system reboot. Civilian officials from the CIA, State Department and United States Agency for International Development were reassigned, lessons went unlearned and the capability was lost to the history books."¹⁹

Even in the hotly contested I Corps area of Vietnam, only 750 of 2,000 CORDS personnel were military.²⁰ Officers received language training for four to six months in their target area prior to eighteen-month to two-year assignments. The CORDS program received funding for development assistance and was also allocated funding for transport and logistical support.²¹ Unfortunately, CORDS was purged from the military lexicon.

Current PRT model

The PRT effort is the modern equivalent of the CORDS that the U.S. and several allies are using in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The same issues that plague DOS also limit the PRT effectiveness such as its ad hoc nature, inadequate staffing (both in numbers and effectiveness), insufficient funding and numerous turf battles. Unlike PRTs currently, the CORDS system, “was fully integrated within the U.S. military command structure in Vietnam and thus sufficiently resourced.”²² The debilitating difficulties that PRTs face in the COE in even securing transportation reveal the difficulty in attempting to graft interagency capability onto the military system as opposed to developing such civilian-military capabilities from within.²³ Several experts and commissions tasked with evaluating the current PRT operations in Afghanistan and Iraq report that the current PRT model is inadequately resourced, ineffectively coordinated, is easily bypassed, and is ignored and disbanded upon completion of missions in Iraq and Afghanistan²⁴ as expressed in a recent article in the Armed Forces Journal in December of 2007. The reconstruction model came into existence in November 2002 with small teams that could respond to the security needs of nations without the heavy commitment of a full time peacekeeping force.²⁵ PRTs are both mixed teams of military and civilian personnel and teams comprised entirely of military personnel. The PRTs are an attempt to promote

peace and stability in a nation. The PRTs mission is to address the root causes of violence as well as the symptoms providing security through civil projects. “The PRT program is a joint civilian-military program that supports local leaders and empowers provincial authorities by working closely with the communities they serve.”²⁶ PRTs are also being employed down to the Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) level as ePRTs (Embedded PRTs).²⁷

The size and composition of the PRTs in Iraq and Afghanistan vary depending on the area, maturity of the PRT, local circumstances, and the availability of personnel from both military and civilian agencies. The ePRT model generally adheres to the following organizational structure 1) commanded by an Army Lieutenant Colonel with a complement of eighty-two American military and civilian personnel 2) supplemented by a host nation Ministry of the Interior (MOI) representative and three to four local interpreters.

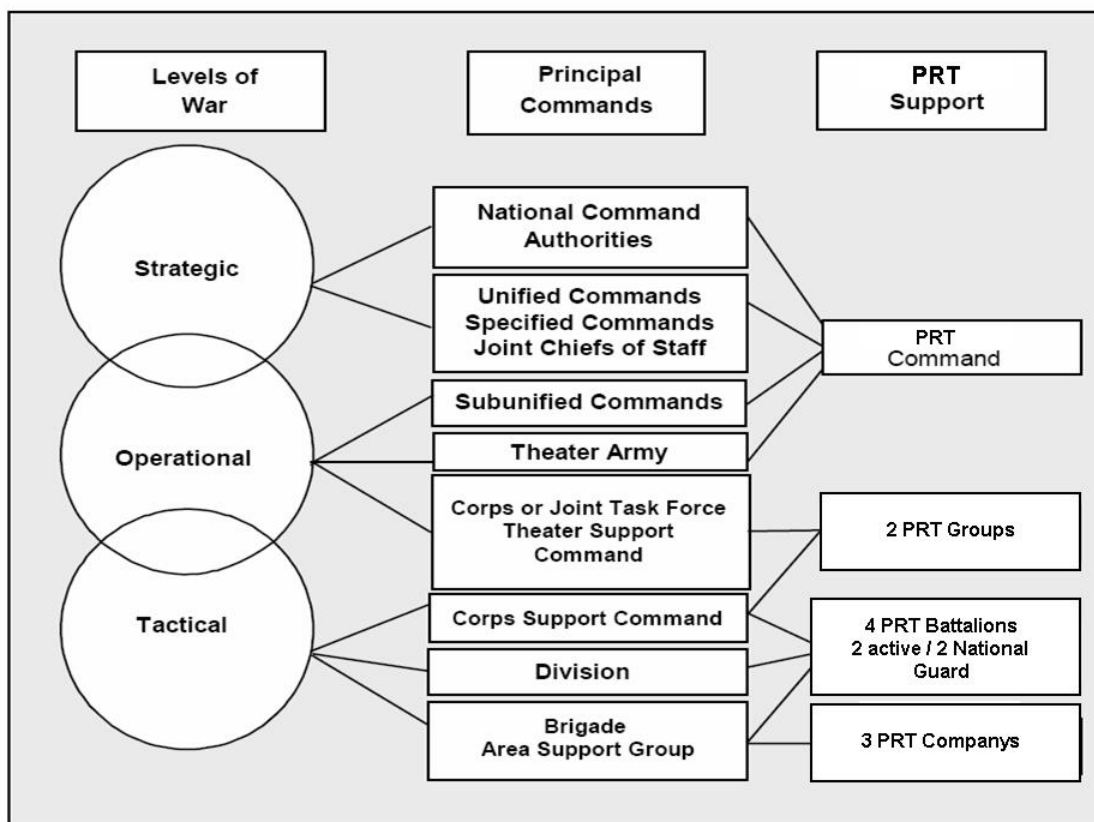
The model's civilian component includes representatives from the Department of State, the Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department of Agriculture (USDA).²⁸ However, the PRTs provisional ad hoc teams are not an acceptable concept of operations. PRTs are problematic because of occasional competing mandates, murky guidelines, lack of an established organization with existing reinforced relationships between civil-military agencies, and lack of cohesion due to each component of the mixed teams coming from different organizational cultures. Without an interagency pre-agreement on individual roles, missions, and job descriptions, extensive time is expended learning by trial and error in order to achieve a common understanding of mission priorities. Another limiting factor to the success of deployed civilian agency

representatives is that they arrive without their own administrative or logistic support and have deployments of short duration that result in disagreements and mixed priorities.

“Without a dedicated vehicle and security guards, State Department representatives are restricted in their movements and their ability to engage Afghan officials. As well as USAID representatives were unable to meet with NGOs or travel to development projects due to the same critical shortfalls.”²⁹

Proposed model

Until now both the DOS and the DOD have undertaken stabilization and reconstruction operations in an ad hoc fashion. Both departments recreate the tools and relationships each time a new crisis arises. The ad hoc approach taken in the PRT program is indicative of the overall U.S. response to the challenges of post-conflict intervention in both Afghanistan and Iraq. PRTs provide a positive international presence in places where there otherwise would have been only combat forces conducting kinetic operations. This study advocates creating a standing PRT capability that focuses on governance, to include resourcing personnel and material, manuals, entry/advanced/senior training, and an education system- essentially the addition of a branch within the United States Army. The addition of a standing PRT capability will provide benefit across the spectrum of the levels of war from Strategic, Operational, and Tactical.



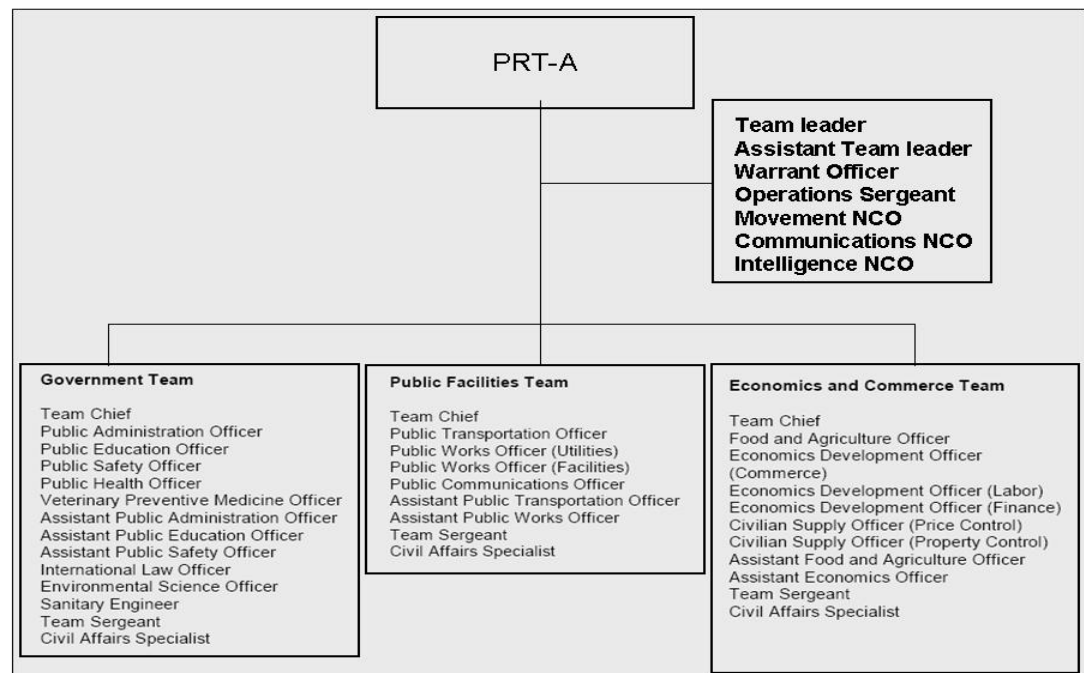
³⁰, ^{*1} **Figure – 1** *Proposed PRT support to Principal Commands at the Levels of War*

A standing PRT capability will provide the United States an additional venue to

- 1) aid failing states, 2) provide planning expertise, 3) coordinate across United States Departments, and 4) provide post conflict intervention expertise. The PRT track must be filled mostly with career governance trained individuals with limited branch details and functional area resourcing. The goal is to create a cadre of governance experts who can fuse state and other governmental organizations' assets and understand how to apply assets to combat the main threats to human security. The PRT individuals would be trained in Phase IV & V (stability/support operations and Enable Civil Authority) and would also be allocated to general staffs to facilitate in transitions to Phase IV & V

^{*1} Taken from CA manual and changed to reflect PRTs, FM 41-10, Headquarters Department of the Army, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS, Chapter 4

planning. The PRT/governance branch trained individual will afford the war fighting commander the opportunity to focus on combat operations while having a branch of governance experts that fuse interagency assets and aid the commander in governance. The added benefit of an existing PRT/governance trained organization is the relationships that they will have formed with the various DOS agencies. The PRT soldier will be able to effectively coordinate across United States Government departments such as the DOS, USAID, other departments and agencies (Commerce, Transportation, Justice, etc.), to include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations (UN), the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), CARE a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty and woman's issues, the World Health Organization (WHO), and other International Organizations (IO), etc.



³¹, ^{*2} **Figure - 2** *Proposed PRT-A, the operational element of PRT organization with 41 assigned personnel*

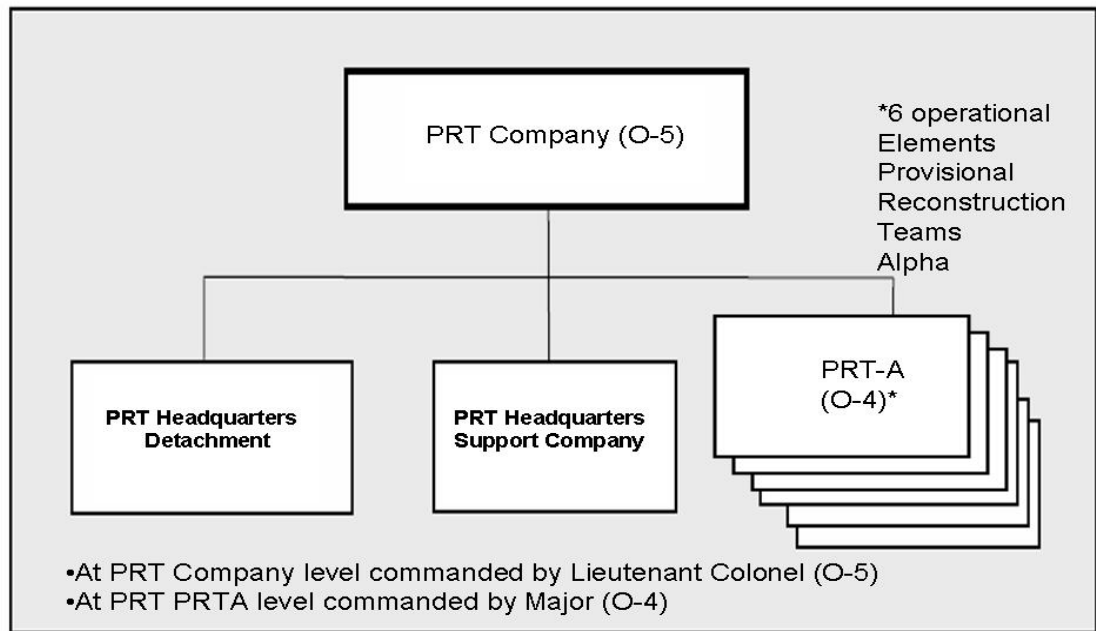
^{*2} Taken from CA manual and changed to reflect PRTs, FM 41-10, Headquarters Department of the Army, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS, Chapter 4

Standing organizations are more integrated in planning for operations and greater synchronization of efforts will translate into greater efficiency and effectiveness. In order to fill the new organization, a modest increase in Army force structure levels is needed to adequately meet active, reserve, and National Guard requirements for the future in nation building capability. The majority of the PRT/governance trained individuals and standing organizations proposed would be manned by U.S. Army National Guard and Army Reserve units, with 2/3 of the personnel allocation from reserve type units and 1/3 of the allocation from the active component. This increase in guard and reserve capability would afford national and state leadership with increased capabilities during times of natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquake, and large fires. A portion of the cadre's entrance to the armed forces could be modeled after the Medical Service Corps entry program for doctors of medicine. Since these individuals will be expected to have 5 or more years of government experience in governmental agencies such as DOS and USAID, they would enter the PRT branch at the level of an Army captain. Placing the majority of PRT/governance personnel in the National Guard and reserves capitalizes on civilian sector experience, experts, and other specialists in fields such as law, engineering, accounting, industrial development, urban planning, agribusiness, and a myriad of governance support functions from the private sector.

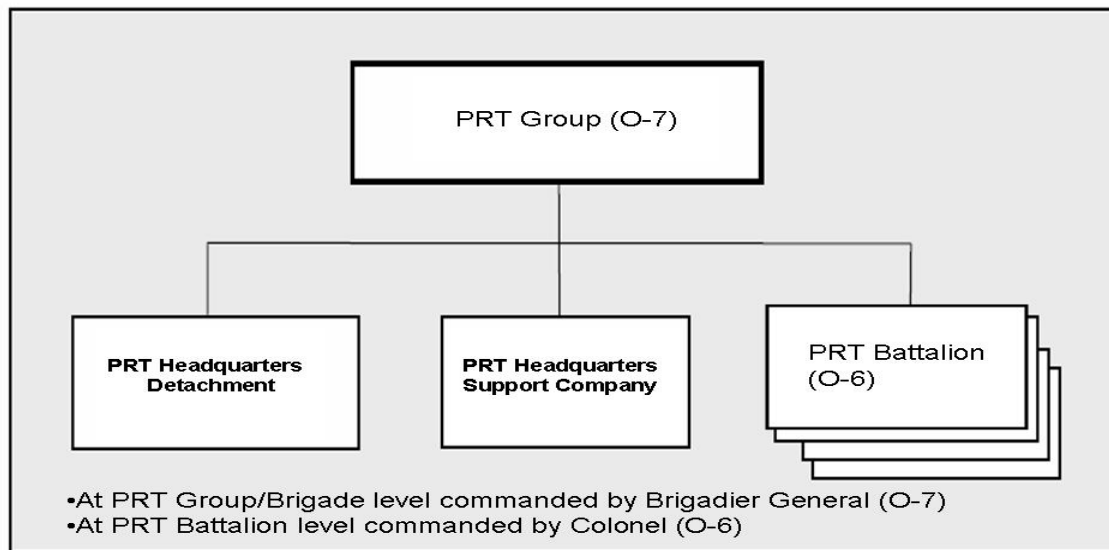
In the future, the United States must be able to project military forces to defeat the adversary and quickly transition to Phase IV & V in a coordinated, effective, and timely manner. The current system of creating ad hoc organizations in both the DOS and DOD has not proven an effective method. This research suggests that marrying a standing professional force from within DOD with the fledgling DOS permanent organization

(S/SCRS) that the United States will have an added capability previously unavailable. The current operational environment and Vietnam, as well as other examples, illustrate deficiencies in the capability of the current military's stability and support capability. Much could be achieved if the military component of the PRT was matched with a robust staff of civilian personnel. This research proposes a combination of the current PRTs and the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) program in Vietnam to provide the model for the future.

The current proposed PRT model will capitalize on wide interpretation of security, beyond a narrow, purely military definition. Under the PRT model security will be will be a product of increased civil happiness. The cornerstone of a standing PRT force is that it is trained to apply assets in a holistic approach to security with the melding between military presence, and a focused military reconstruction effort, and an emphasis on liaison and dialogue between power-holders. This effect can only be achieved through a trained, professional, standing force, that is comprised of both active and National Guard forces that can coordinate across United States departments outside of DOD and coordinate DOD and DOS efforts within the commander's or country team's area. A primary key to success is a trained DOD member who has the ability to interact with DOS and other actors. The goal will always be a civilian and military mix of personnel within the PRTs, focusing on a comprehensive approach, to security.



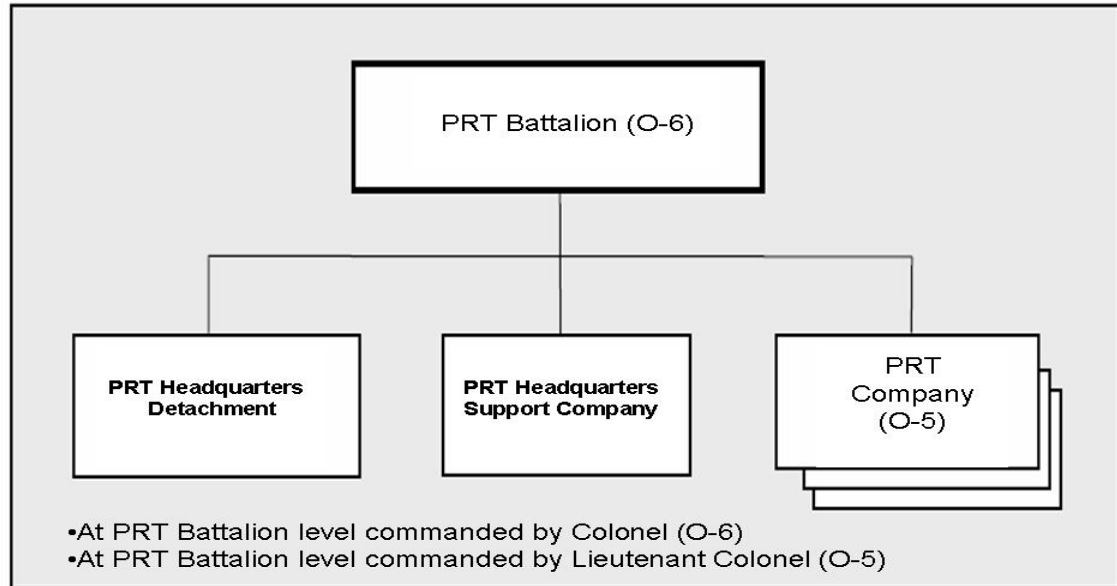
³²,*³ **Figure - 3** *Proposed PRT Company organizational chart with 6 operational PRT teams*



³³,^{*4} **Figure - 4** *Proposed PRT Group level organizational chart*

^{*3} Taken from CA manual and changed to reflect PRTs, FM 41-10, Headquarters Department of the Army, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS, Chapter 4

*4 Taken from CA manual and changed to reflect PRTs, FM 41-10, Headquarters Department of the Army, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS, Chapter 4



³⁴,*⁵ **Figure - 5** *Proposed PRT Battalion organization*

Conclusion

Providing aid to failing and post-conflict states poses one of the greatest national and international security challenges for the United States and the world community today and in the foreseeable future. Failing states are the breeding grounds for terrorism because they have vulnerable populations that can be exploited by anti-American and anti-Western organizations both transnational terrorists and state sponsored. Failing states threaten their populace, neighbors, the region, our allies, and the United States. The United States Army should initiate efforts to research, develop, and maximize military capabilities to conduct stability and support operations through a standing DOD organization. Creating a governance branch within the Army would fundamentally expand the nation's power projection and strategic capabilities. Within such a proposed governance branch, individuals would be able to coordinate across United States

*⁵ Taken from CA manual and changed to reflect PRTs, FM 41-10, Headquarters Department of the Army, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS, Chapter 4

Government departments such as the DOS and USAID, NGOs, such as the UN, IFRC, CARE, WHO. Furthermore, the proposed permanent PRT members would also be trained and accustomed to working outside the borders of the United States with elements such as with U.S. Allies, Coalition Partners, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), etc.

Until a Goldwater-Nichols type act is dictated and fuses interagency cooperation, DOD must internally create the capability to conduct a seamless transition to Phase IV & V operations. The United States military is currently ill equipped to plan for both combat operations and Phase IV & V stability and support operations and nor should the current combat focused forces should not have to divert training and assets to governance operations. The United States military cannot afford to lose its superior military edge in specialization of conventional, special, and air operations. In order to sustain advantages afforded a world power, DOD must develop and maintain a governance specialization. The current United States military structure is completely inadequate for conducting stability and support operations. The United States Army should be the initial branch of service tasked to initiate efforts to research, develop, and to maximize military capabilities to conduct governance operations with supplemental capability created in the other branches of the Department of Defense to compliment U.S. Army capability. This study advocates creating a governance MOS/branch, to include resourcing manuals, entry/advanced/senior training and an education system.

The governance track must be filled mostly with career governance trained individuals with limited branch details and functional area resourcing from within the Army. The goal is to create a cadre of governance experts that can fuse state and other

governmental organizations' assets. In addition, Phase IV & V planners would also be allocated to general staffs to facilitate in transitions to Phase IV & V planning. The governance qualified member of the commander's staff will afford the war fighter the opportunity to focus on combat operations while creating a branch of governance experts that fuse interagency assets and can aid the commander in governance. Furthermore, this study proposes modestly increasing Army force levels to adequately meet both active and reserve requirements for the future in nation building capability. Future studies should be commissioned to determine exact numbers, however, this research premise is a modest increase of Army personnel not a reallocation of personnel in the area of 20,000.

The United States must be able to project military forces to defeat the adversary and quickly transition to Phase IV & V in an effective and timely manner. Clearly, there are considerable advantages to having a forward deployable, joint civil-military entity that can provide its own defense, project a security presence, and promote political and economic development. The future holds many potential deployment possibilities for permanent trained PRTs including possible employment to the Philippines, and Africa. The goal of the proposed PRT organization is to deploy before hostilities arise and coordinate with other United States Government agencies, Allies, and Coalition partners and prevent United States combat forces from having to deploy in the first place. However, in the event of United States combat force deployment, the PRT trained elements will compliment combat forces by providing expertise in planning, coordinating United States Government and other elements to seamlessly transition from Phase III dominance combat operations to Phase IV & V (stabilize and Enable Civil Authority) operations.

PRT trained individuals will afford combat forces the ability to return home or be used elsewhere in a timely effective manner. Lastly, the United States can ill afford to be viewed “whilst United States doctrine of military engagement has evolved to adapt to modern conflict, commitments and capacities to stabilize and transform post-conflict societies have been sorely neglected.”³⁵ The time is now to make the appropriate adjustments.

Endnotes

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- ⁶ <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/>
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- ²¹ Ibid.
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- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Armed Forces Journal, December 2007, Averting the system reboot: Innovations and critical lessons from Iraq must be preserved, Shawn Brimley and Vikram Singh, 35-36.
- ²⁵ Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs): an analysis of their contribution to security in Afghanistan By Charlotte Watkins, 30 September 2003. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the MSc degree in Development Practice, Oxford Brookes University http://www.institute-for-afghan-studies.org/Contributions/Projects/Watkins-PRTs/chapter_5.htm
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²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ FM 41-10, Headquarters Department of the Army, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Unknown