

**Shock and Awe Is Not Enough:
Defeating America's Enemies Requires Interagency Effort Led from the Top**

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BIOGRAPHY

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Shock and Awe Is Not Enough

The media loved calling the concept behind the lightning-fast 2003 coalition military advance inside Iraq “Shock and Awe.” That concept, however, is only part of a broader strategy called “Rapid Dominance” proposed seven years earlier in a paper written by Harlan Ullman and James Wade, with the assistance of several prominent retired United States (US) flag officers. In their Introduction, they say this:

The aim of Rapid Dominance is to affect the will, perception, and understanding of the adversary to fit or respond to our strategic policy ends through imposing a regime of Shock and Awe... Beyond achieving decisive force and dominant battlefield awareness, we envisage Rapid Dominance producing a capability that can more effectively and efficiently achieve the stated political or military objectives underwriting the use of force by rendering the adversary completely impotent. (Ullman & Wade, 1996)

Coalition political objectives in Iraq have proven elusive, despite the quick initial military success. Announcing the commencement of hostilities, President George W. Bush said the mission was clear: “to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein’s support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people” (White House Press Release, March 2003). Forty days later, however, even as he declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq beneath the “Mission Accomplished” banner on the deck of the United States Ship (USS) Abraham Lincoln, the President explained much more remained to be done:

We have difficult work to do in Iraq... The transition from dictatorship to democracy will take time, but it is worth every effort. Our coalition will stay until our work is done. Then we will leave, and we will leave behind a free Iraq. (White House Press Release, May 2003)

President Bush understood the complexity of the situation, but he failed to coordinate among all agencies of our own government and the others involved to form a Coalition of the Capable to follow the initial historic military success of the Coalition of the Willing. Consequently, Shock and Awe has been delivered to us, in non-traditional and increasingly

creative asymmetric fashion. The proponents of Rapid Dominance contended its principles could prevail "...even and perhaps especially in the modern era when adversaries may not elect to fight the US along traditional or expected lines" (Ullman & Wade, 1996); but to prevail in this way US national security efforts must include agencies and robust capabilities that go far beyond major combat operations.

Al-Qaeda attacked the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon with hijacked US-flagged airliners. It was a devastating method of attack never before used, and Al-Qaeda's creativity and persistence continue. To defeat our enemies in the twenty-first century, terrorist and otherwise, the US must learn to respond consistently and dominantly with creativity and persistence of our own, in a coordinated effort led at the highest level to ensure overwhelming whole-of-government engagement at the lowest.

The Range of Military Operations and Beyond

Since the Cold War ended, and with it the need for sizable garrisoned forces-in-waiting, the US military has been summoned to intervene in numerous and varied hostile situations throughout the world. Some have expressed concern that our military has been overused, including even President Bush, during a 2001 debate against then Vice-President Al Gore: "I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation-building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win war" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2004). Defeating our enemies is about much more than simply fighting and winning America's wars, however; and the effort requires expansive commitment. Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations*, dated 17 September 2006, acknowledges this fact by recognizing that military operations will:

vary in size, purpose, and combat intensity within a range that extends from military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence activities to crisis response and limited contingency operations and, if necessary, major operations and campaigns.

The definition of “military options” in JP 1-02, *The Department of Defense (DOD) Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, provides a lengthy list of acceptable military force responses, only one among many being “armed conflict” (DOD, 2001). DOD understands it must be engaged throughout a broad spectrum of operations with a broad spectrum of partners. Our government’s failing has been in coordinating, directing and enabling those partnerships to facilitate effective application of all the elements of our national power.

Integration of the Elements of US National Power

JP 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, says this:

The ability of the US to achieve its national strategic objectives is dependent on the effectiveness of the US Government (USG) in employing the instruments of national power. These instruments of national power (diplomatic, informational, military, and economic) are *normally* coordinated by the *appropriate* governmental officials, *often* with National Security Council (NSC) direction. They are the tools the US uses to apply its sources of power, including its culture, human potential, industry, science and technology, academic institutions, geography, and national will. [Emphasis added.] (DOD, May 2007)

There is no excuse for a lack of USG coordination by the appropriate officials at the specific direction of the NSC. Our nation has more capability to realize and advance its own interests and values than any other nation in history; and our military is incredibly adept at rapid dominance on the battlefield. What USG should be producing, however - with consistent top-down direction from the President via the NSC - is persistent dominance both on the battlefield and off.

Prompted by the ongoing difficulties in Iraq, 2005’s National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and*

Stabilization, designates the Department of State (DOS) the lead for interagency USG reconstruction and stabilization operations worldwide, to assist “foreign states and regions at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife.” Caveats include acknowledgement that USG support relationships will depend on the particular situation, primarily where armed conflict is involved; but, with the Secretary of State (SecState) serving as the focal point, the intent is to look beyond military action alone to coordinated USG efforts which “establish a sustainable path toward peaceful societies, democracies, and market economies” throughout the world.

DOD is committed to stability operations as a core US military mission to “be given priority comparable to combat operations,” and accepts the requirement that US military forces “be prepared to perform all tasks necessary to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so.” DOD also maintains, however, that many, if not all, stability operations “are best performed by indigenous, foreign, or US civilian professionals,” and asserts that “integrated civilian and military efforts are key to successful stability operations” (DOD, 2005).

In April 2007, the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) identified the critical capability shortfall hampering USG civilian and military integration:

The greatest challenge to the USG’s ability to conduct Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) operations is the lack of integrated capability and capacity of civilian agencies with which the military must partner to achieve success. The US Armed Forces can fill some of these gaps in civilian capacity in the short-term, but strategic success in SSTR operations will only be possible with (1) a robust architecture for unified civil-military action, and (2) substantially more resources devoted to making civilian US Departments and Agencies operational and expeditionary. (DOD, April 2007)

We can no longer afford for civilian-military cooperation to be ad-hoc. Instead, as SecDef said, we need “standing civilian-military teams and interagency coordination processes” whereby civilian agencies bring significant capability of their own to the fight (DOD, April 2007).

The current Provincial Reconstruction Team concept in Iraq and Afghanistan represents a limited success story along these lines; and NSPD-44 is intended to further the process of institutionalizing civilian and military integration. In order for that integration to be successful, however, the expeditionary capabilities of civilian Federal agencies must be dramatically improved, in conjunction with the interagency coordination processes that will direct employment of those capabilities alongside the US military's.

The Way Ahead

US expeditionary capability must be funded and cultivated throughout our government. Our military must be capable of fighting both big wars (with traditional direct action against the enemy forces of nation-states, such as an emergent China or a re-emergent Russia) and small wars (with both direct and indirect action against determined partisans who resist our efforts in creative and often tragic asymmetric fashion). Added to this is the programming challenge to create and maintain true expeditionary capability in our civilian Federal agencies, as well. It is a challenge we must not fail to meet.

USG began Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom without a strong strategic plan to coordinate whole-of-government efforts during the campaigns. This is due in no small part to the fact that USG's non-military components did not have the kind of expeditionary capability needed. It is due in larger part to the fact our country's executive leadership is not structured to facilitate broad coordination at the highest levels to ensure broad engagement at the lowest.

Three students at Joint Forces Staff College have made a detailed case for restructuring and strengthening DOS in order to facilitate its leadership of interagency SSTR as envisioned by

NSPD 44. Their recommendations concentrate around reorganizing DOS to create Regional Chiefs of Mission (RCMs) aligned with the geographical domains of the military's Combatant Commanders (COCOMs). These RCMs would report directly to SecState, as the COCOMs report directly to SecDef; they would have regional diplomatic oversight on par with the COCOMs' regional military oversight; and they would be positioned to coordinate strategic application of the US elements of national power, "...with emphasis on crisis response, stability operations, and 'soft power' projection." (Caudill, Leonard & Thresher, 2008)

DOS must certainly be strengthened, and DOS reorganization along the COCOMs' geographic lines is long overdue; but giving DOS the lead of SSTR as envisioned in NSPD 44 is a mistake. In 2004, SecState Colin Powell created the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), to enhance USG's institutional civilian capacity to respond to crises; but as recently as September 2007, DOS' own Inspector General reported that: ...despite its broad mandate, [S/CRS] had not yet carved out a leadership role in the management of reconstruction and stabilization crises, but had remained on the periphery in the interagency handling of such crises. (DOS Office of Inspector General, 2007)

Giving even a reengineered DOS the lead is not the answer. Instead USG needs a new structure to give the President effective control of all the elements of national power within the executive branch of government, spanning its 15 departments and dozens of direct report and subordinate agencies. Even though NSPD 1, *Organization of the National Security Council System*, was published as far back as February 2001, to "clarify responsibilities and effective accountability within the NSC system," that system remains ineffective. NSPD 1 itself calls the system merely "a process to *coordinate* [emphasis added] executive departments and agencies in the effective development and implementation of...national security policies." USG needs clear direction, however, and not merely more coordination.

The solution includes a robust Interagency (IA) Staff modeled after the military's Joint Staff, as envisioned in detail by John Mills:

to better plan, resource, and execute non-military elements of National Power, reserving the Military option for picking the right fight at the right place and not making it the default selection because the non-military elements are primitive in their capability compared to the Military element of National Power. (Mills, 2006)

This IA Staff becomes the overarching leadership apparatus needed to produce and direct comprehensive and coherent courses of action which fully and effectively bring all four basic elements of national power to bear in any crisis worldwide - including both big wars and small ones, as well as disasters of both humanity's making and nature's. To realize the dramatic potential of the Mills IA Staff, however, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs - commonly called the National Security Advisor (NSA) - must become a National Security Director (NSD). This position must be empowered to direct all interagency planning and engagement to ensure the Commander-in-Chief's intent is executed in an end-to-end process for all USG national security actions.

Neither the National Security Act of 1947 which created the NSC, nor its subsequent amendments, makes any provision for an NSA. The post instead developed over time, and its incumbent had no substantive part in the policy-making process until the administration of President John F. Kennedy (DOS, 1997); but the NSA's role has always been dependent upon the personalities and expectations of the President, the NSA, and the President's Cabinet members, SecState and SecDef in particular. The NSA post must now become statutory and directive rather than merely advisory, with the responsibility to run an operational NSC which effects policy rather than merely coordinating it. The NSC has since its inception been used by successive Presidents "as a means of controlling and managing competing departments" (DOS,

1997). It must instead become a means of directing collaborating departments in achieving common US national security goals.

Martin Gorman and Alexander Krongard go too far in their suggestion that the national security structure be rebuilt around “national-level, joint interagency issue-focused organizations,” but not far enough in their suggestion that NSA “concentrate on providing separate and independent advice to the President” (Gorman & Krongard, 2005). The IA Staff concept described by Mills provides exactly the kind of focus needed, within issue-focused staff directorates, without tearing apart USG’s separate departments and agencies. However, without direction at the top from someone empowered to do more than simply give advice, that focus cannot produce the needed results.

While it may be the only USG agency with heavy-lift, expeditionary capability, DOD cannot defeat America’s enemies on its own. In order to achieve lasting effects that advance US interests and values, US national security actions must be executed as synchronized whole-of-government expeditionary efforts to shape the international environment by destroying our enemies - both by capturing or killing them, or, when possible, by turning those enemies into friends. DOD must be involved throughout the full spectrum of these efforts, but overall leadership must come from the highest level to ensure whole-of government engagement at the lowest.

Shock and Awe is not enough. The goal is not merely rapid but persistent dominance, which USG will achieve only with the concerted and coordinated efforts of every USG agency. This requires leadership at the top, from a National Security Director with the authority to produce unity of effort and with it unity of effect, to realize and advance US interests and values throughout the world.

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