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**REPLACING SADDAM: ENABLING GOOD GOVERNANCE THROUGH
IDENTIFICATION OF HUMAN TERRAIN DECISIVE POINTS**

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Abstract

Replacing Saddam: Enabling Good Governance through Identification of Human Terrain

Decisive Points: During stability operations, the ability to identify and gain the support of key national and local leaders becomes critical to the success of the operational force. For this reason, the key leaders themselves become decisive points. Their support of rebuilding efforts will give the Joint Force Commander (JFC) a marked advantage while their opposition or lack of participation will give the enemy a marked advantage. This paper will demonstrate how the inability of Coalition Forces (CF) to properly identify and gain the support of key leaders across the society severely hampered the U.S. military's efforts to rebuild Iraq. Specifically, the paper will examine six different occupational groups where proven competence and leadership becomes decisive to success during stability operations: politicians, technocrats, security professionals, tribal sheikhs, religious leaders, and entrepreneurs. Finally, the paper draws conclusions concerning methods to determine human terrain decisive points and recommends areas for further research and analysis to codify these methods for use in future conflicts.

INTRODUCTION

In April of 2003, U.S. forces watched as Iraqi civilians in Firdoz Square in Baghdad tore down the famous statue of Saddam Hussein. The victors of Phase III (Major Combat Operations) had removed Saddam Hussein, but now they faced a new challenge: Who (or what) would replace him? It's a logical question, but one for which the most powerful military in the world did not have a well-prepared answer. By the end of May, the newly appointed U.S. Administrator in Iraq, L. Paul Bremer, had issued orders to fire all Baathists from government jobs, dissolve the Iraqi Army and Police, and shut down all unprofitable state run economies.¹ Over time, the euphoria of the quick victory in March and April would be replaced by the grueling prospect of administering a country with a moribund economy, rampant unemployment, and without a universally respected leader, experienced bureaucrats, or competent security forces. In retrospect, the inability to identify and gain the support of key leaders in Iraqi society contributed significantly to the initial failure of U.S. forces in rebuilding Iraq.

This criticism of our military's performance in the early part of Phase IV (Stability Operations) is only valuable if joint planners use it as a vehicle to develop better methods for conducting rebuilding operations in future conflicts. When dealing with the prospect of regime change in autocratic societies, leaders must ensure that the cure they impose is better than the disease they eliminated. One way to enable this outcome is to dedicate well-resourced and intellectually gifted planners to the task of determining who the key leaders are across the full range of governmental and societal functions. This paper will examine how the inability to accomplish this task in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) hampered our rebuilding efforts in Iraq and how those lessons can be applied to future conflicts.

OPPOSING VIEWS

Before further analyzing the view that the U.S. military needs to be more aggressive in identifying key leaders in a society prior to a conflict, it is important to note that this idea has not gained universal, or even widespread, acceptance. Many participants and observers in the national defense community will reject this thesis for one of two main reasons. Many will oppose this concept because they believe it is not the military's job to enable governance. Also, some will argue against this concept on the grounds that it is too meddlesome and violates a core U.S. principle of promoting self determination in other states. Both of these opposing viewpoints are worth examining further.

Competing in the Political Terrain: A Soldier's Job?²

In a monologue titled "*Organizing to Compete in the Political Terrain*", military researcher Nadia Schadlow addresses the perception that the U.S. military services should not have a role in political matters following a conflict:

Virtually all of the wars in which it [the U.S. Army] has fought have involved the problem of managing local actors in order to restore stability and basic order. U.S. Army officers directly supervised the creation of new governments in a range of wars. These include the well-known cases of Germany and Japan following World War II, and the lesser known cases of Italy and Korea. In addition, cases that have traditionally garnered less attention include reconstruction after the Mexican War of the 1840s, during the Civil War, and in Puerto Rico and Cuba during the Spanish American War. Governance operations took place during the Cold War period as well as in the Dominican Republic in 1965, Grenada in 1983, and Panama in 1989. Army personnel under the theater commander's operational control supervised and implemented political and economic reconstruction in all cases except those that took place during the Cold War.³

Schadlow also points out that civilian capacity needed to help establish governance in post conflict societies continues to lag behind the capacity of the Department of Defense, despite increased emphasis by the Department of State and the United States Agency for

International Development (USAID). While more civilians are desired and needed, the right mixes of Foreign Service officers and aid workers have failed to materialize.⁴ Even if this were to change, military forces would still have a crucial role in developing governance. The Army recently acknowledged this reality in the Army Capstone Concept, which states, “Army forces must be capable of conducting simultaneous actions – of both a military and a political nature – across the spectrum of conflict.”⁵

To Meddle or Not to Meddle: That is the Question

A second counterargument to the approach of identifying key leaders early in a conflict in order to enable governance, is that, by doing so, the United States will be taking sides in the internal domestic politics of the state. Stated another way, proponents of this argument will argue that empowering local leaders with the U.S. imprimatur denies the state the opportunity for self determination. These proponents will also point out that local leaders will lack effectiveness if they appear to gain their legitimacy only from their appointment by U.S. forces. For example, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was criticized by many observers for not transitioning to complete Iraqi control sooner. Critics, such as Professor Robert Zunes of the University of San Francisco, argue that the yearlong occupation, which featured almost exclusively U.S. appointed Iraqi leaders with limited powers, contributed to the Iraqi view of Americans as occupiers rather than liberators.⁶

For leaders to have legitimacy, they must be selected through a democratic process. However, in the specific case of Iraq, immediate action was necessary to restore public order. If elections are impractical in the short term, it is incumbent upon the joint force headquarters to know the human terrain well enough to appoint interim leaders whose reputations among the population will withstand scrutiny. These leaders must then be willing to either step

down or win approval at the ballot box once elections are feasible. While there is a strong case against meddling in domestic politics, there is an equally strong case that hasty but decisive appointments may be necessary in the near term following the creation of a power vacuum. That said, the joint force headquarters should seek to undo their own meddling as soon as possible through creation or restoration of democratic processes.

HUMAN TERRAIN DECISIVE POINTS

U.S. joint doctrine defines a decisive point as a “geographic place, specific key event, critical factor, or function that, when acted upon, allows commanders to gain a marked advantage over an adversary or contribute materially to achieve success.”⁷ In the context of stability operations, key leaders become, in effect, a “critical factor”. Their support of operational objectives will provide a marked advantage for the joint force. Conversely, their opposition to the joint force’s objectives, or, merely, their apathy, will provide the enemy with a marked advantage. Stated another way, the battle for the hearts and minds should begin with the hearts and minds of key leaders who can then influence their followers across all segments of society.

Intelligence efforts prior to the war, rightfully, focused on who needed to be removed from power, resulting in the famous “Deck of 55” playing cards distributed to American Soldiers. However, there was no corresponding deck for American diplomats and joint force leaders to use to identify the future leaders of Iraq. Intelligence planners simply did not dedicate the same level of effort to identify who should be enabled to create a credible and legitimate government in Iraq. In future stability operations, a team should be dedicated to compiling biographical information on potential leaders who can quickly restore calm in the wake of hostilities.

Conceptual Frameworks for Analyzing Key Leaders as Critical Factors

For future joint staff officers who might be assigned the task of analyzing future leaders, several conceptual frameworks are available. This paper will discuss two potential models. Both of these models have the potential to be of great benefit to joint planners in the future.

Actors and Approaches Model: In 1997, John Paul Lederach, who has provided training and support to peacebuilding programs around the world, proposed the “Actors and Approaches” model.⁸ In this model, he identifies three levels of leadership in a society and corresponding approaches for how to best leverage all three levels of leadership to build peaceful institutions. The first group is the top level, consisting of political, military and religious actors with high visibility in society. The approach to use with top level leaders is high level negotiations to take advantage of the informational effect that their visibility will bring.

Secondly, Lederach urges a focus on middle range leaders in a society. These leaders are respected ethnic and religious leaders, academics and intellectuals, and humanitarian leaders. The approaches to take with middle range leaders would include problem solving workshops, training in conflict resolution, and peace commissions. The final level is the grassroots leadership, consisting of local leaders, leaders of indigenous NGOs, community developers, local health officials, and refugee camp leaders. Approaches for engaging grassroots leadership include local peace commissions, grassroots training, prejudice reduction, and social work.

Lederach’s model was designed for peacekeeping operations and for use by NGOs assisting in rebuilding after conflict. Its utility for the situation that existed in the immediate

aftermath of Phase III in Iraq might not have been ideal. However, it does provide some key insights into how to establish order in a war torn society and provides planners with some noteworthy considerations as they prepare for Phase IV. A reproduction of his model is provided below.



Figure 1: Actors and Approaches Model

Source: *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* by John Paul Lederach

PMESII Model: A second conceptual framework for joint staff officers builds on a method already used to gain a better understanding of the operational environment. This method uses the acronym PMESII (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, and Information) to help commanders better understand how local systems work. By applying the PMESII framework to study key leaders, staff planners can make recommendations to the commander on which leaders to enable and empower. Perhaps more importantly, the analysis will help the commander to identify those figures that are not acceptable as public leaders. As planners “build the deck” of proven competent leaders, as well as incompetents, diplomatic and political leaders begin to have an advantage in dealing with their Iraqi

counterparts. The PMESII framework is already widely used on joint staffs, but is generally focused at the system, rather than the individual, level. By extending the analysis to identify key leaders and using the conceptual framework in conjunction with the Lederach model, planners will have a greater appreciation for the human terrain. Table 1 (below) shows a PMESII analysis model designed to show considerations for identifying key leaders for interim positions during Phase IV.

Table 1: PMESII Considerations in Selecting Interim Key Leaders in Phase IV

System	National-level Leadership Positions	Desired Qualities
Political	Interim President, Vice Presidents, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well respected, unifying figure - Secular, not sectarian - Compelling personal biography - Without strong ties to previous regime
Military	Service Chiefs, Division Commanders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apolitical as possible - Screened for past war crimes - Reputation for honesty, competency by subordinates
Economic	Entrepreneurs capable of generating wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals with exposure to capitalist systems - Western education a plus
Social	Tribal Sheikhs, Religious Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-existing, must be cultivated and reached out to early; natural leaders in a tribal culture - Religious leaders also pre-existing, must be reached out to early; re-assured that religious traditions will be respected
Infrastructure	Cabinet Members, Technocrats, Bureaucrats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify potential cabinet members with extensive managerial experience - Identify those with experience in technical fields - Identify engineers, technicians, lawyers
Information	(Self selected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage grassroots growth of free media - Reward responsible outlets with media access - Must understand early how Iraqis get their news

A key consideration is to place power in the hands of national leaders, even on an interim basis, as soon as possible to avoid the perception of occupation. A U.S. Army War College study in 2003 warned that failing to do so will result in U.S. forces being seen as invaders rather than liberators.⁹ This prediction turned out to be prescient.

When considering how to analyze the human terrain, the joint force commander and his staff should consider how to use the existing governmental architecture to the greatest effect. An understanding of how political boundaries are drawn in a society is essential to facilitate resumption of government services during Phase IV. The commander must then assign tasks and responsibilities to military formations based on their capabilities.

Boundaries normally drawn, according to doctrine, along geographic features such as roads or rivers, should be drawn instead to correspond to political boundaries. These control measures will then allow military units to partner with various levels of government to enable those in power. An example of a partnership construct used in Iraq in 2008-2009 is provided below:¹⁰

Table 2: Partnership Framework to Enable Governance

Government Level	Partnership Unit
National Executive Level	Force Headquarters (MNF-I)
National Ministerial Level	Corps Headquarters (MNC-I)
Regional Leaders/Regional Cooperation	Division Headquarters (MND-N)
Provincial Level	Brigade Headquarters (BCT)
Qada'a (District Level)	Battalion Headquarters
Sub-District Level	Company Headquarters
Village Level	Platoons

Using the construct in Table 2 allows leaders at all levels to build personal relationships with the actors responsible for providing security, essential services, and rule of

law in their areas of responsibility. These personal relationships allow U.S. commanders to leverage their financial resources and logistical capabilities to enable local leaders at their level, thereby increasing their legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Colonel Walter E. Piatt, a former battalion and brigade commander in the 25th Infantry Division, used this approach in Paktika province in Afghanistan. He saw a drastic reduction in violence and a dramatic increase in governance capability during his year in Paktika.

When Colonel Piatt asked the provincial governor, Gulab Mangal, why Paktika had been so successful, the governor replied, “You became our friends first before you told us what to do.”¹¹ In other words, the battalion sought to understand the province’s key leaders before demanding to be understood. Governor Mangal’s answer embodies the essence of what human terrain decisive points are designed to do: allow you to know who potential leaders are in advance (understand the human terrain) and then build relationships with those leaders to create a marked advantage for the government against potential insurgents or criminal activity. A successful and legitimate local government, responsive to the needs of the people, will then remove the *casus belli* from the insurgent, denying him the opportunity to recruit and hide among the population. In other words, the population becomes a security zone for the government and friendly forces, rather than for the insurgent.

Applying the PMESII Model to Key Leaders

Having identified a useful framework for analyzing human terrain decisive points, it is useful to apply the model, after the fact, to Operation Iraqi Freedom. This analysis is not intended as a critique or as “Monday morning quarterbacking”. Rather, it is intended to show how a lack of knowledge of human terrain decisive points hampered the ability of U.S. commanders to make sound, informed decisions.

Political Key Leaders: In his autobiography, *My Year in Iraq*, Ambassador L. Paul “Jerry” Bremer describes a chaotic process in which he and his deputies went about assessing potential future leaders for the country, to include the President, Vice Presidents, Prime Minister, and ministers. In one instance, he met with Hussein Al Shahrastani, a western educated and intellectually gifted Shiite. He later finds out that Al Shahrastani, despite his obvious talents, was not acceptable to most Iraqis because of his Iranian name. Bremer felt that since his ancestors left Iran long ago that this should not be an issue.¹²

This episode highlights the fact that joint planners, both diplomatic and military, had not gathered enough facts about the key leaders they would need to influence. The method of selecting key political leaders was a process of discovery learning because of the lack of preparation for Phase IV. However, to be fair, LTG Sanchez, the JTF-7 Commander and his civilian counterpart, Ambassador Bremer, would have had a challenge in this area even if they had perfect intelligence.

The brutal nature of the Saddam regime made it impossible for capable alternative leaders to emerge. Potential adversaries ended up being removed, and were often jailed. Still, there were talented potential leaders in Iraq, many of whom emerged over time. For example, Al Shahrastani ended up becoming the Iraqi Minister of Oil, and has been, by most accounts, proven to be a competent leader. Another example is Ayad Allawi, a Shiite who has reached out successfully to Sunnis. His compelling personal narrative includes surviving an axe attack in London conducted by Saddam’s operatives.¹³ He eventually became the interim prime minister in 2004 and, more recently, led the Iraqiya coalition in obtaining the largest number of seats in the 2010 parliamentary elections.

While there were some leaders we underestimated, there were others still who we overestimated. Many of these came in the form of former exiles like Ahmed Chalabi. Some policymakers in the Bush administration saw Ahmed Chalabi as a potential prime minister.¹⁴ However, Chalabi did not have strong backing in Iraq. Of those who did know him well, many viewed him as an American puppet or as proof that America was backing one side over another.¹⁵

Military Key Leaders: Without question, many of the senior military leaders in Saddam's Army could no longer be allowed to serve. However, most observers feel that the decision to disband the Army was a major contributing factor to the insurgency that followed.¹⁶ In other words, American leaders needed to use a scalpel to carefully remove the top, but instead they used a meat cleaver. Several pre-war studies argued against this approach to include the U.S. Army War College Report, the Future of Iraq project, and a report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies. As author James Fallows wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 2004:

The case against wholesale dissolution of the army, rather than a selective purge at the top, was that it created an instant enemy class: hundreds of thousands of men who still had their weapons but no longer had a paycheck or a place to go each day. Manpower that could have helped on security patrols became part of the security threat.¹⁷

Indeed, it is useful to consider what would happen in a western country if all current and retired military officers were suddenly stripped of their pensions and all members of the military lost their pay.

A provincial council member in Salah ad Din province, who was also a former Iraqi Air Force pilot, provided a similar analysis.¹⁸ He said if the Americans had simply told the Army to go back to the barracks and wait for further instructions, the Army would have done

it. Many, like this council member, believe the Army could have been used for public works project and as a unifying force in the country.

In addition to cultivating key leaders in the Army, it is also important to identify key players in the police forces and in the judicial system. Police forces operate closer to the people and become critically important in Phase IV. Law and order must be established early to prevent looting and rioting. Knowledge about judges, prosecutors, and jailers is vital to ensure that criminals are prosecuted and detained. When this system broke down, U.S. forces arrested thousands of Iraqis and placed them in U.S. run prisons. In turn, these prisons contributed further to the image of U.S. forces as occupiers and widened the gap between American forces and the population.¹⁹

Economic Key Leaders: Identifying key economic leaders was a tall order in Operation Iraqi Freedom. There were not a lot of capitalists in Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Bremer's CPA took some positive steps in this regard. The CPA issued new currency and created an independent central bank.²⁰ However, as the Center for Strategic and International Studies' fellow Bathsheba Crocker points out, the results were mixed. She asserts that U.S. efforts were hampered by a failure to empower Iraqi leaders and to address Iraqi unemployment by putting money in the hands of Iraqi entrepreneurs rather than U.S. contractors.²¹

Finally, the decision to shut down the state run industries, in hindsight, deserves some scrutiny. Once again, these industries were completely ineffective and operating at a loss, but they *were* employing people. Identifying reformers who could re-tool and overhaul these industries, in retrospect, might well have been worthwhile. The closing of the state run

industries, coupled with the dissolution of the Army, was another blow to the collective psyche of the Iraqi people.

Social Key Leaders: In Iraq, a person's identity is closely connected to his religion and his tribe. It is not clear that joint planners completely understood the importance of these two factors in their initial planning, particularly with respect to tribal loyalties. Eventually, small units began using "tribal overlays" on their maps in order to understand who was influential in particular areas. In later stages of the war, commanders would engage tribal leaders to gain their assistance in tracking down suspected terrorists or in building new schools or roads. However, this awareness of tribal influence did not exist in the early stages of Phase IV. Once again, this gap in our knowledge of the human terrain allowed our enemy a marked advantage over us.

It is imperative for operational and tactical planners to help their commanders empower the right tribal leaders, or sheiks. Because of our poor knowledge of the human terrain, some American commanders empowered people who claimed to be sheikhs by appointing them to key positions in local government or awarding them with contracts to support American forces. These "American sheikhs", as Iraqis came to call them, used this association with American forces to assume inordinately influential roles, often with disastrous results.

A former cavalry squadron commander in Iraq in 2008-2009, Lieutenant Colonel David Hodne, wrote about "fake sheikhs" in a recent after action report published by the Institute for the Study of War. In this report, LTC Hodne describes how impostors had taken over the Sheik's Council in Ad Dujayl district in northern Iraq. The fake sheikhs maintained their influence through a combination of fear, intimidation, and unwitting American support.

By making an effort to understand the real fabric of the tribes, LTC Hodne's squadron was able to work with local leaders to restore the real sheikhs to a position of power. The squadron, in concert with local leaders, marginalized the Sheikhs Council. Meanwhile, local leaders established and empowered a new entity, the Tribal Union. The new Tribal Union was immediately respected as a legitimate body that worked with political and security leaders. As a result, the district saw unprecedented progress.²²

To correctly identify key tribal leaders, joint planners may need to seek the assistance of anthropologists or academicians. Correctly assessing tribal leaders in advance will be difficult, but planners need to make every effort to get it right once they are on the ground. A greater understanding of the importance of tribal allegiances is a good first step. John Paul Lederach's Actors-Approaches Model offers a good idea for a second step. A grand tribal conference to seek the cooperation and support of Iraq's tribal leaders in the very early stages would have sent a strong signal that we understood, appreciated, and did not seek to change the Iraqi culture. Whatever the cost of this conference, it would have been a bargain at twice the price based on its potential to build a bridge of understanding early during the stability phase of operations.

Joint planners also need to identify key leaders in the religious community. American leaders correctly assessed that Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani was the most influential religious leader in Iraq and attempted to engage him.²³ Though Sistani would not meet with American leaders directly, he would communicate through intermediaries. Sunni leaders, though they don't have the same hierarchical structure, needed to be engaged also. The message sent and reaffirmed was that the U.S. presence would not threaten religious traditions and customs of the Iraqi people. In fact, the U.S. would take every prudent

measure to ensure all adherents to all religions were free to practice their faith. The important point regarding religious leaders is to communicate with them as frequently as possible, through intermediaries if necessary, to avoid any misunderstandings about American intentions.

Infrastructure Key Leaders: Many of the key leaders in infrastructure development turned out to be competent technocrats. Iraq has a core of technocrats, many of whom were trained outside the country, who run their oil and power companies. Iraq has many well-trained agricultural engineers who run irrigation systems and canal projects. There was a base from which American planners could build.²⁴ However, the zeal to fire all Baathists hampered American efforts to rebuild infrastructure. American leaders did not understand that being a member of the Baath Party was a prerequisite for government employment for these technocrats. Very few were strident Baathists. As was the case with military leaders, a more surgical removal of Baathists could have prevented a lapse of effectiveness.

U.S. forces faced a similar problem when they had to rebuild Germany while simultaneously removing strident Nazis from key positions. The steps taken in Germany were much more methodical than those taken in Iraq. The occupation forces required all Germans to fill out a questionnaire providing detailed responses to questions about their level of involvement in Nazi Party activities. There was a heavy penalty for lying on the forms and respondents knew their answers would be independently investigated.²⁵

American leaders following World War II denied government positions only to those Germans determined to be top level, active members of the Nazi Party. This approach was successful in surgically removing strident Nazis, but also ensuring that a strong cadre of highly trained technocrats was still available to rebuild Germany's industrial base. This

model was not followed during the stabilization phase of Iraq, even though Dr. Conrad Crane and others strongly advocated this approach.²⁶

Information Key Leaders: Initially, no key leaders existed in the information domain because of Saddam's control of the state media. The free media in Iraq flourished very quickly once Saddam was removed. To enhance our understanding of the culture, we need to understand how Iraqis get their news. They get to decide who their key leaders in the media will be. By understanding how they get their news, however, American leaders can better influence public opinions and attitudes by telling their side of the story to the right influencers.

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The American army of occupation lacked both training and organization to guide the destinies of the nearly one million civilians whom the fortunes of war had placed under its temporary sovereignty.

-- COL Irwin L. Hunt
*Report of the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, Third
Army and American Forces, 4 March, 1920*

This quote from COL Irwin Hunt following World War I underscores the historical frustration that U.S. forces face in planning and executing post conflict operations. One need only look at recent examples in Panama, Haiti, Somalia, and Bosnia to see more recent examples of American challenges in organizing for such missions. However, it should not be surprising that the American military has been challenged in these operations. The missions required in post conflict are exceedingly complex and demand a thorough understanding of the operational environment, especially the human terrain. To paraphrase a famous line from retired Army General Russell Honoré, "we are not stuck on stupid, we are stuck on hard." What is perhaps more surprising is that some in the policy establishment assumed this phase

would not be challenging in Iraq despite the plethora of historical examples suggesting otherwise.²⁷

A great strength of U.S. joint forces is their ability to learn from and correct their mistakes. Intuitive and enterprising young leaders on the ground corrected many of the mistakes highlighted in this paper. However, what the institution owes young leaders in the future is a more thorough process for analyzing human terrain decisive points. Ideally, if young, inexperienced leaders are faced with conducting rebuilding efforts in the future, they will not have to pick up the pieces in the middle of a tough, messy counterinsurgency fight.

In retrospect, the joint force commander needed a group of intelligence professionals, supported by the rest of the CENTCOM and JTF staff, dedicated to understanding the key influencers in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein. Stated another way, the commander needed the same intellectual rigor to be applied to whom he intended to enable that was applied to whom he wanted to disable. This effort should have been supported by an aggressive intelligence effort to identify acceptable key leaders during the months prior to the invasion. By effectively replacing Saddam Hussein's inner circle with meticulously selected leaders of competence, it is likely that diplomatic and military leaders could have restored confidence in Iraqi society.

The following recommendations are offered to future joint force commanders and planners for enabling good governance through identification of human terrain decisive points:

1. A joint planning team, with some of the staff's best officers and NCOs, should be dedicated to identifying human terrain decisive points for Phase IV operations.

2. Joint planners should refer to John Paul Lederach's "Actors and Approaches" model for useful insights and ideas for decisive actions upon cessation of violence. Many of the approaches suggested will help enable the joint force commander to seize momentum for successful transition to Phase IV operations.
3. Human terrain decisive points should be identified, at a minimum, in the following six domains: political, military (security), economic, social, infrastructure, and information.
4. When practical, use existing political boundaries rather than creating new ones in Phase IV. Then, assign subordinate headquarters based on their capabilities to enable local governance.
5. Human terrain decisive points should be used as a tool to build relationships with key leaders and influencers within the society. Leaders at all levels should seek to build strong relationships first, then build consensus with local leaders on a way forward.
6. Joint planners should have a detailed plan for surgically removing leaders associated with the previous regime while maintaining a coterie of qualified, competent technocrats who can enable rebuilding efforts. De-Nazification efforts in post World War II provide a useful model that should be adapted and applied in future conflicts.
7. Joint planners should clearly understand the importance of tribal culture and its ability to serve as a "combat multiplier" to restore societal order.
8. Joint planning teams should reach out to interagency counterparts, expatriates, anthropologists, and academicians to gain additional expertise on potential human terrain decisive points.

9. To discover the best methods of obtaining valuable insights from these disparate groups mentioned above, further research and analysis is recommended.

FINAL REMARKS

Democratic Party strategist James Carville coined the phrase, “It’s the Economy, Stupid!” to keep former President Clinton’s 1992 campaign focused and “on message.”²⁸ If he were writing this paper, he probably would have entitled it, “It’s the People, Stupid!” Indeed, few would deny the importance of understanding human terrain during stability operations. Yet, U.S. forces continue to struggle with how to best conduct these types of operations.

By embracing the people-centric nature of stability operations, U.S. forces can avoid many of the mistakes of past conflicts. One way to ensure proper analysis of the human terrain is to identify those key leaders whose support will give us a marked and decisive advantage in restoring order to a society emerging from conflict. In other words, American planners can help ensure success in future rebuilding efforts by seeking to identify key leaders and by seeking to understand them first before demanding to be understood.

NOTES

1. Thomas E. Ricks. *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), 158-165.
2. This phrase originally used by Nadia Schadlow. See Nadia Schadlow. *Organizing to Compete in the Political Terrain*. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, July 2010).
3. Ibid, 3, 4.
4. Ron Capps. "Call in the Civilians". *Foreignpolicy.com*. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/10/26/call_in_the_civilians (accessed 17 October 2010).
5. *Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-0, The Army Capstone Concept: Operational Adaptability – Operating Under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Consistent Conflict, 2016-202.*, Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, December 21, 2009, available from www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/tp525-3-0.pdf. (accessed 19 October 2010), 27.
6. Stephen Zunes. "Iraq: The Failures of Democratization". (Washington, D.C: Foreign Policy in Focus, March 9, 2007). Available at http://www.fpiif.org/articles/iraq_the_failures_of_democratization (accessed 19 October 2010).
7. U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Joint Publication (JP) 1-02*. Washington, DC: CJCS, 12 April 2001 (As Amended Through 31 July 2010), 144.
8. John Paul Lederach. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 38-52.
9. Conrad Crane and W. Andrew Terrill. *Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario*. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute: February, 2003), 18-19.
10. The framework provided is based on the author's personal experience in OIF 09-11.
11. Walter E. Piatt. *Paktika: The Story of the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds in Paktika, Afghanistan*. (Frederick, MD: Publish America, 2006), 275.
12. L. Paul Bremer with Malcolm McConnell. *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 358-362.

13. Profile, "Ayad Allawi," *New York Times*, 4 October 2010. Available at <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/a/iyad/allawi> (Accessed 26 October 2010).
14. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 104-105.
15. Dan Murphy, "Ahmed Chalabi Emerges as Key Player in Iraq after Falling Out with U.S.," *Christian Science Monitor*. March 5, 2010. Available at: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2010/0305/Ahmed-Chalabi-emerges-as-key-player-in-Iraq-election-after-falling-out-with-US> (Accessed 26 October 2010).
16. James Fallows, "Blind Into Baghdad," *The Atlantic Monthly*. January-February 2004. Available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/issues/2004/01/fallows.htm>. (Accessed on 20 October 2010).
17. Ibid.
18. Interview with Salah ad Din Provincial Council Member Dhamin Elawi (February, 2009).
19. This assertion is based on the author's personal experience in Iraq from October, 2008 to October, 2009.
20. Michael Hirsh. "Reassessing Jerry Bremer". *Newsweek.com*. March 19, 2010. Available at <http://www.newsweek.com/2010/03/18/rethinking-jerry-bremer.html>. (Accessed on 21 October 2010).
21. Bathsheba Crocker. "Reconstructing Iraq's Economy." *Washington Quarterly*. Autumn, 2004, 87-88.
22. David M. Hodne. *After the Surge: Task Force Raider's Experience in Iraq*. (Washington DC: Institute for the Study of War), 25-27.
23. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 216.
24. Hodne, 24-25.
25. Crane and Terrill, 14-15.
26. Ibid, 50.
27. Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor. *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*. (New York: Random House, 2006), 184.
28. Profile, "James Carville," *New York Times*, 20 November 2010. Available at

http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/c/james_carville/index.html
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