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## ABOUT

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*PRISM* is published by the National Defense University Press for the Center for Complex Operations. *PRISM* is a security studies journal chartered to inform members of U.S. Federal Agencies, allies, and other partners on complex and integrated national security operations; reconstruction and nation building; relevant policy and strategy; lessons learned; and developments in training and education to transform America's security and development apparatus to meet tomorrow's challenges better while promoting freedom today.

PRISM

# From the Editor

Welcome to *PRISM*, a national security journal tailored to serve policymakers, scholars, and practitioners working to enhance U.S. Government competency in complex operations. *PRISM* explores the analysis, planning, and implementation of community-wide approaches to the three Ds—Defense, Diplomacy, and Development—and provides a forum for U.S. Government agencies, academic institutions, foreign governments, allied militaries, nongovernmental organizations, and other participants in the complex operations arena. *PRISM* is chartered to study, promote, and reinforce emerging thought and best practices as civilian capacity increases in stability, reconstruction, security, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare operations. *PRISM* complements *Joint Force Quarterly*, chartered by General Colin Powell in 1993 to similarly catalyze cooperation and progress in joint, interagency solutions to national security challenges across the spectrum of conflict.

*PRISM* is chartered by the Center for Complex Operations (CCO) and welcomes manuscripts on a broad range of complex operations issues, especially those that focus on the nexus of civil-military integration. *PRISM* will appear online 30 days ahead of hardcopy distribution, and its interactive Web site will allow readers to search past issues, submit manuscripts, provide subject matter feedback, and submit letters to the editor.

CCO was established to: (1) provide for effective coordination in the preparation of Department of Defense personnel and other U.S. Government personnel for complex operations; (2) foster unity of effort during complex operations among the departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, foreign governments and militaries, international organizations and international nongovernmental organizations, and domestic nongovernmental organizations; (3) conduct research; collect, analyze, and distribute lessons learned; and compile best practices in matters relating to complex operations; (4) identify gaps in the education and training of Department of Defense personnel, and other relevant U.S. Government personnel, relating to complex operations, and to facilitate efforts to fill such gaps. CCO is established within the Center for Technology and National Security Policy at the National Defense University.

*PRISM* evaluates submitted manuscripts against the following criteria: topical relevance, continuing education for national security professionals, scholarly standards of argumentation, and readability. Even if an article is factually accurate and criticism is delivered with precision, authors must recommend clear solutions or arm the reader with actionable knowledge. *PRISM* solicits authors who aggressively seek out and identify problems that should be fixed irrespective of agency perspective, conventional wisdom, or published doctrine. Manuscripts submitted should be between 2,500 and 8,000 words in length and sent via email to prism@ndu.edu. Visit our Web site at http://www.ndu.edu/press/prism.html.

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U.S. Marines and Liberian soldiers deliver humanitarian supplies to schools and medical facilities in Logan Town, Liberia

DOD (Rocco DeFilippis)

## Stabilization and Reconstruction
# A Long Beginning

BY RICHARD G. LUGAR

International crises are inevitable, and in most cases, U.S. national security interests will be threatened by sustained instability. The war on terror necessitates that we not leave nations crumbling and ungoverned. We have seen how terrorists can exploit nations afflicted by lawlessness and desperate circumstances. They seek out such places to establish training camps, recruit new members, and tap into the global black market in weapons.

In this atmosphere, the United States must have the right structures, personnel, and resources in place when an emergency occurs. A delay in response of a few weeks, or even days, can mean the difference between success and failure. Clearly, we need a full range of tools to prevail. My own focus has been on boosting the civilian side of our stabilization and reconstruction capabilities, while encouraging improved mechanisms for civilian and military agencies to work together on these missions. Lessons taken from civil-military interaction in contingencies both large and small, such as Afghanistan or Liberia, should be studied and valuable tools incorporated in our government institutions and response capacity.

Senator Richard G. Lugar is the Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Over the years, our government has cobbled together plans, people, and projects to respond to postconflict situations in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, and elsewhere. The efforts of those engaged have been valiant, but these crises have been complex and time sensitive. In my judgment, our ad hoc approach has been inadequate to deal quickly and efficiently with complicated emergencies. As former Ambassador James Dobbins testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee several years ago:

> Successive administrations have treated each new mission as if it were the first and, more importantly, as if it were the last. Each time we have sent out new people to face old problems, and seen them make old mistakes. Each time we have dissipated accumulated expertise after an operation has been concluded, failing to study the lessons and integrate the results in our doctrine, training and future planning, or to retain and make use of the experienced personnel in ways that ensure their availability for the next mission when it arrives.

In turn, our lack of preparation for immediate stabilization contingencies has made our subsequent reconstruction efforts more difficult and expensive.

In the fall of 2003, I began to explore the possibility of legislation that would bolster U.S. postconflict stabilization and reconstruction capabilities. My own perceptions of shortcomings were reinforced when I discovered a State Department report on goals and activities that barely mentioned the mission of stabilization and reconstruction. My thinking was also stimulated by the work being done on the issue at a number of important organizations and think tanks, including the RAND Corporation,

Center for Strategic and International Studies, U.S. Institute of Peace, and National Defense University. Thoughtful scholarship and analysis were being devoted to the problem, and much of it supported the objective of improving the capacity of U.S. civilian agencies to deal with overseas emergencies.

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In late 2003, I organized a Policy Advisory Group made up of government officials and outside experts to give members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee advice on how to strengthen U.S. capabilities for implementing these postconflict missions. After several meetings and much study, members came to the conclusion that we needed a well-organized and strongly led civilian counterpart to the military in postconflict zones. The civilian side needed both operational capability and a significant surge capacity. It was our judgment that only a Cabinet-level Secretary could provide the necessary interagency clout and leadership to create and sustain the organization. In our judgment, the Secretary of State, working with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), was best positioned to lead this effort.

Building on our deliberations, I introduced S. 2127, the Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004, with Senators Joe Biden and Chuck Hagel. The committee passed the bill unanimously in March 2004. The legislation envisioned a new office at the State Department with a joint State-USAID readiness

response corps comprised of both reserve and active duty components. To maximize flexibility in a crisis, our legislation also authorized funding and provided important personnel authorities to the new office. In addition, it provided for the establishment of two key capacities sorely lacking within our civilian agencies that would provide for more timely and less costly responses—crisis and contingency planning, and a forum for lessons learned in contingencies past.

Without waiting for passage of the bill, the State Department responded by establishing the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in July 2004. This was an important breakthrough that demonstrated the State Department's recognition of the role it could and should be playing. Together with other members of the Foreign Relations Committee, I have endeavored to provide support and encouragement to this new office. Like many initiatives, it has had its share of teething pains.

Under the initial leadership of Carlos Pascual, the office conducted a government-wide inventory of the civilian assets that might be available for stabilization and reconstruction tasks in postconflict zones. It undertook the planning necessary to recruit, train, and organize a reserve corps of civilians for rapid deployment. It also formulated interagency contingency plans—informed by our past experiences—for countries and regions of the world where the next crisis could suddenly arise.

In December 2005, President George W. Bush signed a directive putting the Secretary of State in charge of interagency stabilization and reconstruction efforts. Secretary Condoleezza Rice promised to dedicate 15 of the 100 new positions requested for fiscal year 2007 to augment the small Reconstruction and Stabilization Office. In those days, the office

heroically stretched dollars by recruiting personnel on detail from other agencies, taking advantage of Department of Defense (DOD)–funded training, and getting the State Department to pay for the overhead of new office space from other sources such as general administrative accounts. But such a hand-to-mouth existence has obvious disadvantages. Detailed personnel rarely stay long, circumstances do not inspire confidence in the concept as they return to their home agencies, and institutional memory becomes short. Relying on DOD funds put the office in the passenger seat when it should have had the resources to pursue uniquely civilian-oriented goals.

Despite good progress, significant gaps in capabilities remained as the bureaucratic bottlenecks limited the impact of the civilian agency coordinator. The effort received

> a 250-person active duty corps would be the first civilian team on the ground in postconflict situations, arriving well in advance of the establishment of an Embassy

new impetus in the January 2007 State of the Union speech, when President Bush gave his personal endorsement to the concept by emphasizing the value of a "civilian reserve corps . . . with critical skills to serve on missions abroad." Soon after, in February 2007, I introduced S. 613, the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2007, along with Senator Biden, and we were later joined by a bipartisan group of seven cosponsors. It was ultimately passed as an amendment to DOD authorization and signed into law by President Bush in October 2008. The bill, a follow-on to

WFP (Alejandro Chicheri)

USAID programs help educate young girls in Afghanistan

the 2004 legislation that was never enacted, established into law the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. It also:

❖ supports the President's 2009 budget request for $248 million for the purpose of enabling U.S. civilian stabilization capabilities through the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization

❖ authorizes assistance for stabilization and reconstruction in a country or region that the President determines is at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife

❖ establishes and maintains a Response Readiness Corps of government civilians with an active and standby component, trained and ready to deploy on short notice in support of U.S. crisis response

❖ establishes a Civilian Reserve Corps to deepen the pool of civilian experts trained and ready to deploy expeditiously in support of U.S. crisis response

❖ directs the development of an interagency strategy to rapidly and effectively respond when stabilization and reconstruction operations are required.

While many of the measures called for in our legislation have been implemented, some are still works in progress. We envisioned a 250-person *active duty* corps made up of men and women specifically hired and trained for the duty. Such a corps could be rapidly deployed with the military or independently, for both initial assessments and operational purposes. They would be the first civilian team on the ground in postconflict situations, for example, arriving well in advance of the establishment of an Embassy. This active duty corps would be able to do a wide range of civilian jobs from assessment to initial implementation needed in a postconflict or otherwise hostile environment, or in permissive environments without military support.

Such a corps would be no larger than the typical Army company. But with training for these situations and the capability to deploy anywhere in the world, it would be a force multiplier. It would be equipped with the authority and training to take broad operational responsibility for stabilization missions. Establishment of such a corps is a modest investment when seen as part of the overall national security budget. Even in peacetime, we maintain Active duty military forces of almost 1.4 million men and women who train and plan for the possibility of war, not to mention the nearly 1 million Reserve and National Guard forces. A civilian capability to respond is a needed complement as well.

Our legislation also calls on the heads of other executive branch agencies to establish personnel exchange programs designed to enhance stabilization and reconstruction capacity with a standby reserve of 2,000, drawn from State, USAID, and other agencies. The Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, and Justice, among others, can make important contributions. In addition, the legislation calls for creation of a "civilian reserve" of 500 volunteers from outside the government with the requisite training and skills.

The main roadblock to enhancing the State Department's stabilization and reconstruction capacity has been resources. The expressions of support from top officials did not translate into a robust budget request to achieve such purposes until 2009. In the final budget submitted by the Bush administration, the President requested $248 million for the Civilian Stabilization Initiative. The administration of Barack Obama has likewise sustained its support for such capabilities by providing significant additional resources in the 2009 Emergency Supplemental Appropriation of $45 million, and more so in the fiscal year 2010 budget request at nearly $324 million.

One stopgap measure that Congress did pass in fiscal year 2006, overcoming historical congressional skepticism of such pools of funding, was the authority to transfer up to $100 million from the Pentagon to the State Department for boosting the civilian response

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to particular trouble spots. I had sought to have such a fund established at the State Department for some years, and this artful legislative relocation overcame the persistent congressional tightfistedness toward foreign assistance relative to DOD programs. Still, this

is a 1-year authority, and the money does not provide the long-term perspective to improve the State Department's capacity to respond to complex emergencies. It has been renewed each year since in lieu of a direct authorization through the foreign affairs budget. In practice, money from the fund has been used, legally, by the Pentagon for its own purposes.

This brief history of our efforts to improve civilian capability in foreign conflict zones must be seen in the larger context of Federal spending priorities. The foreign affairs budget (150 Account) is always a tougher sell to Congress than the military budget (050 Account). To President Bush's credit, he attempted to reverse the downward spiral in overall foreign affairs spending that took place in the 1990s. In that decade, both the executive and legislative branches rushed to cash in on the peace dividend. But President Bush consistently requested increases for the 150 Account in his budgets—although amounts appropriated by Congress typically fell short of the requests. President Obama has indicated that he sees a larger foreign assistance budget as in our national security interest, but appropriators have already trimmed his initial request.

Today, in the midst of a global struggle of information and ideas, when anti-Western riots can be set off by the publication of a cartoon; in the midst of a crisis with Iran that will decide whether the nonproliferation regime of the last half century will be abandoned; when we are in our sixth year of attempting to stabilize Iraq; when the stability of nuclear-armed Pakistan is at risk; and when the Arab-Israeli peace process remains fraught with uncertainty, the reservoir of support for foreign affairs spending in Congress is still shallow. Members of Congress may recognize the value of the work done by the State Department, and some selected programs may be popular, but at the end of the day, the

150 Account is seldom defended against competing priorities.

As all this suggests, we have a long way to go on the civilian side of stability and reconstruction efforts. DOD is keenly aware of the importance of having a capable civilian partner in such operations. We should consider setting up a multiagency fund specifically for addressing stabilization and reconstruction planning and operations and providing sufficient consultation and oversight for Congress. Dispensing with the competitive interagency scramble for resources would not be easy, but the need for more coordination is clear.

If the problems on the civilian side of crisis management cannot be solved, I think we will begin to see a realignment of authorities between the Departments of Defense and State. Some would argue that this realignment has already begun. For example, the Department of Defense was granted money and authority to operate a worldwide train and equip program despite the fact that foreign assistance has long been under the purview of the Secretary of State. Foreign Relations Committee staff conducted a field study of this program in 2006, and I initiated another broader followup study for fall 2009. If we cannot think this through as a government, the United States may come to depend even more on the military for tasks and functions far beyond its current role.

The good news is that under the Obama administration, we have a Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Vice President, National Security Advisor, and, I believe, President who all appreciate the importance of building a strong civilian arm to perform vital civilian tasks. That is why I am optimistic that we can build on the progress already made to create a robust civilian component to our stabilization and reconstruction capabilities. PRISM

# THROUGH
## the Complex Operations
# Prism

BY HANS BINNENDIJK AND PATRICK M. CRONIN

I t has been over 12 years since the Bill Clinton administration released Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56, "Managing Complex Contingency Operations." PDD 56 was issued in May 1997 to direct the institutionalization within the executive branch of lessons learned from such complex operations as Panama, Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia. Our recent frustrations in Iraq and Afghanistan, not to mention the deaths of over 5,000 American soldiers and civilians, and multiple trillions of dollars in war-related costs have caused us once again to scrutinize the failures of our approach to complex operations and to reapply ourselves to a better understanding of those operations and the environments they are meant to address.

The military has responded to the challenge with a proliferation of new doctrine and policy aimed at improving performance in complex operations, while civilian agencies have committed to increasing expeditionary capacities and created a "civilian response corps." Yet the United States still lacks many of the capacities, processes, mechanisms, and resources required to effectively conduct complex operations—those operations that require close civil-military planning and cooperation in the field.[1] Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen have been strong advocates before Congress and in the public media of strengthening the civilian agencies. Both have focused attention on this need and transferred defense dollars into civilian programs. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review dedicated a chapter to "building partner capacity." At least two dozen recent studies document aspects of the civilian capacity gap and recommend remedies. Various directives and statutes have been issued in the past few years that begin to provide partial solutions.

Dr. Hans Binnendijk is Director of the Center for Technology and National Security Policy at the National Defense University (NDU). Dr. Patrick M. Cronin is Senior Advisor and Senior Director of the Asia Program at the Center for a New American Security. A version of this article was originally published in *Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations,* ed. Hans Binnendijk and Patrick M. Cronin (NDU Press, 2009).

USAID military health worker gives cholera inoculation to Vietnamese refugee, 1966

## Capabilities Lost

Four decades ago in Vietnam, an effective partnership between the U.S. military and civilian agencies supported the so-called pacification program. Programs of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) were important components of the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program, whose operations were relatively successful against the Viet Cong but were trumped in the end by North Vietnamese regular forces in a massive conventional invasion. In the wake of the fall of South Vietnam, U.S. military and civilian components let this important capacity to conduct complex operations lapse.

Attempts to avoid repeating the Vietnam experience produced restrictive guidelines governing American military interventions and assistance to foreign governments. Doctrines associated with former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and General Colin Powell that emphasized decisive use of overwhelming force had the unintended consequence of undermining skills required for smaller engagements. Military skills associated with stabilization and reconstruction operations withered, while America's Armed Forces became extremely proficient in high-intensity, net-centric warfare. A culture developed within the military that deferred to civilian partners to conduct what came to be known as phase four or postconflict operations.

Rather than developing the capacity to fulfill this role, civilian departments and agencies saw their skills and resources decline in the face of a strong cost-cutting mood in Congress that extended over decades. USAID was compelled to reduce its Foreign Service and Civil Service staff from about 12,000 personnel during the Vietnam War to some 2,000 today. The United States Information Agency (USIA), which had more than 8,000 personnel worldwide in 1996, was decimated and forced to merge with the Department of State—itself underresourced and understaffed, sometimes having to forego any new intake of Foreign Service Officers. Other civilian departments of government had few incentives to contribute personnel to national security missions.

## Filling the Gap

In Grenada and Panama, U.S. military forces provided the personnel for the stabilization and reconstruction efforts. Operation *Desert Storm* in 1991 was predominantly military with little role for civilians. The civilian expeditionary capacity gap was noted as early as 1993; PDD 71, "Strengthening Criminal Justice Systems in Support of Peace Operations," published by the Clinton administration in 2000, states that in Somalia in 1993, "There were not enough civilian personnel to negotiate with the various factions or to assist local village elders in establishing councils and security forces." The Balkans postwar efforts in the 1990s again called for civilian managers and planners. The civilian response was better than in the past, but the capacity gap was still notable.

The U.S. forces that invaded and occupied Iraq in 2003 had some reconstruction capabilities, but their mission was to capture Baghdad, not to engage in stabilization and reconstruction. Commander of U.S. Central Command General Tommy Franks, USA, made it clear that he had planned only for the invasion, not for postconflict operations. That mission was left to civilians reporting to the Secretary of Defense, but their number was small, their time to plan limited, and their resources negligible. Hence, in May 2003, when both civilian and military skills were needed to manage postinvasion operations in Iraq, the civilian elements were in short supply. As a result, military forces had to assume responsibilities and perform tasks that are generally thought to be more appropriate for civilian cadres.

In January 2004, National Defense University (NDU) published *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, which identified a "stabilization and reconstruction gap." It called on the military to adapt and develop the skills needed to fill this gap. Reluctantly at first, and under the pressure of two insurgencies, the Armed Forces did eventually comply. In 2005, Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 3000.05, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations," declared that stability operations were a core U.S. military mission to be accorded priority comparable to combat operations. Army occupational specialties were shifted to this new core mission by

> the United States Information Agency was decimated and forced to merge with the Department of State—itself underresourced and understaffed

the tens of thousands. New joint operational concepts and field manuals were written on stability operations, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare. These significant doctrinal developments are reflected in new training

and education programs. In October 2007, the leaders of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard issued a new Maritime Strategy that announced another important change in focus: "We believe that preventing wars is as important as winning wars." Operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere have created a large cadre of officers and enlisted personnel with some of the skills needed for complex

> the Obama administration's apparent preference to conduct diplomacy through special envoys suggests a noninstitutional approach to foreign policy priorities

operations. Additionally, the military Services and DOD have undertaken numerous analytic initiatives to better understand the nature of the global challenges that we face and that require complex operations.

The process of adaptation came much more slowly on the civilian side. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee took the lead, passing several versions of the Lugar-Biden Bill, which created offices and provided funding at the State Department to begin to meet the need. That legislation was finally enacted late in 2008 as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. In 2004, stimulated by the introduction of the Lugar-Biden Bill, the State Department created the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), which in turn drafted National Security Presidential Directive 44, which named State as the lead agency for reconstruction and stability operations overseas. S/CRS made heroic efforts to organize and develop civilian capabilities for complex operations, but the new office was underfunded, understaffed,

and unappreciated within the State Department. Whereas the Defense Department had dedicated tens of thousands of military personnel to these operations, S/CRS had a staff of fewer than 100, most of them detailees. Important efforts by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to pursue "transformational diplomacy" were also underfunded. It is too soon to know what role S/CRS will play in the State Department under Secretary Hillary Clinton; however, the Obama administration's apparent preference to conduct diplomacy through special envoys such as Richard Holbrooke, Dennis Ross, and Senator George Mitchell suggests a noninstitutional approach to foreign policy priorities, which could well leave S/CRS on the periphery. The Inter-Agency Management System, designed by S/CRS to guide reconstruction and stabilization operations, has yet to be invoked.

Inevitably and necessarily, DOD was forced to fill the overall gap with military resources, personnel, and private contractors. Traditionally, civilian functions were increasingly performed in Iraq and Afghanistan by DOD. Foreign assistance was provided through the Commander's Emergency Response Program. Provincial Reconstruction Teams, usually dominantly military, implemented local reconstruction projects. Civil Affairs units previously relegated to the Reserve Component and seldom called to Active duty became frontline coordinators. Public affairs, too, became a province of the military, with new strategic communication efforts and military information support teams doing what USIA did in an earlier era. Human terrain teams, guided by cultural anthropologists, provided the kinds of important insights traditionally provided by State Department experts.

These DOD efforts became global. All regional commands developed small interagency civilian cohorts, usually called Joint Interagency

Coordinating Groups. In two cases, U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Southern Command, major efforts are ongoing to strengthen the capabilities of civilians within the commands who are under State Department deputies yet ultimately serve under military commanders. Legislation was enacted to enable global DOD authority to train and equip allies to use DOD rather than State Department funds, thereby reducing State Department policy oversight.

## More than a Question of Balance

The imbalanced growth of military and civilian capabilities for complex operations in 2005–2008 caused several problems that underlined the call by DOD leaders for increased resources for their civilian counterparts. First, the imbalance created the impression internationally that American foreign policy was being "militarized." Second, military personnel performed functions that trained civilian counterparts with reachback to civilian agencies could perform much more effectively. Third, many in the military came to believe that only DOD is at war, not the Nation. Fourth, civilian voices in interagency policy discussions carried less weight because they lacked operational resources. Fifth, as a result, civilian agencies began to balk at the dominant role played by DOD. And sixth, as the prospect of future defense budget constraints became clearer, and ground forces focused almost exclusively on irregular warfare,[2] some analysts grew concerned that inadequate attention was being paid to preparing for major combat operations.

The laudable steps that have been taken by the civilian agencies, with the full-hearted support of DOD, to correct the imbalance in usable resources for complex operations between the civilian and military agencies are noteworthy. However, there should be no illusion that the problem will then be "solved." Secretary Clinton has pledged to increase the numbers of Foreign Service Officers both at State and USAID dramatically in the next few years, but it will be some years at least before the new staff brought into State, USAID, and the other agencies are trained and ready for complex operations.

The unreadiness of the U.S. Government for future complex operations is not just a question of numbers. While the military has done much over the past 8 years in terms of doctrine and training, civilian agencies still lack doctrine, training, or education programs to prepare their expeditionary cadres for complex operations. Neither State nor USAID has institutionalized processes or dedicated resources for analyzing their experience, and the so-called lessons learned process remains underdeveloped. As individuals transition to other positions and vocations, their experience and learning are at risk of vanishing with them. The dismantling of USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation several years ago was highly regrettable and leaves USAID without a capacity to systematically study its own work, identify, articulate, and validate lessons, and recycle them into organizational training. At the State Department, S/CRS has taken up the lessons learned role for stabilization and reconstruction operations, but it has had little opportunity to develop this function. The civilian agencies have taken few initiatives toward improved understanding of complex environments or complex operations. Research and development are not prioritized in the civilian agencies, so tools such as social network analysis and Web-based information-sharing are underutilized.

## Policy Options

Several broad options may be considered with regard to U.S. capacity for future complex operations. We can:

- ❖ follow policies that seek to limit the need for complex operations and not develop additional capacity; but while we may be able to avoid wars of choice, such as Iraq, there will likely be other contingencies, small and large, where benign neglect may not be an option.

- ❖ continue to let DOD shoulder the main burden, with military personnel performing essentially civilian functions, augmented, where necessary, by DOD civilians; this is essentially the status quo, and this does not resolve the issues of balance and effectiveness noted above.

- ❖ rely more on civilian contractors; but there are limits to the use of contractors, and the United States may already be exceeding those limits.

- ❖ accelerate efforts to build the capacity of civilian agencies by providing additional resources, creating new authorities, and changing existing interagency structures.

This article recommends pursuing the fourth course of action. What capacity to build, how much of it, and how to organize and manage it are at the center of this discussion. President

Restructuring institutional architecture for complex operations would strengthen overseas regional role of State Department under Secretary Clinton

Obama has pledged "to increase both the numbers and capabilities of our diplomats, development experts, and other civilians who can work alongside our military." However, candidates pledge many things. Will the Obama administration prioritize this task among all the other challenges the country faces today?

## Civilian Surge: Major Findings

The need for a robust and sustainable civilian expeditionary capacity is discussed at length in *Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations* (NDU Press, 2009). This section summarizes the major findings presented in that publication.

Complex operations encompass 6 broad categories of missions, with 60 associated tasks, 48 of which in 5 categories are probably best performed by civilians. Five thousand deployable, active-duty government civilians and 10,000 civilian reserves would be needed to perform these 48 tasks on a sustained basis in one large, one medium, and four small contingencies. In today's global security environment, structuring civilian and military capabilities to meet this 1–1–4 contingency

standard is prudent. This requirement substantially exceeds current executive branch planning assumptions, which call for 2,250 active-duty civilians and 2,000 civilian reservists.

Lead agency and lead individual approaches are inadequate to deal with complex missions involving multiple departments and agencies. One recommendation is to use "empowered cross-functional teams" with sufficient authority and resources to control departmental and agency activities within the scope of specific mandates. The National Security Council's oversight role also needs to be strengthened.

> lead agency and lead individual approaches are inadequate to deal with complex missions involving multiple departments and agencies

DOD has adjusted well to its new complex missions since 2003. In anticipation of constricting defense budgets, the Department needs to invest in high-end military capabilities, and, as a result, it needs its civilian partners to build up their capacity to conduct complex operations. Recently, DOD has enhanced its authorities to deploy its own civilians, should other departments fail to deliver. Plans to organize and train these personnel should be more closely coordinated with similar planning by the State Department.

The State Department should concentrate on developing "stabilization and reconstruction–savvy" diplomats, who should be plugged directly into executive crisis management activities. Key interagency planning and operational functions should be moved out of the State Department to a new interagency coordinator, allowing State to more strategically target its resources for diplomatic readiness needs in underserved regions. A new, empowered cross-functional interagency team should inherit several of the functions of S/CRS.

USAID should be the operational agency charged with training and equipping civilians for complex missions. This will require doubling its personnel strength and endowing it with new authorities akin to those associated in the past with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and new funding to reimburse other agencies that provide personnel for overseas deployment. USAID also will need to undergo a significant cultural change. To promote that change, and to reflect its new mission, USAID might be renamed the U.S. Agency for Development and Reconstruction (USADR). The reconstituted USAID/USADR might have two basic divisions, one for each major function—development and reconstruction.

Domestic civilian agencies and the Intelligence Community have significant skills that would prove useful to the successful completion of a complex operation. But overcoming bureaucratic, structural, and cultural barriers of domestic agencies may require special legislation. Domestic civilian agencies should be given a statutory mission to participate in overseas complex operations, just as many of them now have with respect to domestic contingencies, as well as modest budget increases to tie their new responsibilities into existing capacity deployment programs. The Intelligence Community is preoccupied with counterterrorism operations, and additional assets are needed to enable greater contributions to complex operations.

While the use of contractors in U.S. military operations has been a constructive factor since the Revolutionary War, the ratio of contractors to military personnel is at an all-time high. This has led to loss of core competencies in Federal departments and agencies, lack

of supervision of contractors, and lower than expected cost efficiencies. Thus, the case is made for dropping the presumption that favors outsourcing civilian tasks in complex operations, instead increasing the government civilian workforce in some agencies and improving contractor oversight.

The Federal Government might reorganize itself to educate and train the many civilians needed for future complex missions. Efforts to provide this education were initiated in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review but have stalled, in part because the demand for new educational programs has not been fully articulated or resourced and is resisted by those departments and agencies in which education has little traditional support. Efforts should be directed to define and develop the learning elements of the emerging national security operations. This will require dedication and a commitment to resourcing across the executive branch and will call for the establishment of a new academic entity for this purpose, possibly at NDU.

The total cost of the required civilian capacity is estimated at about $2 billion annually. Some of these costs are already embedded in current executive branch budget requests. New approaches, such as a combined national security budget presentation, may be needed to enhance congressional support for these funds.

The necessary civilian capacity should connect to its military counterpart in an overseas operation. Important efforts at civil-military integration and cooperation have taken place within the confines of the military, but these do not address the fundamental problem of the absence of civilian infrastructure to lead U.S. efforts during complex operations. One recommendation is to create new regional Ambassadors' Councils, a surge capacity to absorb interagency influx at key Embassies, and

easier civilian access to military transportation and materiel during a crisis.

Homeland security events, such as the response to Hurricane Katrina and management of the consequences of a major terrorist attack, are also complex operations that require collaboration and skill sets similar to those needed in overseas operations. DOD will likely never be the lead agency in the homeland, given constitutional and legal constraints. Issues of state sovereignty and the unique relationship between a Governor and a state's National Guard—in other than Title 10 status—preclude a traditional command and control relationship, even within the uniformed community. Add Federal/state/local/tribal and even private-sector entities to the mix, and complexity goes off the chart. Nonetheless, the synergies between homeland and overseas complex operations need better development to take full advantage of the similarities.

> efforts to develop the learning elements of the emerging national security operations will require a commitment to resourcing across the executive branch and will call for the establishment of a new academic entity

Overseas complex operations are seldom undertaken by the United States alone, and the civilian capacities of other nations should be harnessed at an early stage. Key international institutions include the United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, European Union, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund. Recent experience in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan

indicates that coordination among these institutions has been inadequate and that a comprehensive approach is needed. NATO is seeking to develop such an approach with the European Union, but Turkey and Cyprus tend to veto such cooperation within their respective organizations, to the detriment of ongoing operations. A major effort is needed to address this problem.

Connecting with nongovernmental organizations and having a broad representation of local actors are critical to success in complex operations. In fact, unless we are able to engage effectively with indigenous populations, we cannot achieve the political, social, and economic goals for which the military was committed in the first place. Success may depend on early engagement and planning, enabled by open communications networks with maximum sharing of unclassified information with civilians, an area that needs more emphasis.

## Managing Complex Operations

The distinguishing characteristic of complex operations is the compound nature of the challenges they represent. The situations that call for complex operations are not strictly or even primarily military problems; social, economic, developmental, and above all political factors are intrinsic to such operations. A more robust and sustainable civilian expeditionary capacity is thus indispensable if the United States is to significantly improve its performance.

But more is needed than numbers. The institutional architecture for managing complex operations should be dramatically altered. The accompanying chart (facing page) depicts a structure for managing future complex operations that would be more effective. The current lead State Department role in interagency coordination and planning is replaced by an "interagency

coordinator," a strong, empowered, cross-functional interagency team that reports to the National Security Council. A senior member of the National Security Council is responsible for overseeing this coordinator and field operations. The Departments of Defense and State make major financial and personnel contributions to empower the interagency coordinator.

A reconstituted, enlarged, and refocused USAID/USADR would be the main operational agency to train and equip for complex operations. It would have FEMA-like authorities and resources to reimburse other agencies for their contributions to a specific operation. Domestic civilian agencies and departments would receive new authorities, budgets, incentives, and responsibilities to participate, working closely with the agency. The civilian reserve corps and contractors would report primarily to USAID/USADR and, in certain cases, to domestic agencies.

The development of joint, interagency doctrine for complex operations would provide guidelines for future roles, responsibilities, and interaction. The use of doctrine in the civilian agencies is not fully accepted, but that barrier must be overcome if we are not

> a reconstituted, enlarged, and refocused USAID/USADR would be the main operational agency to train and equip for complex operations

to approach every contingency in an ad hoc fashion—which has been the inadequate pattern of the past.

The civilian agencies in particular, but the interagency community as a whole, including the military, must develop a disciplined approach to

## Managing Complex Operations: A New Model

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                    National Security
                        Council
                        (Policy)
                           │
                           ▼
Department of Defense   Interagency        State
      (DOD)      ─────▶ Coordinator ◀─────
                           │
         ┌─────────────────┤
         ▲                 ▼
      DOD           U.S. Agency For      Other
    Civilians      Development and ◀──  Agencies
                    Reconstruction
                   (Train and Equip)
                           ▲
                    Civilian    Contractor
                    Reserve

Continental United States
Field
                           ▼
                        Complex
                        Operation


     Phases Zero, One, Five    Civilian Lead
     Phases Two, Three         Military Lead
     Phase Four                Conditions-based Lead with Handoff
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learning the lessons of experience in complex operations. The cost of not learning these lessons is paid in many currencies, including the blood of U.S. soldiers and citizens. State and USAID specifically must take the "lesson learning" responsibility more seriously and dedicate resources to develop institutionalized practices for identifying, articulating, analyzing, and validating lessons learned from experience. These lessons must then be recycled into the training and education process so that experience does not vanish with the individuals who come and go, but informs new generations of U.S. personnel working in complex operations.

Overseas, the regional role of the State Department would be strengthened, and Ambassadors would be in charge of operations in time of peace and deterrence (phases zero, one, and five). Military commanders would take the lead in time of conflict (phases two and three). Command arrangements are most difficult in the immediate postconflict stage (phase four); during this phase, close personal cooperation is required between the Ambassador and combatant commander. Command should shift to civilian leadership as soon as significant combat operations have ended, as decided by the President with the recommendation of the National Security Advisor.

Above all, what is needed is an ongoing dialogue between the military and civilian agencies and within the respective agencies about complex operations and the situations that call for them.

There will likely be a strong tendency to revert to more traditional roles and lanes once the military engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan recedes. Military and civilians alike will want to resume the pre–September 11 practices based on so-called steady state models of international relations and development. It is already possible to detect a bit of "complex operations fatigue" in Washington. Yet it is precisely these operations that analysts tell us are most likely in the future. We are still low on the learning curve when it comes to complex operations. There is much to examine, including many of the themes set forth in this article. Future issues of this journal will delve into all the dimensions of complex operations and the complex environments they are meant to address. Indeed, the Center for Complex Operations would like this journal to serve as a prism that breaks complex operations and environments into their constituent elements and to help build a community of practice capable of rejoining these constituent elements into real-life solutions. PRISM

## Notes

[1] The definition of *complex operations* has changed over time—sometimes including combat, sometimes excluding it, sometimes encompassing disaster relief, sometimes not, and usually focusing only on missions overseas. For example, the Center for Complex Operations Web site states that "stability operations, counterinsurgency and *irregular warfare* [are] collectively called 'complex operations.'" This article adopts a more expansive definition that includes humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, at home and abroad.

[2] Department of Defense, Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept, version 1.0, September 11, 2007, defines *irregular warfare* as "a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will." Available at <www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/iw_joc1_0.pdf>.

Addressing the Problem of Failed States

# A New Instrument

BY JOHN E. HERBST

The problem of failed states and ungoverned spaces is not new. Since the appearance of the first civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and India, there have been frontiers and wildernesses without governance. Naturally, these spaces often represented a grave threat to neighbors. Over 2,000 years ago, the Chinese built the Great Wall to keep out intruders from the Eurasian steppes, and over 1,600 years ago, the Romans built a complex defensive system to demarcate and defend its borders in Germany and England.

In the past, ungoverned spaces posed a problem only for immediate neighbors. But today, failed states, failing states, and ungoverned spaces may pose a security threat to states around the world. This was brought home on September 11, 2001, when a terrorist group launched the most lethal attack on the United States since Pearl Harbor from a safe haven thousands of miles away. This was a global wakeup call announcing a new era in international relations. The hopes entertained after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 for a "New World Order" or an "end of history" were not to be.

Indeed, the post–Cold War world has turned out to be disorderly and dangerous. According to the *Failed States Index 2009*, there are no fewer than 40 failing states today, many of which are the source of the world's worst problems of instability and violence. The challenge posed by failed states and ungoverned spaces will last a generation or more. This is a consequence of paradoxical tendencies within the international system. On the one hand, globalization, the extraordinary interconnectedness of economies and societies around the world, will likely grow as advances in communications and transportation continue. Yet while our national societies and economies are interacting ever more closely, there are centrifugal tendencies pulling states apart. The emergence of 15 independent countries from the demise of the Soviet Union and 7 from the breakup of the former Yugoslavia are the clearest examples. But so too are the European nationalist obstacles to further integration within the European Union, as well as the separatist movements in places such as the Caucasus, northern Iraq, Kashmir, and Africa, with its hundreds of ethnic groups distributed among 53 states.

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Globalization, driven by the information revolution, has accelerated the decline of central authority, making it harder for authoritarian rulers (or media elites) to monopolize the interpretation of events or to prevent their citizens from communicating and organizing on taboo subjects. For instance, protests in Iran following the presidential election last summer would have been hard to sustain were it not for the networking capacity offered by Twitter.

Globalization has also enabled the emergence of the phenomenon that Thomas Friedman calls super-empowered individuals and groups—that is, individuals and groups with the means to influence global affairs from inside or outside government. The Internet and the near-free ability to communicate with anyone anywhere on the globe at any time allow individuals to unite for economic and political purposes or, as we know too well, for jihadist purposes. The ability of al Qaeda, for instance, to network through the touch of a few buttons with terrorists from the Philippines to Pakistan to the Arabian Peninsula to Western Europe would not be possible without globalization.

Ungoverned spaces may become centers for terrorist activities, narcotrafficking, and piracy. For all these reasons, the international community must concern itself with unstable states. In fact, it has. In the 20 years since the end of the Cold War, there have been 41 peacekeeping missions run under United Nations (UN) auspices alone in contrast to the 16 that the UN ran between 1945 and 1989. But peacekeeping operations are only part of the equation. They keep combatants at bay or provide security so that a country may resume development, but peacekeeping operations do not address the problems of failed governance, nor do they help states develop capacity for efficient governance. This is the realm of peacebuilding.

To address the problem of ungoverned spaces, the United States has begun to develop new instruments of national security. These instruments take advantage of all aspects of government power, creating a whole-of-government approach. In the best of circumstances, they will mobilize assets from our broader society (such as nongovernmental organizations and volunteers), and, as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton notes, "create partnerships aimed at solving problems" with allies and friends around the world.

We have learned in Iraq and Afghanistan that the U.S. Armed Forces are quite efficient in dealing with the military threat emanating from failed states and that they will assume responsibilities far afield from their core competencies to fill the gap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, if necessary. But we have also learned that the failure to stabilize through development of a competent, responsible state government results in temporary military victory, but with a prolonged struggle for stability.

## A New Instrument

The responsibility for developing this new instrument of peacebuilding has been vested in the Secretary of State, who has tasked the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) to take on this responsibility. The Secretary has charged S/CRS with three broad tasks:

❖ developing a civilian response capability

❖ developing a whole-of-government response to stability operations

❖ ensuring civilian-military integration.

To meet these objectives, S/CRS has led an interagency process that is creating a Civilian Response Corps (CRC) made up of Federal employees and American citizens with the

necessary skills to undertake reconstruction and stabilization activities for countries that have no functioning government, or a poorly functioning one. The CRC will be made up of engineers, lawyers, judges, corrections officials, diplomats, development experts, public administrators, public health officials, city planners, border control officials, economists, and others from seven civilian U.S. Government departments and an agency: the Departments of State, Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice, and Treasury, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and state and local governments and the private sector.

The CRC will also be made up of three distinct elements—the active, standby, and reserve components—enabling the United States to scale up for major stabilization missions and to scale down in periods of less demand. The active component is composed of 250 Federal employees whose full-time job is to train for and deploy to stability operations. The active component will focus on critical initial interagency functions such as assessment, planning, management, administration, logistics, and resource mobilization and will deploy within 72 hours of a decision. The active component represents the U.S. Government's first responders, who will pave the way for a successful, coordinated, larger civilian intervention.

The standby component, with additional subject matter expertise, provides critical reinforcement and followup for the active component. The initial 2,000 standby component members are current Federal employees with other full-time jobs across the above mentioned Federal departments and agency. They will train 2 to 3 weeks a year and will be ready for deployment within 30 to 60 days of a decision, with 10 to 25 percent of them deployable at any one time.

The 2,000-member reserve component will provide a pool of state and local government and private sector professionals with expertise and skills not readily found within the U.S. Government, such as municipal administration, policing, and local governance. Reserve component members will sign up for a 4-year commitment. Each reserve member will be required to train for 2 weeks a year and will have an obligation to deploy for up to 1 year if needed. Up to 25 percent of reserve component members will be available to deploy within 2 months of the decision.

This Civilian Response Corps of 4,250 would enable the United States to continuously deploy between 900 and 1,200 members to simultaneously staff a large stabilization mission, such as Afghanistan, and a medium-sized crisis, such as Kosovo in the late 1990s, while still retaining a response capacity for smaller crises.

To date, funds for the CRC have been appropriated under the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110–252) and under the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2009 (Div. H, P.L. 111–8). These funds have allowed S/CRS and USAID to initiate the recruitment, hiring, training, and equipping of the active and standby components. Between January 2008

> peacekeeping operations do not address the problems of failed governance, nor do they help states develop capacity for efficient governance

and May 2009, 56 CRC members have deployed to 11 countries, including Afghanistan, and we are on target to have 250 active members and 1,000 standby members ready to deploy by the end of 2010.

Of course, it is not enough to have the right people. They also need to be in the right place at the right time, with the skills, knowledge, equipment, and organization to get the job done.

To ensure that the peacebuilding effort is successful, a new Interagency Management System (IMS) for Reconstruction and Stabilization was created in coordination with 15 departments and agencies across the U.S. Government. The IMS outlines the roles, responsibilities, and processes for mobilizing and supporting interagency reconstruction and stabilization operations. In concert with the planning framework—a template for planning at the strategic and policy level, as well as at the Country Team level—the IMS provides for whole-of-government, civilian-military planning and coordination in Washington, DC, at combatant commands, and in the field.

The IMS was designed to be flexible to meet the particular requirements of stabilization operations with regard to required skills, size of the teams, and specific tasks and activities. The IMS is also designed to be used in engagements with or without military operations. It is not intended, however, to respond to political and humanitarian crises in otherwise stable countries that are regularly and effectively handled through current organizations and systems.

Planning is a critical element of stability operations, and S/CRS has focused on development of a planning shop unique to the U.S. Government. Unlike military planning, S/CRS has the ability to knit together the efforts of the whole government and to express the guidance of policymakers, identify tradeoffs to decisions, define milestones and endstates, and analyze resource requirements and sequencing programs. S/CRS planners have already led interagency planning efforts and produced strategic and implementation plans for Sudan, Haiti, Kosovo, Georgia, and Bangladesh.

In Afghanistan, S/CRS civilian planners have produced operational plans for Regional Command East, its component brigades, and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), as well as for U.S.-led PRTs in the west and south. S/CRS pioneered the creation of the Integrated Civilian Military Action Group (ICMAG) at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, which is responsible for ensuring that all elements (civilian and military) of American operations are fully integrated—a key concept of the Interagency Management System. S/CRS planners in the ICMAG are also directing the first-ever integrated planning effort for Afghanistan.

## Getting Help

As the United States builds the capacity to stabilize countries in crisis or heading toward crisis, it is important to remember that Washington cannot and should not try to address problems of failing and failed states alone. The sheer number of such states, in addition to the complexity of these crises, is a problem that requires a global response. It is therefore critical that the United States

> the Interagency Management System outlines the roles, responsibilities, and processes for mobilizing and supporting interagency reconstruction and stabilization operations

develop civilian and whole-of-government capacity in conjunction with other like-minded states. It is also critical to develop an international network of partners who share that vision.

There are now at least 14 countries with civilian capacity and whole-of-government approaches similar to that of S/CRS, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The efforts of some of these partners are quite impressive; a number have budgets higher than that of S/CRS. Australia, for example, has created an expeditionary police force that numbers over 700 and has been used to promote stability in East Timor, New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Marshall Islands.

S/CRS has also been working to build international reconstruction and stability capacity by reaching out and engaging with large potential stakeholders, such as Brazil, China, India, and South Africa, who already participate in regional or UN peacekeeping efforts. Furthermore, S/CRS is working with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, European Union, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, UN, and African Union on stabilization issues. The long-term goal is to increase the number of countries and regional organizations with stabilization capabilities and to seek partnerships as specific crises emerge. By building relationships with partners willing to take on stabilization work in areas important to them, S/CRS is both promoting stability and reducing the burden on the United States.

### Prevention as Stabilization

Responding to crises, however, is only half of the equation. The best goal is to avoid conflict or destabilization in the first place by maintaining an active conflict prevention program. S/CRS has already made two significant contributions to that goal: the development and application of the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF), and the allocation and management of over $300 million in funds since 2006 under the Section 1207 transfer authority, which authorizes the Department of Defense to transfer funds to the Department of State for reconstruction, stabilization, and security purposes.

The ICAF, which was developed by an interagency working group, helps a Country

> the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework helps a Country Team reach a shared understanding of a country's conflict dynamics and build consensus on potential entry points for additional U.S. support

Team reach a shared understanding of a country's conflict dynamics and build consensus on potential entry points for additional U.S. support for conflict prevention and transformation. To date, the ICAF has been used at our Embassies in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Panama, and Washington-based assessments have been done on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan, and most recently Pakistan.

Funds transferred under Section 1207 authority have been used to restore or maintain peace and security with the larger goal of avoiding the need to deploy U.S. troops. Projects or activities funded under Section 1207 are selected through an interagency process. Since fiscal year 2006, this funding has supported successful programs in 19 countries. For example, the Haiti Stabilization Initiative reestablished a Haitian police presence in the Cité Soleil slum after a long absence and engaged the local populace in labor-intensive infrastructure projects. In Colombia, 1207

funds reestablished a secure central government presence in the Macarena region, which has served as a model for bringing together civilian and military efforts to provide services to citizens recently liberated from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

## Commitment Fulfilled

The United States is now committed to addressing the complex, long-term challenges of ungoverned spaces, and failed and failing states. The President has directed, Congress has authorized and funded, and the State Department, in cooperation with its interagency partners, is executing the work required to fulfill that commitment. That effort is fraught with obstacles—some substantive, some bureaucratic—and the 5 years since the creation of S/CRS have been both frustrating and rewarding; but the civilian capability to both lead and cooperate in stability operations and to forge integrated U.S. efforts in such operations is no longer theoretical; it is well on its way to full realization. One can read whole-of-government plans and study the interagency reconstruction and stabilization doctrine. Training classes are being held every month. Coordination across the U.S. Government and with international partners is happening every day. Most importantly, the CRC is funded, being built, and starting to deploy.

Once we build this new capability, we must use it wisely. We should only engage where our interests are on the line, success is achievable, and we have the clear support of the American people. To succeed, our engagement and objectives must be sensitive to the culture of the area. With this understanding, sustainable peacebuilding is within reach. PRISM

DOD (William Greeson)

**U.S. Marine with Afghan boy during renovation planning visit at school in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, August 2009**

# Military Adaptation
## in Complex Operations

**BY DAVID W. BARNO**

The U.S. military today is engaged globally in the most demanding set of combat and stability tasks seen in over a generation—a host of challenges that have been called complex operations. The military faces these challenges side by side with its partners in the diplomatic and development communities—the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International

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Development (USAID)—as well as a myriad of other interagency and international partners.

Such operations demand integrated whole-of-government approaches to address the vexing problems of instability, insurgency, terrorism, and irregular warfare. Unfortunately, these requirements bear scant resemblance to the worldview of military and security experts just 10 years ago. This new set of requirements has challenged the fundamentals of how the U.S. military operates in the world—from an outlook where some in the past argued, "We don't do windows" to an approach where others today may contend, "We own it all." Inherent in this

> not only did the enemy have a name; it also had observable military formations, advanced weaponry, and highly developed doctrines of battle

tension is the overarching question of the purpose of military forces in a world much different from the 20th century.

Do militaries now exist simply to deter conflict and fight nations' wars when deterrence fails? Or in an age of transnational terrorism, nonstate actors, and irregular warfare, do larger purposes obtain? Is our present era truly a generational spell of "persistent conflict"?[1] And if so, how does the military leverage its substantial capacity to contribute effectively to what has become unalterably a whole-of-government fight? Finally, can the military move beyond the core of its conventional warfare culture to grasp the deeper security needs of this era and truly deliver on the massive security investment that it represents in ways relevant to this century?

These challenges are worthy of deep debate, and the consequences of error will be severe. At root, our challenge is to understand the evolving face of conflict and adapt our highly structured military as an institution to complex operations that may be largely at odds with our innate military culture.

## How We Got Where We Are

From soon after World War II until the end of the Cold War—a period of nearly half a century—the U.S. military was animated by the specter of global war with the Soviet Union. For land forces, the primary battlefield was seen as Western Europe, where the threat was clear and present: Warsaw Pact armored formations lined up along the borders that defined the "Iron Curtain" separating the occupied postwar satellites of the Soviet Union from the free states to the west. The danger was obvious: tens of thousands of Warsaw Pact tanks and armored vehicles in readiness, thousands of combat aircraft at the ready on airfields, and further to the east, intercontinental ballistic missile fields, strategic bombers, and the Russian deep sea fleet with nuclear-armed ships and submarines. This threat not only included a visible adversary of known intentions to energize what would become the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its defense planning, but also was utterly convincing to the taxpayers of the West who would have to foot the bill for some of the largest peacetime expenditures on defense in modern memory.

For the U.S. military during this 50-year period, war was not hypothetical; the potential for a real war to be fought against a known adversary on clearly defined terrain was ever present. Moreover, not only did the enemy have a name (the Warsaw Pact); it also had observable military formations, advanced weaponry, and highly developed doctrines of battle—all of which became the subject of intense study among the militaries of the United States and

its allies. Predictability and an unusual degree of certainty—in enemy, location, equipment, tactics—became an expected norm for military planning. Uncertainty was reduced to nuances of when, where, and how to apply the "knowns" of doctrine, tactics, and equipment that the Warsaw Pact employed. Complex operations were no more than how to best employ combined arms—infantry, tanks, and artillery together with airpower—to defeat the Soviets on the European battlefield.[2]

None of this should suggest that the U.S. military in particular saw its NATO mission as the only potential zone of conflict. During the decades of the Cold War, the United States intervened with small forces in a number of countries ranging from Lebanon in 1958 to Panama in 1989. Major conflicts were also fought out on the periphery of the Cold War in Korea (1950–1953) and Vietnam (1960–1973), resulting in tens of thousands of casualties. Yet each intervention was in fact viewed by the U.S. military as an excursion from the most dangerous fight—an all-out war in central Europe.

In the painful aftermath of failure in Vietnam, irregular warfare and counterinsurgency were simply tasks the Army no longer performed—or even thought about. Small-scale contingencies were the purview of airborne troops and a growing force of special operators, but "real Soldiers" rode to battle in armored vehicles—again, a massive reorientation toward the central European battlefield. Complex operations involving host-nation forces (beyond NATO), police, USAID, or diplomatic personnel were beyond the ken of the military establishment—certainly at the tactical level.

The wars of 2009 and beyond exhibit few characteristics in common with the conflicts hardwired into the U.S. military's DNA over the last 50 years. The extended period of Cold War

predictability attached to the Soviet threat dovetailed well with the Army's search for its cultural footing following its failure in Vietnam's irregular war. Refocusing on a major war in Europe offered to heal the painful scars of failed counterinsurgency. A new doctrine called AirLand Battle (ALB) became the conceptual driver of the Army during the 1980s, a doctrine explicitly developed to conventionally defeat a massive Soviet armored invasion of Western Europe by attacking all echelons of the invading force in the close and deep fight simultaneously.[3]

With the advent of ALB doctrine, the Army had found its concept of war. It also pioneered a system of integrating and embedding the ALB doctrine into every aspect of the force, driving everything from procurement of new equipment to training and leadership development. This system remains deeply ingrained in the Army's institutional culture today. Typically, it is known by the particularly unwieldy acronym of DOTLMP–F, which stands for doctrine, organization, training, leadership, materiel, personnel, and facilities. This was in many ways a revolutionary approach and went far in rationalizing all efforts within the Army toward this common target.

The rigorous, across-the-force application of the DOTLMP–F systems approach deeply institutionalized a capacity for large-scale conventional war in Europe into every corner of Army culture. It not only ensured that the best weapons systems for conventional war against the Soviets got top priority, but it also matched them with organizational changes to optimize their performance in battle (a new infantry and armor battalion organization), a rigorous self-critical training methodology (including massive free-play armored force-on-force laser battles), advanced ranges and training simulators for mechanized warfare, and perhaps most importantly, the recruitment and leadership

of extraordinarily high quality personnel who were bright, motivated, and superbly trained to make best use of the emerging new concepts and high-tech equipment being fielded. These innovations that grew out of the massive infusion of resources in the 1980s remain the cornerstone of the Army as an institution today. Their long-term influence on Army culture and institutional preferences cannot be overstated.

## Today's Conflicts

Yet conflict today has evolved dramatically from the conventional "big war" environment of the ALB world of the 1980s. Rather than a nation-state adversary armed with conventional military capabilities that very much mirrored our own, today we are dealing with a world of asymmetrical threats—fighting shadowy adversaries often operating at the murky nexus of terrorism, transnational crime, and illicit global money flows. Effective national security responses have become necessarily

> our military today is in a sense operating without a concept of war and is searching desperately for the new "unified field theory" of conflict

whole-of-government, involving departments from Treasury to Justice to Commerce to the Intelligence Community. These responses are rightfully called complex operations, and only through integrated and coherent responses across all elements of national power can we hope to overcome adversaries operating in this new battlespace.

In the aftermath of the relative certainty of doctrine, training, tactics, adversary, and known terrain of the Cold War, our military

today is in a sense operating without a concept of war and is searching desperately for the new "unified field theory" of conflict that will serve to organize and drive military doctrine and tactics, acquisition and research, training and organization, leader development and education, materiel and weaponry, and personnel and promotion policies in ways that could replace the legacy impact that Cold War structures still exert on all facets of the military. Today, no agreed-upon theory of conflict drives all of these critical vectors toward a commonly understood paradigm; the result is a profusion of disparate outlooks leading toward the risk of professional incoherence. The confidence of civilian leaders and the population they serve that our military will continue to prevail in conflicts regardless of their complex nature may be in jeopardy.

Some characterize the nature of the nontraditional threat today as irregular warfare. This view sees a global security picture upended by 9/11 and inspired by al Qaeda acting through affiliates around the world, extending its reach by effective use of all forms of modern information age technology. Others demur and continue to view nation-state threats as the primary danger—a nuclear-armed Iran, a rogue North Korea, or even a resurgent Russia. Still others expect future wars will reflect a blending of both—so-called hybrid wars where irregular forces will operate with selected high-tech capabilities and seamlessly move in and out of civil populations.[4] Regardless, it is becoming increasingly apparent that adversaries of all origins will choose unconventional means to assert their interests. Few see good ends in confronting American conventional military power frontally, a situation unlikely to change.

Given this shift, one of the significant difficulties facing our military in dealing with this

threat is our lack of a coherent concept of war to animate and focus our military efforts. We should examine closely the degree to which military forces, deployed globally and often the anchor point for regional security around the world, have adapted to this new threat environment, and why this adaptation is so difficult.

Why is this important? Are militaries really an instrument suited to this threat? Should we not be talking first and foremost about law enforcement, border control, tracking financial transactions, and intelligence-gathering? Is it not common practice to accept that even in counterinsurgency campaigns, the efforts are 80 percent nonmilitary and only 20 percent military? And on the scale of a global insurgency, is this not even more the case?

## Military Force in the 21st Century

The above are sound questions, but two factors dictate the centrality and practical reality of military involvement in this challenge, especially as related to the U.S. military.

*Militaries are charged with the core business of national defense.* Military forces and their leaders are societies' instruments tasked with thinking about warfare: how to fight and win when the nation commits to a war, and how to leverage military power to best achieve objectives short of war. Military professionals spend 30- or 40-year careers thinking about warfare—unlike politicians—and should reasonably be expected to have sound ideas about conflict and its changing nature.

Moreover, militaries exist to provide the ultimate measure of security to societies—and arguably the different global terrorist of today presents an existential threat to the continued security and functionality of our societies. Thus, militaries *will* be involved, and societies have major equities in military involvement with this

challenge. (In another era, this threat emanated from large enemy armed formations invading countries and seizing territories, perhaps even their capitals. Today's unconventional threat is no less dangerous, only less obvious.)

*Militaries are immensely capable organizations.* Militaries represent capacity to get practical things done in remote and difficult environments in concrete ways that cause other government entities to pale by comparison. Witness

> warfare is changing, and Western militaries are having serious difficulties keeping up—intellectually, materially, and psychologically

the military responses, both U.S. and international, to the Asian tsunami and the Pakistan earthquake of 2005.

The Defense Department budget for next year is expected to exceed $663 billion, which only partly includes the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This level of resourcing is an order of magnitude above virtually all other government agencies, and remains so even in peacetime. The U.S. military has 1.5 million men and women on Active duty serving under arms together with another 800,000 civilians. *That is capacity.*[5] By comparison, the Department of State has fewer than 8,000 Foreign Service Officers to cover the globe, and a budget that under the most generous definitions is less than 5 percent of the Pentagon's. USAID fares similarly, with a $32 billion budget and about 7,000 members.[6] The "three Ds" of diplomacy, defense, and development are not animals in the American zoo that have remotely equal strength or reach. So in any conflict environment where societies are threatened, the

military is going to have a substantial role simply through resource allocations.

Where do our militaries—and most particularly the U.S. military—come down on the ability to leverage this large capacity to positively influence the security challenge presented by a world of asymmetrical threats and irregular warfare?

## Changing Character of Conflict

Warfare is changing, and Western militaries to date are having serious difficulties keeping up—intellectually, materially, and psychologically. This failure has had the ripple effect of undermining broader security thinking in many nations, for the military's role in providing sage counsel to civil leaders on security has often formed the cornerstone of many countries' national security analysis.

Militaries at their core have struggled to adjust their doctrines, training, weapons systems, and cultures from a wholesale focus on conventional state-on-state military conflicts to a much more nebulous collection of uncertain threats. A survey of ongoing and recent conflicts of this decade reinforces the notion that the well-understood (if immensely bloody) 20th-century model of warfare is fast disappearing. Irregular warfare—"war amongst the people," in General Sir Rupert Smith's turn of phrase—has begun to challenge deep-seated assumptions about war among major military powers around the globe.[7]

In each of these cases above, rather than nation-states battling other nation-states, we have seen nations (or groups of nations in coalitions) battling amorphous nonstate actors. In place of traditional wars where well-defined armies, navies, and air forces battled for cities or key terrain, we now see conventional militaries fighting shadowy insurgents blended in with the population. Instead of tanks, artillery, and airplanes fighting their opposite numbers, the primary means of battle have become ambushes, roadside explosives, kidnappings, assassinations, and suicide attacks, all carried out intentionally "on camera" for maximum informational effect. Battlefields no longer are mountaintops or key road junctions or river lines; they are the minds of the adversary's political leadership, his populations, and his armed forces.

Where the conventional forces in these conflicts have exercised "command and control" through the use of expensive purpose-built, high-tech communications systems, secure radios, and satellite navigation, the insurgent enemies have leveraged cell phones, the Internet, laptops, handheld video cameras, and DVDs with unprecedented speed to share information, motivate followers, and influence the global audience—all while frightening those who are uncommitted. Insurgent groups have formed de facto temporary "minigovernments" with the provision of social services in affected areas, such as financial relief from battle damage, charity support for families, medical support, and refugee relief. Sometimes, they even supplant both local governments and international organizations. Hizballah's social outreach efforts in southern Lebanon during and immediately following combat actions are now the archetype.

Where populations in previous wars were an encumbrance and distracter to battlefield action, as I noted to my troops in Afghanistan, civilians today *are* the battlefield. Unlike the ideologies of the 20th century—fascism and communism—the enemy in many of these recent and ongoing conflicts has leveraged cultural ties to Islam, and works relentlessly to intermingle politics, religion, ideology, and military tactics into a persuasive whole.

## Modern Hierarchy of Conflict

Our strategic approach has likewise been slow to adapt to this new environment. Militaries are drilled in setting a hierarchy of tasks to help impose order upon the chaos of war. One model of this hierarchy is that of a pyramid depicting from the bottom the tactical, operational, strategic, and political levels of war in ascending order (see figure 1).

Unfortunately, this "Western" triangle—wide at the base where tactics lie, small at the top where politics and strategy are found—in some ways also graphically represents the weighting militaries assign to their role and priority in the holistic picture that constitutes war today. Tactics predominate in attention, focus, and resources—while strategy and politics get the least attention and are often viewed as the purview of others. In the words of Sun Tzu, "Strategy without tactics is the longest road to victory. Tactics without strategy is simply the noise before defeat." Many nation-states fighting irregular adversaries have experienced a "strategy deficit" in confronting an asymmetric enemy. (Who could dispute that the Taliban's strategy to "run out the clock" is anything but sound?)

**powerful internal forces continue to rally support toward preserving strong capabilities to conduct state-on-state conventional military warfare**

Our adversaries have a different take on this construct; they too have a triangle representing their effort, but it is inverted with the apex at the bottom and broad base at the top (see figure 2). Tactics at the bottom represent the smallest portion of their effort and their lowest priority. Politics and strategy are the dominant portions of their inverted triangle

**Figure 1. U.S. Military Construct**



*Source*: David W. Barno, "Challenges in Fighting a Global Insurgency," *Parameters* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2006), 18.

and where they place their priority effort. Tactical events—suicide attacks, ambushes, assassinations, blame for civilian casualties—are carefully chosen to create the most significant political and strategic effect and are highly publicized to multiply their impact. Powerful examples in Iraq include the bombing of the Samara mosque in March 2006. This attack was carefully planned to deliver a massive political blow and created effects stunningly out of proportion to their expense and complexity. In part as a result, Iraqi and coalition forces found themselves at risk of "winning all the battles, but losing the war." In Afghanistan, the immense publicity of civilian casualties (a fraction of those seen in Iraq) has become such a cause célèbre that it threatens to remove NATO airpower from the battlefield.

Western militaries are struggling to understand and adapt to the characteristics of the wars they are engaged in today. At the same time, powerful internal forces continue to rally

**Figure 2. Insurgent Construct**
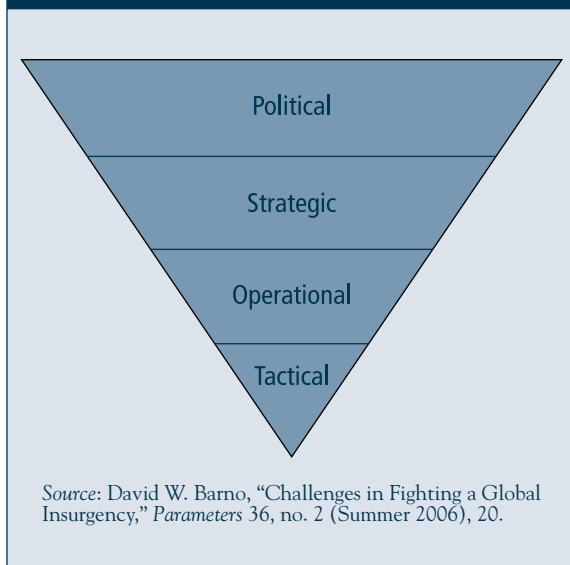
Political

Strategic

Operational

Tactical

*Source*: David W. Barno, "Challenges in Fighting a Global Insurgency," *Parameters* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2006), 20.

support toward preserving strong capabilities to conduct state-on-state conventional military warfare. Nostalgia for a simpler though no less deadly time remains. But as General Sir Rupert Smith states in *The Utility of Force*, "industrial war no longer exists." His phrase "war amongst the people" reflects not that wars between nation-states are over, but simply that their form will be far more complex than the military-versus-military battles that characterized such conflicts in the 20th century.[8]

Other thoughtful theorists such as retired Marine colonel T.X. Hammes characterize the emerging form of war as *fourth-generation warfare*,[9] defined as using "all available networks—political, economic, social, military—to convince the enemy's political decision-makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is an evolved form of insurgency." Regardless of labeling, the character of war has changed. Complex operations have become the norm.

## Possible Prescriptions

So what to do? From a military standpoint, serious intellectual energy must be devoted to developing a concept of war to describe the nature of the conflict today, for if we do not know where we are going, any road will take us there. Government policies must inform this concept, but a concept of war need not be somehow held hostage to today's policies.

First, from a concept of war, thoughtful doctrine can be developed that encompasses the *levels* of war—from tactical through grand strategic. (Much of the basics of a tactical-level doctrine now exists in the new U.S. Army and Marine Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3–24.[10]) From this comprehensive doctrine can emerge "requirements" that drive acquisition of new capabilities, as well as new education and training, personnel policies, and ultimately new organizations better suited to effectiveness in this environment, and not *only* combat organizations. DOTLMP–F must be thoroughly updated for today's irregular wars as relentlessly as it was once hewn to mechanized warfare. To illustrate the need for change, consider the billions of dollars the United States has programmed today in defense acquisitions reaching years into the future—expensive major programs of weapons systems and capabilities that, when acquired, may in truth have only peripheral impact on the nonstate conflicts of today.

Second, a cultural change is needed. The reason I continue to use the term *concept of war* is that military Services *culturally* view themselves as "warriors"—and subconsciously, but strongly, discount those whose remit lies outside this focus as somehow peripheral. Warfare today implies complex operations and requires a concerted integrated defense, diplomatic, and development effort. This new reality demands from our military leaders much more than a simple warrior ethos

and those related skills adequate for a large-scale clash of conventional militaries. Success in modern conflict requires adaptive thinkers who share a strategic view of warfare, a holistic approach, and a strong valuation of all the contributing players. This holistic outlook recognizing the key importance of elements beyond conventional force of arms is growing, but the military culture has yet to fully embrace it, operationalize it, and afford it institutional and cultural permanence.

Third, unity of effort and fusion of all elements of power is a sine qua non of success in warfare today. Comments often made by senior U.S. commanders that "we cannot be defeated militarily" and "this war cannot be won by military means" should send shudders down the spines of all serious students of war. War is nothing if not a political act; it always serves political ends. The phrase "War is the extension of politics with the admixture of other means" remains as true today as when written 200 years ago by Carl von Clausewitz, a brilliant soldier and strategist who remains among the foremost writers and thinkers on the nature of war. Clausewitz also noted that "war is the act of compelling the enemy to bend to your will."[11] *Defeat* in war does not discriminate between whether the defeat is military, political, or economic; defeat remains defeat. Societies fight wars to prevail and must marshal all available resources to win against violent and adaptive adversaries. Nothing less will suffice. The military cannot insulate itself from the other elements of application of power required to prevail in modern war. It must act even more strongly as a catalyst and enabler of other entities of government to fuse their efforts into a unified approach for success in modern conflicts.

Finally, we must accept the prolonged nature of current conflicts and the utter tenacity of the enemy. During the Cold War, Western societies could look through the barbed wire into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and see Warsaw Pact tank divisions, aircraft armed with nuclear weapons sitting on dozens of runways, fields with hundreds of nuclear-tipped missiles, and a menacing Soviet blue water fleet with a nuclear first-strike capability. This threat quite simply scared the dickens out of Europe and North America and animated 40 years of deep and powerful defense thinking and spending. Moreover, it was of sufficient gravity and immediacy to sustain 40 years of overwhelming popular support for the effort.

## An Uncertain Future

Today, the threat is far more obscure, far less tangible, and in some ways, for those very reasons, more insidious and dangerous. Because we face an indistinct enemy with no heavily equipped armies, air forces, navies, space satellites, or—to date at least—apparent nuclear weapons, perceptions of threat emanating from terrorism (or a global insurgency) in the West, indeed around the globe, are uncertain at best. Moreover, our militaries in some ways have been lulled into a false sense of security and supremacy by the lack of a mirror image enemy against whom to aim our dominant conventional military power.

> we must accept the prolonged nature of current conflicts and the utter tenacity of the enemy

Prior to the end of 2003, it was commonplace to hear the terms *shock and awe* and *rapid decisive operations* used to describe how the U.S. military would fight its wars—short, sharp, and overwhelmingly effective actions that would quickly shatter the enemy's will to

resist. We hear little of this overconfident jargon today as the realities of a different type of war have set in. The shape of a new and as yet poorly defined conflict of indeterminate length has begun to emerge. For militaries, the fundamental dilemma of this era is whether to seize upon this emerging new reality of conflict—fourth-generation warfare, global insurgency, and war amongst the peoples—as the evolving wave of the future, or reject it. Will this development be seen only as a passing anomaly, marginalized to preserve full capabilities for the inevitable return to conventional conflicts? Or will an understanding fully sink in that irregular warfare is our adversary's answer to how the weak will fight the strong?

The challenge for all security professionals today—diplomats, soldiers, development practitioners—is to explore, analyze, reflect, and think creatively about the character of this new conflict and the enemy we collectively face. We confront a different environment with a more complex threat than that of most of the conflicts of our recent past—and indeed than anything our educational systems have prepared us for. But this is also an opportunity to be seized, rather than a reason to shirk from the challenge. Anything less than our full intellectual and institutional commitment to thinking our way through the vexing challenge of complex operations will ultimately cause our nations to fail, and our societies and our peoples to suffer defeat in this shadowy new confrontation. We have a profound responsibility to get this right. **PRISM**

## Notes

[1] The term *persistent conflict* was first attributed to Chief of Staff of the Army General George Casey in Jim Garamone, "Casey Says Army Must Be Prepared for 'Persistent Conflict,'" American Forces Information Service, May 11, 2007. See also Gregory Fontenot and Kevin Benson, "Persistent Conflict or Containment: Alternate Visions of Contemporary Conflict," *Army*, September 2009.

[2] For the best discussion of U.S. doctrine, see John L. Romjue, "Evolution of the Airland Battle Concept," *Air University Review*, May-June 1984; and Paul Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100–5*, Operations (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1988), 6–7, 99–100.

[3] Romjue.

[4] Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On Warfare in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004); and Frank G. Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007).

[5] Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), "Defense Budget Recommendation Statement," Washington, DC, April 6, 2009.

[6] Department of State, "International Affairs—FY2010 Budget," Washington, DC, May 8, 2009.

[7] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Knopf, 2005).

[8] Ibid.

[9] Hammes.

[10] U.S. Army Field Manual 3–24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 2007); and U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33–5, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Navy, 2007).

[11] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 75.

# Complex Operations

## and *Interagency* Operational Art

BY CHRISTOPHER M. SCHNAUBELT

The term *comprehensive approach* has been used by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union not only with great frequency but also with a high degree of ambiguity.[1] The U.S. Government Interagency Counterinsurgency (COIN) Guide provides a graphical depiction of a "Comprehensive Approach to Counterinsurgency," showing a mixture of economic development, political strategy, information, security, and control, but does not define the term within the text.[2]

Army Field Manual (FM) 3–07, *Stability Operations*, defines *comprehensive approach* as one that "integrates the cooperative efforts of the departments and agencies of the United States Government, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), multinational partners, and private sector entities to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal."[3] Additionally, it states that "through a comprehensive approach to stability operations, military forces establish the conditions that enable the efforts of the other instruments of national and international power. By providing the requisite security and control to stabilize an operational area, those efforts build a foundation for transitioning to civilian control, and eventually to a host nation."[4]

Although a "comprehensive" or "whole-of-government" approach is widely accepted as a requirement for successful humanitarian assistance, COIN, and stability operations, it is nonetheless extremely rare to find the requisite levels of political, military, economic, and civil resources being successfully integrated into the prescribed collaborative effort. This observation begs the question: If there is consensus that a comprehensive approach is required for complex operations, why has the concept proven so difficult to implement?

Much of the attention regarding shortfalls in American interagency coordination has focused on bureaucratic wrangling at the National Security Council level.[5] This is certainly part of the problem. A report by the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services found that current national-level direction "provides unclear and inconsistent guidance on agencies' roles and responsibilities. In addition, the lack of an agreed-upon definition for stabilization and reconstruction operations poses an obstacle to interagency collaboration." Furthermore, the report asserts that

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"while senior leaders should get along in the interest of the mission, history is replete with examples where they have not. Rather than depending exclusively on personalities for success, the right interagency structures need to be in place and working."[6]

Other analyses have pointed to the differences in the amount and deployability of resources available to implement the military and nonmilitary dimensions of such efforts. For example, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen recently stated that "I've got soldiers in the [National] Guard who are farmers in Texas and Missouri and Iowa, and they are going to Afghanistan to work on agriculture" because employees from the U.S. Department of Agriculture do not expect to be sent to Afghanistan.[7]

Calls for improving the processes of the National Security Council, shoring up the nonmilitary aspects of U.S. national power, and increasing civilian expeditionary capability should not be discounted. However, this article argues that differences in the characteristics of the various elements of national power (often summarized as diplomatic, information, military, and economic [DIME]) and in the activities necessary to bring them collectively to bear pose unique planning and coordination challenges. Even if resource, policy, and bureaucratic impediments can be resolved, it remains a puzzle how to effectively integrate the activities performed by the military, civilian agencies, private sector, and international and nongovernmental organizations into a common synergistic effort.

Recognizing this aspect of the interagency challenge is particularly important because a frequent policy prescription is to achieve "unity of command" instead of mere "unity of effort" by placing a single person in command of all military and civilian aspects of a complex operation.

Yet emerging concepts such as the Combatant Commanders Integrated Collaboration Team are unlikely to garner adequate academic, private sector, and interagency cooperation if they are perceived as subordinate to a particular military command rather than being a council of equals. The Joint Interagency Coordination Groups have generally been plagued by a lack of interagency buy-in that at best results in an information fusion center rather than a forum for effective collaborative planning.

Regardless of who or how many are "in charge," we simply do not know how to achieve both vertical and horizontal integration of planning and execution across all the elements of DIME. In short, we need *interagency operational art*.

## Nature of Warfighting versus Civilian Challenges

Joint Publication (JP) 3–0, *Joint Operations*, states that *operational art* links the tactical employment of forces to strategic objectives. Furthermore, it entails "the application of creative imagination by commanders and staffs—supported by their skill, knowledge, and experience—to design strategies, campaigns, and major operations and organize and employ military forces."[8]

Although the comparison is not exact, it could be argued that the civilian equivalent of operational art is *policy implementation*, variously defined as "the carrying out of a basic policy decision" or "what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action." This is a different concept than "management." It is an element of policy *design* that includes consideration of the problems of interpretation and adjusting policy decisions to make it more likely that eventual

policy execution will produce the desired outcomes. Although the term *design* is now emerging in U.S. military doctrine, as discussed below, public policy analysts have been using it since at least the 1980s.[9]

Perhaps because of smaller size and often much greater autonomy at the delivery end of policy, civilian agencies (and private businesses) rarely have organizational structures and planning functions equivalent to the military concept of an operational-level headquarters. Nor is it clear that they would benefit from adding such a layer in most circumstances. The purpose of civilian midlevel management is usually to reduce the span of control rather than develop plans to link strategy to "tactical" activity by multiple offices or business units.[10]

At least in the case of ground forces, which are generally expected to have the lead during complex operations, modern U.S. military planning still betrays its physical heritage of moving large armies on land during the era of Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini, when an army's line of march was a critical consideration. Beginning at least with the concept of AirLand Battle adopted by the U.S. Army in the late 1970s and early 1980s, doctrine began to recognize that the contemporary battlefield was "nonlinear" and included a much deeper physical dimension and a time dimension.[11] However, the "line of operation" continues to be a basic organizing principle.

The U.S. Army has tried to relax this conceptual straitjacket and now speaks of "lines of effort" (previously called "logical lines of operation") in addition to "physical lines of operation."[12] But, of course, by definition "lines" are "linear." Trying to fit nonwarfighting activities into such a framework has not thus far proved productive. One reason might be that the objectives and tasks for the political, diplomatic, and economic lines of effort in a campaign plan

have significant qualitative differences from those of the security line. Calling these activities a "line of effort" instead of a "logical line of operation" does not resolve this disjuncture. The mathematical concept of a set is probably a better organizing principle for most of the nonmilitary activities in complex operations, many of which do not require performance in a specific sequence.

In a critique of U.S. Army FM 3–24/U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, Major General Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., asserts that the manual relies too heavily on "the same solution that Soldiers typically fall back on when confounded by a difficult operational situation (COIN or otherwise): employ ever larger numbers of Soldiers and have them engage in 'close' contact with the 'target,' however defined." With a logic that should apply to stability operations as well as COIN, General Dunlap argues, "Of course,

> **military and nonmilitary activities tend to differ in their calculability**

Airmen bring distinct weaponry to the fight but equally—or more—important is the Airmen's unique way of thinking."[13] There is no doubt that bringing a less Earthbound perspective to planning for the military aspects of a comprehensive approach would be useful. Yet if Dunlap is correct about the differences between the way Soldiers and Airmen think about strategy and tactics, the divergence between typical military and civilian approaches—and the nature of their activities—is even greater.

For example, military and nonmilitary activities tend to differ in their calculability. While many components of economic development—such as miles of road built and

kilowatt hours of electricity generated—can be straightforwardly counted or measured, many critical nonsecurity outputs, such as political accommodation, progress toward reconciliation, legitimacy of governing institutions, and cooperation from neighboring

> even senior Foreign Service Officers typically spend more time as "operators" than managers or developers of strategy and plans

states, are more likely to be intangible. This is not to say that empirical indicators cannot be identified, but these are highly subjective constructs that are more difficult to measure than, for example, the size of the area under military control or friendly, enemy, and noncombatant casualty rates.

Perhaps the biggest difference may be the inputs. Activities to implement a security line of operation frequently involve well-defined tasks such as providing military and police training to host-nation security forces, clearing neighborhoods, and operating checkpoints. Military inputs tend to be tangible: T-walls can be touched; the number of patrols conducted or joint security stations in operation can be counted. The inputs involved in many, if not most, political tasks are to attend meetings and perform other activities in attempts to persuade political leaders to behave in a certain way.

Another aspect to the difference between security and the other requirements for stability is that the organization and processes for military operations have been well documented. This is not to imply that warfighting is simpler or easier than performing nonmilitary tasks (it is certainly deadlier), but it is an empirical fact

regarding what the military has done to train and prepare for combat operations.[14]

For "traditional" high-intensity battles, we have a pretty good understanding of the physics and physiology of combat.[15] The Army, for example, has planning factors that suggest that a 3-to-1 ratio of attackers to defenders is necessary for an assault to have a reasonable probability of success. After defeating a defending company at 3 to 1, a battalion will be out of the fight for 24 hours. The odds of success are increased and the recovery time reduced if the attackers have a higher ratio against the defenders.[16]

Conversely, our understanding of how to produce political change (at least in the absence of military or economic threats, if not an outright military overthrow) and how to create economic growth is vague. The timelines for realizing concrete results from political and economic policies tend to be wildly inaccurate and reflect wishful thinking rather than historical analysis.

Military planners can use shorthand on PowerPoint slides for a task such as "Seize Objective Widget," and there is a largely common understanding of the requirements. Behind that simple description, there will be detailed operations orders down through several levels of command and troop leading procedures and standard operating procedures at the lowest echelons. Military leaders at all levels involved will have completed significant formal training to inculcate the processes to develop plans and monitor their execution.

The U.S. Army has a standard, modular hierarchical organization from division headquarters down to squads. There are Joint and Mission Essential Task Lists, which break down further into Battle Tasks that describe the key subtasks for accomplishing a mission and their

U.S. Department of Agriculture and Konar Provincial Reconstruction Team members gather soil for tests

U.S. Army (Russell Gilchrest)

interrelationship between the next higher/lower echelons. There are task lists and crosswalks for leader tasks, collective tasks, and Soldier tasks; and there are training and evaluation outlines for use in training units and troops to accomplish these actions and in assessing their ability to do so. (Of course, the other Services have modular organizations and similar training and evaluation regimes.)
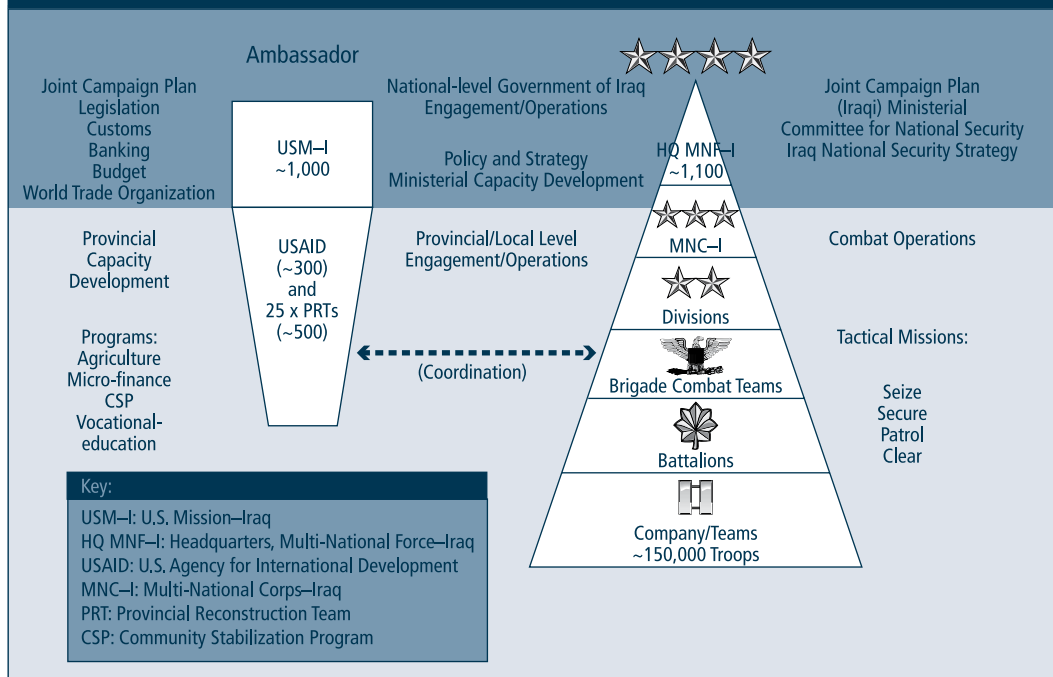
A typical military operation will delineate unambiguous geographic boundaries (area of responsibility) that assign specific units to be responsible for every inch of ground and cubic foot of airspace. There is an obvious chain of responsibilities and expected actions between each individual Soldier or Marine on the ground and the commanding general.

Nothing comparable exists for economic development and governance tasks, which tend to be aligned by function rather than local geography or a rigid hierarchy of authority. This does not imply that civilian processes are slipshod or lackadaisical. Rather, they are of a different nature.

Figure 1 illustrates the differences between coalition civilian and military structures and their organization to manage or command and control their relative functions in Iraq as of 2008. At the top, the shaded area depicts the U.S. Embassy and Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF–I) Headquarters and their roles in relation to the national government of Iraq. Both organizations collaborated in writing, updating, and monitoring the execution of a joint campaign plan for Iraq and engaged the prime minister and other ministerial-level Iraqi officials.

It might be argued that at this level can be found the greatest similarities between military and civilian activities. Neither the U.S. Ambassador nor the MNF–I commanding general could *force* the sovereign government of Iraq to do anything. The primary inputs were to advise, monitor, and

**Figure 1. U.S. Mission–Iraq/Multi-National Force–Iraq Vertical Integration Structures and Key Tasks**

Ambassador

Joint Campaign Plan
Legislation
Customs
Banking
Budget
World Trade Organization

USM–I
~1,000

National-level Government of Iraq
Engagement/Operations

Policy and Strategy
Ministerial Capacity Development

HQ MNF–I
~1,100

Joint Campaign Plan
(Iraqi) Ministerial
Committee for National Security
Iraq National Security Strategy

Provincial
Capacity
Development

USAID
(~300)
and
25 x PRTs
(~500)

Provincial/Local Level
Engagement/Operations

(Coordination)

MNC–I

Divisions

Brigade Combat Teams

Battalions

Company/Teams
~150,000 Troops

Combat Operations

Tactical Missions:

Seize
Secure
Patrol
Clear

Programs:
Agriculture
Micro-finance
CSP
Vocational-
education

Key:
USM–I: U.S. Mission–Iraq
HQ MNF–I: Headquarters, Multi-National Force–Iraq
USAID: U.S. Agency for International Development
MNC–I: Multi-National Corps–Iraq
PRT: Provincial Reconstruction Team
CSP: Community Stabilization Program

persuade Iraqi officials to make decisions conducive to promoting security and stability, to include implementing policies that would promote democracy, good governance, rule of law, economic growth, and good relations with neighbors and other states.

However, the MNF–I military headquarters also executed considerable efforts from the top down to conduct command and control of all coalition military activities. In comparison, the Embassy is not organized with the equivalent of subordinate "maneuver units."[17] The Embassy's political, political-military, and economic sections operate with a high degree of autonomy in day-to-day activities. Even senior Foreign Service Officers typically spend more time as "operators" than managers or developers of strategy and plans. A higher "rank" or grade in the Foreign Service correlates more closely with the expected level of host-nation interlocutors than with the number of subordinates directed.

Below the horizontal line in figure 1, the disparities become even sharper. The military activities are aligned with a straightforward, hierarchical pyramid with many more personnel and other resources at the bottom than at the top. Although midlevel and junior leaders can and often do perform activities typically described as "civilian" tasks, such as promoting good governance and economic development at the local level, their primary responsibilities are security related—the "clear" and "hold" tasks in a counterinsurgency framework.[18] The vertical integration via a chain of command is unambiguous. While horizontal coordination occurs, laterally between units at the same echelon and in some cases between units and local Iraqi officials, most attention is

downward-directed management (that is, command and control).

Civilian political and economic tasks are conceived and executed differently than military security tasks. Especially in traditional Embassy activities, there is much less management directed downward. The civilian side is nearly an inverted pyramid with more staffing and resources at the top than at the bottom.

This configuration is not top-heavy in the sense of a high ratio of "management" to "workers," but is a reflection of the fact that the bulk of the political and diplomatic work is being conducted parallel to the Iraqi national level of government. Most Foreign Service Officers spend the majority of their time engaging their host-nation equivalents, not directing actions along a chain of subordinates. Also, there is no matching effort at the neighborhood, district, and municipal level—which would require several thousand more civilian personnel.

Most economic development programs are decentralized and diffuse. Programs are not "tied in" with other programs on their left and right boundaries as is the case with military units. There is no battlefield maneuver conducted between or among the programs and thus no requirement for civilian management to be the equivalent of military command and control.

Another difference (asymmetry?) is that war is almost always a zero-sum game. For something to be a benefit to one side, it generally must hurt the other. Time is a great example of this. Historically, it usually benefits the defender except during a siege.[19]

Successful democratic governance and economic development, however, are usually not zero-sum. For a voluntary economic transaction to occur, both sides must perceive that they will benefit. Otherwise, the voluntary exchange would not take place. (This is not to say that both sides must benefit equally or that the transaction is necessarily noncompetitive.)

Often, time will benefit both sides in a business or diplomatic negotiation by allowing them to explore and agree upon a mutually satisfactory resolution. However, in cases such as the coalition efforts in Iraq, timeline-driven legislative and political goals can be counterproductive by reducing the opportunities to resolve real differences. In such a fragile environment, it may be better not to pass a controversial law than to pass it with a legally required parliamentary majority that lacks consensus and thus results in driving the parties further apart. Intervening policymakers must be careful that by applying additional pressure on host-nation political parties to reach a deal, they do not inadvertently push them toward violence instead of agreement.

## Clocks and Clutch Plates

There are at least two components to the problem of improving host-nation governance. One is *technical capacity*, which is somewhat amenable to being developed more quickly through "surging" to provide expertise. This has to do with teaching/helping host-nation officials to perform the bureaucratic functions of government (and, to a lesser extent, business). Perhaps any artillery captain can become emperor of France, but running a national government is a difficult task for most people who do not possess large organization management experience. In failed or failing states, there are few such individuals, much less those who also possess legitimacy with the population. This challenge is compounded by the fact that at least initially, these leaders will typically be without a capable, professional bureaucracy that can effectively implement even the wisest policy decisions.

Within a wide range, there is a direct correlation between surging civilian resources to

provide advice and the pace of improvement in technical capabilities. Even so, technical training can be ineffective unless the society has accepted and inculcated the values on which the principles are based. For example, anticorruption technical assistance and investigator training does little good if corruption is widely accepted in society and government officials are routinely able to act with impunity. A great deal of technical assistance also requires civil society programs that reinforce the message among the general populace.

A related and more difficult problem is *willingness* to make the compromises necessary to achieve political consensus. To some extent, willingness can be generated with targeted and appropriate training for government officials and awareness programs in civil society if such efforts result in socialization of the necessary underlying values. These are the types of programs needed to provide a foundation for building the necessary governmental or economic capacity in areas such as rule of law, electricity, oil, services, medical care, and so forth. But these cultural/societal shifts are likely to take decades or generations to fully achieve.[20]

Lack of willingness is a problem that does not lend itself to a more rapid resolution as a result of a "surge" of resources, whether military or civilian. Some of the elements of reconciliation, if they are to truly occur instead of being merely a "check in the box" on the political timeline of the intervening powers, are likely to require decades if not generations.

Despite doctrinal recognition that military operations entail art as well as science, with increasingly more art and less science applicable at the higher levels of war, the modern U.S. Army still tends to take a mechanistic approach to planning its operations—the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). Although the process may be modified, especially when

time is running short on the battlefield, its procedures are far more routinized and driven from the top down than anything found in the civilian world. The MDMP is primarily deductive and designed for a specific set of problems (military missions) under a specific set of circumstances (primarily combat).

This approach is rarely optimal for civilian decisionmaking. The most important factor may be that the MDMP begins with a "problem" that has largely been defined by the higher headquarters in the form of orders or plans that assign a specific mission to the organization conducting the MDMP. In most cases, civilian organizations must start from scratch in framing the problem to be solved rather than deduce it from higher guidance that, when it exists at all, is likely to be ambiguous and aspirational rather than precise and directive.[21]

These differences in planning, combined with different cultures and types of activities involved in the execution of plans, increase the difficulty of integrating military and civilian activities in a conflict environment. This observation is not to claim that either a civilian or a military approach to decisionmaking is the better. Rather, they serve different purposes that historically have operated in separate, unrelated spheres in which the coordination of military and civilian activities was not a consideration.

Most military tasks can be synchronized in time and space (this is the crux of "maneuver") and, given a known correlation of forces, have somewhat predicable outcomes that can be modeled using computer simulations. Yet this is often not true for key aspects of political and economic development. While interdependent, the linkages between activities in these realms are not rigid.

Building a road or installing a sewer line, at least in a peaceful area, is largely predictable and can be scheduled. However, creating jobs,

reconciling grievances, or negotiating political compromises in an area still torn by conflict is much more problematic. Even "simple" construction tasks such as building a hospital or repairing power lines become unpredictable when workers are threatened by violence or infrastructure is frequently attacked. Building schools does little good if teachers or students are routinely killed or afraid to come to class. In such cases, the military can enable civilian efforts by providing sufficiently enduring security, but this tends to be sequential rather than integrated.

Tactical-level ground force leaders, especially at echelons below division, can create relatively accurate timetables for the "clear" portion of the "clear-hold-build" approach to counterinsurgency. Adjusted through experience and the level of armed resistance met, a unit can develop a fairly reliable estimate of how long it will take to clear a geographic region of a given size with a given force of known capability. When projected timelines go awry at the company, battalion, regiment, or brigade level, they are likely to be off by a matter of hours or days rather than the months or even years that are the common range of error for political or economic estimates.

Nonetheless, the "hold" task becomes problematic. This is not because maintaining security or defending a cleared area is uniquely difficult, but because of the question of how long it must be held. This presents a particular challenge in situations such as Iraq—at least prior to the troop surge in 2007—and contemporary Afghanistan where there are insufficient capable and reliable forces to clear *and* hold large parts of the battlespace simultaneously. The need to clear other areas puts pressure on the military force to move on from holding an area once it has been cleared. Yet when an area is insufficiently "built" to keep insurgents out,

there is a high probability that it will revert to enemy control and have to be cleared again.

A lesson that many military leaders have drawn from the problem of holding gains long enough is that clear-hold-build activities must occur simultaneously rather than sequentially.[22] However, it might be instead argued that the real lesson is that security ("clear" + "hold") requires a more enduring effort and that the political and economic development aspects of "build" cannot quickly replace the need for security.
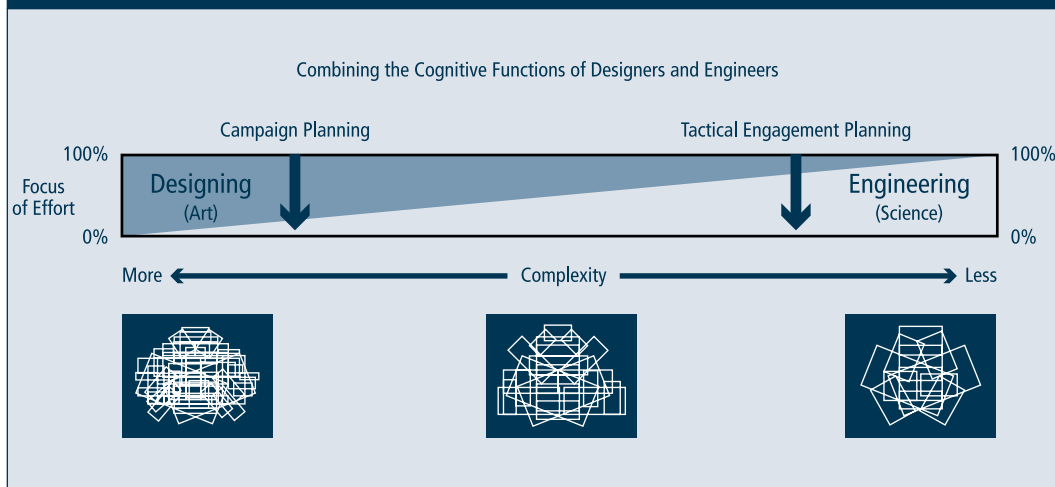
Yet another layer of complexity is added when the important role of NGOs in a comprehensive approach is considered. Many NGOs operate highly independent programs with almost no hierarchical structure for managing their in-country activities. Some NGOs refuse to collaborate with military units as a matter of principle. In an *International Herald Tribune* op-ed, for example, Anna Husarska of the International Rescue Committee wrote that

> another layer of complexity is added when the important role of nongovernmental organizations in a comprehensive approach is considered

"mixing aid and security is a mistake the international stakeholders in Afghanistan are making . . . . security and development are two distinct objectives that require different approaches."[23]

Ironically, on the same day, the *Times of London* carried a front-page article on development aid to Somalia being inadvertently used to fund militias and warlords. It was followed by an article on the British Department for International Development having "taken over diplomacy in Africa" while "[naively] dealing with Africa's notoriously venal leaders, dragging Britain into

**Figure 2. Military Planning**

Combining the Cognitive Functions of Designers and Engineers

Campaign Planning     Tactical Engagement Planning

100%                                                    100%

Focus
of Effort    Designing                    Engineering
             (Art)                        (Science)

0%                                                        0%

More ◄─────────── Complexity ───────────► Less

unhealthy close relations with countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, which have poor governance records." It concludes by noting that "it is precisely the money lavished on some of the most incompetent governments in the world which prevents them from taking measures for higher economic growth."[24]

The preceding does not suggest that political and economic development is not of equal or greater importance to military (and police) security in establishing a stable democracy. However, these different aspects of counterinsurgency and stability operations move according to a logic of their own and at a pace that seems only indirectly related to policy changes and financial initiatives. A mechanistic approach to synchronizing them is probably not possible. At best, they are more akin to the clutch and pressure plate in the transmission of a car than the precisely fit gears in a watch. Making allowance for friction is as important as making use of it.

## Getting the Pieces to Work Together

The collaborative "design" approach now being explored by the U.S. military seems to offer the most promising methodology to bridge the gap between traditional "military" and "civilian" activities in counterinsurgency and stability operations. It may help to fill some of the void and provide an intellectual framework that could be useful to both military and civilian planners in beginning to meet the challenge of aligning their disparate activities.

The February 13, 2008, version of JP 3–0 briefly addresses design elements in relation to operational art. However, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525–5–500, *Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design*, develops the concept in much greater detail and specifically recognizes the limitations of the military's "traditional planning processes" in its assumption "that plans and orders from higher headquarters have framed the problem for their subordinates" and, as shown in figure 2, depicts a range of "engineering" to "designing"

according to the complexity of the problem to be addressed.[25]

The campaign design approach recognizes a class of complex, ill-structured—or "wicked"—problems that lack not only a single solution set, but also a commonly defined frame for the problem. Furthermore, the problem evolves because the inputs intended to provide a solution cause shifts within the system. Traditional sequential step problemsolving approaches do not work for wicked problems. Instead, an iterative effort that initially focuses on framing the problem is necessary.

Key elements to implementing a campaign design approach include:

❖ Establishing the strategic context. What is the history of the problem, and why does it now require military power to address it?

❖ Synthesizing strategic guidance. What ends do national-level leaders desire, what have they directed military commanders to accomplish, and why did they establish those particular goals?

❖ Describing the systemic nature of the problem to be solved and creating a narrative to explain what problems must be addressed to achieve strategic goals. What factors, constituents, and relationships are relevant?

❖ Establishing assumptions about the problem. In social science terms, this is similar to establishing a working hypothesis: What gaps need to be filled between what we think we know and what we think we need to know in order to design an approach to the problem?

The campaign design process also recognizes the importance of continually revisiting and revising the framing of the problem, especially the assumptions, as the design is implemented. More information about the problem will become known as the process is carried out. Additionally, system inputs resulting from the design are likely to cause the problem to evolve and require an adjustment to the previous frame. This concept is a quantum leap from planning a linear campaign that moves sequentially across a geographic series of battlefields.

Perhaps the most significant change from traditional MDMP-style planning is the axiom that "designing is creative and best accomplished through discourse. *Discourse* is the candid exchange of ideas without fear of retribution that results in a synthesis . . . and a shared understanding of the operational problem."[26] This suggests more of a two-way, dialectic approach between a commander and his staff compared to the MDMP, which is largely driven from the top down.

Such practice is similar to how many corporations develop business strategy. According to University of Pittsburgh Professor of Strategic Management John C. Camillus:

*Companies can manage strategy's wickedness not by being more systematic but by using social-planning processes. They should organize brainstorming sessions to identify the various aspects of a wicked problem; hold retreats to encourage executives and stakeholders to share their perspectives; run focus groups to better understand stakeholders' viewpoints; involve stakeholders in developing future scenarios; and organize design charrettes to develop and gain acceptance for possible strategies. The aim should be to create a shared understanding of the problem and foster a joint commitment to possible ways of resolving it.*[27]

While the campaign design approach is a step in the right direction, many challenges to implementation remain. Although it will probably be incorporated in the next version of FM 5–0 on the operations process, the Army has yet to fully institutionalize the concept of "design" versus planning. Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege has recently written that "the kind of thinking we have called 'operational art' is often now required at the battalion level,"[28] but for most U.S. Army officers—at least at the company and field-grade ranks—the TRADOC pamphlet is an esoteric, academic document, and their thinking is still largely driven by the traditional top-down, linear MDMP approach.

Additionally, even though the campaign design concept highlights the importance of discourse, it is still commander-centric. Successfully applying it will require modification to make it work among multiple agencies and organizations. Civilian leaders will typically expect to be treated as equals rather than subordinates of the military commander. In this author's experience, most senior military commanders work cooperatively and collegially with their civilian counterparts. The difficulties usually appear at the next layer down within their staffs, which may sometimes be inclined to cut off the civilian side of discourse by saying that "this is what the commander wants." Commanders must not only be cognizant of their own interactions with their partners from other organizations, but they also need to ensure their staffs work in a truly collaborative fashion with their civilian counterparts.

Another of the institutional differences that make it difficult to implement collaborative designing or planning is the fact that American civilian agencies generally lack comprehensive continuing professional education programs for mid-career and senior managers that are comparable to professional military education programs. Although the State Department sends some Foreign Service Officers to the National War College or one of the other Defense Department senior Service colleges, most have no formal education regarding the development of strategy or planning. This inequality in education is combined with a disparity in typical levels of management and/or leadership experience: The average company commander on the streets of Baghdad is in charge of more people than the average U.S. Ambassador.

Rather than simply being directed—which many "unity of command" proponents assume will solve the interagency problem—

> civilian leaders will typically expect to be treated as equals rather than subordinates of the military commander

most civilian leaders and planners will need to be both convinced and guided through the process of writing a joint-interagency campaign plan or through other means of designing and implementing a comprehensive approach. This in turn will place a premium on interpersonal skills and require a degree of persuasion that many commanders and staff officers are unused to applying in a traditional military context. **PRISM**

**Notes**

[1] See Brooke Smith-Windsor, NATO Defense College Research Paper #38, "Hasten Slowly: NATO's Effects Based and Comprehensive Approach to Operations," July 2008, available at <www.ndc.nato.int/research/respaper.html>.

[2] United States Government Counterinsurgency Initiative, January 2009, 17, available at <www.state. gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf>.

[3] In November 2008, the Joint Doctrine Development Community agreed to initiate the development of a joint publication (JP) on stability operations with U.S. Joint Forces Command designated as lead agent. See "Joint Doctrine Update," *Joint Force Quarterly* 54 (2d Quarter 2009), 128.

[4] JP 3–27, *Homeland Defense*, states: "Given the persistent nature of current threats, a proactive, comprehensive approach to HD is required," in Glossary-4 and vii; however, it does not provide a definition (I–3).

[5] The Congressional Research Service (CRS) has compiled a summary of many of the arguments in the American context. See Catherine Dale et al., *Organizing the U.S. Government for National Security: Overview of the Interagency Reform Debates* (Washington, DC: CRS, April 18, 2008).

[6] U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, "Agency Stovepipes vs. Strategic Agility: Lessons We Need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan," April 2008, 32, 49, available at <www.armedservices.house. gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT_Report.pdf>.

[7] Walter Pincus, "Foreign Policy Beyond the Pentagon," *The Washington Post*, February 9, 2009, A–15.

[8] Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3–0, *Joint Operations*, Change 1, February 13, 2008, xiii, xix.

[9] Peter deLeon and Linda deLeon, "What Ever Happened to Policy Implementation?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 12, no. 4 (2002), 473–474.

[10] The author thanks Allen Burch and Joseph Banavige for their insights on this topic as Master of Business Administration graduates and instructors. Also see Steven Kelman et al., "Dialogue on the Definition and Evolution of the Field of Public Management," *International Public Management Review* 4, no. 2 (2003), 1–19.

[11] The kernel of this concept was to attack Soviet–Warsaw Pact formations in depth, that is, hit their second- and third-echelon unit formations, as a means to offset their superior numerical strength in lieu of conceding defensive space on West Germany territory. This concept replaced the "active-defense," which proposed "trading space for time" and fighting a delaying effort until reinforcements could arrive from North America. Naturally, the owners of the space to be traded—the West Germans—were not enthusiastic about the earlier concept. Compare John Romjue, "The Evolution of the Airland Battle Concept," *Air University Review* (May-June 1984), available at <www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1984/may-jun/romjue.html>.

[12] Jack Kem, "Thoughts on Logical Lines of Operations," November 17, 2008, available at <http://usacac. army.mil/BLOG/blogs/reflectionsfromfront/archive/2008/11/17/thoughts-on-logical-lines-of-operation.aspx>.

[13] Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., "Developing Joint Counterinsurgency Doctrine: An Airman's Perspective," *Joint Force Quarterly* 49 (2d Quarter 2008), 87.

[14] James Q. Wilson argues that in peacetime, the U.S. Army is a "procedural agency"; it can observe the activities of its operators but not the outcomes of their efforts because war is the only test that counts. Yet in wartime, it is a "craft agency" because the outcomes can be observed but not the activities of its operators. Accordingly, this uncertainty drives the Army to emphasize the detailed definition and documentation of tasks during peacetime. See *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 163–168.

[15] This is not to claim that achieving mechanical precision in security operations is possible. As H.R. McMaster has recently written, the intangible human element plus the "fog of war" play key roles in determining the outcome of any armed conflict. See "The Human Element: When Gadgetry Becomes Strategy," *World*

*Affairs* (Winter 2009), available at <www.worldaffairsjournal.org/2009%20-%20Winter/full-McMaster.html>. Nonetheless, the side that possesses overwhelming force, sound leadership, and mostly accurate information will usually win a particular battle.

[16] Field Manual (FM) 5.0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, January 2005), 3–32.

[17] Susan B. Epstein, *U.S. Embassy in Iraq* (Washington, DC: CRS, October 24, 2006), figure 1.

[18] The "clear-hold-build" approach to counterinsurgency is described in chapter 5 of FM 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*. In brief, "the pattern of this approach is to clear, hold, and build one village, area, or city—and then reinforce success by expanding to other areas. This approach aims to develop a long-term, effective HN [host-nation] government framework and presence that secures the people and facilitates meeting their basic needs. Success reinforces the HN government's legitimacy." The primary tasks during clear-hold-build are to provide continuous security for the local populace, eliminate insurgent presence, reinforce political primacy, enforce the rule of law, and rebuild local HN institutions.

[19] Compare Victor Davis Hanson, *A War Like No Other* (New York: Random House, 2006), 207. One of the debates on the existence of military revolutions concerns whether or how technology has shifted the advantage back and forth between the offense and defense over time.

[20] However, recent research by Stathis N. Kalyvas on civil war violence implies that effective control by the government (or insurgents) can shift the prewar preferences of the population toward the position favored by the group exerting control in a relatively short time. This implies that causing a change in societal values may be easier than expected, but emphasizes the ability to broadly apply force rather than the effects of political compromise, implementing good governance, or achieving economic growth. See *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 92–104, 112–132.

[21] There are also significant differences in planning and execution between the private sector and government civilian agencies. This is true particularly with regard to establishing goals since making a profit is rarely a governmental consideration. Wilson provides a detailed analysis in *Bureaucracy*. For the purposes of the argument in this article, however, reference to a common "civilian" approach is adequate.

[22] John Burns, "U.S. General Says Jobs and Services May Curb Iraq Violence," *The New York Times*, December 13, 2006, A–1.

[23] Anna Husarska, "Sending the wrong message," *International Herald Tribune*, June 3, 2008, 8.

[24] Rob Crilly, "British taxpayer funds Somali police force for regime accused of war crimes," *Times of London*, June 2, 2008, available at <www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article4046164.ece>.

[25] U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525–5–500, *Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design* (Fort Monroe, VA: TRADOC, January 28, 2008), figure 1–3.

[26] Ibid., 15. Italics in original.

[27] "Strategy as a Wicked Problem," *Harvard Business Review*, May 2008.

[28] Huba Wass de Czege, "Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," *Military Review* (January-February 2009), 2.

**U.S. forces, rather than engaging in peacekeeping in Afghanistan, have trained the country's police and army to take responsibility for their country's security**

# Organizing
# for Victory

BY JAMES DOBBINS

Since the end of the Korean War, all of America's conventional campaigns have ended in a matter of weeks, sometimes even days, with overwhelming victories and few if any friendly casualties. Nation-building, counterinsurgency, and postconflict reconstruction, on the other hand, have always proved much more time-consuming, expensive, and problematic. One reason for this disjunction is that the U.S. Government is well structured for peace or war, but ill adapted for missions that fall in between. In both peace and conventional war, each agency knows its place. Coordination among them, while demanding, does not call for endless improvisation. By contrast, nation-building, stability operations, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare all require that agencies collaborate in ways they are not accustomed to. These missions are consequently among the most difficult for any President to direct precisely because administrations are not structured for that purpose.

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Recent commentary has largely focused on the difficulty in fielding adequate numbers of competent, appropriately experienced civilians willing to live in military caserns, travel in military convoys, wear helmets and flak vests to work, and complement the efforts of their military colleagues in conditions of considerable hardship and danger. Yet historically the more

> no one was establishing an evolving doctrine for the conduct of operations or building a cadre of experts available to go from one mission to the next

serious problems have been in Washington, where civilian and military expertise must be blended across multiple agencies, where the responsibilities among agencies for carrying out interlocking and often overlapping responsibilities must be worked out, and where policy is set and funding allocated. When stability and counterinsurgency operations have faltered or failed, as they have in Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq, the causes can largely be traced to flawed decisionmaking in Washington.

### Identifying Critical Lessons

Observing the American occupation of Iraq, one might be forgiven for thinking it is the first time the United States has embarked on such an enterprise. Throughout that first year, one unanticipated challenge after another occasioned one improvised response after another. This was, however, not the first, but rather the seventh occasion in little more than a decade that the United States helped liberate a society and then tried to rebuild it, beginning with Kuwait in 1991, and followed by Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and finally Iraq.

Six of those seven societies are predominantly Muslim. Thus, by 2003, there was no country in the world more experienced in nation-building than America, and no Western army with more modern experience operating with a Muslim society. How could the United States perform this mission so frequently, yet do it so poorly? The answer was that in 2003, neither the U.S. military nor any of the relevant civilian agencies regarded postconflict stabilization and reconstruction as a core function to be adequately funded, regularly practiced, and routinely executed. Instead, the United States had tended to treat each of these successive missions as if it were the first ever encountered, sending new people with new ideas to face what should have been familiar challenges. Worse yet, it treated each mission as if it were the last such it would ever have to conduct. No organization was taking steps to harvest and sustain the expertise gained. No one was establishing an evolving doctrine for the conduct of these operations or building a cadre of experts available to go from one mission to the next.

There was, nevertheless, some improvement in American performance through the 1990s. During his 8 years in office, President Bill Clinton oversaw four successive efforts at stabilization and postconflict reconstruction. Beginning with an unqualified failure in Somalia, followed by a largely wasted effort in Haiti, his administration was eventually able to achieve more enduring results in Bosnia and Kosovo. None of these efforts was perfect, but each successive operation was better conceived, more abundantly resourced, and more competently conducted, as the same officials repeatedly performed comparable tasks.

The Clinton administration derived three large policy lessons from its experience: employ overwhelming force, provide public security,

and engage neighboring and regional states, particularly those behaving most irresponsibly.

***Employ Overwhelming Force.*** In Somalia, President George H.W. Bush originally sent a large U.S. force to perform a limited task, protecting humanitarian food and medicine shipments. President Clinton reduced that presence from 20,000 Soldiers and Marines to 2,000, and gave this residual force the mission of supporting a United Nations (UN)–led, grass roots democratization campaign that was bound to antagonize every warlord in the country. Capabilities plummeted even as ambitions soared. The weakened American force was soon challenged. The encounter, chronicled in the book and movie *Black Hawk Down*, resulted in a firestorm of domestic criticism and caused the administration to withdraw American troops from Somalia.

From then on, the Clinton administration embraced the doctrine espoused by outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell of applying overwhelming force, choosing to supersize each of its subsequent interventions, going in heavy, and then scaling back once a secure environment was established and potential adversaries were deterred from mounting violent resistance.

***Provide Public Security.*** In Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo, the United States arrived to find local security forces incompetent, abusive, or entirely nonexistent. Building new institutions and reforming existing ones took many years. In the interim, responsibility for public security devolved to the United States and its coalition partners. For a long time, the U.S. military resisted this mission, but to no avail.

Finally by 1999, when they went into Kosovo, U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military authorities accepted that responsibility for public safety would be a *military* task until international

and local police could be mobilized in sufficient numbers.

***Engage Neighboring and Regional States.*** Adjoining states played a major role in fomenting the conflicts in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. This problem was largely ignored in Somalia but faced squarely in Bosnia. The presidents of Serbia and Croatia, both of whom bore heavy responsibility for the ethnic cleansing that NATO was trying to stop, were invited by the United States to the peace conference in Dayton, Ohio. Both leaders were given privileged places in that process and continued to be engaged in the subsequent peace implementation. Both won subsequent elections in their own countries, their domestic stature having been enhanced by this elevated international role. Had Washington treated them as pariahs, the war in Bosnia might be under way still.

By 1999, that same Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic, had actually been indicted by the international tribunal in The Hague for genocide and other war crimes. Yet NATO and the Clinton administration still negotiated with his regime to end the conflict in Kosovo.

## Unlearned Lessons

Each of these large lessons was rejected by a successor administration that was initially determined to avoid nation-building altogether, and that subsequently insisted on doing it entirely differently, and especially more economically.

Ironically, the Powell doctrine of overwhelming force was embraced only after General Colin Powell left office in 1993, and was abandoned as soon as he returned as Secretary of State in 2001. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's views were diametrically opposed. He argued in speeches and op-ed articles that by flooding Bosnia and Kosovo with military manpower and economic assistance, the United States and its

allies turned these societies into permanent wards of the international community. By stinting on such commitments, the Bush administration would ensure that Afghanistan and Iraq would more quickly become self-sufficient. This line of thinking transposed the American domestic debate over welfare reform to the international arena. The analogy could not have proven less

> Washington assumed that the Iraqi police and military would continue to maintain public order once Saddam Hussein's regime was removed

apt. By making minimal initial efforts at stabilization in Afghanistan and Iraq, and reinforcing troop and financial commitments only once challenged, the administration failed to deter the emergence of organized resistance in either country. The Rumsfeld vision of "defense transformation" may have been well suited to conventional combat against vastly inferior adversaries, but it became a much more expensive approach to postconflict stabilization and reconstruction than the then-out-of-fashion Powell doctrine.

During the 2000 Presidential campaign, Condoleezza Rice wrote dismissively of stability operations, declaring that "we don't need to have the 82d Airborne escorting kids to kindergarten." Consistent with this view, the Bush administration, having overthrown the Taliban and installed a new government in Kabul, determined that American troops would do no peacekeeping and that peacekeepers from other countries would not be allowed to venture beyond the Kabul city limits. Public security throughout the rest of the country would be left entirely to the Afghans, despite the fact that Afghanistan had no army and no police force. A year later,

President Bush was asking his advisors irritably why the reconstruction that had occurred was largely limited to the capital.

The same attitude toward public security informed U.S. plans for postwar Iraq. Washington assumed that the Iraqi police and military would continue to maintain public order once Saddam Hussein's regime was removed. The fact that this arrangement had already proven impractical not only in Afghanistan just a year earlier, but also in Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo, was ignored. In the weeks leading up to the invasion, Pentagon leadership cut the number of Military Police proposed by military authorities for the operation, while the White House cut even more drastically the number of international civilian police proposed by the Department of State. The White House also directed that any civilian police sent to Iraq should be unarmed. For the next several years, as Iraq descended into civil war, American authorities declined to collect data on the number of Iraqis getting killed. Secretary Rumsfeld maintained that such statistics were not a relevant indicator of the success or failure of the American military mission. Only with the arrival of General David Petraeus in 2007 did the number of civilian casualties become the chief metric for measuring the progress of the campaign.

America's quick success in overthrowing the Taliban and replacing it with a broadly based successor regime owed much to the assistance received from nearby states, to include such long-term opponents of the Taliban as Iran, Russia, and India. Yet no sooner had the Hamid Karzai government been installed than Washington rebuffed offers of further assistance from Iran and relaxed the pressure on Pakistan to sever its remaining ties with violent extremist groups. The broad regional strategy, so

critical to both Washington's initial military victory and political achievement, was effectively abandoned.

Such a strategy was not even attempted with respect to Iraq. The invasion was conducted not only against the advice of several of Washington's most important allies, but also contrary to the wishes of most regional states. With the exception of Kuwait, none of Iraq's neighbors supported the intervention. Even Kuwait could not have been enthusiastic about the announced American intention to make Iraq a democratic model for the region in the hopes of inspiring similar changes in the form of government of all its neighbors. Not surprisingly, neighborly interference quickly became a significant factor in stoking Iraq's sectarian passions.

In his second term, President Bush worked hard to recover from these early mistakes. In the process, his administration embraced the mission of postconflict stabilization with the fervor of a new convert. The President issued a directive setting out an interagency structure for managing such operations. Secretary of State Rice recanted her earlier dismissal of nation-building. The State Department established the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, charged with establishing a doctrine for the civilian conduct of such missions and building a cadre of experts ready to man them. The Department of Defense (DOD) issued a directive making stability operations a core function of the U.S. military.

In Iraq, more forces and money were committed, public security was embraced as the heart of a new counterinsurgency strategy, and efforts were made to better engage neighboring states, not even excepting Iran. The lessons of the 1990s had been *relearned*. Iraq pulled back from the abyss.

## Retaining Hard Won Lessons

Both the Clinton and Bush administrations began poorly and gradually improved their management of nation-building operations. President Barack Obama's election offered every prospect of this pattern being repeated, as a new administration of a different party took office, intent on doing things differently from its predecessor. Fortunately, and rather remarkably, Obama chose to keep Robert Gates as Secretary of Defense, General David Petraeus as commander of U.S. Central Command, and Lieutenant General Douglas Lute, along with a team of professional military, diplomatic, and intelligence officers, in the White House, advising him and organizing the interagency management of both wars. The result has been a degree of continuity that leaves some Democrats uneasy but that offers hope that the lessons of the past two decades will not be shed once again in the transition from one administration and governing party to the next.

The Obama strategy for Afghanistan is an effort to replicate the success achieved in Iraq in 2007 by employing many of the same

> nation-building remains at the core of the American strategy for Afghanistan and Iraq, even though counterterrorism is the rationale

elements in a different environment. These elements include a counterinsurgency doctrine focused on public security, an increase in U.S. and Afghan military manpower, financial incentives to economically motivated insurgents to change sides, enlistment of local defense forces, intensified regional diplomacy (particularly with Pakistan, as well as with

India, Iran, and Russia), and a willingness to envisage accommodation with some elements of the insurgency. President Obama has sought to distinguish his approach rhetorically from that of his predecessor by downplaying democratization and focusing instead on counterterrorism as the reason for being in Afghanistan. Yet he accompanied this apparent narrowing of the American mission with an increase in the manpower and money devoted to it. Furthermore, the President's immediate

> the Obama administration basically picked up where its predecessor left off, retaining senior officials and key staffers in the White House and DOD, avoiding the abrupt drop-off in competence that plagued its immediate predecessors

rationale for an increase in American troop strength was the need to secure the upcoming Afghan elections. Nation-building thus remains at the core of the American strategy for Afghanistan and Iraq, even though counterterrorism is the rationale.

Whether the new administration's strategy for Afghanistan can succeed depends more on its execution than its articulation. Adequate civilian capacity to conduct reconstruction and development activities will be one factor determining success. But once again, the most critical variable seems to be troop numbers—American, allied, and Afghan. The President and his advisors are clearly reluctant to send yet more forces, the allies claim to be tapped out, and increasing the size of the Afghan army and police forces will take time. National Security Advisor James Jones and other administration officials have sought to deflect calls for more

American troops by arguing for a focus on economic development and governmental capacity-building. Those programs are likely to have limited utility in the most contested parts of the country. If the past is any guide, no amount of additional money and civilian manpower will offset an inadequate military effort.

## Options for Institutional Reform

Early setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan have already caused significant changes in the way the United States approaches these missions. The U.S. military has been given a good deal of money for development and humanitarian-type activities, such as the Commander's Emergency Response Program. Commanders have more flexibility in the use of these funds than do any of the civilian agencies. The U.S. military has also acquired a good deal of civilian expertise through detailees from other agencies and contracting with individuals and private organizations. The Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and, to a lesser extent, other departments have shifted resources toward these two operations. The State Department is building a reserve corps of government and private individuals ready to man current and future nation-building missions. These various initiatives have greatly increased civilian capacity in the field, albeit at the cost of substantial overlap among the three major agencies involved. Most of these reforms represent temporary expedients, however, explicitly designed to be shed once the current demand recedes.

The hardest fought interagency battles are usually over who pays for what. Issues of this nature can seldom be resolved in the field, whatever the authority delegated to a local supremo, for no local proconsul can exercise real control over anyone's budget except his

own. Indeed, these funding disputes can only be overcome in Washington with great difficulty. The President has sufficient authority to adjudicate policy differences among agencies, but even he cannot normally shift money from one agency to another, nor can he compel agencies to perform activities for which they lack congressional authorization. In recent years, workarounds have been employed to deal with this lack of flexibility. Congress has granted limited permission to shift money from Defense to State, and authorities from State to Defense. The result has been a better alignment of resources and strategy, but at the cost of large-scale duplication of functions and capabilities, and total confusion over longer term roles and missions.

Whether further institutional adjustments are needed (as opposed to more money and people) is a matter of some debate. Experience of the past 20 years suggests that the main problem is not inadequate civilian capacity in the field, but rather the failure at the Washington headquarters level to retain acquired expertise, formulate realistically resourced plans, and successfully integrate the various elements of American power and international influence. If this is an accurate diagnosis, prescriptions for change should be directed primarily to fixing the problem in Washington, and only secondarily in the field.

Fixing the interagency problem in Washington requires both increasing continuity in expertise from one administration to the next, and rationalizing a durable division of labor among the relevant agencies, principally DOD, State, and USAID.

## Promoting Continuity of Expertise

As noted, the Obama administration basically picked up where its predecessor left off in the conduct of operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan, retaining a number of senior officials and key staffers in both the White House and DOD, and thereby avoiding the abrupt drop-off in competence that plagued both of its immediate predecessors. This was, unfortunately, an aberration rather than the norm. We cannot and should not count on future Presidents to behave likewise.

Gyrations in governing capacity reflect not only the personalities of different chief executives but also the nature of the American spoils system, which replaces thousands of senior and mid-level officials every 4 to 8 years. The U.S. military, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies are largely insulated from these periodic purges, on the grounds that security is too important to be politicized. But State, USAID, civilian elements of DOD, and the entire national security apparatus within the White House are not. If civilian expertise is important to success in nation-building, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare, then there is a case for treating these repositories of that expertise similarly to the Nation's military, intelligence, and law enforcement establishments. Legislation reserving some proportion of Presidentially appointed positions in State, USAID, and DOD, and some number of National Security Council staff positions for career professionals, would have such an effect.

## Establishing an Enduring Division of Labor

In the 1990s, the division of labor among national security agencies was pretty clear-cut. The Congress did not like nation-building, and this reinforced the military's own aversion to taking on functions associated with it. Thus, in the Balkans, U.S. and NATO forces confined themselves almost exclusively to peacekeeping,

fairly narrowly defined, leaving civilian agencies to work the underlying political, social, and bureaucratic changes that would make the interventions worthwhile. It was State, not DOD, that organized military training, rebuilt police forces, and arranged protection for local leaders. It was USAID that built schools, dug wells, and improved roads.

In the Bush administration's first foray into nation-building, this allocation of responsibility was turned on its head. In 2002, American forces did no peacekeeping in Afghanistan, but they did train the local military and police, protect Hamid Karzai, build schools, and dig wells. Thus, one administration where the American military did nothing but peacekeeping was succeeded by another administration where the military did everything except peacekeeping. In 2003, this redistribution of portfolios was taken even further, when DOD was given responsibility for overseeing all civilian as well as military activity in Iraq, to include organizing elections, promoting a free press, encouraging civil society, writing a constitution, and expanding the economy.

Beyond the immediate confusion occasioned by these changes, the longer term effect was to promote large-scale duplication in expertise and activity and to create deep uncertainty about agency roles and missions, thus diminishing the incentive of all the agencies to make long-term investments in these areas of overlap. Why spend now to become better at a given task 10 or 20 years hence if there is no reason to be confident that an agency will retain the function? A great deal of supplemental money is going into deploying civilian expertise in Afghanistan and Iraq, but regular funding is not being devoted to long-term development of such institutional capacity.

There is debate over where such capacity ought to be located. Congress, based on its record of funding, would seem to prefer DOD. The Secretary of Defense has argued that civilian capacity ought to be centered in State and USAID. Others have suggested creating a new agency especially to handle the reconstruction in conflict or postconflict environments and/or beefing up the Executive Office of the President.

To evaluate these proposals, it helps to have some understanding of the various levels of responsibility within the executive branch. They are:

❖ setting national policy and ensuring all agencies adhere to it

❖ integrating various agency programs to maximize achievement of national policy in a given country

❖ executing the programs.

The first of these responsibilities can be fulfilled only by the President and his staff. Cabinet agencies with independent budgets, responsible to different congressional oversight committees, cannot be effectively subordinated one to another.

The second level of responsibility for coordinating program design and execution in a given country is normally performed by the State Department, through its resident chiefs of mission, or occasionally by a Washington-based

> it is in the area of program execution that most of the current confusion regarding roles and missions resides

"special envoy." In 2003, the function was transferred, for Iraq, to DOD. The experiment was not deemed a success. Setting up and managing branch offices of the U.S. Government all over

U.S. Air Force (Jerry Morrison)

**President Obama's retention of GEN David Petraeus and Defense Secretary Robert Gates has promoted continuity of expertise**

the world is a core mission of the State Department. Creating such a capacity in DOD would be difficult and expensive. Creating yet another new agency to perform such a function in conflict and postconflict areas would simply introduce a third player alongside the other two. The new agency would not likely be given authority over military operations or the conduct of diplomacy, so instead of two lead agencies, there would be three.

It is in the area of program execution that most of the current confusion regarding roles and missions resides, as key functions such as police training are continually passed back and forth from one agency to another. This is the area where some rationalization would be most helpful, ideally in the form of legislation laying out a more enduring division of labor among agencies.

To recapitulate, responsibility for setting national policy and keeping all agencies on task should continue to reside in the White House. Responsibility for ensuring the integration of nonmilitary activities in support of that policy within a given country should continue to be exercised by the State Department. Responsibility for conducting those activities should be allocated among a number of agencies based on some judgment of their capabilities. To the extent that other agencies do not have an obvious comparative advantage, reconstruction and development programs should be assigned to USAID. This division of labor should be established in law, leaving the President some leeway to reassign functions, but not to the degree experienced over the past decade.

## Bolstering Authority and Capacity

The three layers of responsibility laid out above are how the executive branch is designed to function, and how it does so most of the time. To the extent that it fails to function satisfactorily,

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the fault lies at one or more of these levels. In 2003, for instance, President Bush and his staff failed to exercise their responsibility for setting national policy regarding the occupation of Iraq and ensuring that all agencies adhered to it. Instead, responsibility for interagency coordination was delegated to the Secretary of Defense and then to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) administrator in Iraq, neither of whom was equipped to perform the function.

Often, the State Department is in a weak position to design and oversee implementation of a multiagency strategy for the achievement of national objectives in a given country because it lacks control over the funding. A strong

> **Congress should continue to provide the funding for all nonmilitary activities in conflict and postconflict environments to State**

Ambassador or special envoy can prevent other agencies from doing something stupid with their money, but he cannot make them do something smart. If, on the other hand, State controls the funding, it can always find an agency to conduct the desired program. In conflict and postconflict environments, therefore, Congress should provide the funding for all nonmilitary activities to State, with the intention that State, via the resident Ambassador or Washington-based special envoy, should design and oversee a complex of USAID, Treasury, Agriculture, Drug Enforcement Administration, and agency activities in support of national policy.

USAID today is a shadow of the agency that could send over a thousand officers to Vietnam in support of rural pacification. Some of this decline is due to an increased reliance on private contractors. But that phenomenon is by no means limited to USAID. The larger cause of USAID decline is the number of functions that have been stripped out of it and allocated elsewhere. Police training and refugee assistance went long ago to State. Much economic assistance funding has gone to the Millennium Development Challenge Corporation. Combating AIDS in Africa has gone to yet another new independent agency. The Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization has been located in the State Department, and so has the new reserve corps of civilian development experts being organized to man such missions. In Iraq, most heavy infrastructure development was done (badly) by the Army Corps of Engineers because USAID was not thought up to the task.

USAID could be brought back to its former size and capacity by returning these functions, staffs, and budgets to that agency. To signify the agency's enlarged responsibilities, the term *reconstruction* might usefully be added to its title, making it the U.S. Agency for Reconstruction and Development. The enlarged and restored agency might even be given Cabinet status, becoming the Department of Reconstruction and Development. But Congress should continue to provide the funding for all nonmilitary activities in conflict and postconflict environments to State, allowing that department to design the overall approach to civilian implementation, and dole out the money to the agencies best able to meet the resultant demands.

This is how responsibilities for stabilization and reconstruction were allocated in the Balkans in the late 1990s. The President set policy, and his staff kept all agencies on task. DOD confined itself to essentially military tasks and resisted efforts to expand its mission. Funding for nonmilitary activities went

to State, which allocated money to USAID, Treasury, Justice, and other agencies to carry out specified functions. The Bosnia and Kosovo operations were far from perfect, but they remain the most successful such efforts of the past 20 years. The machinery employed then and described herein thus represents a good place to start in considering how to organize government for this mission.

## Conclusion

Modern generals are fond of alleging that there is no military solution to the conflicts they are engaged in. This usually means that they are losing. And they are usually losing because the military, not the civilian, efforts have been inadequate. This was certainly the case in Iraq until 2007 and in Afghanistan until much more recently. That is not to say that the civilian contribution to those two campaigns was adequate. It was not. But the decisive variables in both cases were inappropriate tactics and inadequate troop numbers, not a paucity of diplomats and development experts. The increased quantity and quality of State and USAID staff assigned to Iraq in 2007 contributed to the turnaround, but even the most ardent State Department loyalists would acknowledge that the surge in troop strength and the introduction of more sophisticated counterinsurgency tactics were more important factors.

The occupation of Iraq and the performance of the CPA are often cited as the most egregious example of critical failure on the civilian side of the ledger. "Can't Provide Anything" was a frequently heard translation of the initials. The CPA was certainly inadequately staffed, poorly supported, and, for its first 6 months, largely unsupervised. Yet despite these deficiencies, that scratch organization managed, during its brief 14-month lifespan, to restore Iraq's essential public services to near—or in some cases better than—their prewar level, reform the Iraqi judiciary and penal systems, dramatically reduce inflation, promote rapid economic growth, help broker the largest debt relief package in history, put in place institutional barriers to corruption, begin to reform the civil service, promote development of the most liberal constitution in the Middle East, and set the stage for a series of free elections. Economic growth in Iraq in 2004 was 46.3 percent, the second highest economic expansion in any U.S.-, UN-, and European-led reconstruction efforts since World War II. By the end of the CPA's brief reign, unemployment in Iraq was down significantly, spending on health care was up 3,500 percent over prewar levels, and a reformed court system was adjudicating a higher caseload than at any time in Iraqi history. All this was accomplished without the benefit of prior planning

> it was officials in Washington, not those in the field, who thought Iraq could be secured by a few thousand American soldiers and governed by a few hundred American officials

or major infusions of U.S. aid (American and other foreign assistance to Iraq began to flow in large amounts only after the closure of the CPA) and despite Washington's inability to fill more than half the CPA's positions at any time. Measured against progress registered over a similar period in 20 other American-, NATO-, and UN-led postconflict reconstruction missions of the past 60 years, the CPA's accomplishments in most of these fields bear respectable, in some cases quite favorable, comparison.

What the CPA did not do is halt Iraq's descent into civil war. With respect to security,

arguably the most important aspect of any postconflict mission, Iraq comes near the bottom in any ranking of modern postwar reconstruction efforts. The CPA shares responsibility for this failure. Different approaches to demobilization of the army and purging of the bureaucracy might have produced better results. But security in Iraq was primarily a military, not civilian, responsibility. And it was officials in Washington, not those in the field, who thought Iraq could be secured by a few thousand American soldiers and governed by a few hundred American officials. Nothing the CPA did or failed to do could have remedied this fundamental misjudgment or compensate for the lack of plans, money, and military manpower initially devoted to the task of securing the country the United States had just conquered.

Modern generals are right to insist on the need for more effective application of nonmilitary expertise and capacity to stability operations, nation-building, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare. A review of American experience over the 20 years since the end of the Cold War suggests that in all such cases the civilian component was slow to arrive, and seldom sufficient in size or capability. Yet if agencies are working well together in Washington, if defense, diplomatic, and development expertise is being blended at the headquarters level to make well-conceived policy, and if programs across agencies are being meshed for maximum effect, then the experience of the past 20 years, across half a dozen stabilization and counterinsurgency operations, suggests that American civilians and soldiers will also collaborate effectively in the field, despite occasional differences of temperament and shortages of capacity.[1] **PRISM**

## Note

[1] The record of the Coalition Provisional Authority is examined in James Dobbins et al., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2009). The record of previous efforts at postconflict stabilization and reconstruction is examined in three volumes of RAND case studies: James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003); James Dobbins et al., *The UN's Role in Nation Building: From the Congo to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005); and James Dobbins et al., *Europe's Role in Nation Building: From the Balkans to the Congo* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008).

# Time Lag and Sequencing Dilemmas of
# Postconflict Reconstruction

BY ANDREW S. NATSIOS

The United States appears to be moving to a whole-of-government approach to address the challenges of failed states and postconflict reconstruction without a full understanding of its implications. The most often observed weakness in U.S. foreign policy architecture is the imbalance among the three elements of national power: defense, diplomacy, and development (the three Ds). Some critics argue that the Pentagon dominates field operations and the interagency process not only because of its massive staff, enormous budget, and highly developed planning and operations culture but also because of the relative weakness of diplomacy and development. Linking development and diplomacy, however, is a mistake. While they do share the common problem of being weak compared to the defense establishment, beyond this they are unalike in every important way.

Both defense and diplomacy share a common short-term time horizon inconsistent with that of development, which requires a longer timeframe for planning and success. The demands made by the U.S. defense and diplomatic establishments of development agencies (usually the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] in the case of the U.S. Government) during and following conflicts contradict good development practice and the dynamics of collapsed states. Defense and diplomacy demand more immediate results than what are achievable given the nature of social change and institution-building in the postconflict setting. When the results produced by aid programs are not what the other agencies of the U.S. Government expect, aid or development is said to have "failed" when in fact the demands were inconsistent with historical and developmental reality.

The discontinuities among the three Ds most often involve time.[1] Successful development in fragile or failed states—Paul Collier's "bottom billion"—simply takes much longer to achieve than defense planners and diplomats can accept. In addition, postconflict states suffer from time

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lags between the development of rural versus urban areas, of one region versus another, and in the proper timing and sequencing of various sector programs. The three largest current U.S. aid programs—in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sudan—are used as case studies in this analysis.

> some development programs are more important than others earlier in the process of reconstruction

## Time Lags

Some of the most serious discontinuities in reconstruction and peacekeeping operations revolve around the issue of time lags: between public expectations and actual results people can see on the ground, between the local demand of people to own and control reconstruction efforts in their country and the institutional incapacity of postconflict countries to manage their own affairs, and in the disparity among various regions of a country in the pace of reconstruction. States coming out of conflict face dilemmas between the demand of peacekeeping troops for reconstruction programs to pacify unstable areas so they do not sustain high casualty rates and the ability of bilateral and multilateral aid agencies to deliver these programs operationally. Perhaps the greatest of all time lags is the 15- to 20-year period necessary (but not sufficient) to build stable democratic political institutions and functioning national and local governments.[2] Finally, some development programs are more important than others earlier in the process of reconstruction.

In the case of Afghanistan, the first element of this time lag manifestation is the rapid modernization of society in urban areas through the people's contact with the outside world, increases in discretionary family income in urban centers creating a consumer economy for modern products, and the presence of television programming, which has created a window into the global economy and modern world. It is the physical images of people on television, particularly of unrelated young men and women appearing together in public, of immodestly dressed women, and of modern consumer culture, that are undoubtedly disturbing to conservative Afghan families. The one major private television station in Kabul is now under intense pressure from conservative forces to curtail its programming, compromise the integrity of its news coverage, and limit the window it provides for Afghans to see the outside world.

Modernization, particularly when it comes as rapidly as it has in parts of Afghanistan, can be a disruptive force in traditional societies. In addition, educated parents in urban areas are insisting their daughters attend school, even college. While primary schools are increasingly available in rural areas for both boys and girls and considerable progress has been made in increasing girls' attendance, high schools and colleges are not as available in rural areas for girls. Traditional Afghan society is giving way to modernization in Kabul, but this is not the case in rural areas. This is creating serious social tensions between rural and urban areas because of the cultural time lag caused by the disparity in the rates of modernization. These tensions between modernity and tradition are fueling Taliban resurgence in rural areas.

A second manifestation of the time lag problem is the differential rates of development in various regions of the country. The Afghan government and the international community assisting the country in the reconstruction process have struggled with the need to balance urban and rural development. If there is one

**Road construction project improved travel network between Alam and Samrah, Iraq, June 2009**

Afghan government refrain heard over and over again, it is to put resources into rural areas. That has certainly happened in the case of the U.S. reconstruction program, which has built or rebuilt over 1,000 schools and health clinics, the bulk of them in rural areas, and produced 63 million textbooks for all schools in all subjects (with the exception of religion). One complicating factor in this allocation of U.S. funds to rural areas has been the requirement that much of this money must be spent on the U.S. counternarcotics program to reduce poppy production, which, while being a laudable goal, is a narrowly focused strategy. Moreover, it has diverted funding from broader objectives. There has been heavy political pressure to invest development funds in Afghanistan in the center of the Taliban insurgency for understandable reasons—the Pashtun area in the east and southeast part of the country—with the consequence that the other regions have suffered from proportionately reduced aid programming, angering the Hazara, Uzbek, and Tajik populations, among others. Since these ethnic groups have been traditional opponents of the Taliban, it is unwise to alienate them by limiting their development and rewarding the principal ethnic adversary of efforts to modernize and rebuild Afghanistan.

The economic power of international aid programs in postconflict settings goes well beyond the programs themselves, as the subsidiary infusion of money into the economy through the presence of aid workers and headquarters operations in the capital city and other urban areas acts as a stimulus to growth. This economic infusion includes the rental of elite-owned local housing for international aid and military contractor staffs (often at inflated rates given the limited supply); purchase, repair, and fueling of aid vehicles; purchase of supplies and equipment; subcontracting of aid work to local companies; and purchase of consumer goods on the local urban markets. The increased sale of Afghan

rugs alone to the massive inflow of international aid workers must be enormous. While I worked in the nongovernmental organization (NGO) community in the 1990s, I informally calculated the average NGO staffing pattern in postconflict settings in Africa and found that for every one expatriate brought into the country to manage programs, between 15 and 20 national staff

**the local institutions needed to meet public expectations take years to develop, evolve, and mature**

are hired from the local economy. Most of this secondary spending takes place in urban areas, particularly in the capital cities such as Kabul, Baghdad, and Juba (Southern Sudan), causing rapid urban economic growth over a short time that, despite every effort to the contrary, does not extend to rural areas at the same rate. One USAID-commissioned study of Afghanistan in early 2002 described *four* Afghan economies as the aid effort was poised to expand massively:[3]

❖ the war economy composed of, among other things, local weapons markets whose customers were warlords and their militias

❖ the poppy economy encouraged and facilitated by the Taliban in the 1990s as a way of destroying Western society

❖ the international aid economy just described

❖ the legitimate but anemic economy of agricultural products and transportation services (Afghanistan is Central Asia's indispensible regional transport hub).

Many Afghans living in rural areas see the international aid program based in urban areas as part and parcel of the donor government effort to destroy the poppy economy, which is the one source of increased income they survive on.

The third manifestation of the time lag problem is the high expectation for a peace dividend by the devastated and impoverished population and the long time required to build public and private institutions to manage public services, enforce some semblance of public order through the establishment of the rule of law, and stabilize the political system sufficiently to get the legitimate economy moving to produce wealth and jobs. This has been a problem in all three countries (as it is in all fragile and failed states, and indeed it is the definition of state fragility). The local institutions needed to meet these public expectations simply do not exist or are fragile; they take years to develop, evolve, and mature and get woven into the culture and structure of the societies they serve. While outside aid organizations can support and facilitate the development of local institutions, or at least not act as an impediment to their development, they cannot transplant them mechanically into a society that does not provide some preexisting fertile indigenous ground for their development in the form of local leadership, local support, and a culture and system of values conducive to institutional development. More importantly, these institutions take decades to develop. Since the time required to build institutions is at the heart of the time lag problem, we should briefly examine the matter.

### Institution-building

Institutions are sets of formal and informal organizations based on common norms, business systems, and structures that carry out certain repetitive functions in the social, political, and economic orders making up a nation-state.

Profoundly affected by the values of the culture that the institutions develop in, these norms, systems, and structures determine how strong or weak, and how sustainable, the institutions may become over time. Strong and sustainable institutions provide a breakwater to destructive social upheaval, stabilize society during times of crisis, provide an orderly means for the peaceful resolution of internal conflict and of decision-making, and carry out critical functions needed for a society to function.[4]

At their core, development and reconstruction are about institution-building—both public and private. Military planners and, to a lesser degree, diplomats too often take reconstruction as a literal concept: the physical rebuilding of infrastructure that, while a part of reconstruction, is not at the heart of it. Even reconstructed infrastructure is unsustainable without key institutions protecting the investment through operations and maintenance capacity in ministries of public works or transportation, and protecting infrastructure from insurgent attacks through institutions of internal security. The presence of a wide variety of robust institutions is what distinguishes highly developed, stable states from fragile and failed states.

The absorptive capacity problems in post-conflict states force international donor aid agencies to go through their own implementation mechanisms or multilateral channels such as the international development banks or United Nations (UN) agencies because they reduce the risk of accountability and performance problems. They generally do this well under difficult circumstances, but at a high overhead cost. They fund private for-profit businesses and international NGOs to implement programs and provide public services usually in cooperation with the weak ministry structures, but using their internal business systems and implementation structures outside the regular bureaucratic national systems. The less developed the country at the beginning of the reconstruction process and the smaller the pool of educated people, the more acute this problem will be. Southern Sudan and Afghanistan, for example, faced a serious human capital deficit at the beginning of their reconstruction process because of a small pool of individuals available for hire. Paul Collier points out that civil wars tend to drive out the educated elites early in the conflicts because they are the most mobile individuals, with the consequence that the human capital available for reconstruction is modest. While much critical analysis has been done of these parallel international aid implementation mechanisms, none of these critiques has proposed a viable alternative to the parallel "international government" constructed by aid agencies in postconflict settings to get work done—work demanded by diplomats and military officers.[5]

Even the formal institutions of a private market economy, such as the banking system, are frequently underdeveloped or nonexistent.

> over time, local political leaders grow more vocal in demanding that they manage their own reconstruction even if the institutions of government remain underdeveloped

For instance, when the U.S. Government and the newly formed Afghan government arrived in Kabul in early 2002, there were no commercial banks in Afghanistan, nor were there any banks in Southern Sudan in 2005 when the North South Peace Agreement was signed. This was also true of Somalia when coalition forces entered Mogadishu in late 1992.

Thus, there is a gap between the demands of the public and the capacity of either nascent

**Afghan Interior Minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar
has been an effective administrator**

local institutions or newly arriving international institutions to deliver on these demands. If the time lag is not reduced and the gap between expectation and delivery is not bridged relatively quickly, the credibility of the central government suffers, sometimes through political upheaval. If this outside reconstruction infrastructure is not put in place and instead aid agencies attempt to force funding through weak local institutions or national governments as they form and develop, this time lag grows even more severe with even greater risk of political explosion. Over time, local political leaders grow more vocal in demanding that they manage their own reconstruction even if the institutions of government remain underdeveloped. If, because of this pressure, the transfer of managerial responsibility to indigenous government takes place too rapidly, accountability will deteriorate and performance will lag, with both having political implications. The international aid program then may witness the revolution of rising reconstruction expectations among the population and the

unraveling of the political arrangements that brought peace.

World Bank studies have shown that as many as 50 percent of all political settlements after a violent conflict fail at the implementation stage. While most of these failures are either a function of the collapse of fragile political settlements or failures to put in place security sector measures to control street crime, militias, and warlords, time lag can play a role in this collapse. Conversely, an accelerated and robust reconstruction effort can shore up a failing political settlement and an unstable security situation.[6]

## Some Remedies

In the cases of Afghanistan and Southern Sudan, several remedies were undertaken. The most successful of these in Afghanistan was initiated by then–Minister of Rural Reconstruction (and now Minister of the Interior) Mohammad Hanif Atmar, one of the most able of the Afghan cabinet ministers, who knew from his long experience in the NGO world that performance and accountability issues were of central importance to the donors. Yet he wanted Afghans to control the reconstruction agenda at the village level, so he designed an innovative solution to the problem. He set up village reconstruction committees with men and women elected to decide on small village projects. He contracted with a respected American development company to serve as the fiduciary and implementing agent to coordinate with communities to get the work done. Many donors put money into the program, which performed exceptionally well, had high levels of accountability, suffered little if any corruption, moved quickly once decisions were made locally, and ensured local control, ownership, and visibility. The Atmar

innovation is a case study in a local solution to this recurrent problem, though it requires strong and capable ministry leadership to make it work—and that is often *not* present. Atmar is an exceptional (and rare) administrator. This is why he has held three cabinet posts in the past few years—whenever a ministry is in trouble, President Hamid Karzai moves him to fix the problem.

In Southern Sudan, European bilateral aid agencies in 2005 created the Joint Donor Trust Fund to be managed by the World Bank to administer their development program for them. Europeans signed agreements with the new government of Southern Sudan to require that outside aid be matched with oil revenues. The fund, while well intended, was delayed by several years because of disputes between the World Bank and UN over authority and responsibility. Attempts by the Europeans, World Bank, and UN to improve the performance of the Southern Sudanese government in administering public services by marrying aid money and oil revenues have failed as the Southern government simply has neither the capacity nor the will to develop the fund and to spend public revenue. The attention of Southern leaders has been on preparing to defend themselves from a potential attack from Khartoum when the mandated referendum on Southern independence takes place in 2011.

USAID, taking a different approach than the Europeans, used its new fragile states strategy to design the U.S. reconstruction effort in Southern Sudan. This strategy attempts to marry political analysis with reconstruction planning to minimize the destructive effect of time lags on the peace settlement. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the Southern Sudanese and Northern government is the cornerstone of the

peace, which allows the reconstruction effort to take place. If the CPA failed, USAID strategists reasoned, there would be no reconstruction effort as the parties were likely to return to war. Political analysis determined that three areas—Abyei, Nuba Mountains, and Upper Blue Nile—were the most sensitive politically and most likely to blow up. The United States designed its reconstruction effort to make visible improvements in people's lives through the provision of public services such as health clinics, schools, and water projects to reduce the

> in virtually all postconflict capital cities, an artificial international assistance culture emerges that stimulates *unsustainable* growth

likelihood of instability. Unfortunately, when the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Bashir for war crimes in Darfur, the self-destructive reaction of the Sudanese government was to expel American (as well as French and British) contractors and NGOs, thus shutting down programs in these three critical areas and others in Sudan (such as Darfur).

### Economic and Political Reform

Another critical factor in making reconstruction efforts successful has been stimulating economic growth—creating jobs, reducing poverty, producing tax revenues for public services, and improving living standards. All development, postconflict or not, ultimately depends on whether sustained rates of economic growth can be achieved over time, producing the tax revenues needed to maintain competent institutions of governance, establish the rule of law,

build infrastructure, and sustain public services. More importantly, economic growth can create the jobs needed to absorb surplus labor that might otherwise be drawn into organized criminal activity or warlord militias. This is particularly true of unemployed young men who are the fodder for militias and criminal gangs. Research into the drivers of conflict indicate that the size of the age cohort of men between 15 and 30 years as a total proportion of the population of a country has a high correlation to the likelihood the society will experience violent conflict, particularly if the young men are unemployed or displaced from their traditional societal moorings.[7]

The importance of sustainable economic growth cannot be overestimated, and yet long-term growth in postconflict settings once again requires political will, the right policies, the willingness of political leaders to annoy powerful economic interests with monopolistic control over segments of the economy, and a much longer timeframe than military planners and diplomats can tolerate. This principle is qualified with the word *sustainable*. In virtually all postconflict capital cities, an artificial international assistance culture emerges that stimulates *unsustainable* growth. Once those aid dollars slow or decline, and eventually they always do, the boom from ancillary aid spending in the local economy collapses. Thus, we have a lag between the time that real economic growth occurs from private investment and economic reforms (and the short-term political instability these reforms may engender) and the immediate demand for new jobs and higher living standards.

In the case of Iraq, the time lag between the initiation of economic reforms by the interim governments (which would have eventually led to private investment and economic growth) and the actual creation of jobs on the

ground led USAID to initiate short-term public employment programs in 2003 and 2004—employing at their height 60,000 to 70,000 Iraqis as day laborers to clean up neighborhoods, repair sewer and water lines, and perform other small-scale public works projects. This was done through USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives within the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. We know from careful statistical data kept by the U.S. military that violence in the areas where these jobs programs were undertaken was measurably lower than those where there were no programs. The problem is that there is a temporal limit on how many public sector jobs can be created effectively by local and international aid programs. But this was one way to stabilize conditions in fragile areas during the early stages of reconstruction before the benefits of private sector economic growth could take place. Aid agencies have had much greater success in stimulating economic growth and job creation through commercial loan guarantee programs administered by the newly established banking system than by public works programs run by aid agencies or local governments.

## Sequencing Programs and Operations

Jack Goldstone has provided important analysis of peacekeeping operations on the problem of *simultaneity* (that is, the demand that all programs be initiated simultaneously even when this is operationally difficult and perhaps counterproductive).[8] He suggests some useful guidance on how operational and programmatic tasks should be sequenced, particularly focusing on the security sector. Goldstone argues that the first priority should be what is called security sector reform to deal with warlords and militias that threaten fragile political systems. In addition, development professionals argue it

is essential that security sector reform includes dealing with street crime through the establishment of functioning police departments, a body of criminal law, a court system, a cadre of trained criminal prosecutors, and a prison system to incarcerate those convicted of crimes. In civil wars, the line between warlord militias and street criminals is ambiguous. Though Goldstone's broad analysis is plausible, its weakness is in the time lag between the initiation of these security programs and actual improvements in security on the ground.

As a USAID official, I managed the U.S. humanitarian aid effort in Somalia in 1991 and 1992, and the first priority (after we tried to reduce the death rates from starvation and disease from the famine) was the creation of a legal system to arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate the criminals and brigands causing chaos. Because neither the United States nor the UN had the capacity to put in place a robust program to accomplish these security sector objectives in some organized way, the program was

> we have learned from reconstruction in Afghanistan and Southern Sudan the importance of rebuilding the road system before nearly any other intervention

never successfully implemented, but a great deal of planning and analysis was done in 1992 on the matter.

Goldstone's argument can be taken further by examining another sector that could be ramped up for action with much more rapid, early results—rural roads. We have learned from reconstruction in Afghanistan and Southern Sudan the importance of rebuilding the road system before nearly any other intervention. Because we attempted in 2002

to reconstruct everything simultaneously in Afghanistan, we may have retarded the reconstruction effort since roads and transportation infrastructure affect most other programs so directly. A photograph taken of one of the USAID convoys carrying bricks to a remote area of Afghanistan to build a school illustrates this point well. The truck was consumed by a mud hole that had once been a road, and neither the truck nor bricks on it were recoverable even after the rainy season. This scene has repeated itself across the country if in less dramatic ways, increasing the cost and time to construct schools, health clinics, court houses, and municipal buildings. We should have reconstructed the roads first and then followed with the other social welfare and governance programs. This would have reduced the cost and time needed to build the schools and clinics.

Indeed, USAID used this operational strategy very successfully in the communist insurgency in Northern Thailand in the 1970s. Perhaps the greatest impediment to an integrated strategy in the case of Afghanistan has been its weak national government, internal infighting between ministries, and poor planning capacity. In Thailand in the 1970s, the national government was institutionally strong with functional ministries, which made planning and executing a counterinsurgency strategy much easier than in Afghanistan.

Road reconstruction programs in Afghanistan had three other salutary consequences. First, they reduced the isolation of rural areas and thus the attraction of the insurgency. U.S. military officers stated that wherever rural roads were constructed or reconstructed, the influence of the insurgency in Afghanistan declined. Moreover, as soon as roads are open, commerce increases, markets flourish, food prices drop as supply increases, and job creation is stimulated. Family income also grows as farmers produce agricultural surpluses, with inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, and tools.

Second, road programs in the reconstruction of Southern Sudan are having a significant impact on economic growth and the development of a nascent commercial sector. Within a year after the reconstruction of the road by USAID from Uganda to Yei, the capital of Western Equitoria Province, the number of small businesses increased from 200 to 1,200. In addition to commercial traffic, a twice-weekly private bus service was initiated between Kampala and Yei, dramatically reducing the isolation of the province after two decades of civil conflict.[9]

Finally, U.S. military commanders have asserted that the roads program in Afghanistan improved the ability of coalition forces to enforce the peace and counter the insurgency because more troops can be moved more quickly. This analysis must be tempered in the case of the USAID undertaking to rebuild the southern half of the ring road from Kabul to Kandahar and then to Heart. The Taliban insurgents have blown up the newly installed culverts that drain water away from the highway so it will be gradually destroyed by water. Brigands, perhaps associated with the insurgency, have made the highway so dangerous to travel that trucking traffic has had to be seriously curtailed. Once again, these problems can only be resolved through Afghan institutions.

While education is a popular program for its own intrinsic value, new evidence from studies in the poorest countries indicates that there is a direct correlation between school attendance by young men and criminal violence: the higher the rates of attendance, the lower the

level of crime. Thus, we may infer that rapidly raising school enrollment following a conflict is one way of improving security.[10]

Sequencing is not only a critical factor in reconstruction; in its military operational manifestation, it can also have profound effects on emergency humanitarian programs. During the Somalia intervention in December 1992, Fred Cuny, a legendary international disaster response expert who was later murdered in Chechnya, warned against the movement

> Aideed's recruitment effort was facilitated by the collapse of traditional authority structures in villages

of U.S. troops into Somalia to one location. However much that may have made logistical and operational sense to the U.S. military, it was unintentionally counterproductive from a developmental perspective because it acted as a magnet for poor, hungry, and vulnerable villagers who saw the U.S. military representing food and protection from the violence of the warlords. Entire populations left their villages and moved toward this one base. General Muhammad Farrah Aideed, who later became the most disruptive of the warlords and who refused to negotiate a political settlement with other clan and factional leaders, was the principal beneficiary of this population movement because he sent his operatives into the feeding centers to recruit young men into his militia. Aideed's recruitment effort was facilitated by the collapse of traditional authority structures in villages. Cuny had proposed instead that international coalition military units arrive simultaneously at all of the dozen cities that the allied forces eventually sent troops to, thus reducing the powerful magnetic effect of

General Aideed's area to hungry villagers. This was a vivid example of the time lag problem in humanitarian operations and the rule of unintended consequences.[11]

We have also learned important lessons about sequencing in the timing of the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes to coincide with the agricultural cycle, particularly for sedentary agriculturalists in rural areas. This has been a persistent problem in many emergencies such as Somalia (1993–1994), Sudan (2005–2007), and Afghanistan (2002–2004). If the movement of these populations is out of sequence with the agricultural cycle (that is, if they arrive too late to plant the next crop), they become dependent on external humanitarian assistance for a year longer. Since it is frequently difficult for aid agencies to serve people widely dispersed in rural areas, particularly areas that may remain insecure, having people return home under these circumstances can cause serious nutritional problems, encourage conflict between populations trying to survive until the next crop, and increase the risk that people may move again to other locations in search of food.

## Discontinuities

Historically, reconstruction programs following conflicts or natural disasters face two recurrent problems. First, while many countries make pledges of financial support against comprehensive reconstruction plans developed by international institutions—such as the World Bank and UN agencies with support of donor governments—some countries never fulfill their pledges, others count the same pledge several times to inflate their contributions, and still others spend the money over much longer periods than the pledge covers.

Second, in many countries, public-through-private contributions and their

government's foreign aid give large amounts of money to the visible early emergency humanitarian phase of a crisis response, when the real need is for funding for reconstruction and longer term development. Perhaps the best recent example was the massive sum raised in 2005

in countries where the bulk of the population obtains its livelihood from agriculture, planners should consider putting disproportionate aid funding in rural areas

for tsunami relief in Aceh, Indonesia. Even if all the funding was spent on reconstruction, the total amount raised was grossly in excess of what was needed given the number of people affected and the real cost of recovery. The tsunami is admittedly an extreme example of overfunding (albeit for a worthy cause) driven by sustained international media coverage.

Third, the international institutional arrangements for raising funds for postdisaster and postconflict reconstruction have tended to encourage exaggerated public expectations of a peace dividend that will transform their lives overnight. The system used by the international community (historically encouraged by the United States) has relied on international pledging conferences to raise money. The problem with them is that they usually end with announcements of large donor pledges that create high expectations by the people in the countries to get the assistance for a rapid peace dividend, when in fact the disbursement and implementation problems ensure they will not see any broad improvements in their lives for some time.

These problems have led to chronic spending gaps, particularly in longer term

reconstruction efforts. These weaknesses in the international aid system are not unknown, and they remain unresolved; the organizational and political pressures that have caused them have not changed and are not likely to change any time soon. To a great degree, the organizational arrangements of the response structure—both bilateral and multilateral—have perpetuated this system, since they raise money for their particular mandates and not others. One reform that would alleviate some of the stress on the financing system would be to designate the burst of early funding as no-year money, so early emergency funds could be spent over many years on rehabilitation and reconstruction. Some of the emergency offices of aid agencies are now making rehabilitation and reconstruction grants and contracts using their emergency humanitarian funding accounts. This is particularly true in the case of USAID, where statutory changes were made by Congress during the 1990s. These humanitarian accounts are politically popular, widely supported in Congress across all administrations, and have never sustained significant budget cuts the way longer term development accounts have. Thus, one answer to this budgeting problem is to expand the definition of emergency aid and how it may be used, as well as which agencies may do reconstruction programming. NGOs have begun putting caveats in their fundraising letters to private donors that they may use some of the funding for reconstruction rather than simply humanitarian response, which increases the flexibility of the use of these funds and makes responses more effective.

## Observations

Time lags in postconflict settings may seriously disrupt the effectiveness of reconstruction

programs, and thus policymakers, program managers, and strategists should pay much closer attention to the timing and sequencing of these programs to address the challenges presented. Time lags are common features of most postconflict settings, but that does not mean the solution to these problems can be summarized in a simple formula or that successes in addressing them are easily transferred from one postconflict setting to another. Some lessons and remedies are transferrable, but others are not: reconstruction planning should be driven by the local context, not by an assembly line approach. One programmatic size (or approach) does not fit all situations. All reconstruction, like all politics, is ultimately local.

As a general proposition—consistent with local conditions—planners should consider overcompensating in budgeting, planning, operations, and programming for time lags rather than treating them as an isolated problem. Practically speaking, this means that in countries where the bulk of the population lives in rural areas and obtains its livelihood from agriculture, planners should consider putting disproportionate aid funding in rural areas not only because they do not benefit from the subsidiary aid spending that takes place in urban areas but also because dissatisfaction there can often fuel insurgencies.

The whole-of-government approach to reconstruction based on the three-D formulation often involves trying to accommodate inherently contradictory objectives. While more planning and information-sharing by elements of the three Ds can certainly help make the choices clearer, this analysis cannot resolve the unresolvable or rationalize inherently contradictory objectives. Calls for greater coordination as a solution to these problems ignore the essential conflict among the three

Ds in time, sequencing, and the different political and operational pressures they are under. The bureaucratic weakness of the development function in the U.S. Government has meant operationally that it will lose bureaucratic and policy battles, not because its perspective is less legitimate than those of diplomats and military officers, but because it is not at the table or its positions contradict those of its State Department superiors.

Unless policymakers seek out development expertise, the short planning requirements of American diplomacy and military operations will overwhelm the long-term development requirements to create a sustainable peace. Policymakers should make extra efforts, given the bureaucratic weakness of the development function, to get the input of experienced development professionals into key decisions. It is development professionals who best understand these time lags and sequencing challenges because they deal with them in every development setting, including those *not* involving postconflict situations.

Development and postconflict reconstruction require planners and strategists with experience and expertise in these disciplines, and USAID is the historical repository of this knowledge. Its problem right now is that its career staff has been decimated by 25 years of effective reductions in its operational budget, which pays for personnel and training. While Congress appears to be correcting this weakness, it will be some years before the damage is repaired. In the meantime, calling retired USAID officers back to service can bring this expertise to the planners' table to bridge the gap between development theory and practice, and the diplomatic and military requirements they are expected to serve. **PRISM**

## Notes

[1] I have taken the broad notion of time lags from James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock's celebrated essay (first published in 1958) on the subject in their *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), though their use of the term is not directly related to international development.

[2] The notion of a 15- to 20-year time horizon for a democracy to begin to take root is based on common practice among development agencies in regard to one critical indicator of democratization: successive free and fair elections and orderly succession of governments in which there is a change of party at least twice.

[3] The study was conducted by Sue Lautze of the Feinstein Famine Center at Tufts University. It was based on 1,200 random interviews in provinces taken in the first half of 2002. See *Food Insecurity in Afghanistan 1999–2002*, May 2002, available at <http://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Food+Insecurity+in+Afghanistan+1999-2002>.

[4] While the creation of public and private institutions as the central purpose of development programs is a historical axiom of international development theory, Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast's *Violence and Social Order: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1–27, presents an excellent new framework for understanding why and how institutions are what distinguish wealthy and democratic developed societies from societies that tend to be undemocratic, unstable, and poor.

[5] See Andrew S. Natsios, "The Aid Wars," *American Interest* 4 (September–October 2008).

[6] See Paul Collier et al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2003), 83.

[7] See Henrik Urdal, *The Devil in the Demographics: The Effect of Youth Bulges on Domestic Armed Conflict, 1950–2000* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2004); and Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein, "Who Fights: The Determinants of Participation in Civil War," *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no. 2 (2008), 436–455.

[8] Jack A. Goldstone, "The Simultaneity Problem in Stabilization/Reconstruction Operations," *International Peace Operations Association Quarterly* (January 2006).

[9] Data taken from interviews with Development Alternatives, Inc., project management staff in 2003.

[10] Urdal.

[11] I have written a fuller account of these problems in Somalia in "Humanitarian Relief Interventions in Somalia: The Economics of Chaos," *International Peacekeeping* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1996).

Afghan Parliament representative cuts ribbon dedicating Teachers Training College in Panjshir, Afghanistan

U.S. Army (Chris Shin)

## National Security Reform

# A Prerequisite for Successful Complex Operations

BY JAMES R. LOCHER III

In Kandahar, Afghanistan, the Teacher Training College has 184 students, including a 19-year-old woman named Shogota. "Here, we need teachers, education," she says. Shogota believes that if people like her can become teachers, engineers, and businesspeople—community leaders—they will play a crucial role in creating a more modern and secure Afghanistan.[1]

But right now, Shogota and her peers do not have the resources they need. There are not enough trainers at the college. There are not enough engineers to rebuild vital infrastructure. There are not enough advisors to help local businesses grow. As a result, poor Afghans turn to

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the Taliban for employment, adventure, and a sense of belonging.[2] Despite the best efforts of Americans on the ground, and for all the hopes of a young woman such as Shogota, hers is the story of a national security failure for the United States. The most important part of

> if complex operations are to succeed, the Nation must reorient and reform its entire national security system

Shogota's story takes place not in Afghanistan, but in Washington. For years, experts and leaders from across government have been arguing that Afghanistan needs to be treated as a complex operation, with agricultural experts, teachers, lawyers, and engineers working alongside the military. But while strategists were thinking about the mission as a whole, it was being funded in a piecemeal fashion, agency by agency. The Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have small budgets compared to that of the Department of Defense (DOD), and as a result, the civilian effort never received needed support. There is no way to train civilian teachers, lawyers, engineers, or agricultural experts for combat-zone assignments. This, in turn, makes our well-funded military's job more difficult, forced as it is to become the face of the American presence in Afghanistan. In the words of Michèle Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the United States has been reduced to taking "stopgap measures"—using soldiers to do civilian work.[3]

Looking at the big picture, the reason Shogota is having trouble becoming a teacher is not because any one part of the national security system failed. Rather, failure in the contemporary security climate is *built into the system itself*.

If we do not change the way we think about national security, this failure will be repeated time and time again. America will fail to seize important opportunities to win friends and build partnerships around the world and will fail to respond to a growing range of increasingly diverse, complex threats from abroad.

Complexity is now the norm. Operations in the 21st century involve the Departments of Justice, Treasury, Agriculture, Homeland Security, and Energy, among others.[4] They require some of the most highly trained personnel in the world—people who can police unstable areas, train fledgling forces, think strategically, and advise other nations on issues as diverse as capacity-building, local governance, and economic development.[5]

But the success or failure of these operations will not depend solely on what takes place on the ground. As we see from the example above, the outcome is determined in government offices across Washington and the Nation and is written, to a great extent, into the very structure of the national security system itself. We must reconsider all the elements in this system to assess their effectiveness and to suggest ways in which they can be improved.

For, indeed, they *must be improved*. If complex operations are to succeed—if America is to remain secure in the face of new and ever-changing threats—the Nation must reorient and reform its entire national security system.

## Past Lessons

The national security system has never been static; it is in a constant state of evolution. As threats have changed shape, policymakers—in the executive branch, Congress, and Armed Forces—have changed aspects of the system by

adding capacity, shifting or increasing resources, refining strategy, and so forth.

But this evolution has tended to be ad hoc, inconsistent, and incomplete. In general, it has been reactive rather than proactive, lagging behind the challenges that it exists to address. Despite all this, the remarkable men and women who safeguard our nation's security have achieved some stunning successes—winning battles large and small, tracking and neutralizing enemies, and defending our borders against myriad threats. But the system that should enable them has too often held them back.

During World War II, our ability to wage conventional war was hampered by a lack of communication within the military. The Army and Navy had their own air forces and intelligence agencies, and information-sharing was almost nonexistent. This was addressed after the war by the National Security Act (NSA) of 1947, which created, among other things, the organizations that would become the National Security Council (NSC), Central Intelligence Agency, and DOD. The NSA, however, was a compromise bill and integrated the Services to a much lesser degree than President Harry Truman wanted.[6] In the 1970s, our national security failures began to grow more apparent. They were exposed by the Vietnam War, the intelligence abuses investigated by the Church Commission, and the Iran hostage crisis.

Complex threats such as the Iran hostage crisis required greater cooperation among the Services. In 1986, as a professional staff member on the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), I helped draft the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986, which empowered the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Staff, and combatant commands, and brought us out of "The Age of Services" and into "The Age of Jointness."

Although these reforms greatly strengthened our national defense, it is also true that threats have not stopped evolving. Indeed, they are changing at an accelerating rate, spreading in an increasing number of directions, taking new and at first unrecognizable shapes. For example, in recent years we have witnessed the steady rise of transnational actors—militia groups, terrorist networks, narcotraffickers, pirates, and other criminal enterprises—whose strength and agility may far exceed the capability of weak governments to police their own territories.[7] Other threats to our security are not manmade: natural disasters, climate change, and AIDS, among others.

The national security environment is more likely to be characterized by complex operations today than it was during World War II. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, one of the most influential advocates for national security reform, has observed:

> Over the last 15 years, the U.S. Government has tried to meet post–Cold War challenges and pursue 21st-century objectives with processes and organizations designed in the wake of the Second World War. Operating within this outdated bureaucratic superstructure, the U.S. Government has sought to improve interagency planning and cooperation through a variety of means: new legislation, directives, offices, coordinators, "tsars," authorities, and initiatives with varying degrees of success. . . . I'm encouraged that a consensus appears to be building that we need to rethink the fundamental structure and processes of our national security system.[8]

Gates recognizes the increasing need for effective interagency processes, whole-of-government solutions, and the increased use of soft

power. Indeed, one analysis predicted that the Obama administration would face six critical challenges in the field of complex operations: "improving integration and program coherence, enlarging the capacity for stabilization and reconstruction, strengthening conflict prevention, promoting economic growth, strengthening institution-building, and leveraging U.S. programs internationally."[9]

In the face of complex threats, a new age must begin. Our patchwork approach to national security must end. In the 21st century, we need a new whole-of-government approach—an "Interagency Age" in which our system is as adaptable as the threats we face.

## Growing Consensus for an Interagency Age

Support for this idea has been building for more than a decade. Experts have been pushing for greater cooperation among agencies and a more strategic, coordinated approach to national security policy.

In 1994, Vice President Al Gore's National Performance Review argued that the U.S. Agency for International Development,

> after the 9/11 attacks—the most catastrophic national security failure since Vietnam—the calls for reform grew louder and more urgent

U.S. Information Agency, and Arms Control and Disarmament Agency should be incorporated into the State Department. In 1995, the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces found a need for a "quadrennial strategy review," an interagency project to be led by the National Security Council

and conducted at the beginning of each administration. In 1996, the Aspin-Brown Commission on Roles and Capabilities of the U.S. Intelligence Community issued its final report, and that same year, the staff of the House Intelligence Committee conducted the Intelligence Community in the 21st Century study. Both reports proposed major restructuring and realignment of authorities.[10] In December 1997, the National Defense Panel published a report stating that "the entire U.S. national security structure must become more integrated, coherent, and proactive."[11] A report released by the Hart-Rudman Commission in 2001 argued that the United States must "redesign not just individual departments and agencies but its national security apparatus as a whole. Serious deficiencies exist that cannot be solved by a piecemeal approach."[12]

After the 9/11 attacks—the most catastrophic national security failure since Vietnam—the calls for reform grew louder and more urgent. The 9/11 Commission Report declared, "Americans should not settle for incremental, ad hoc adjustments to a system designed generations ago for a world that no longer exists."[13] In the fall of 2006, the Princeton Project on National Security issued recommendations for a new, more flexible national security strategy.[14] The Center for Strategic and International Studies launched "Beyond Goldwater-Nichols," a four-phase study on ways to reorganize the national security system to meet 21st-century challenges.[15] Project Horizon, an internal government program, began in 2005 in order to identify "capabilities to prepare for the unforeseen threats and opportunities that will face the nation over the next 20 years" through increased interagency cooperation.[16]

**Teacher talks during interview at reopening of school in Abu Ghraib, Iraq**

In 2006, the Iraq Study Group issued a sweeping recommendation on national security policy that went well beyond the subject of the Iraq War:

> *For the longer term, the United States government needs to improve how its constituent agencies—Defense, State, [U.S.] Agency for International Development, Treasury, Justice, the intelligence community, and others—respond to a complex stability operation like that represented by this decade's Iraq and Afghanistan wars and the previous decades' operations in the Balkans.*[17]

Today, there is agreement that our national security system must become more coordinated and adaptable. The U.S. Government is currently unequipped to integrate the various departments or harness their skills to carry out complex operations. As Senator John Warner wrote to the White House in 2006, the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan "have revealed that our government is not adequately organized to conduct interagency operations."[18] It is consequently unprepared to meet threats requiring complex operations.

Despite this consensus, however, the Interagency Age will not emerge of its own accord. It will take a concerted and sustained push by both the executive and legislative branches. It will take considerable foresight. And it will require that officials take a holistic view of what the national security system is intended to accomplish.

## Identifying Problems

That effort must begin with a careful analysis of the flaws in the current system. At first glance, this seems a nearly impossible task: the U.S. national security system is a maze of

> although many congressional committees have jurisdiction over a part of the national security system, no single committee oversees the system as a whole

institutions. During the first year of the George W. Bush administration, for example, there were 9 unified commands, 16 agencies in the Intelligence Community, 17 agencies in DOD, 17 committees in the NSC, 22 agencies folded into the Department of Homeland Security, and 305 Embassies, consulates, and diplomatic missions around the globe.[19] In all, our national

security system at the Federal level relies on approximately 4 million people.[20]

The system is complicated. But for all its complexity, it has three central elements: Congress, the White House, and the departments and agencies themselves. We can ask the same question of each element: Is its priority successful mission outcomes? Right now, the answer for all three is *no*. Each has conflicting priorities. Each is distracted from the mission at hand. As a result, each is unprepared to support complex operations.

*Congress.* Congress is responsible for authorizing and funding the national security system. But the structure of Congress itself virtually guarantees that its oversight of the system will be fragmented and ad hoc.

Although many congressional committees have jurisdiction over a part of the national security system, no single committee oversees the system as a whole. According to a 2008 congressional report:

> *Congressional oversight of national security programs is divided among many different committees, including the Armed Services Committees, the Select Committees on Intelligence, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the Committee on Homeland Security, among others.*[21]

This means that no committee can focus on a mission outcome. It has only part of the entire mission and often engages in fights over jurisdiction as well. One result is an alphabet soup of uncoordinated agencies.

Finally, the rules governing congressional funding practices are inconsistent and overcomplicated. As the HELP Commission[22] put it, "At

present, the interpretation, management and operation of these procedures is at best unwieldy and at times unworkable. . . . Within the legislative branch itself, the authorizers and appropriators follow different procedures, and the House and Senate obey their own distinct processes."[23]

Complex operations in the field, such as an Afghanistan Provincial Reconstruction Team, are not likely to be successful in the absence of wise congressional action in Washington.

*White House.* The Commander in Chief is responsible for managing the 4-million-person national security system and setting its long-term strategy. Right now—although it would be politically impossible for any White House to admit—the President constantly risks being overwhelmed by these responsibilities and lacks the resources to fulfill them effectively.

The root of this problem lies with the overburdened NSC. The Ashridge Centre, a strategy research group, collected data in the 1990s that suggest a hypothetical corporation with 4 million employees would have more than 3,200 staff members in its corporate headquarters.[24] The NSC, which ought to be the headquarters for the national security system, is approximately one-fifteenth that size, with 71 funded employee slots and 155 detailees. With the NSC asked to do so much with so little, there is an insufficient national security "brain"—no center to effectively coordinate between agencies and missions.

This means the Oval Office is overburdened as well. Since true management is impossible, the President is forced to hope for an individual foreign policy guru—Henry Kissinger is the most frequently used example—to provide direction. This arrangement is, at best, inconsistent. As a result, all Presidents are forced to micromanage, dealing with short-term threats rather than grand strategy. We elect our Presidents based on their vision and foresight, but once they are in office, we require them to spend their time dealing with the crisis of the day.

*Departments and Agencies.* Government departments and agencies are the direct link between managers in Washington and operations

> like the Age of Services, the Interagency Age will become possible only when Congress reorganizes the national security system by statute

in the field. However, the cultures and designs of these agencies make it harder for our forces on the ground to execute missions.

The greatest problem within the agencies is that they provide no incentives for a bureaucrat to adopt an interagency mentality. In fact, they encourage the opposite. It is no wonder that interagency committees, where they exist, have largely been ineffective—for work on those committees will not break a person's career, but loyalty to one's own agency will *make* that career. This parochial mentality is reinforced by the way operations are funded—agency-by-agency rather than operation-by-operation. The natural consequence is that an agency has two missions for every one it is assigned. In addition to achieving a successful outcome, there is an internal mission: demand the most money and take the most credit.

Even when agencies *do* want to cooperate, they face unnecessary obstacles. For example, each agency uses idiosyncratic rules to govern information-sharing, making it harder for them to communicate with one another. As a result, an unofficial network of back channels, bypasses, workarounds, and ad hoc solutions has taken the place of real, transparent cooperation.

These jerry-rigged systems show that staffs from different agencies want to work together but lack the necessary tools or authorization.

Because the current national security system is grossly imbalanced toward agency capabilities and away from interagency missions, complex operations are likely ineffective, information-impoverished, frustrating, and held together by out-of-the-box organizational inventions.

We need a national security system focused on outcomes. Congress should authorize this system, the White House should manage it, and the agencies should give those in the field the support they need to execute it. At the moment, however, competing interests are getting in the way. Without fundamental change, it will be impossible for the United States to focus solely on the successful outcomes of the missions at hand.

## Solution: A New National Security Act

Like the Age of Services, which was ushered in by the 1947 National Security Act, and the Age of Jointness, which was ushered in by Goldwater-Nichols, the Interagency Age will become possible only when Congress reorganizes the national security system by statute. In order for any such legislation to be effective, it will need to address the three problem areas already identified:

*Congress.* The legislative branch must begin by changing its own rules to reflect a view of national security that is broader and more complex. It should start by establishing a Select Committee on National Security in each chamber to oversee the entire national security system. It should also strengthen the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee by adopting new rules to empower them to formulate and enact annual authorization bills.

*The NSC.* The NSC should seek legislation to formalize the merger between the staffs of the Homeland Security Council and the NSC, and begin to expand the new National Security Staff. It should strengthen the position of Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs so whoever holds it can be an effective manager for the entire national security system.

In addition, the NSC staff should be freed to deal with long-term strategy. Instead of having to carry out damage control, the Executive would be freed to focus on U.S. long-term interests. Furthermore, the NSC should delegate medium-term responsibility to interagency teams. These teams would be divided by region, country, and province. Finally, the NSC should use interagency crisis task forces to respond to extremely sudden, short-term threats.

*Departments and Agencies.* The NSC staff should seek legislation that would mandate a whole-of-government quadrennial national security review (QNSR). National security legislation could reduce the need for back channels and ad hoc solutions by building a coherent framework and normative process for strategy formation, management, and implementation. To reduce interagency friction, it should direct each national security agency to prepare a 6-year budget projection influenced by the QNSR, the annual national security strategy document, and new annual national security planning and resource guidance documents.

## Conclusion

Complex operations in Afghanistan and throughout the world, at home and abroad, will not be successful in the absence of full-scale national security reform in Washington. The war in Afghanistan cannot end without successes in numerous Provincial

Reconstruction Teams, but the U.S. national security system is not currently able to generate these interagency successes. Shogata's frustration at the lack of teachers for her Teacher Training College in Kandahar symbolizes this inability and the repeated failure of the U.S. national security system to successfully conduct complex operations.

After every national security failure, people start looking for someone to blame. Can we blame the President? Can we blame Congress? Can we blame bureaucrats in Washington or "bad apples" in the field? It takes far more calm—and far more courage—to acknowledge that our problems run deeper than any one person. But it is true. We need to stop looking for the failure within the national security system. The failure *is* the system. **PRISM**

## Notes

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[22] According to the Brookings Institution Web site, "Congress established the Helping to Enhance the Livelihood of People around the Globe (HELP) Commission to study U.S. development and humanitarian assistance programs and to propose bold reform recommendations for relevant structures, mechanisms, and incentives."

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**President Obama with Vice President Joseph Biden, Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai, and Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari at White House, May 2009**

White House (Lawrence Jackson)

# A New Approach

## to the Delivery of U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

BY WILLIAM M. FREJ AND DAVID HATCH

*The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves and then we will save our country.*

—Abraham Lincoln

We listened with great anticipation as President Barack Obama delivered his inaugural address, ushering in change and a "new era of responsibility." The words spoken that day reflected on where we are as a nation, what we have learned from our Founding Fathers, and, above all, a renewed sense of hope and virtue to meet the challenges ahead. And these challenges are many.

Building on his address, on March 27, President Obama announced a comprehensive regional strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The goal is clear: "to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al

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Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future."[1] To do so, "America must no longer deny resources to Afghanistan because of the war in Iraq";[2] these are the dogmas of the past. The strategy aims to coalesce U.S. military,

> long excluded from education, health care, employment, and public life, Afghan women continue to suffer from illiteracy, poor health, and extreme poverty

economic, and governance efforts—a commitment to invest and to provide the resource requirements that can accomplish our goals in the region.

While only a few months have passed since the President announced the strategy, there is a stark contrast between the role of the U.S. Government now and then—in particular on the approach to delivering foreign assistance in Afghanistan. We have been rigorously reviewing all existing and planned nonmilitary development assistance resources to align U.S. civilian assistance with the President's strategy. For example, individual government agencies, and sections within these agencies, can no longer be "islands." We must act more as a "continent," with the United States and Afghanistan working together with a whole-of-government approach in close partnership with the international community in the delivery of development assistance. Although the United States is the largest bilateral provider of assistance in Afghanistan, we recognize that we need help.

The purpose of this article is to outline the development context, a new U.S. whole-of-government approach, and how we are building a sense of hope and virtue to meet the challenges in Afghanistan.

## "Out of Many, One"

Beginning in medias res, Afghanistan, especially in the border areas with Pakistan, sails between Scylla and Charybdis—between al Qaeda and its allies. And the stormy present has been deadly. We are mindful of the sacrifices made and of those who have fallen in the name of freedom.

Like the citizens of the United States and its partners, Afghans have big dreams for their nation. Afghanistan is a country firmly focused on the future that refuses to give in to the voices of hatred, resentment, and unbridled furor. The Afghan government, international community, and local population must continue to move the country forward and demonstrate results.

We are aware that Afghans are dreaming of stability amid instability. Out of many provinces, peoples, ethnicities, and ancestries, it is hoped that a single Afghanistan will emerge. America itself emerged under similar circumstances to become the melting pot of diversity that it is today. Yet the dream of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness on the frontlines in Afghanistan is at risk. A perfect storm of anarchy, extremism, and narcoterrorism clouds the day.

According to the 2008 Asia Foundation Survey, the biggest problems faced by Afghanistan are security, unemployment, high prices, a poor economy, and corruption. Afghans work hard yet lack opportunities for jobs and basic services such as water, electricity, education, and health care. Opportunities to join the insurgency become attractive.

We will continue to support the basic human rights for all Afghans. Let us not forget the importance of gender issues, with a special emphasis on women. Long excluded from education, health care, employment, and public life, Afghan women continue to suffer from illiteracy, poor health, and extreme poverty.

The country's maternal mortality and female illiteracy rates are among the highest in the world, while a woman's life expectancy, at just 44 years, is among the lowest. Not only do Afghan women face urgent humanitarian needs, but also their untapped energy and productivity are essential for sustainable peace, security, and development. To achieve our goals, we need full economic participation, equal access, and opportunity for all. Our words here on gender, in particular for the empowerment of women, may be few, but they are of the utmost importance.

The United States stands with the Afghan government. Kabul has an Afghan-developed blueprint for development, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, to create a stable and tolerant society with a market-based licit economy, improved quality of life, and effective and legitimate governance. To implement this strategy following three decades of war, Afghanistan needs public and private sector *presence*, not just *presents*.

## New Approach

The U.S. Mission's new approach in Afghanistan, to implement the President's Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy, is to support Afghan leadership, Afghan capacity-building efforts at all levels, and Afghan sustainability (for, with, and by the people), and to increase local procurement initiatives such as "Afghan First." The U.S. Government's guiding principle of *Afghanization* (meaning Afghan-led development) will ensure that Afghans lead, not follow, in their path to a secure and economically viable country, in partnership with the United States. An agile, flexible, and responsive U.S. regional counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy will provide the framework in which we operate to maximize all U.S. resources by sector and,

more importantly, geographically to promote stability. A whole-of-government, unity-of-effort approach through integrated planning and operations will also help us coordinate and integrate with international community partners. A significant change in contracting, management, resources, and focus of our foreign assistance to overcome the "trust deficit" will help us engage the populace in ways that demonstrate commitment to a responsive and capable Afghan government. Additional assistance must be accompanied by new contracting principles and delivery mechanisms to mitigate risks and to ensure greater accountability, immediate action, and sustained commitment.

In short, we seek a stronger and more effective Afghan-U.S. development partnership. At the national level, more U.S. assistance will be channeled through the Afghan government core budget. At the field level,

> to implement a strategy following decades of war, Afghanistan needs public and private sector *presence*, not just *presents*

U.S. assistance will be shifting to smaller, more flexible, and faster contract and grant mechanisms to increase decentralized decisionmaking in the field. In each program and project design, we will outline how field input has been incorporated, show how field staff will be involved in implementation as appropriate, and demonstrate how the proposed activity will contribute to U.S. COIN goals. Factors we will consider prior to awarding contracts and grants will include:

❖ the degree to which Afghan content (labor and materials) is emphasized

❖ how the activity contributes to COIN

- the bidder's track record
- anticipated results and impact
- flexibility and agility.

For example, contracts and awards will include an evaluation factor that allows for special consideration to offerers who propose procurement mechanisms to purchase more products and services locally. We will build on past successes and lessons learned, including working closer with our Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction and Regional Inspector General colleagues to provide adequate oversight.

## Adopt Guiding Framework

To increase Afghanization, the U.S. Mission is adopting a whole-of-government assistance framework that:

- aligns with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy
- directs capacity-building efforts at the public sector, private sector, and civil society
- increases joint decisionmaking and joint action with line ministries by involving ministry staff in program design, procurement, and joint monitoring and evaluation
- focuses U.S. assistance on sectors and regions where the United States has a comparative advantage, and makes decisions on geographic focus in consultation with the Independent Directorate for Local Government
- ensures U.S. contractors utilize Afghans in key personnel positions as a means of ensuring a better grasp of the needs

and reality on the ground and improving senior management capabilities

- ensures that more U.S.-trained, skilled Afghan workers are hired by U.S. contractors
- purchases more products and services locally via programs such as Afghan First
- scales up contributions to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) as a means to deliver better coordinated assistance and improve Afghan government procedures and management capacity
- delivers support directly to some ministries through the Ministry of Finance (once U.S. Government accounting and financial requirements have been met)
- forges public-private alliances to maximize the impact and quality of activities.

## Mitigate Risks and Be Accountable

The U.S. Mission's new approach is an essential step in a fresh relationship between the United States and Afghanistan, which will underscore that the United States seeks a strong and capable partner in the Afghan government. In essence, the Afghan people are the mission. The challenges are significant:

- a great lack of Afghan experience with planning and implementation, nascent government capacity, an extremely underdeveloped private sector and civil society, and persistent insecurity in the south and east, all of which can imperil the achievement of intended impacts

♦ a pervasive public perception that U.S. assistance does not benefit ordinary Afghans and that it contributes to government corruption

♦ the potential for corruption at all levels that harms the achievement of the central goal—connecting the people to the state—and undermines sustainability.

There are positive signals of Afghan government capacity. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Financial Management (OFM) is in the process of updating its 2007 financial assessment of the Ministry of Finance's three directorates (Budget, Internal Audit, and Treasury). In addition, OFM visited Afghanistan's central bank (Da Afghanistan Bank) and General Auditor's Office, the Control and Audit Office. Although some areas for technical assistance were noted, no major concerns that would impact the flow of funds through Afghan government institutions were found during the assessment's field work.

The United States can further help the Afghan government achieve results by enhancing its own measures of risk mitigation and accountability. For example, all new USAID contracts and grants will have a maximum basic performance period of 1 year, with optional years possible subsequent to a rigorous performance review. Once projects/activities have started, more oversight to monitor, track, and report progress by indicators, targets, and criteria will be developed. Multiple smaller contracts will also mitigate risk as opposed to large contracts, which tend to have slow startup and project delays.

Direct civilian oversight of projects, contracts, and grants will increase dramatically with the influx from the civilian uplift, as well as enhanced partnerships with the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction and the Regional Inspector General, with proper monitoring and oversight.

## Think Nationally, Act Regionally and Locally

At the national level, specific recommendations to increase Afghanization include increased funding through the ARTF and credible direct budget support mechanisms to help bring the government closer to the people.

The United States is developing an action plan to increase direct assistance through more Afghan government systems. In addition to the recent reassessment of the Afghan Ministry of Finance financial management systems to determine its capacity to absorb direct funding, additional government entities such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, among others, are in line for assessments. The U.S. Mission will also coordinate with other donors to align direct support to line ministries or host country contracts and help connect national and field level initiatives.

At the regional level, there is an explicit recognition that the United States is pursuing development within the context of a broader COIN strategy. One of our primary objectives is consolidation of a government and society that are stable, secure, and confident enough to be an effective partner. Essential initiatives are in the east and south where we will target areas (for example, Nangarhar, bordering Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas) in coordination with the U.S. interagency community, U.S. Forces–Afghanistan, International Security Assistance Force, the Afghan government, and donors.

Afghan national programs such as the National Solidarity Program, funded through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, have increased cooperation at the village, community, district, provincial, and national levels. This program is a bottom-up approach to development where communities identify, develop, and implement their own projects, thus encouraging more buy-in and Afghan ownership on the ground.

### Be Agile, Flexible, and Responsive

USAID procurement and contracting procedures are being amended to include incentives to increase capacity-building efforts and reporting requirements on Afghanization. To increase Afghan ownership, leadership, and visibility, joint decisionmaking is emphasized at the line-ministry level in all sectors, and

> Afghan national programs have increased cooperation at the village, community, district, provincial, and national levels

Afghan officials will more frequently participate in the USAID procurement processes. Special consideration in new procurements is being given for Afghans in key senior-level personnel positions.

U.S. assistance will be shifting to smaller, more flexible, and faster contract and grant mechanisms to increase decentralized decisionmaking in the field and to be more responsive to Afghan communities. To accomplish this, we are working with Washington to support allowing warrants (simplified acquisition procedures) for up to $25,000 for qualified and trained USAID Field Program Officers. We also plan to shift warranted officers to the regional platforms

in coordination with U.S. military colleagues. Innovative interagency procurement boards are also being explored.

### Buy Local, Build Afghanistan

Local procurement is faster, easier, and often less expensive than purchasing from outside Afghanistan. To seek more local expertise and to buy goods and services locally, the United States is now doing more work through local companies. As of June 2009, USAID employed over 20,000 Afghans and procured more than $280 million in local goods and services. The U.S. Mission itself—as distinct from the assistance programs we implement—also buys locally. Over half of the Mission's current spending on goods and services is Afghan-sourced. The Afghan government also has an important role in this process. The best thing the government can do to increase local procurement is to strengthen the legal and policy environment to promote private sector development. A climate that enables private business to operate with limited bureaucratic obstacles will help bring new investment, which will better support Afghan companies in competing for foreign military and assistance contracts.

Specifically to increase sustainability, the U.S. Mission supports the Afghan First initiative. The U.S. Mission plans to work with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and donors to increase procurement of supplies for civilian and military activities within the country, use Afghan material in the implementation of projects (in particular for infrastructure), and increasingly employ Afghan national implementation partners and equally qualified local and expatriate Afghans. For example, the United States can link its agriculture programs to source food for the military located at Provincial Reconstruction Teams. As

the U.S. Department of Agriculture increases its presence, its officers will also become key players in the region.

Washington supports local partners such as the Peace Dividend Trust (PDT), which has been working in Afghanistan since January 2006 to increase local procurement by connecting international buyers to Afghan sellers. In particular, PDT manages a database of around 3,500 Afghan suppliers. These vendors can be found at the PDT Web site at www.buildingmarkets. org. PDT trains Afghan companies about bidding and performance issues. It can also distribute tenders directly to Afghan businesses either in person or via email. Within a few months, PDT will distribute short-notice bidding opportunities by Short Message Service (texting).

USAID is working to connect vocational program graduates with its contractors and grantees. The Kunar Construction Trades Training Center, funded by both the Commander's Emergency Response Program and USAID, has graduated three classes to date, with a total of 400 students. Each graduation is followed by a job fair, and almost all graduates have been hired right out of the training program.

To deliver more funding straight to ministries, the United States is providing up to $236 million over 5 years directly to the Afghan Ministry of Public Health and $1 million to the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. The United States has also developed an action plan to channel more assistance directly to the Afghan government and is aligning capacity-building efforts to strengthen core functions such as procurement and financial systems in line ministries to make this happen.

To maximize the use of the ARTF, Washington contributed a total of $110 million to the fund in Afghan fiscal year (FY) 1387 (March 21, 2008–March 20, 2009). This was more than double the U.S. contribution in FY 1386 and made the United States the top contributor to the ARTF in FY 1387. We aim to provide even more in the future.

Capacity-building mitigates risk and increases sustainability. The United States is currently building capacity in all three branches of government at both the national and subnational levels. Substantial capacity is also being built in businesses and nongovernmental organizations. As of March 2009, approximately

> partnerships among donors, government, and the private sector will help create in-country conditions that fuel private investment and stimulate entrepreneurship

$62 million was provided in a targeted capacity development program to 15 ministries and national institutions, and the program is being extended to the subnational level.

To maximize the impact and quality of activities, the United States is leveraging over $38 million in private resources, primarily through public-private partnerships with Afghan businesses, on a U.S. investment of $15 million. Partnerships among donors, government, and the private sector will help create in-country conditions that fuel private investment and stimulate entrepreneurship, especially in small and medium enterprises.

### Next Steps

All U.S. agencies in Afghanistan are following a whole-of-government approach to achieve the goals specified in the Obama administration's strategy: They are working as teams, not individualized agencies. They are collaborating to integrate population security

with building effective local governance, economic development, and sustainability across Country Teams and in close cooperation with U.S. Forces–Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force, coalition partners, and especially our hosts, the government of Afghanistan and Afghan civil society leaders. Increased funding to programs is vital to the success of America's new strategy over the next 18 months. Moreover, it is feasible to implement at higher levels at an efficient and responsible manner.

Specifically, the United States plans to channel more funding in FY 2010 through the Afghan government's core budget via the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund to ensure that national programs such as the National Solidarity Program have adequate resources, while promoting incentives for securing government reforms. The U.S. Mission in Afghanistan also proposes a direct budget support program via the Ministry of Finance (for systems that have passed U.S. requirements) to further build capacity on internal audit, public financial management systems, and discretionary funds conditional on policy and results benchmarks in coordination with donors. Washington also aims to provide technical assistance and training to private Afghan nongovernmental organizations, specifically including those involved in women's issues, to meet U.S. requirements to receive funding by having adequate financial and procurement systems in place.

By 2011, the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan's ambitious goal is to channel more than half of the USAID budget through the government of Afghanistan and local Afghan firms. This high level of Afghanization will strengthen sustainability by putting Afghans in charge of their country's development. Adhering to our new contracting principles will ensure that Afghans lead, not follow, in their path to a secure and economically viable Afghanistan, in partnership with the United States.

## Trust, Confidence, and Hope

Afghanistan is hungry for development. The United States, in coordination with its international partners, is providing jobs to the jobless, a voice to the voiceless, heat for cold homes, water for the thirsty, and food for the hungry. In short, it is offering Afghans a path to hope and sustainable development. We are optimistic about a new era of prosperity and peace. We are also optimistic that one day we will echo Woodrow Wilson's famous words: "The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people."

The only constant in the future is change. We look forward to learning from our partners, the Afghan government, neighboring Pakistan, and others how we can better implement the President's evolving strategy, putting actions to words and measuring progress against clear metrics. With greater smart power comes greater responsibility and, like Lincoln, we must rise with the occasion. **PRISM**

## Notes

[1] See <www.whitehouse.gov/blog/09/03/27/A-New-Strategy-for-Afghanistan-and-Pakistan/>.

[2] Ibid.

# Provincial Reconstruction Teams
# A Literature Review

**BY CHRISTOFF LUEHRS**

Considerable writings and testimony have been produced by the U.S. Government, nongovernmental organizations, think tanks, and academia on Iraq and Afghanistan Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) since their inception. A review of the literature beginning in 2004 through mid-2009 reveals certain trends and broad consensus on a number of issues. The most prominent of these trends is the failure to learn the lessons throughout this period such that the challenges and gaps identified in 2004 persist into 2009. Issues identified include the need for:

- ❖ better defined mission objectives and transition strategies
- ❖ integrated interagency training with greater input from subject matter experts
- ❖ resolution of command and control issues and "culture clash" between civilians and military, and among civilian interagency partners
- ❖ increased planning to integrate civil-military and interagency members
- ❖ streamlined and integrated funding mechanisms
- ❖ augmented host-nation involvement throughout the reconstruction and stabilization process
- ❖ continuity of human resources and enhancement of institutional knowledge retention
- ❖ coordination of and integration across the sectors and programs—breaking down stovepipes.

The list of representative documents is relatively short, as every effort has been made to present only those issues on which there appears a broad consensus, rather than going into the details of all specific recommendations that have been made to date.[1]

## Mission Objectives and Strategy

At the most basic level, the various documents under review state that there is a fundamental uncertainty as to the proper concept, role, and objectives of PRTs in Iraq and Afghanistan. Basic

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**Electrician with embedded PRT checks wiring at water treatment plant outside Ahmad Jamil, Iraq**

questions are not settled. What is a PRT? What is it trying to achieve? How does the objective relate to an overall political purpose?

Several texts note that PRTs were originally designed in Afghanistan to deal with the "spoiler problem" by coopting and reconciling local power brokers, and that other missions such as counterinsurgency and postconflict reconstruction were added on later. Thus, the basic understanding of what a PRT should be trying to achieve and what it realistically can achieve has been in flux.[2]

Some authors stress that PRTs should be focused on security (security sector reform, intelligence, force protection), only conduct limited reconstruction, and avoid governance. In this view, PRTs can make a valuable contribution in areas where a lack of security makes "regular development work" difficult but not impossible.[3] On the other hand, the International Security Assistance Force has identified discrete lines of operation for PRTs: security, governance, enabling reconstruction, and coordinating with other actors. Beyond such broad mission statements, there is no agreement within

the U.S. Government (or between the government and its allies) on how PRTs should be organized, how they should conduct operations, or what specifically they should accomplish.[4] At the same time, no endstate has been defined at which the PRTs would be replaced by "regular development" teams, making it more difficult for personnel on the ground to balance the desire for rapid results with sustainable development and capacity-building; all too often, this results in the pursuit of "feel-good projects."[5]

Predictably, a lack of clarity on the objectives that PRTs should pursue translates into a similar state of affairs with regard to strategy. Thus, virtually all documents under review lament the lack of an overarching strategy and put forward a range of "strategic fixes" from civilianizing the PRTs across the board, to limiting their role, to "buying time" for kinetic military efforts and "development proper," to setting up in-country interagency coordinating bodies with a mandate to fit PRT efforts into broader U.S. foreign policy objectives.[6]

## Interagency Command and Control Issues

*Policymaking Level.* This problem has been flagged without exception in all publications in the reviewed literature. There are no clear lines of authority, let alone a single chain of command, to ensure that military and civilian PRT efforts are effectively coordinated. The problem starts at the policy level and persists down to the tactical in a more or less severe form depending largely on circumstances in theater, personalities, and goodwill. As the Deputy Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction summed it up in 2007:

> *On the issue of civil-military integration, the problems that we are finding are that*

*there is really no permanent, predictable method of integrating decisionmaking and resource-sharing. Instead, there is a patchwork quilt of memoranda of agreements and* [fragmentary orders] *and military orders and cables that, all together, sort of provide the policy underpinnings that are used by PRTs.*[7]

Despite efforts to remedy the situation through implementing National Security Presidential Directive 44, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, and similar documents, this state of affairs persists as per the latest texts under review.[8]

*Intra-PRT Level.* At the level of individual PRTs, the literature particularly emphasizes the "clash of cultures" in addition to more

> the basic understanding of what a Provincial Reconstruction Team should be trying to achieve and what it realistically can achieve has been in flux

detailed descriptions of command and control issues playing out at the tactical level.

In Afghanistan, civilian PRT members have frequently complained that they were being treated as outsiders by their numerically stronger military counterparts. This issue was being compounded by poor synchronization of tours and team deployments.[9] Beyond the (likely inevitable) persistence of unique organizational cultures, insufficient joint training and predeployment socialization exacerbate the problem and reinforce a lack of understanding of organizational cultures and modus operandi.[10] Even where functional overlap exists between military Civil Affairs units

and civilian experts, these assets are not fully integrated as teams, and may therefore end up working at cross purposes.

> the absence of clear objectives and supporting strategies combines with interagency command and control issues to inhibit coordinated planning and sound assessments of PRT efforts

Beyond the individual PRTs, there is a lack of coordination between PRT activities and Regimental Combat Team/Brigade Combat Team (BCT) efforts in Iraq, and between PRT activities and nonkinetic military efforts, as well as between other civilian efforts in Afghanistan. In Iraq, two measures were taken to mitigate the chain of command problem. The Departments of State and Defense agreed upon a Memorandum of Understanding for administrative and logistical support and for providing security. In addition, the United States established the embedded PRTs (ePRTs), which work directly for the BCT commander's staff. In Afghanistan, the problem has been addressed more recently through the establishment of the Integrated Civil-Military Action Group (ICMAG), which is intended to be the go-to problem solver for the range of interagency and civil-military issues.

### Planning and Assessment

The absence of clear objectives and supporting strategies combines with interagency command and control issues to inhibit coordinated planning and sound assessments of PRT efforts.

Virtually all observers cite the lack of an overall strategic plan and resultant difficulties of joint operational planning as major obstacles to successful PRT operations.[11] As a logical corollary, U.S. agencies and PRTs often struggle to establish metrics for progress; without a plan articulating specific objectives and measures to achieve them, measuring progress becomes a haphazard endeavor.[12]

In Iraq, this issue has been addressed through the development and revision of the Office of Provincial Affairs' (OPA's) *Planning and Assessment User Guide*, which requires PRTs to draw up specific work plans, conduct assessments of their provinces of operation, and revise plans in light of their assessments. According to the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, the capacity to monitor PRT progress in Iraq is improving as a result.[13]

In the Afghan case, the literature offers numerous suggestions as to how planning and assessment can be improved. For example, the Vietnam-era Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support Hamlet Evaluation System has been held up as a model to improve the hitherto rather basic measurement tools.[14] More recently, the ICMAG has been cooperating with a Washington reachback group to develop metrics with a view to linking the emerging assessment tools to the Afghan government.[15]

This particular "known issue" is of critical importance, especially with a view to the House Armed Services Committee's general skepticism toward various initiatives to improve assessments in the absence of statutory obligations to do so.[16]

### Funding

Across the board, analyses agreed that PRT funding mechanisms are overly complex, leading to inefficiencies in the field. Many lamented that there is no "unity of funding," mirroring the lack of unity of command.[17] As

a result, projects are too often based on how funds can be spent rather than on assessment of local needs.[18] While recommendations cover a broad range, there are three elements common to all of them: there should be a single source of funding for PRTs, civilian access to funds must be improved, and functional experts need more authority over funding to ensure money is spent wisely in different functional areas.[19]

### Host-nation Relationships

Throughout the literature, a lack of engagement with the host nation is cited as an impediment to PRT efforts in both theaters. Commentators agree that PRT members must "go outside the wire" and build relationships on a personal level, even—and especially—if their host-nation partners are more motivated by graft than long-term development goals and struggle with U.S. notions of budgeting and planning.[20] Some lament that the Afghan National Army has "nothing more than token involvement" with the PRTs in the form of liaison officers[21] and stress that Afghan involvement is required at all levels to avoid building a culture of dependency on PRTs.[22]

Similarly, analyses on PRTs in Iraq stress the need to engage with Iraqis at all levels from the provincial government to tribal and religious leaders, as well as ordinary citizens and civil society organizations (and to make specific, detailed "tribal engagement" or "religious engagement" plans). On the flip side, it should also be noted that the confusing PRT structure makes it more difficult for host-nation members to engage with the teams.[23]

Several publications pointed to recent developments that may be utilized to mitigate this problem, such as the Afghan National Development Strategy, Independent Directorate for Local Governance, Provincial Development Plans, National Solidarity Program, and Local Development Councils.[24]

### Management

Apart from the need to engage the host nation more, the literature shows general agreement that basic management issues need to be addressed if PRTs are to be effective (once a mission/strategy has been sorted out).

While this category covers myriad observations, many of them agency-specific, broad consensus exists on two key problems: lack of continuity between rotations, and information-sharing/coordination between PRT elements. Most documents under review made the case for improved procedures to ensure continuity between PRT efforts from one rotation to the next. Many suggested that this could be best addressed by developing standard operating procedures and publishing them for OPA

> there will always be a steep learning curve for newly deployed individuals, and building relationships with key host-nation individuals will take time

as well as each individual PRT in Iraq and to develop "desk top procedures" or "continuity books" for each section or portfolio within each PRT/ePRT in Iraq. However, it should be noted that there are limits to "fixing" this problem; there will always be a steep learning curve for newly deployed individuals, and the necessary building of relationships with key host-nation individuals will take time.[25] In the case of Afghanistan, the same problem has been framed more generally as a need to strengthen civilian management systems inside, and in support of, the PRTs.[26]

**Airman deworms livestock during veterinary medical outreach conducted by Zabul PRT, Afghanistan**

U.S. Air Force (Keith Brown)

Second, regarding the issue of communication, all documents lament the problem of stovepiping and describe instances in which the various elements of PRTs fail to communicate and share information with the result that they may work at cross purposes.[27] Specific issues range from a lack of joint meetings and briefings on the actual PRT[28] to breakdowns in communication between PRT members and their "home agency."

## Training

Training is a concern in all surveyed documents. The topic is often discussed at great length, offering numerous detailed insights and suggestions on the specific content of various training programs and what should be dropped/added to make them more effective. All documents agree on two key points: training has to become *truly interagency* to allow military and civilian PRT members to exercise together for their deployment as well as enabling socialization and familiarization with each other's unique approaches and operating procedures; and there is a need to increase subject matter expert input into the design and execution of PRT training to ensure it is realistic and up to date.

Several suggestions were offered to make PRT training truly interagency. Some texts recommend incorporating PRT training and personnel from the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization into joint and interagency exercises.[29] Others state more generally that some effort has to be made at standardized joint civil-military PRT training for all team members or, at a minimum, to include briefings on the roles of all team members in-theater.[30] While

the issue has persisted into the most recent documents under review, there are also signs that the problem is being addressed, specifically through Army initiatives and the incorporation of Marine Corps personnel into Foreign Service Institute training.[31]

The second point is stressed just as frequently, and a number of suggestions have been offered. The most frequent is the call to include subject matter experts in the design and execution of training to ensure training is current and realistic. Some also recommend incorporating PRT veterans. Another suggestion is to include host-nation nationals in the training process to ensure it is as realistic as possible.

## Conclusion

It is important to recognize that the issues and problems outlined above were identified early in the development of the PRTs. The literature from 2005 essentially focuses on the same problem set as that of early 2009. Therefore, the most important lesson may in fact be that significant improvements in any of the areas will only result if senior leadership of the relevant agencies prioritize PRTs and act on the insights and advice produced over the last 4 years. **PRISM**

## Notes

[1] The Center for Complex Operations (CCO) reviewed some 60 documents, including academic studies and articles, official government reports, and internal surveys, reports, and PowerPoint presentations compiled by government agencies involved in PRT operations. Most of the material is publicly available and cited throughout the review. While agency-internal documents have also informed the CCO analysis, such documents are not specifically referenced.

[2] Oskari Eronen, "PRT Models in Afghanistan: Approaches to Civil-Military Integration," *Civilian Crisis Management Studies* 1, no. 5 (2008).

[3] U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment* (Washington, DC: USAID, 2006).

[4] Robert Perito, "The U.S. Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan," testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, October 17, 2007.

[5] House Armed Services Committee (HASC), *Agency Stovepipes v. Strategic Agility: Lessons We Need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: HASC, 2008); and Michael Hallett, "New Potentials for Provincial Reconstruction Teams," *Small Wars Journal* (2008).

[6] Eronen; USAID, 6; Nima Abbaszadeh et al., "Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations," Woodrow Wilson School Graduate Workshop on Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Washington, DC, 2008; United States Institute of Peace (USIP), "The Iraq Provincial Reconstruction Teams," USIP Oral Histories Project on Stability Operations, 2009, available at <www.usip.org/resources/oral-histories-iraq-provincial-reconstruction-teams>.

[7] Quoted in HASC.

[8] Ibid.; Abbaszadeh et al.; Perito.

[9] Carlos Hernandorena, "U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, 2003–2006: Obstacles to Interagency Cooperation," in *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles*, ed. Joseph Cerami and Jay Boggs (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007).

[10] International Resources Group (IRG), *Follow Up Field Survey: Evaluation of Interagency PRT Training* (Washington, DC: IRG, 2008); USIP.

[11] Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Review of the Effectiveness of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Program in Iraq*, October 18, 2007; SIGIR, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams' Performance Measurement Process Has Improved*, January 28, 2009; HASC; I.D. Westerman, "Provincial Reconstruction in Afghanistan: An Examination of the Problems of Integrating the Military, Political and Development Dimensions with Reference to the U.S. Experience in Vietnam," *Small Wars Journal* exclusive, July 15, 2008.

[12] Abbaszadeh et al.; Perito; HASC; Westerman.

[13] SIGIR, *Provincial*, 15.

[14] Westerman.

[15] John E. Herbst, Prepared Statement Before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, May 19, 2009.

[16] HASC, 32.

[17] USIP; HASC.

[18] HASC.

[19] Ibid.; USAID; Hernandorena.

[20] USIP.

[21] Westerman, 21.

[22] Save the Children, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Humanitarian-Military Relations in Afghanistan* (London: Save the Children, 2004); HASC; Eronen; Westerman.

[23] Eronen.

[24] Save the Children; HASC; Westerman; Hallett.

[25] USIP.

[26] USAID.

[27] USIP.

[28] USAID.

[29] U.S. Joint Forces Command, "Pre-Doctrinal Research White Paper: Provincial Reconstruction Teams," November 27, 2007.

[30] Abbaszadeh et al.; IRG; USAID; Hernandorena.

[31] HASC.

# An Interview with
# Richard L. Armitage

**Richard L. Armitage**

### What surprised you taking on the challenges of Afghanistan and Iraq?

**Richard Armitage:** They're completely different places. I found that Afghanistan was an absolutely necessary war; they struck us, and we had to strike back. What surprised me was how quickly we morphed from a fight against al Qaeda—that is, from foreigners, Uzbeks, Pakistanis, Saudis, even Uighers—to the Taliban after coexisting with the Taliban for so long. The Taliban wasn't really fighting us too much; they weren't helping us, but they weren't fighting us, either—so again how quickly that morphed was the big surprise.

The second surprise was frankly how successful we were for the first 4 years—almost 5 years—at keeping the ISI [Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence] relatively out of it. They were so shocked with the speed at which we invaded Afghanistan that I think the ISI felt it was only a matter of time until we prevailed. But as we broadened our scope to the Taliban, we both brought out some antipathies that Pashtuns have against foreigners, and we also made it more difficult to be able to accomplish our "objective." So how do you declare victory when you completely change the target?

### In what way did we change the objective?

**RA:** We originally invaded to defeat al Qaeda, and in fact we kept the Taliban relationship with Pakistan. [Former Pakistani President Pervez] Musharraf wanted to break the relationship—break off diplomatic relations. We argued, "No, don't do that please, we have reasons. . . ." We had two NGO [nongovernmental organization] women who were captured. And we were negotiating with the Taliban to get them out. Finally, we got them out with Special Forces, and then we told Musharraf that he could break relations with the Taliban. So although we didn't declare them to be an

**Richard L. Armitage was the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State from 2001 to 2005.**

enemy originally, we started using terms, which are understandable, that "anyone who harbors a terrorist is a terrorist." It was the same language that George Shultz used in the mid-1980s; he was thinking of Germany and France at the time, but we never put it into effect, and here we started to put it into effect.

### What surprised you about Iraq?

**RA:** I was surprised initially with the speed at which we were going into Iraq, and I never understood it. I was not opposed to attacking Iraq—I was opposed to the timing. I just couldn't see it. I was surprised at the low number of forces—which Secretary [Colin] Powell was able to get doubled—but still far too few.

The third thing is that we sent over a memo—using Ahmed Chalabi–like language—that explained why we would not be welcomed as liberators; that might have been true in a certain segment of society, but the idea had a measurable shelf life and wasn't universally the case. Never to my knowledge, and I'm pretty

> we got rushed into this timing by the military, who kept talking about the heat—that if it got to April and May, it would get too hot and we couldn't operate

sure I'm right on this, did the President [George W. Bush] ever sit around with his advisors and say, "Should we do this or not?" He never did it.

### Was the State Department role marginal in the early planning?

**RA:** The answer depends on whom you ask. We were at every meeting, and we would raise points. We weren't necessarily opposed to—particularly after 16 UN [United Nations] Security Council resolutions—the notion of removing Saddam Hussein. Secretary Powell was opposed to the number of [soldiers]; he wanted many more. As I said before, I was more worried about timing. And we got rushed into this timing by the military, who kept talking about the heat—that if it got to April and May, it would get too hot and we couldn't operate. And I remember thinking and arguing—and it wasn't just me, but Marc Grossman and others—saying, "Wait a minute, we own the night. We don't have to fight in the daytime. We're all-seeing at night—let's do it! Don't let the heat be the thing that gets us into war!" So it wasn't that we were marginalized. We were allowed our voice, but no one wanted to hear it. They were victims of their own prejudices and their own ideology.

### Were you surprised by the speed at which the Iraqi army collapsed?

**RA:** No. The [Iraqi] army was never considered an extremely loyal factor to Saddam. And we had bombarded them with leaflets telling them, "Go home. We're going to come back and get you and we will reconstitute you as an army," which was the decision the President made. "And we will use you in the new Iraq." So that was not what surprised us. If you think back to April 9, when the Saddam statue came down, President Bush looked pretty brilliant. But about 3 days later, once the looting started—which was predicted in the Future of Iraq Project—everything turned out badly.

### What could have been a solution to the looting problem?

**RA:** Having more people, clearly, and there was a time in there when unit commanders were saying, "What are our responsibilities? Tell us what to do. Should we stop this looting?" And [Donald] Rumsfeld said no. I'll give you an example. I'm very loyal to Secretary Powell for 30 years as my good friend. But in the Panama invasion of 1989—originally called Operation *Blue Spoon*—we sent in the SEALs, we sent in the Airborne, we sent in a division. And the fighting was basically over in a couple of days. We still had [Manuel] Noriega holed up in his house, and we wanted to get him alive and that took a couple of days. But Colin flowed, as Chairman, another division even though the fighting had ended. His staff argued that "we don't need to do this, it's expensive when you move 20,000 men and equipment," but he said, "Look—we don't know what we're going to find outside of Panama City. So let's make sure that whatever it is, we're better than it is. It's a lot easier to get these fellows out on our timetable, than to get them in when there's an enemy." So he flowed another whole division, which was totally unnecessary as it turned out. But that's the better part of wisdom. So the lesson of Iraq is not to drink your own bathwater. You can't be victims of your own prejudice. You have to have someone red team this. Really red team it. We didn't get around to red teaming really until Jay Garner went out to NDU [National Defense University] and did his famous rock drill.

*Was that the meeting at which some State Department people were asked to leave?*

**RA:** No. We may have been asked to leave, but Tom Warrick and Meghan O'Sullivan, they were all there. It was later. Garner said, "These folks know what they are doing." He wanted them to come with him. And Rumsfeld said, "No, I've got instructions from higher guidance—higher headquarters," which was the Vice President.

*What role could the civilian agencies have played early on in both Iraq and Afghanistan that they did not play?*

**RA:** It's mixed. In Afghanistan, it's a somewhat more manageable problem. Because of the regional differences, we could have been heavily involved much earlier on in Mazur Sharif and Herat in relatively safe conditions, and really built a bulwark against expansion of the Taliban. But we were at the State Department—we weren't seized with the mission; we don't have enough folks. USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development] isn't the USAID you joined because it has been whittled away so much. So we have to relearn the lessons. It was not in any way a lack of courage among the civilian agencies; in fact, when I give speeches, I'll say that these fellows—men and women—are out in all these exotic-sounding places—they're not in canapé lines in London and Paris; they're in Mazur and Kandahar and other places right alongside the men and women in uniform. Not a bit of difference, except one: they're not armed. So we have to get more expeditionary, which means we have to get more people. And I like this Civilian Reserve Corps, and all those things.

We've got to have access to money. There has to be a limited but readily available fund—I don't mean without any strings; obviously, we have to get the permission of [Capitol] Hill. But if you knew that you had X amount of funds, you could go in and staunch something. There is also something that I don't know how to solve. During the 4 years I was Deputy Secretary, I got a lot of money for the

department for everything from IT [information technology] to 1,200 more people, and I got a lot of money in foreign aid.

But the money in foreign aid, outside the PEPFAR [President's Emergency Plan for

> perhaps the most effective foreign aid programs, whether in Pakistan or Afghanistan, would be those that bridge ethnic divides

AIDS Relief] program, which was the infectious disease program in Africa, was for necessary and feel-good deliverables, such as clinics, schools, et cetera. Now these things are great. Who doesn't feel good about funding maternity clinics? The U.S. Congress feels good about themselves. They can explain to their constituents. Everyone wants to help some poor Afghan mother. But those very schools depend on several things for their livelihood after the first year or two. A central government, which provides pay for the teachers and the upkeep and all, is very difficult in a developing nation. Number two, they require a certain amount of infrastructure themselves— roads, et cetera. Perhaps the most effective foreign aid programs, whether in Pakistan or Afghanistan, would be those that bridge ethnic divides. Sort of a Kandahar to Mazur Sharif highway, or a great hydroelectric dam that services all the people—gives them buy-in; they all suffer, they all hang together, or hang separately. The same is true of something that brings together the Punjab and Sind, or the Sind and Baluchistan. But those are not popular. The days of the Aswan Dam are gone. There's a road from Peshawar to Islamabad. It used to be a difficult trip, and dangerous.

Now it's a big four-lane highway; it's called the Japanese highway. And for good reason—the Japanese built it.

In the end, you need both project funding and infrastructure development funding. If you're in an emergency situation—a complex operation—you're going to have to have something that staunches a wound. But you're also going to have to simultaneously be thinking about larger infrastructure programs that help cauterize and bring together warring parties or different ethnic grievances or religious divides.

I don't know the answer. This is something that has to be approached head on by an administration. You have to simultaneously have some money available for an emergency. You can't go through the appropriations process to get it. You've got to have certain things that you know you're going to have to have, such as water purification and medicines. That money has to be available for the Secretary of State now. Then you've got to have follow-on "feel-good" items, plus infrastructure programs. I think you can get away with roads pretty well. You know that famous statement, "Where the road ends, the war begins," out of Afghanistan. I think that's more popular.

*That raises an almost philosophical question. There was a lot of aversion in the early Bush administration to state-building. Do you think that state-building should be explicitly considered a legitimate national security objective in some cases?*

**RA:** I think I would put it a little differently. It shouldn't be excluded as the Bush administration tried to do. If you look at the Bosnia situation, and what we faced, and if it's true that al Qaeda is morphing into Africa in a bigger way, then we're going to have to be

involved in more of this rather than less. So I don't think it should be excluded. But each of these so-called nation-building exercises is a little different. Afghanistan is an armed nation we're building; it has never been one, so you're trying to arm a nation and build it. In Iraq, you're not so much arming it—they have plenty of weapons—you're trying to hold it together. That's a different situation. So they're all different, and I don't think the term nation-building is sufficient. It doesn't capture the complexity or the difficulty.

**What do you think of the notion of the "three Ds?"**

**RA:** Defense, diplomacy, and development? I think that [Secretary of State Hillary] Clinton has done us a service. I assume, by the way, your question has to do with democracy. As far as I know, every President except John Quincy Adams has been involved in the belief that the world is made better by a U.S. that is involved in the protection of human freedoms and human rights across the board, notwithstanding the second inaugural address of President Washington. And certainly all the great architects of our nation—Jefferson, Madison—they believed in this message. The builders—Lincoln, both Roosevelts—they believed in it, too. And every postwar President has believed we have a duty to spread democracy. The question and the difference among all the postwar Presidents had to do with two things: emphasis and a philosophical belief. The philosophical belief had to do with whether democracy is a journey or an end point. I think you and I would agree it's a journey—it never ends. It has taken us a long time to get us to where we are. The Bush administration's push for votes as though voting equals

democracy was wrong-headed because a vote is something that happens inside a democracy, but is not necessary for a democracy. You can have a democratic system without having people raise their hands and have a secret ballot. Loya Jirgas to some extent are these. But it appears that Secretary Clinton is focusing on the necessary preconditions that allow democracy to thrive—the rule of law, transparency, party-building, free press—and, frankly, the development of institutions that can provide goods and services.

In 1986, we had something I was intimately involved with, democracy in the Philippines—getting rid of [Ferdinand] Marcos—and immediately after this great celebration of a relatively bloodless, fantastic demonstration of people power, Cory Aquino became president. We got $800 million appropriated, which was serious cash back then. The Philippines couldn't spend

> you can have a democratic system without having people raise their hands and have a secret ballot

it. And within a year or two, Aquino had six coups. Why? Because the expectations were so heightened by democracy they couldn't be met. And so you couldn't eat it, you couldn't drink it, and it didn't provide any service, anything beyond getting rid of Marcos. And yet peoples' expectations were so much higher and so their disappointment was so much greater.

It's not unlike what you have in Venezuela. By the Bush definition, [Hugo] Chavez is a democrat. He was elected three times—against our wishes—we tried to get a referendum to recall him, but it failed. But he is a populist because he's not willing to do what's necessary

to develop a longstanding democracy. And that's all those things I mentioned before. He has become autocratic and dictatorial.

So I think that President [Barack] Obama certainly is not out of step with every other President. He wants human rights, human freedoms, and democracy. But his general manner, not pushing democracy in the way that Mr. Bush did, is actually a good thing, as long as we concentrate on those necessary preconditions. I've thought a lot about this, and I've been involved in the spread of democracy.

Here's one for the intellectual or academic approach. In the 1980s, I was an Assistant Secretary of Defense, responsible for the Soviet war among other things. That's why every 3 months I would go to Pakistan with my CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] counterpart, and we would sit down with the mujahideen, including Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the rest of these characters. We would not only sit with them but also divide up the money, divide up the weapons, depending on who was doing what, how many fighters they had, and all this stuff every 3 months. And this was a wildly popular policy. Democrats and Republicans supported it and threw money at it. And yet we knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that if we accomplished our objectives, the mujahideen would fall in on themselves, which they did. And we knew this clearly. So what I'm sketching is a policy that was relatively amoral—not immoral but amoral. You look at the other side of the coin, you had the contra policy, which was wildly divisive because of liberation theology and the bad behavior of everyone involved, but its heart was much more moral than the Afghan policy.

*Is it possible to meet national security objectives in Afghanistan without making it a functioning democracy or at least*

*putting it on a trajectory toward being a functioning democracy?*

**RA:** We've clearly lowered our sights in Afghanistan. I don't know if this is a precursor of Mr. Obama concentrating on fighting al Qaeda again, which could be a way that lets him set up for declaring victory and moving on, but I don't know what that does for Pakistan. If you would accept my view that a Loya Jirga is a form of democracy, what's wrong with it? So you could have a sort of light democracy, like the Diwaniyah process in some of the Arab countries such as Abu Dhabi and its neighbors. So I think we have got to be more precise and cautious in how we push these things, and we've got to be supple enough to change our emphasis when we run up against a hard point. I was in Saudi Arabia recently with Turki Al Faisal, and he was saying in conversation, "What His Majesty is trying to do is bring about in a generation what it has taken you 200 years to do. And in fact it wasn't until 1965 that you by law enfranchised all your people. So whether we're moving fast enough for present conditions is an open question. I've got my view and you've got yours. We can have an argument, but it took

> President Obama certainly wants human rights, human freedoms, and democracy

you 160 years, and that's not wrong." And I particularly like that he acknowledged that we're moving fast enough for present conditions.

So I've really thought a lot about this whole democratization thing, and I feel quite strongly that it is our duty as a nation to do this. It's harder and made more complex when we abuse the writ of habeas corpus here or

when we torture people. And this causes me to wonder—when I was Deputy Secretary, did I make human rights presentations in China? I absolutely did. Did we get some results? Yes, but they were very disappointing! We got individual results. I could get one dissident or another out of jail, but that's retail and that plays to Chinese strengths. I want to do whole-sale. But our system puts all the concentration on Rabiyah Khadir, so I went and got her out of prison. But that allows the Chinese then to sit back for 6 months and say, "We did it!" And the heat would be off the Congress, and I would go to them and say, "human rights," and they would say, "We gave you Rabiyah Khadir." I would rather leave her in prison, frankly, to better the rights of 1.3 billion Chinese.

*Do you see a similar situation in Egypt?*

**RA:** The Egyptian situation is a really tough one because it's going the wrong way with the Muslim Brotherhood, and the con-stipation and sclerotic nature of the regime. Have you read the novels of Naguib Mahfouz? They're great, and through them all you get a couple of things, I think. First, the good humor of Egyptians; they have enormous good humor. Second, patience and long suffering, but you realize that at some point in time you can't joke something away. You can't outwait it. I would be afraid the tipping point is going to come, and particularly now that the stra-tegic center of gravity in the Middle East has shifted to Riyadh and away from Cairo.

*Egypt had one tipping point in 1953, and it's possible it could happen again. In the 1980s, USAID was modestly implementing democracy, development, and rule of law programs that were all well*

*intentioned, and had some small results here and there, but were unable to get the kind of change in the country we hoped for. It remains a real dilemma for us.*

**RA:** It is a dilemma and you could try to move the country in a way that breaks the country and brings about reactions to what you want to do. I've been on both sides of the issue, and I've come to the conclusion that people are best served when we concen-trate on good governance and rule of law and move at a pace congenial to them toward full democracy with the institutions that hold up the code of democracy.

> people are best served when we concentrate on good governance and rule of law and move at a pace congenial to them toward full democracy

*Including traditional institutions such as Loya Jirgas or Diwaniyahs?*

**RA:** Even better. Those are unthreatening democratic institutions.

*With Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. military was called upon to do so much more than they had done traditionally in diplomacy and development. Do you view that as a threatening development, or to phrase it in the current vernacular, do you have any fear of the "militarization of foreign policy"?*

**RA:** I have a fear of the militarization of all policy. And the reason is not because I fear the military—having come from it—but because there has been a phenomenon I've noticed in 28 years of government service, that for a lot of

different reasons, and I'm not sure I can codify them all, people are less able to do things. The culture of the military is to make chicken salad out of chicken poop. The culture of the military is, "Yessir, three bags full sir. I'll get it done." The culture of the military is embraced as far as I'm concerned in the most positive way by the first general order of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps (different from the Army), which cautions a sentry to take charge of all government property on this post, and that includes people. And that's frankly how Powell and I viewed the State Department—all government property at post. So that's their going-in position, whether they're a private or a colonel. The going-in position for USAID, State, Commerce, or Energy is not to take charge of all government property in sight, but to take charge of "mine." I like to say that this is my little cubicle and I keep it clean, and if there is a light next door that's not there or not on, if you are in the military you are going to go fix it. At least you are supposed to. All government property in sight. You're doing not just your cubicle, whereas the civilians will just take care of their cubicle or space. When I or Secretary Powell would ever swear in an Ambassador, we would tell him he could not be totally responsible for the development of our relationship between the United States and country X. But he would be held 100 percent accountable for the development of all personnel under his command—as officers and as citizens and people. If they have personal problems, they're his. If they have lapses in their behavior, it's his problem. He doesn't overlook it, he works with them, he cautions them, he counsels them, and he does whatever it takes. And this is more the culture of the military.

*Is that a cultural barrier that can be overcome and that civilians should try to adopt?*

**RA:** Yes, it is. I've been very heartened the last 3 ½ years that I've been out here, the number of people—many of whom I don't even know—that worked for Powell and me, and to be frank with you, what they've said is, "The Dr. Rice years were terrible. The Powell years were wonderful. But don't worry. We're remembering what you said about taking care of your people. We're remembering what you said about leadership." So that fills me with enthusiasm, and the answer to your question is yes, it can happen. But it has to be inculcated. Unfortunately, I don't think Ms. Clinton is from that mindset. She's very good as Secretary of State, she'll study her brief, but this takes effort from the bottom up. One has to be inculcated with this.

Look at the first general order of the Navy and Marine Corps—again, the Army's general order is a little different—and then look at all the general orders. When you go to boot camp, you have to memorize all this. You'll see, I think, some of the reasons you're having militarization in general. Remember the big hurricane in North Carolina in 1991? Andy Card was Secretary of Transportation and President Bush sent him down to take charge. And this was so funny to me: Andy Card is standing on a chair in North Carolina, and he's yelling in his tent, and there are people milling about—people who had lost their homes. And all these different aid agencies and FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] are running around, even some military guys milling around. And Card's up there yelling, "I'm Secretary Andy Card and I'm in charge here!" Actually, this colonel from the 82d Airborne stood up and said something like, "Now hear this—I'm Colonel So-and-So from the 82d Airborne, 19th Battalion, and I'm in charge here, FEMA!" "Yessir!" It was fantastic, but it was someone used to taking charge of all government property in sight.

*That's a strong characteristic of the military, and I'm concerned when I see that attitude juxtaposed against the typical civilian attitude.*

**RA:** Then you have to change the civilian attitude. As I say, I'm thrilled with the officers Secretary Powell and I brought in. I'm thrilled with them. I see them at different posts, I always stop at the different Embassies and I get great reports. I know a fellow who just went over to work with Senator George Mitchell, and he sent me an email. He said that he was so impressed with these younger officers. They came in at a time when in their A–100 class that's what they were told. When they went through their Foreign Service training before they went to their post and they came to see Marc Grossman or me, that's what they were told. So they started it. Now whether they will remember it, I can't say, but it's a good base. We just have to do it all the way up. The same is true and it's harder actually in Commerce and some places. It's easier to do at State because it's small enough to get your arms around it, even though there are 48,000 of them with the Foreign Service nationals. But it takes constant—not just repetition— you have to embrace it.

*That would be a cultural/behavioral change that you are recommending. Is there an institutional change that you would recommend for the civilian agencies— something like Goldwater-Nichols?*

**RA:** I've looked at what Mr. [Arnold L.] Punaro [Executive Vice President, Science Applications International Corporation] is doing and what other people are doing in Goldwater-Nichols–type stuff. I would like to see a lot more

cross-pollination. That would be healthy. And we've got a fair amount even though Rumsfeld, when he came in, took back all the military officers. Over time, we got them back, we fought like crazy, much to their delight and our delight because it was better for us. I think a lot more of that is good. The Goldwater-Nichols that everyone sings so proudly about in the military is now something that Goldwater-Nichols wouldn't recognize. This military—because jointness itself has changed, requirements have changed, schooling has gone by the board because of the necessities of the war—has changed so much. And I think most of your military colleagues would say, "Yeah, we're more joint. Absolutely, but we're not anywhere near where we need to be." And when you talk to special operations, they'll definitely tell

> **we need a cadre of leaders who totally embrace the notion of taking charge of all government property in sight**

you that. So frankly it gets down more to leadership and less to Goldwater-Nichols. We need a cadre of leaders who totally embrace the notion of taking charge of all government property in sight. And that's why you have a young State officer out on a PRT [Provincial Reconstruction Team], no question State lead, depending on the military, consulting with him, giving instructions to the other departments who are less represented about who does what to whom. There's something about just naturally going for the flagpole, standing up and saying, "I'm the alpha dog here," whether you're a male or a female.

*With all the ferment in the area of military and even civilian doctrine related to counterinsurgency, irregular warfare,*

*unconventional warfare, state-building, reconstruction and stabilization, and the building up of a civilian reserve corps, are you concerned that we're gearing up for the last war, and not the next war?*

**RA:** We always have. If you look historically, this is not just a military problem. Twelve years ago in the CIA, what would you be studying as a language? Chinese or Japanese? Now what would you be studying? Arabic? Only 3 percent of the population is Arab. There's a certain inevitability to that. I think that you're going to be a little behind. Very few people, even George Kennan when he wrote his famous article, didn't see what was going on. It's hard to look into the future. But the important thing is to not lose the lessons of the past. And this is what this whole insurgency is. Do you know, by the way, in testimony that I called it an "insurgency"? Dick Myers, General Myers, said, "Oh no. This isn't an insurgency!" I said, "Well, yes it is!" So when you come so late to a realization of it—what we really did wrong was we undervalued the enemy.

We didn't understand that al Qaeda is a flat organization. It's not a hierarchical one. And in a flat organization where there are only cells, we could pick up Osama bin Laden tomorrow and it wouldn't make a damn bit of difference. He could tell us what he knew. He doesn't know that much. When you're a flat organization, you only know a couple of guys in the cell with you. So we never really analyzed the problem we were facing in military terms. In civilian terms, you need the sort of an approach the military commander would take; the commander's estimate of both the friendly forces and the enemy. For a civilian, you need your estimate of what you have in your kit bag. What you might get from local land. And what's the real lack. So take a more analytical approach to these things, à la the military. The military does a lot of things not right, but when they organize for a problem, they generally do it pretty well, and I think you're coming to it. PRISM

# Book Review

## REVIEWED BY JUSTIN GORKOWSKI

On the western edge of Peshawar, Pakistan, a sign at a military checkpoint prohibits the movement of foreigners into the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) where the Pakistani government essentially claims no control. On the edge of the FATA, women who once showed their faces now walk fully covered, and images of women on billboards are obliterated with paint—two eerie reminders of Taliban reemergence.

The sanctuary afforded to the Taliban and al Qaeda in the FATA is something that RAND analyst and Georgetown University adjunct professor Seth Jones argues the United States must eliminate to have any chance of winning the war in Afghanistan. He contends that history—and not just the commonly misunderstood Soviet experience—provides some valuable lessons on Afghanistan. Past empires from Macedonia, to Great Britain, to the Soviet Union have entered Afghanistan, only to find themselves caught up in local resistance. To understand the motivation of key actors and assess what factors contributed to the current insurgency, Jones analyzed recently declassified material from the Soviet Politburo and the Central Intelligence Agency and interviewed numerous prominent Afghan, Pakistani, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, nongovernmental organization, and U.S. officials.

Jones offers insight into the rise of the Taliban and al Qaeda's ideological origins through an examination of the impressions Islamic fundamentalists Sayyid Qutb and Abdullah Azzam had on al Qaeda leaders as they struggled over issues such as Takfir and the targeting of the near versus far enemy. Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden generated a shift in radical Islamic thought acknowledging the far enemy (that is, the United States) was the true target, rather than apostate regimes such as Egypt that were viewed as that enemy's puppets. This point resonated among the population as al Qaeda sought sanctuary among remote Afghan tribes and civilian casualties mounted in the face of U.S. pursuit of al Qaeda and the Taliban. Slowly, villagers accepted radical thought labeling the United States as the enemy while taking up arms themselves to become what David Kilcullen calls "accidental guerrillas." Jones' analysis of Afghan history and radical Islamic thought progression significantly contributes to the understanding of the complexities involved in Afghanistan. Had policymakers better understood the dynamics of the Afghan situation, recognition of the budding insurgency may have focused efforts toward counterinsurgency sooner rather than just terrorist capture/kill missions.

At the war's onset, U.S. officials kept the lessons of the Soviet experience in mind. The

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Soviets deployed a large force, which U.S. officials believed created a quagmire that resulted in large-scale popular resistance. However, Jones contends that the U.S. decision to deploy a "light footprint" was misreading the Soviet experience. The lesson was not in the number of forces deployed; it was in *how* the forces were deployed. Much like the Cold War–era U.S. military, the Soviet military of the 1970s and 1980s was trained to fight a conventional battle with a modern enemy along the Fulda Gap. The Soviets used conventional tactics to fight an unconventional enemy. Alexander the Great encountered the same problem in his Afghanistan campaign. His army of mounted cavalry and foot soldiers armed with 20-foot pikes and javelins was barbarously fought by the tribesmen and horse warriors of the region's steppes and mountains. The results of the Macedonian and Soviet invasions are analogous. The adoption of the light footprint strategy by U.S. officials actually served as an incubator for the looming insurgency.

In summer 2006, the United States learned through over 100 interrogations that Taliban support had little to do with religious ideology; rather, it had to do with poor governance and economics. The Afghan government was unable to extend control beyond Kabul and actually fostered the formation of peripheral power players. Afghanistan's weak governance was a major component of what Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry phrased "the perfect storm": the Taliban and al Qaeda had sanctuary in Pakistan, local governance was not taking hold, narcotrafficking and associated criminality were emerging as significant security threats, and the planning and implementation of critical infrastructure projects were lagging. In addition, Afghanistan efforts were severely underfunded. Ambassador Ronald Neumann asked for a much-needed $600 million for fiscal year 2006 and received only $43 million. A U.S. Civil Affairs officer told Jones, "We're like the Pacific theater in World War II; we will get more resources when we defeat Berlin," alluding to the U.S. focus in Iraq.

Jones concludes there is hope that Afghanistan will eventually stabilize and prosper, but America must completely rethink its involvement in the region. The rise of the insurgency after victory over the Taliban was unfortunate but not inevitable. To avoid the disastrous fate of previous world powers that entered the region, America must take three critical steps: confront corruption, partner with local (not just national) entities, and undermine sanctuary in Pakistan.

First, Jones stresses that corruption needs to be addressed at the local and national levels, with emphasis on drug trafficking, bribery, and the pervasive extortion of police and judges. Anticorruption efforts should follow the pattern of successful cases in Singapore, Liberia, and Botswana, beginning with the immediate firing of corrupt officials, the bolstering of the justice system, new staff professionalization, and the implementation of incentive/performance assessment programs. Jones addresses the second step through the balancing of top-down and bottom-up efforts, both critical for security and the provision of public services. The historical weakness of the Afghan state, the local nature of politics, and a population deeply intolerant of external forces require a strong local government to support national level efforts. Accordingly, bottom-up strategies require supporting and empowering legitimate tribal leaders and providing them with security and aid, since they are bound to be targets of insurgents. The predominantly top-down approach employed thus far is inappropriate for a weak central government in a tribal society.

Finally, enforcement of the denial of Pakistani must be through measures designed to close the structural gap that exists in many of Pakistan's border regions—specifically the FATA, where weak government institutions are coupled with incredibly poor social and economic conditions. It is imperative that the United States persuade Pakistani officials to conduct a sustained campaign against militants who threaten the local and international community. The United States can identify pressure points that raise the cost of stalling for the Pakistani government—such as the $1 billion annual military and economic aid package provided to Pakistan. In addition, Jones argues that the United States needs to make a concerted effort in engaging both Pakistan and India, which have competing interests in Afghanistan.

The goal of Jones' proposed strategy in Afghanistan is to improve the competence and legitimacy of national and local Afghan institutions to provide security and services to the local population. Comparable books, such as Ahmed Rashid's *Descent into Chaos* (Viking, 2008), provide similar perspective but stop short of clearly identifying the way ahead. Jones' policy recommendations and implications are applicable to the policymaker as well as the soldier. Given the complexities and dynamics of Afghanistan, decisionmakers would be hard pressed to find a more comprehensive study. PRISM

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*"As President, my greatest responsibility is to protect the American people…We are in Afghanistan to confront a common enemy that threatens the United States, our friends and allies, and the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan who have suffered the most at the hands of violent extremists. So I want the American people to understand that we have a clear and focused goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future…To achieve our goals, we need a stronger, smarter and comprehensive strategy."*

—President Barack Obama
March 27, 2009

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