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NATO Defense College
Collège de Défense de l'OTAN

# Operationalizing a comprehensive approach in semi-permissive environments

Edited by
Christopher M. Schnaubelt

Research Division • Rome, June 2009

NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE
COLLEGE DE DEFENSE DE L'OTAN

Research Division
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# OPERATIONALIZING A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH IN SEMI-PERMISSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Rome, June 2009

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# INTRODUCTION

## Operationalizing a comprehensive approach in semi-permissive environments

Christopher M. Schnaubelt

*"War and diplomacy are different but intimately related aspects of national policy. Diplomats and warriors who recall this will therefore act as brothers in a potentially lethal common endeavor. ...*
*They will consider together when to fight and when to talk and when to press and when to stop."*
Chas. W. Freeman, Jr., *The Diplomat's Dictionary* (1995)[1]

The collection of articles in this NDC Forum Paper provides ideas regarding the comprehensive approach in semi-permissive environments. They focus on current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, examining Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) as a model to vertically and horizontally integrate all the elements of national and international power.

Current research typically argues that for many years to come, contemporary adversaries are highly unlikely to directly threaten NATO or any of its individual members with traditional military means. Given NATO's conventional military capabilities, emerging threats to NATO are most likely to consist of asymmetric warfare that is less vulnerable to overwhelming conventional combat forces. As General (ret) Charles Krulak has posited: "They're not going to fight us straight up. We're not going to see the son of Desert Storm anymore. You're going to see the stepchild of Chechnya."[2]

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[1] Quoted by Kurt Amend at: http://smallwarsjournal.com/mag/docs-temp/75-amend.pdf.
[2] Interview with Jim Lehrer, June 25, 1999. Transcript at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/military/jan-june99/krulak_6-25.html

Therefore, a common prescription in the security literature is to implement a "comprehensive approach." For example, Friis Arne Petersen and Hans Binnendijk have written: "Experience has shown that conflict resolution requires the application of all the elements of national and international power—political, diplomatic, economic, financial, informational, social, and commercial, as well as military. To resolve conflicts or crises, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) should adopt a Comprehensive Approach that would enable the collaborative engagement of all requisite civil and military elements of international power…."[3]

UN, NATO, and EU officials commonly speak of a comprehensive approach. On February 20, 2001, for example, the UN Security Council released a Presidential Statement asserting "…the quest for peace requires a comprehensive, concerted and determined approach that addresses the root causes of conflicts, including their economic and social dimensions…[that] must involve all the relevant actors in this field…."[4] In 2006, a representative of the EU President declared: "The EU's commitment to the security, stability and development of Afghanistan has been significant during the past, and it will continue its long-term support with a comprehensive approach recognizing the close interlinkages between different sectors and between military and civilian efforts."[5] In 2007, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Sheffer called for more robust civilian efforts in Afghanistan, saying: "…sustaining the progress in Afghanistan cannot be done by NATO Allies alone. A broader, concerted international effort by the whole of the international community is required. And this is what we, in NATO, mean when we talk about a comprehensive approach."[6]

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[3] "The Comprehensive Approach Initiative: Future Options for NATO," *Defense Horizons* 58, September 2007, p. 1. Available at: http://www.ndu.edu/ctnsp/defense_horizons/DH_58.pdf.

[4] "Security Council Addresses Comprehensive Approach to Peace-Building," Press Release SC/7014. Available at: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7014.doc.htm.

[5] Address by Mr Pertti Torstila to the Assembly of Western European Union, December 19, 2006 (Finnish Presidency).
Available at: http://www.eu2006.fi/news_and_documents/speeches/vko51/en_GB/1166539581430/.

[6] Speech to the Microsoft-BBC-NATO - Defence Leaders forum at Noordwijk Aan Zee, Netherlands, April 23, 2007. Available at: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070423a.html.

Despite the frequent use of the term, neither the UN, nor EU, nor NATO has an official standard definition of "comprehensive approach."[7] Nonetheless, there is a general understanding of what it means: synchronizing all the elements of national and international power. The elements of national and international power themselves also lack a widely agreed upon definition, but generally entail diplomatic, informational, military, and economic elements. These are often summarized by the acronym "DIME."

While there is broad agreement on the general concept that elements of power exist (sometimes described as the national and international elements of power and influence) and can be applied to obtain national objectives, there is no consensus on a specific list of these elements. Some contemporary authors have expanded the roster to add financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIMEFIL) or proposed different or re-ordered sets, such as military, intelligence, diplomatic, law enforcement, information, finance, and economic (MIDLIFE).[8] Whichever collection of attributes is chosen, the full range of these elements should entail both so-called "hard power" and "soft power" which in combination are sometimes called "smart power."[9]

The importance of being able to bring to bear the elements of power is not a new concept, various states and alliances have attempted to

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[7] For review of definitional and conceptual difficulties with the concept, see Brooke Smith-Windsor, "Hasten Slowly: NATO's Effects Based and Comprehensive Approach to Operations." NATO Defense College Paper Research Paper #38, July 2008.
Available at: http://www.ndc.nato.int/research/respaper.html.

[8] Jack Kem, "Understanding the Operational Environment: The Expansion of the DIME," University of Military Intelligence, at: http://www.universityofmilitaryintelligence.us/mipb/article.asp?articleID=578&issueID=45 (accessed January 9, 2009). Alternatively, the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense notes that "National Strategy is delivered by appropriate application of the 3 national instruments of power (diplomatic, military and economic). See "The Comprehensive Approach," *Joint Discussion Note 4/05*, January 2006. Available at: http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BEE7F0A4-C1DA-45F8-9FDC-7FBD25750EE3/0/dcdc21_jdn4_05.pdf.

[9] The CSIS Commission on Smart Power uses the following definition: "Smart power is neither hard nor soft—it is the skillful combination of both. Smart power means developing an integrated strategy, resource base, and tool kit to achieve [national] objectives, drawing on both hard and soft power. It is an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions at all levels…." Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007, p. 7. Available at: http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/071106_csissmartpowerreport.pdf.

combine the various elements of power and use them in tandem since at least the 17th Century. However, views have changed considerably over time regarding what characteristics actually constitute the elements of national power and how they might interrelate.

Space limitations preclude a detailed review of the literature regarding the elements of national power and how national leaders have historically conceived their application. However, some background may be useful towards understanding how the concept of a comprehensive approach has emerged and why its application remains difficult. It may seem obvious to a contemporary observer that a state should apply all its resources, rather than just the military, in order to win a war or attain vital national security objectives. However, theoretical development of concepts regarding the integration of the elements of national power is relatively new. Most of the literature on this topic has emerged since the early 1990s.

Monarchs and other rulers have long recognized a relationship between military power and diplomacy, yet the two constructs were often viewed as alternatives rather than complementary elements of power to be synchronized. For centuries, the military played its role in achieving a state's security objectives by fighting other militaries and defending its own and/or capturing (or destroying) enemy cities.

Writing about the growth of European armies in the late 1600s and early 1700s, John Lynn concluded that "in a greater Clausewitzian sense, armies are instruments intended to force the enemy to do your will, but in the narrower context of seventeenth-century strategy, armies were instruments to seize and protect territory. Territory was the object of, and the key to, the ruler's will."[10] Even in the early 20th Century, the U.S. Army Field Service Regulations of 1923—intended to reflect American experience during World War I—stated that "the ultimate

[10] "The *trace italienne* and the Growth of Armies," p. 182, in Clifford J. Rogers, ed. *The Military Revolution Debate*, Westview Press, 1995.

objective of all military operations is the destruction of the enemy's armed forces in battle."[11]

Conversely, diplomats talked to other diplomats (or rulers to other rulers) with little direct coordination between the spheres of activities other than the threat or use of military force frequently being an important diplomatic tool. Napoleon, for instance, saw little use for diplomacy *during* a campaign. He often used his foreign minister, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord, for tasks such as getting supplies for the army. Writing to Talleyrand in 1807, Napoleon stated: "If I have bread, beating the Russians is child's play. What I am asking for is more important than all the negotiations in the world."[12]

At the conclusion of major campaigns or decisive battles, diplomacy could be brought in again to divide up the spoils among the victors and determine the price the losers would pay. After Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz in 1805, defeating the combined armies of the Russian and Austrian Empires, Talleyrand played a key role in negotiating the Treaty of Pressburg that took Austria out of the war, resulted in the creation of the Confederation of the Rhine, and reorganized the borders and allegiances of "dozens, scores even, of …tiny states [by] tossing the marbles around."[13]

Similarly, the perceived relevance of economics as an element of power was once limited to a ruler's ability to pay for an army and the size of the available pool of potential soldiers. Geoffrey Parker, for example, argues that the primary constraints on military power in Western Europe until the 17th Century were the level of wealth in a society and the size of population that could be mobilized.[14] In other words, economic power was

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[11] Quoted in James Jay Carafano, "Principles for Stability Operations and State-Building." Heritage Lecture delivered February 13, 2008. Available at: http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/hl1067.cfm.

[12] David Lawday, *Napoleon's Master: A Life of Prince Talleyrand*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006, p. 179.

[13] Lawday, p. 168.

[14] "The Military Revolution—A Myth?" p. 46, in Clifford J. Rogers, ed. *The Military Revolution Debate*, Westview Press, 1995.

viewed as a means to generate combat power rather than a tool that could be usefully applied independently from military forces.[15]

It has been suggested that England's intervention (1655-1658) in Savoy to protect the Vaudois (a religious minority) during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell was history's first humanitarian intervention. Furthermore, Cromwell may have been the first ruler to apply a comprehensive approach. Cromwell not only used the threat of force and diplomatic pressure, in combination with France, to stop the Duke of Savoy from continuing a massacre of the Vaudois that had begun in 1655, he also sent a large sum of money and two ambassadors to aid the Vaudois in reconstructing their community.[16]

Arguably, the Concert of Europe also applied a comprehensive approach—using military, diplomatic, and economic power—during its intervention in Lebanon-Syria (1860-1861) to protect Maronite Christians after sectarian warfare had broken out.[17] France sent a squadron of warships to the coast of Lebanon and sent French marines onshore. The military intervention was followed by a long-term program to protect the civilian population regardless of religion. A European Commission, with representatives from France, Great Britain, Russia, and Austria was appointed and worked together to direct the use of charitable funds in reconstruction of Christian and Druze villages that had been destroyed during the fighting.

Despite these early, limited examples of a broader approach, mid-20th Century formulations tended to view all the national elements of power in terms of strategic military capabilities. Addressing the US National War

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[15] Bribes (or *douceur*) might be used to sway decisions on military alliances or positions on treaties, but were viewed as an adjunct to diplomacy. (Cf. the "X, Y, Z Affair" and negotiations between the fledgling United States and Imperial France in 1798 in David McCullough, *John Adams*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001, pp. 495-98.)

[16] Presentation by David Trim at the Changing Character of War Conference, Oxford University, March 20, 2009 and forthcoming paper; also see B. P. Simms and D. J. B. Trim (eds.), *Humanitarian intervention–a history* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2010).

[17] Trim, ibid.

College and Industrial College of the Armed Forces in 1958, John Carlton Ward spoke of the linkage between national economic power and military power:

> When you gentlemen concern yourselves with political attitudes, psychological warfare, economic warfare, and, finally, combat warfare, you are concerned, not with the number of men, but with the economic might of a nation that will provide those men with the tools and weaponry which they must use to be effective. This means that we have to manufacture and supply such weaponry in times of war. We have to transport it. We have to supply and maintain it. And our Nation has to supply the civil population who will make this weaponry. All this is part of our, shall we call it, military posture—a term that I hear from time to time.[18]

A broader view of the non-military elements of power in contemporary thought began to emerge in the 1980s. In *Thinking about National Security*, his ground-breaking book on American defense and foreign policy, former US Secretary of Defense Harold Brown wrote that "A workable national security policy requires a combination of political, economic, and military elements."[19] Yet, Brown's approach was largely one of developing a national security policy that would strike the right "balance" between the elements, whose relationship with each other were defined by tradeoffs. For example, he posited that "To choose either guns or butter in peacetime is a mistake. The more fundamental mistake is to insist on one or the other without examining what kind of guns, what kind of butter, the requirements for each, and how these all fit into a program to increase the human and material capabilities on which both national security and domestic well-being depend."[20]

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[18] "Science and Technology as Elements of National Power," transcript dated 13 October 1958, Industrial College of the Armed Forces Publication L59-036. Available at: http://www.ndu.edu/library/ic3/L59-036.pdf.

[19] Westview Press, 1983, p. 264. Brown had been the U.S. Secretary of Defense in the Carter administration.

[20] Ibid. p. 279.

Today, economic power (as well as diplomacy and information) is recognized as a valuable tool for its own potential to realize national security objectives as distinct from its role in generating military forces. Indeed, it is widely recognized that achieving virtually any national security objective in the contemporary operating environment requires bringing to bear all the elements of national power.

In its latest field manual on stability operations, the US Army recently incorporated the concept in its doctrine and provides the following description: "A *comprehensive approach* is an approach that integrates the tools of statecraft with our military forces, international partners, humanitarian organizations, and the private sector to achieve unity of effort towards a shared goal."[21] Nonetheless, achieving this integration has been an illusive goal—not only for individual states such as the US, but also for a military alliance such as NATO and international organizations such as the EU and UN.

Current dialogue on a comprehensive approach and applying all the elements of power is mostly focused on the national and multi-national levels. It provides often simplistic suggestions—such as enhancing the instruments of "soft power" through more public diplomacy efforts by the EU and increased financial support to global alliances and institutions like the UN peacekeeping missions, the World Food Program, and the World Health Organization.[22] A frequently suggested remedy, apparently based upon the belief that unity of command would necessarily produce unity of effort, is to appoint a single military or civilian leader to be in charge of all activities in a particular operation.[23]

There has been little research on how these strategic resources can best

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[21] Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*. U.S. Department of the Army, October 2008, pp. 1-4 and 1-5. Available at: http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-07.pdf.

[22] For example, see John R. Mills, "'All Elements of National Power': Re-Organizing the Interagency Structure and Process for Victory in the Long War," *Strategic Insights* vol. V, Issue 6 (July 2006); and Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., co-chairs, *CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A smarter, more secure America*. Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2006.

[23] E.g., Phillip S. Meilinger, "Counterinsurgency From Above." *Air Force Magazine*, July 2007. Available at: http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2008/July%202008/0708COIN.aspx

be operationalized—that is, integrated and applied at the operational and tactical level.[24] It may also be argued that the traditionally conceived levels of war (strategic, operational, and tactical) are collapsed in asymmetric warfare, making the distinctions between them both more conceptually difficult and less useful as an organizing principle. Therefore, vertical integration of these components of power and influence may be as critical as horizontal integration.

A particular challenge is how to accomplish this integration in semi-permissive environments, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, where the level of conflict is generally less than full-scale combat but high enough to present a security threat to civilians engaged in governance and economic development efforts.[25] This is especially difficult when sufficient military resources are not available or do not have the capabilities to implement the necessary non-military elements of the DIME.

Both vertical and horizontal integration of a comprehensive approach is a strategic transformation issue for NATO because it must adapt its ability to apply military force and other resources in the face of a threat far different from what it was originally organized to face. In addition to whether NATO succeeds in Afghanistan and similar missions it may choose to undertake in the future, the approach to this problem has implications for the way forces are manned, trained and educated, equipped, leaders developed, laws and agreements on who is deployable in what circumstances, and how civilian elements of government are structured, funded, manned, etc. In other words, the institutional implications are important to NATO and its member states as well as to NATO's partners and international organizations it might support or collaborate with.

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[24] The term "operationalized" is used here both in its public policy meaning (to put a theory into practice or implement a policy) and the military sense of the term (to convert strategy into tactical actions).
[25] One end of the spectrum of the operating environment is non-permissive. This consists of high-intensity combat where military forces must fight to gain freedom of movement and any supporting civilian elements or organizations are exposed to high risk of attack. The other end is permissive, such as typically found during humanitarian assistance following a natural disaster where there is there no risk of combat. Also called "low-intensity," semi-permissive environments fall somewhere in between, such the post major conflict reconstruction in Iraq or the initial entry of NATO forces into Bosnia, where there is a risk to military units and supporting civilian elements or organizations but it falls short of full combat.

# COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES: THEORIES, STRATEGIES, PLANS AND PRACTICE

Alexander Alderson

## Introduction

In the United Kingdom the term *Comprehensive Approach* is relatively new. It was first coined in 2005 when the then Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre (JDCC)[1] started work to reinvigorate an existing Cabinet Office-led approach for developing and implementing national responses to complex situations. JDCC carried out a great deal of operational analysis, and consulted widely with other government departments in Whitehall. It intended to codify, and then institutionalize a conceptual framework to underpin decision-making at the highest level having to deal with strategic problems. As work progressed, so the central idea of acting comprehensively across government started to be reflected in the lexicon of operational planning. JDCC's work was published in a Joint Discussion Note in January 2006.[2]

The idea of a comprehensive approach assumes a continuum of thought and action within national government, and, from it, out into the theatre of operations. It is there where objectives designed in government are converted into action on the ground. But what happens when the continuum is broken? What happens when national objectives are not congruent with operational plans developed in a theatre of operations? If recent experience is an indicator, much depends on the theatre, or operational level of planning, the point at which strategic objectives are translated into tactical action. This paper seeks to examine the notion of a comprehensive approach and its link with strategy, operational planning and tactics. It does so against the context of counterinsurgency, where for many years it

[1] Now the Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC).
[2] Joint Discussion Note 4/05, *The Comprehensive Approach*, London: Ministry of Defence, promulgated as directed by the Chiefs of Staff, January 2006. Hereafter *JDN 4/05*.

has been recognized that success is built on a comprehensive approach. In counterinsurgency, as General Sir Frank Kitson observes,

> there can be no such thing as a purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity. Political measures alone might have prevented the insurgency from occurring in the first place, ….[but once an insurgency] has taken hold, politics and force, backed up by economic measures *will have to be harnessed together* for the purpose of restoring peaceful conditions.[3]

The paper first sets the comprehensive approach in its historical context. It then examines it against the enduring characteristics of counterinsurgency, and looks at how they affect strategy, in particular the primacy that political factors take in counterinsurgency. The paper examines the elements of a comprehensive approach required for expeditionary counterinsurgency. In the final section, it looks at strategy and its interplay with campaign design: the desirable characteristics of an effective national strategy, strategy for counterinsurgency, the influence of doctrine, and the case of Multinational Forces Iraq (MNF-I).

This paper is based on the premise that the notion of a comprehensive approach is inextricably linked to the requirement for an effective national strategy. Without such a strategy, and in the absence of a comprehensive *national* approach, there is an inevitable risk that tactical actions within the theatre of operations – particularly set-backs – will start to drive strategic decisions. That said, there is a safety net, albeit an unsatisfactory one if a strategy-tactics continuum is a pre-requisite. A comprehensive in-theatre campaign plan can be an effective safety net and a powerful unifying force, provided it draws together the strengths of individual political, military, and economic contributions. Developments in Iraq 2007-08, under the joint leadership of Ambassador Ryan Crocker and General David Petraeus, support this.

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[3] Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, London: Faber & Faber, 1977, p. 283. Emphasis added.

**Comprehensive approach: historical context**

In itself, the idea of a comprehensive approach is not new. President Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and their respective cabinets and chiefs of staff, would recognize the principles – but perhaps not the idiom – the British discussion note describes: a pro-active cross-government approach, shared understanding between departments, outcome-based thinking and collaborative working.[4] Although Roosevelt and Churchill might have added statecraft and leadership to the list of essentials, the notion of not fighting a campaign under governmental direction, or under a unifying theme, or that efforts would not be co-ordinated and synchronized, would have appeared somewhat illogical.

Similarly, in terms of smaller wars, practitioners and theorists, such Sir Robert Thompson and General Sir Frank Kitson, arguably the most influential British counterinsurgency theorists and practitioners of the last century, would also recognize the essence of a comprehensive approach. Thompson, an experienced serviceman and civil servant who was closely involved with the famous Briggs plan in Malaya in 1950, made the point that "[w]ithout a reasonably efficient government machine, no project or programme, in the context of counterinsurgency, will produce the desired results."[5] Kitson described a framework for the planning and conduct of counterinsurgency campaigns comprising four critical elements:

> co-ordinating machinery at every level for the direction of the campaign, arrangements for ensuring that the insurgents do not win the war for the minds of the people, an intelligence organisation suited to the circumstances, and a legal system adequate to the needs of the moment.[6]

His observations on the requirement for co-ordinated government machinery remain apposite. In Kitson's view, it was needed to create the political conditions to enable a government to make the best use of its

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[4] *JDN 4/05*, pp. 1-6-1-7.
[5] Thompson, p. 52.
[6] Ibid. pp. 290-1.

strengths, and – this is the important part – to prevent one government measure cutting across and disrupting other efforts. All this, Kitson explains, requires vertical and horizontal integration to prevent separate ministries cascading information in isolation. Kitson and the authors of *JDN 4/05* share the same ideal, albeit that Kitson expressed his more succinctly.

In the context of contemporary operations, conducting operations that fall short of general war has a bearing on the discussion in terms of balance of effort. David Galula observed that this sort of campaign is "eighty percent political, twenty percent military."[7] This ties in closely to Frank Kitson's assertion about the need to harness political, security and economic measures to restore peace and order. The implication is clear: while the military will have an important part to play, it is but one part of the campaign, and very much subordinate to the political imperative.

**Enduring characteristics of counterinsurgency: their effect on strategy**

Despite the many and continuing changes to the operational environment, insurgency and counterinsurgency retain two important and enduring characteristics. First, both sides have a political imperative. The insurgent generally seeks to bring about some form of political change, from the overthrow of the government, to the formal recognition of a problem or grievance and action being taken to address it. The defining characteristic of insurgency is the recourse to armed force in the pursuit of objectives. For those countering the insurgency, the imperative is to re-establish law and order, to reinstate an effective political process, to remove the root cause of the insurgency and to allow normal civil and civic life to continue.

Second, the solution is multifaceted. To paraphrase Kitson, there can be no such thing as a purely military solution to an insurgency because insurgency is not primarily a military activity. Although political measures might have prevented the insurgency from developing in the first place,

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[7] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1964, reprinted 2006, p. 63.

once it has taken hold, political, economic, security and diplomatic measures will have to be integrated and applied. However widespread and however violent security problems may be, they are symptoms of a deeper problem. Treating the symptoms is necessary but that alone will not produce security and stability, and that is one of the principal reasons why security operations have to be interwoven with wider government measures and initiatives and not the central theme of a campaign. As Kitson notes, "those who turn with relief towards the subject of Security Force operations expecting to find easily-defined problems and clear-cut solutions will be disappointed." [8]

**Counterinsurgency: political factors have primacy**

Despite Kitson's caution about expecting too much of security operations alone, a problem with today's campaigns is the impression that military actions dominate. This has a great deal to do with the focus the media can place on highly visible security operations. The perceptions this creates – that military operations are the determining factor in counterinsurgency – distort the fact that there is, as theorists tell us and recent experience in Iraq demonstrates clearly, no purely military solution to the problem. The issue is that, as Galula points out, counterinsurgency is 80 percent political action and only 20 percent military.[9] The actual percentage is not important. What is important is the principle that in counterinsurgency political factors have primacy. The military focus may be on protecting the general population, but for the campaign as a whole, it will only be effective if political control and good governance are established and an effective political process enabled.

Policy is therefore required to guide how security operations develop and this means that active political involvement is needed throughout the planning, preparation, execution, and assessment of counterinsurgency operations. This is the crux of any comprehensive approach.

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[8] Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five,* London: Faber and Faber, 1977, p. 292.

[9] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1964, reprinted 2006, p. 63.

Military operations, for example, may meet their military objectives, but if they are conducted without properly assessing their likely political effects, the overall outcome may well be entirely counterproductive. The key is for military commanders, development officers, diplomats and civil servants alike to ensure that their actions do not hamper the political outcome.

British doctrinal principles for counterinsurgency reflect what has worked as the operational environment has changed. They distil to five key themes: the political character of the campaign, the requirement of co-ordinated civil-military action, the central position of the population, the crucial role of intelligence, and the importance of learning and adapting. The key point for this paper is the emphasis placed on co-ordinated civil-military action. While Thompson really highlighted this aspect, it can be traced back into the period of British imperial policing in the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1934, Major General Charles Gwynn published *Imperial Policing*, in which he examined military support to the civil police and the civil administration. Far from being a dated period piece, Gwynn's emphasis on the intrinsic difficulties the soldier faces in dealing with a deepening insurgency, when the civil policy is more conciliatory than confrontational, is directly relevant to contemporary counterinsurgency.

He listed four principles, two of which are germane to today's idea of a comprehensive approach. The first is that "questions of policy remain vested in the civil Government and, even when the military authorities are in full executive control, the policy of the Government must be loyally carried out." Second, (albeit his fourth), "close co-operation between civil and military authorities are [sic] required".[10] Gwynn explained that unity of command, close co-operation and mutual understanding between the civil

[10] Major General Sir Charles W. Gwynn, *Imperial Policing*, London: Macmillan, 1934. His principles are explained pp. 12-14: questions of policy remain vested in the civil Government and, even when the military authorities are in full executive control, the policy of the Government must be loyally carried out; the amount of military force employed must be the minimum the situation demands; firm and timely action is needed to discourage further disorder; close co-operation between civil and military authorities are [sic] required.

authorities and the military were essential and that the civil authority must retain overall responsibility for the situation. Nothing has changed and Gwynn's understanding of the character of the problem only serves to underline the principles of the Comprehensive Approach.

**Putting a comprehensive approach into practice: expeditionary counterinsurgency**

The primary political task a government facing an insurgency has to achieve is to direct its efforts to restoring its authority and law and order across the country. This cannot be achieved unless a high priority is given to the administrative structure of government itself, to state institutions, and to the training of its personnel. This raises the issue of the host country's capacity to govern. Whatever the capacity and capability of the host administration, Kitson identified some simple rules to define the relationship and the method of co-coordinating efforts between a host country and its allies or partners. His first rule was that "the ally always [takes] second place to the host country."[11] Second, and mirroring his call for co-ordinated government machinery, "no arrangement will work unless that host country itself has a properly ordered system for prosecuting the war." He suggests the supreme council or committee as the focal point. Third, the ally, or allies, should co-ordinate aid through one individual who sits on the host country's supreme council to help formulate overall policy. Finally, the ally must be represented at every level of government but always in a subordinate role to the host country, and in an advisory capacity. Full cooperation is necessary between the host country and the ally, and full integration of the full range of civil and military efforts.

Kitson is, in effect, describing the rules by which the comprehensive approaches, developed nationally, and by an alliance, can be used to support the host country facing an insurgency. The difficulty comes in harnessing the enormous co-ordinating effort required to meet the Kitson

[11] Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping*, London: Faber, 1971, p. 58.

ideal. Difficulties can be anticipated in reconciling the conflicting policies and priorities of multinational contributors, regional protagonists, and the host country, including the conflicting views of the various interested parties. The scope for friction, when unifying and co-ordinating departments, agencies and organizations, is considerable. Much effort will be required from all involved to ensure frictions are reduced. This will depend greatly on the local capacity of organizations deployed, the experience of those involved, leadership, personality and the ability to communicate effectively. Early consultation, discussion and resolution over important decisions such as leadership and authorities, responsibility, timelines, and the prioritization and allocation of resources are necessary.

**Desirable characteristics of an effective national strategy**

Many writers have analyzed, distilled, and developed the essence of sound strategic thought.[12] The Ends-Ways-Means paradigm is familiar, from Basil Liddell Hart's statement that strategy "depends for success, first and most, on a sound calculation and coordination of the end and the means",[13] to Art Lykke's deceptively simple model, which is the cornerstone of teaching at the U.S. Army War College:

Strategy is all about *how* (way or concept) leadership will use the *power* (means or resources) available to the state to exercise control over sets of circumstances and geographic locations to achieve *objectives* (ends) that support state interests. Strategy provides direction for the coercive or persuasive use of this power to achieve specified objectives.[14]

This, he argues, is applicable to the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war because strategists, planners and commanders alike "are

[12] Basil Liddell Hart, Strategy, London: Faber and Faber, 1954; Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace*. Harvard CT: Harvard University Press; Revised Edition April 2002; Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, and *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2005, and "Why Strategy Is Difficult", *Joint Force Quarterly*, Summer 1999, pp. 6-12.
[13] B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, London: Faber & Faber, 1954, 1967, p. 322.
[14] *Theory of War and Strategy*, p. 43.

all concerned with ways to employ means to achieve ends."[15] All should be striving to develop "a valid strategy [which] must have an appropriate balance of objectives, concepts, and resources or its success is at greater risk."[16] While a strategy may prove difficult to develop and execute,[17] nevertheless, the theory appears to be straightforward, and those involved in its execution expect a strategy to exist. The implication is clear: to balance ends, ways and means requires what *JDN 4/05* describes as a pro-active cross-government approach, shared understanding between departments, outcome-based thinking and collaborative working.

Although theorists like Galula, Thompson and Kitson encourage the strategist to identify the ends, ways and means to meet national objectives, their theories say little about what constitutes an *effective* national strategy. Today, any discussion about what constitutes effective is likely to be fraught. In the interests of brevity, therefore, an assumption will be made that effective strategy is that which best serves the national interests of the country involved, and that such a strategy dovetails neatly enough into that of the alliance or coalition supporting the host country. Sadly, history is strewn with examples of strategies that fail to meet this assumption.

The quest to define effective strategy is helped, rather surprisingly, by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). In 2004, it identified that there were "no legislative or executive mandates identifying a uniform set of required or desirable characteristics for ... national strategies."[18] The GAO wanted to find a way to make some analytical and administrative sense of the United States' international military operations. The approach it adopted resulted in it identifying six desirable characteristics of a National Strategy. These were derived from existing statu-

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[15] Arthur F. Lykke, Jr., "Toward an Understanding of Military Strategy," in *U.S. Army War College Guide To Strategy*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2001, p. 180.
[16] *Theory of War and Strategy*, p. 47.
[17] See Colin S. Gray, "Why Strategy Is Difficult," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Summer 1999, pp. 6-12.
[18] U.S. Government Accountability Office Report to Congressional Committees, *Combating Terrorism: Evaluation of Selected Characteristics in National Strategies Related to Terrorism*, Washington DC: United States Government Accountability Office, GAO-04-408T, dated 3 February 2004, p. 28.

tory requirements, the views of those working in the then U.S. administration, and the strategic planning and performance literature. It then grouped ideas logically in a sequence that moved from the conception of a strategy to its implementation, and followed six themes. They compliment the principles of a comprehensive approach, and accord with the administrative and campaign frameworks proposed by Thompson and Kitson. The GAO's strategy characteristics provide a sound analytical starting point for this discussion, particularly since they have been used by students of strategy in their analyses of contemporary operations.[19]

Table 1 on the following page illustrates the desirable characteristics further:[20]

[19] Stephen D. Sklenka, *Strategy, National Interests, and Means to an End*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, October 2007.
[20] Ibid. GAO-04-408T, p. 11.

| Desirable Characteristic | Description | Examples of elements |
|---|---|---|
| Purpose, scope, and methodology | Addresses why the strategy was produced, the scope of its coverage, and the process by which it was developed. | •Principles guiding development<br>•Impetus: e.g., legislation<br>•Definition of key terms<br>•Process and methodology to produce strategy (via intergency task force, private input, etc.) |
| Detailed discussion of problems, risks, and threats | Addresses the particular national problems and threats at which the strategy is directed. | •Discussion or definition of problems, causes, and operating environment<br>•Risk assessment, including analysis of threat and vulnerabilities<br>•Quality of data: constraints, deficiencies, unknowns |
| Desired goals, objectives, activities, and outcome-related performance measures | Addresses what the strategy is trying to achieve, steps to achieve those results, as well as the priorities, milestones, and performance measures to gauge results. | •Overall results desired: end-state<br>•Hierarchy of goals and subordinate objectives<br>•Priorities, milestones, and performance measures to gauge results<br>•Specific performance measures and activities to achieve results<br>•Limitations on progress indicators |
| Description of future costs and resources needed | Addresses what the strategy will cost, the sources and types of resources and investments needed, and where resources and | •Resources and investments associated with strategy<br>•Types of resources required<br>•Sources of resources<br>•Economic principles, e.g., balancing benefits and costs<br>•Resource allocation mecha |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | investments should be targeted by balancing risk reductions and costs. | nisms, such as grants, in-kind services, loans.<br>•Mandates/incentives to spur action<br>•Importance of fiscal discipline<br>•Linkage to other resource documents, e.g., federal budget<br>•Risk management principles |
| Delineation of U.S. government roles, responsibilities and coordination mechanism | Addresses who will be implementing the strategy, what their roles will be compared to others, and mechanisms for them to coordinate their efforts. | •Lead, support, and partner roles and responsibilities<br>•Accountability and oversight framework<br>•Potential changes to structure<br>•Specific coordination processes<br>•Conflict resolution mechanism |
| Description of strategy's integration among and with other entities | Addresses how a national strategy relates to other strategies' goals, objectives, and activities and to subordinate levels of government and their plans to implement the strategy. | •Integration with other national strategies (horizontal)<br>•Integration with relevant documents from other implementing organizations (vertical)<br>•Implementation guidance<br>•Details on subordinate stratgies and plans for implementation (e.g., human capital, enterprise architecture) |

**Table 1 – Desirable Characteristics of Strategy**
**Source**: GAO-06-788 Rebuilding Iraq, p. 37.

**Counterinsurgency strategy: a neglected field**

Conventional military strategy may well be well established as a subject, but strategy for counterinsurgency is a different matter. The literature is surprisingly thin and it is focused more on operational level campaigning than how a national strategy might be developed. Not surprisingly given their eventual successes, the famous Briggs Plan in Malaya – itself a model of the comprehensive approach – and General Sir Gerald Templer's energetic, galvanising role in achieving a successful political transition from Britain to the Malayan Federation, tend to take centre stage, usually in conjunction with Thompson's analysis.[21] Galula and Kitson both look at strategy from the practitioner's perspective, not that of the policy maker or the strategist.[22] The other key works include Robert Trinquier's *Modern Warfare*, which succinctly addresses the issue of counterinsurgency at the strategic, operational and tactical level but is discredited for his position on torture; John McCuen's *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War*; and Harry Summers' *On Strategy*, which critically analyses American strategy during the Vietnam War against the Clausewitzian model.[23]

Steven Metz has focussed attention on the broad interplay between policy, national security, and resources, or capabilities, and counterinsurgency. His analysis of the trends in American counterinsurgency strategy establishes a clear link between policy, the strategic rationale for engagement in counterinsurgency, and national counterinsurgency capabilities: "When the strategic rationale faded, these atrophied."[24] Interestingly, he first put this idea forward in the 1990s, when counterinsurgency did not

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[21] Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam*, New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966.

[22] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1964, reprinted 2006; Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping*, London: Faber, 1971.

[23] Colonel Robert Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*, French Army, 1961, translated by Daniel Lee, contributor Eliot A. Cohen, Westport CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006; John J.McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War: The Strategy of Counter-Insurgency*, Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1966; Harry Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, New York, NY: Random House, 1982, reprinted 1995.

[24] Steven Metz, *Counterinsurgency: Strategy and the Phoenix of American Capability*, Carlisle

hold the policymaker's attention. By 2007, the situation had changed radically, and Metz was able to examine the campaign in Iraq, and the American policy behind it, against the Ends-Ways-Means paradigm:

> However laudable the overarching American objectives in Iraq, the United States was strategically and conceptually unprepared to realize them. We used flawed strategic assumptions, did not plan adequately, and had a doctrinal void. We had enough force on the ground to antagonize Iraqis or give them the false expectation of security, but not enough to control the Sunni Arab areas. We stayed long enough to be viewed as occupiers but did not administer the country long enough to permanently alter a political culture based on sectarian suspicion, corruption and violence. We created an organization to unify all governmental efforts but did not give it the authority or resources to do so, thus leaving everyone concerned believing that others would do more than they did. Or could. Most of all, American strategy was characterized by a pervasive means/ends mismatch... we did not allocate money, time, and people in proportion to this ambitious goal.[25]

Why should the subject receive so little attention? Complexity may be one reason. A cyclical lack of interest among policymakers, as Metz suggests, may be another. Whatever the reason, if the theory is not well enough understood, difficulties in applying it are inevitable. As a result, addressing the GAO's last two characteristics of strategy – who will be implementing the strategy, what their roles will be compared to others, and mechanisms for them to co-ordinate their efforts, and how a national strategy relates to other strategies, and to subordinate levels of government and their plans to implement the strategy – still proves to be easier said than done. The trouble is that both are at the crux of counterinsurgency and

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[25] Steven Metz, *Learning From Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy*. Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, January 2007, p. 85.

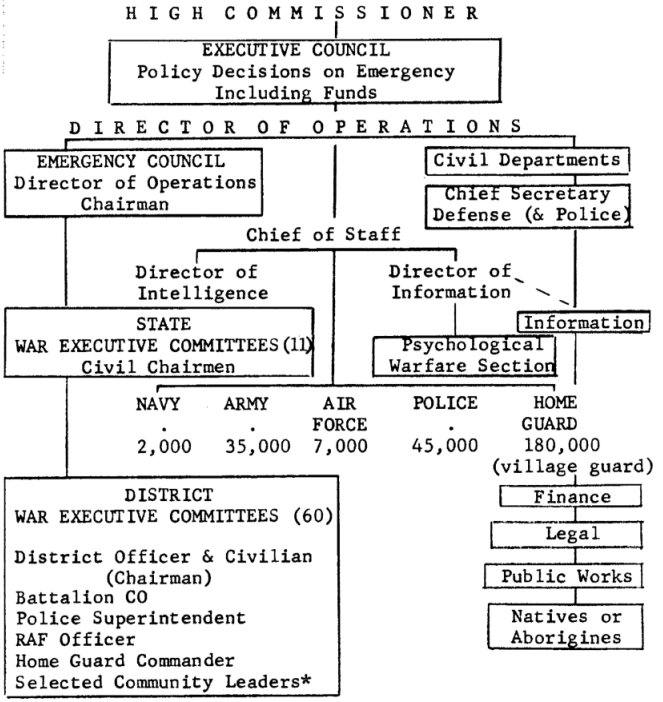
the comprehensive approach, politics and governance are critical. Until those two characteristics are addressed effectively, any attempt to counter an insurgency will be incomplete, or, worse, counterproductive.

**Counterinsurgency campaign design: doctrine**

The next level down from strategy – campaigning – is better served by doctrine for counterinsurgency than is strategy. British military doctrine, still influenced by the whole of government approach adopted in Malaya and Kenya over fifty years ago, refers to the ideal of establishing committees at every level of government to plan and co-ordinate its efforts. This is the co-ordinated government machinery necessary to achieve co-ordinated government action. Figure 1 illustrates how the Malayan administration was re-organized in 1950 to deal with the Emergency.

Fig. 2

THE ORGANIZATIONAL SIDE OF THE BRIGGS PLAN[40]




*These leaders advised on civil problems, food control, restrictions, etc.

[40]This chart was presented by General Sir Geoffrey Bourne in a lecture given at The RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California, on February 27, 1962. Gen. Bourne was Director of Operations in Malaya from 1954 to 1956.

**Figure 1** - A System to Prosecute the Campaign. Source: Riley Sutherland, *Organizing Counterinsurgency in Malaya, 1947-1960*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, Prepared for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense/International Security Affairs, September 1964.

The latest U.S. military doctrine, Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*,[26] influenced by British counterinsurgency experience and doctrine, by more recent campaign experience from Iraq and Afghanistan, and by subsequent reflection on both, stresses the importance of integrating the military effort "into a comprehensive strategy employing all instruments of national power."[27] *FM 3-24* devotes a chapter to integrating civilian and military activities, and another to campaign design. It introduces the idea of logical lines of operation (LLO), and the framework on which interagency planning and co-ordination can be built:

> Guided by the campaign's purpose, commanders articulate an operational logic for the campaign that expresses in clear, concise, conceptual language a broad vision of what they plan to accomplish. The operational logic is the commander's assessment of the problem and approach toward solving it. Commanders express it as the commander's intent. Ideally, the operational logic is expressed clearly and simply but in comprehensive terms, such as what the commander envisions achieving with various components or particular LLOs. This short statement of the operational logic helps subordinate commanders and planners, *as well as members of other agencies and organizations, see the campaign's direction. It provides a unifying theme for interagency planning*.[28]

*FM 3-24* then explains the process of iterative campaign design. This starts by diagnosing (*diagnose*) the problem, followed by *dialogue*, intended to develop a better understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural conditions affecting the situation. The campaign is then designed (*design*). Its implementation offers the opportunity to *learn*, resulting in a greater understanding of the problem, and this, in turn, may

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[26] U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, December 2006. Hereafter referred to as *FM 3-24.*

[27] *FM 3-24,* p. 2-1.

[28] *FM 3-24*, p. 4-4. Emphasis added.

generate modifications to the design (*redesign*). The process of diagnosis, dialogue, design, and learning is then repeated. LLOs lie at the heart of the campaign design because a

> plan based on LLOs unifies the efforts of joint, interagency, multinational, and HN forces toward a common purpose. Each LLO represents a conceptual category along which the [host nation] government and COIN force commander intend to attack the insurgent strategy and establish [host nation] government legitimacy. LLOs are closely related. Successful achievement of the end state requires careful coordination of actions undertaken along all LLOs.[29]

The doctrine offers illustrative LLOs: conduct information operations, conduct combat operations/civil security operations, train and employ the host nation's security forces, establish or restore essential services, support development of better governance, and support economic development. Clearly, a comprehensive approach, in the sense *JDN 4/05* describes, is required.

**Campaign design in practice: the multinational force Iraq Joint Campaign Plan**

The MNF-I Joint Campaign Plan (JCP) puts the doctrine into practice. This should not be a surprise; after all, General David Petraeus who developed it with Ambassador Crocker, also wrote the doctrine. Petraeus is, as Sarah Sewall observes, "almost unique among senior Army leaders in fully embracing both the theory and practice of counterinsurgency."[30]

Petraeus and Crocker recognized that the campaign in Iraq had to achieve four main tasks. First, it had to secure the population in order to

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[29] *FM 3-24*, p. 5-3.
[30] Sarah Sewall, "He Wrote the Book. Can He Follow It?" *Washington Post*, February 25, 2007; B03.

create the political space for the Government of Iraq to make political progress. Training, developing and using Iraq's security forces would be essential in security operations. Second, political reform and development were necessary and this was to be the campaign's main effort. Third, economic development would be used to cement political and security gains. Finally, diplomatic efforts had to establish Iraq in the regional and international scene. These themes were reflected in the mission: "The coalition, in partnership with the government of Iraq, employs integrated political, security, economic and diplomatic means, to help the people of Iraq achieve sustainable security by the summer of 2009".[31] This is, in the particular circumstances Iraq faced, both politically and its security problems, as comprehensive an approach as could be reasonably expected.

By any standard, the MNF-I JCP of 2007 was an important step forward in terms of comprehensive approaches, particularly in the considerable collaborative civilian and military effort made in Baghdad to create it. The planning process, although ostensibly military, and not easily embraced by the civilian staff, drew ideas together and started to shape the behaviour of all the agencies involved. In keeping with the doctrine, the JCP recognized from the outset that the character of the Iraqi problem was a political battle for power and resources. Crocker and Petraeus therefore focused the plan on brokering power-sharing within the Iraqi political process, building on political accommodations reached at the local level, and reconciling the reconcilable. The irreconcilables would be dealt with by security operations. Political and security gains were to be cemented through economic development and diplomatic progress.

## Conclusions

According to doctrine, a campaign plan should have strategic guidance from national authorities for its development, it "integrates military actions and capabilities with those of other instruments of national

[31] For a more detailed description of the campaign plan see Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq*, New York: Public Affairs, 2008, pp. 176-177.

power in time, space, and purpose in unified action," and it should provide an estimate of the time and forces required to reach the conditions for mission success or termination.[32] If not, and if "operational objectives are not linked to strategic objectives, the inherent linkage or "nesting" is broken and eventually tactical considerations can begin to drive the overall strategy at cross-purposes."[33] The doctrine assumes the continuum from strategy to tactics, but what happens if the continuum is broken? What happens if the national strategy does not meet the aspirations of the Comprehensive Approach?

Adopting a comprehensive approach makes sense for any form of crisis management, but especially so when dealing with an insurgency. Counterinsurgency remains an essentially political problem which requires a broad political response and a co-ordinated cross-government response: in other words a strategy. This, in turn, demands a strategic view of Ends, Ways and Means so that conflicting tactical and operational interests can be managed through the comprehensive, cross-government, holistic approach this paper has examined. A strategy requires a comprehensive approach to implement it. Without it, as Kitson warned, departments and agencies run the risk of acting in isolation, disrupting the efforts of others or, just as damaging, not acting at all.

The campaign plan, devised by Petraeus and Crocker, builds on the theory laid out in U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine. They identified, and then developed ways needed to address the key campaign themes and objectives relative to conditions in Iraq. They took account of the pressing political and security problems at the time the plan was written, and made sensible assumptions about what further progress would be possible. Although, as the GAO points out, U.S. strategy for Iraq was not fully integrated and depended on revised policy statements, and the JCP was an operational, not a strategic plan, the effect was comprehensive in coverage and comprehensive in approach. These two features went a long way to

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[32] U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 5-0 *Joint Operation Planning*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 26 December 2006, Chapter III.
[33] Joint Publication 5-0 *Joint Operation Planning*, p. III-38.

overcoming the problems identified in the absence of a fully developed and clearly articulated national strategy.

This paper has shown that by adopting a comprehensive approach at the operational level, a safe-guard can be developed that can avoid tactical considerations from driving the overall strategy and at cross-purposes to it. A campaign plan of the type developed and followed in Baghdad does not, however, remove the requirement for a comprehensive approach to be developed and followed at the national level. Iraq shows what can be achieved if it is followed in the field; the issue at stake is to realize the potential a genuinely comprehensive approach offers nationally.

# THE CHALLENGES TO OPERATIONALIZING A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Christopher M. Schnaubelt

*"And after?- Ask the Yusufzaies*
*What comes of all our 'ologies.*
*A scrimmage in a Border Station-*
*A canter down some dark defile*
*Two thousand pounds of education*
*Drops to a ten-rupee jezail."*
Rudyard Kipling, "*Arithmetic on the Frontier*"

A consensus has emerged that a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency and stability challenges such as Afghanistan and Iraq is required; the military alone cannot deliver the interventions necessary to defeat insurgencies nor stabilize failed or failing states.[1] Accordingly, there is wide recognition of the limitations of military power and the need for whole-of-government, multi-national, and international efforts to attain strategic objectives in the contemporary milieu. In January 2007, for example, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Sheffer said: "The final answer in Afghanistan will not be a military answer. The final answer will be national building, reconstruction, development of course…I'll be pushing for more civilian support [and] institution building…."[2]

Although "comprehensive approach" is now a widely accepted

[1] The preceding chapter by Alex Alderson describes the evolution of and theory behind the comprehensive approach. NATO uses the term with a high degree of ambiguity; see Brooke Smith-Windsor, "Hasten Slowly: NATO's Effects Based and Comprehensive Approach to Operations." NATO Defense College Paper Research Paper #38, July 2008. Available at: http://www.ndc.nato.int/research/respaper.html.
[2] Speech at the annual press reception on the occasion of the New Year, January 17, 2007; at: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070117a.html (accessed April 21, 2008)

mantra, the repetitious chanting has not produced the requisite levels of political, military, economic, and civil resources, nor effectively integrated them into the prescribed collaborative effort. Bringing all the key players together has been problematic: implementing a "whole of government" approach within even a single nation has been daunting. Add multi-national efforts and the complexity increases. Add international and non-governmental organizations and it increases further.

Even in a high priority undertaking such as the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, civilian political and economic development initiatives remain largely disjointed from each other and disconnected from security efforts.[3] This observation begs the question: why are NATO and other international organizations such as the EU and UN, as well as individual states such as the US, experiencing such difficulty in effectively implementing a comprehensive approach if it is a widely agreed upon concept?

**Bureaucratic hurdles and resource shortfalls**

Part of the reason, which has received the bulk of the attention in the policy literature, is bureaucratic wrangling. Turf battles and protection of personal and organizational prerogatives, as well as legitimate policy differences at the national/grand-strategic levels, are certainly part of the explanation.[4] A report by the US House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services found that current US 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." Further, the report asserts that "While senior leaders should get along in the interest of the mission, history is replete with examples where they

[3] Unity of command for military operations in Afghanistan has also been problematic, although recent moves to place all US and other NATO troops in Afghanistan under the command of a single senior coalition military officer, General David McKiernan, should help to reduce this problem.

[4] The US Congressional Research Service 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,* April 18, 2008.

have not. Rather than depending exclusively on personalities for success, the right interagency structures need to be in place and working."[5]

Much attention has been paid to the national cabinet/ministry level, such as the US National Security Council.[6] However, many analysts have pointed out problems at other echelons. James Carafano posits that interagency cooperation is "not so bad at the policy level and not too bad on the ground where individuals work together." Instead, he believes that the biggest problem "is at the intermediate level, the operational level, where the US government undertakes major operations and campaigns…."[7] Gary Luck and Mike Findlay echo this assessment. They suggest the US military "is structured to operate at the national-strategic level in Washington, DC, theater-strategic level at the combatant commands, and operational and tactical levels at the JTF [joint task force] and below" but civilian agencies lack the same degree of vertical integration because they do not have the equivalent of operational level headquarters to bridge the gap between national-level policy/strategy and tactical actions on the ground. The following figure taken from their paper on "Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Nongovernmental Coordination" [8] illustrates this supposed void:

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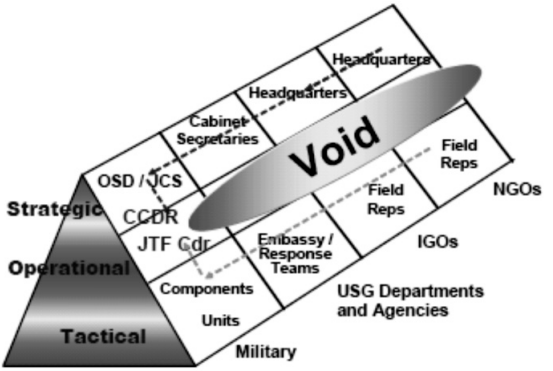
[5] "Agency Stovepipes vs Strategic Agility: Lessons We Need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan." US House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations, April 2008 pp. 49, 32.
Available at: http://www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT_Report.pdf.

[6] Cf: Sami Said and Cameron Holt, "A Time for Action: The Case for Interagency Deliberate Planning." *Strategic Studies Quarterly* Fall 2008.
Available at: http://www.au.af.mil/au/ssq/2008/Fall/said&holt.pdf.

[7] "Herding Cats: Understanding Why Government Agencies Don't Cooperate and How to Fix the Problem." *Heritage Lecture 955*, June 15, 2006, p.2.
Available at: http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/hl955.cfm.

[8] "Insights and Best Practices: Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Nongovernmental Coordination (A Joint Force Operational Perspective)," *Focus Paper #3*, July 2007, Joint Warfighting Center, United States Joint Forces Command. Available at: http://jko.cmil.org/file/109/view.




Alternatively, writing about multi-agency Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) intended to deliver economic development at the tactical level in Afghanistan, Michael J. McNerney reported that

> A vague mission, vague roles, and insufficient resources created significant civil-military tensions at the PRTs, particularly over mission priorities. Many of the State Department personnel and other civilians on the team had military experience, but this did not reduce tensions. In fact, some of the harshest criticisms of the military personnel on PRTs came from retired military members of the team. During one of the author's trips to a PRT, a member of the team confided: "Those briefing slides look good, but this place is completely dysfunctional."[9]

Another aspect of the difficulties of applying a comprehensive approach is generating enough resources from the various stakeholders. In the US, a lot of attention has been placed upon the availability and deployability of the civilian components such as Foreign Service Officers from the Department of State.[10] The Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff,

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[9] "PRTs in Afghanistan: Model or Muddle?" *Foreign Service Journal*, March 2006, p. 64. Available at: http://www.afsa.org/fsj/mar06/prt.pdf.

[10] Rarely noted, however, is that no nation currently has a large deployable civilian capability to send to conflict areas in coordination with military efforts.

Admiral Michael Mullen, recently stated that US "foreign policy [is] too militarized" and argued that the US military has been "stretched" by doing "soft power" missions—tasks more suited to the Departments of State, Treasure, Commerce, and Justice—that military personnel are not typically trained to perform. He said, "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 US Department Agriculture don't expect to be sent to Afghanistan. Mullen further stated that in the initial call for civilian volunteers for Iraq, "half of them were from the Department of Defense, which is another extension of the military, and these are people who are available and accept orders to go and do it."[11]

Yet such broad statements, which often imply that the civilian departments of government simply aren't willing to endure hardship and danger, discount the reality that individuals who sign-up for the military do so fully expecting the possibility of being deployed to a combat zone as part of the job to fight a war. If you want to do Army stuff, you join the Army. If you want to do State Department stuff, you join the State Department. Many humanitarian aid workers experience more hardship more frequently than most military personnel—particularly considering the amenities on large forward operating bases in Iraq and Afghanistan.[12] But to most civilians, it looks an awful lot like Army stuff to live and work in a place with frequent mortar and rocket attacks and ambushes by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) along the roads.

Perhaps more importantly, the arguments implying that civilian agencies are not doing their fair share gloss over the fact that the DOD has many more people and a much larger budget than any other agency with US

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[11] Jim Garamone, "Mullen Addresses Need for 'Whole Government' Approach." *American Forces Press Service*, February 6, 2009 at: http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=52978. Also see Walter Pincus, "Foreign Policy Beyond The Pentagon." *Washington Post* February 9, 2009, at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/02/08/AR2009020801852.html.

[12] For an excellent profile of civilians who spend years and careers among desolate places in broken countries like Chad, see Jonathan Harr, "Lives of the Saints." *The New Yorker*, January 5, 2009, pp. 47-59. Available at: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/01/05/090105fa_fact_harr.

national security responsibilities. The DOD budget for operations in Iraq alone is several times larger than the entire State Department's budget for its operations world-wide. Illustrating this disparity, counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen has written that "there are substantially more people employed as musicians in Defense bands than in the entire foreign service."[13] And besides the difference in sheer numbers, unlike the military civilian agencies do not have a large pool of non-deployed personnel who can readily be shifted to support contingency operations. The State Department has been trying for several years to establish a "Civilian Response Corps" to help meet the desire for expeditionary civilian expertise, yet Congress has thus far funded only $55 million of the $248.6 million that the Bush administration requested in the 2009 appropriations process.[14]

Furthermore, the comment that US Department of Agriculture employees "don't expect to be sent to Afghanistan" misses the point that sending them to Afghanistan would take them away from their primary mission: "to enhance agricultural trade, improve farm economies and quality of life in rural America, protect the Nation's food supply, improve the Nation's nutrition, and protect and enhance the Nation's natural resource base and environment."[15] Each of these tasks entails activities conducted almost exclusively within the United States. Conversely, the Department of Defense's mission includes "War-fighting, Humanitarian Aid, Peacekeeping, Disaster Relief, Homeland Security." The first three of these tasks explicitly require overseas deployment.[16]

The US Department of State (DOS) has about 48,000 American and foreign employees world-wide. Of these, about 8,000 are US Foreign Service Officers. In comparison, the US Army alone has a total strength of

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[13] "New Paradigms for 21st Century Conflict," *Small Wars Journal*, June 23, 2007 at: http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/06/new-paradigms-for-21st-century/.

[14] Brittany R. Ballenstedt, "State Department recruits for Civilian Response Corps." Government Executive.Com, February 3, 2009, at: http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=41959. Elsewhere in this NDC Forum Paper, Stephen Mariano provides a more detailed history of the Civilian Response Corps and related organizational initiatives.

[15] See the US Department of Agriculture's Mission Statement at: http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/usdasp.htm (accessed March 2, 2009)

[16] See: http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/dod101/ (accessed March 2, 2009)

about 1,051,000 soldiers (including active component, Army National Guard, and US Army Reserve) but according to the Department of the Army only about 251,000 of these were "forward deployed" at the beginning of 2008.[17] Conversely, the vast majority of DOS employees are deployed to approximately 265 embassies, consulates, and missions in more than 190 different countries.[18] It may be counterintuitive, but at any given time most DOD military and civilian personnel are located and performing their jobs inside the US. According to its 2008 Base Structure Report, the DOD rents or owns more than 316,000 buildings around the world at 4,669 sites in the US and 716 locations in foreign countries.[19]

The military in some ways is like a fire department—only a relatively small portion of its total number is engaged in operations at any particular time. The remainder is in reserve waiting for a call to action, or in training, or undergoing a "re-set" to prepare for a specific future operation. Civilian agencies such as the Department of State are more like a police department—nearly all of their personnel are engaged in current operations with almost no float for training and virtually none being held in reserve.[20]

Problem recognition is, of course, the first step towards a solution. The increasing calls for shoring up the non-military aspects of US national power and increasing civilian expeditionary capability should not be discounted.

However, properly defining the entire range of the problem is also necessary: our predicament extends beyond producing a willingness to

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[17] US Army Posture Statement 2008, p. 4. Available at: http://www.army.mil/aps/08/. Of the total reported as "forward deployed," almost one-third (73,000) soldiers are from the US Army National Guard and US Army Reserve.

[18] http://future.state.gov/. Also see Kilcullen "New Paradigms…" (*Ibid*). The figures include both the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development, which nominally falls under the State Department but is typically considered a separate agency.

[19] David Weigel, "Bases, bases everywhere." *Reason* December 2008, p. 13.

[20] Some may argue that those in Washington, DC are not "deployed." However, a comparison of the number of people in the State Department's Harry S. Truman Building with the number in the Pentagon and the numerous offices leased by the Department of Defense in high rise buildings in the Washington area would still leave the "non-deployed" to "deployed" ratio far higher for the military.

collaborate and increasing the civilian resources that are available. Especially in semi-permissive environments,[21] such as Iraq and Afghanistan, we lack an adequate understanding of how to best organize and orchestrate the full range of assets that are present, particularly how to integrate the activities performed by the military, US civilian agencies, the private sector, and international and non-governmental organizations into at least a mutually reinforcing—if not synergistic—effort.

Bureaucratic infighting, misunderstandings, significant differences in resourcing levels, and problems with interpersonal relations at all levels have certainly contributed to the various interagency and multinational difficulties. However, little has been written on the practical, mechanical challenges of integrating the disparate types of action involved in a comprehensive approach even when the stakeholders want to "all get along."

Differences in the characteristics of the various elements of power (usually summarized as Diplomacy, Information, Military, and Economic—DIME), and in the activities necessary to bring them collectively to bear, pose coordination challenges in addition to the problems of bureaucratic turf battles and political inertia. Even if resource, policy, and bureaucratic impediments can be resolved, there remain practical coordination challenges—especially at the operational and tactical levels—that still require a solution.[22] These difficulties are exacerbated by approaches to planning and management that significantly differ between the military and civilian organizational cultures.

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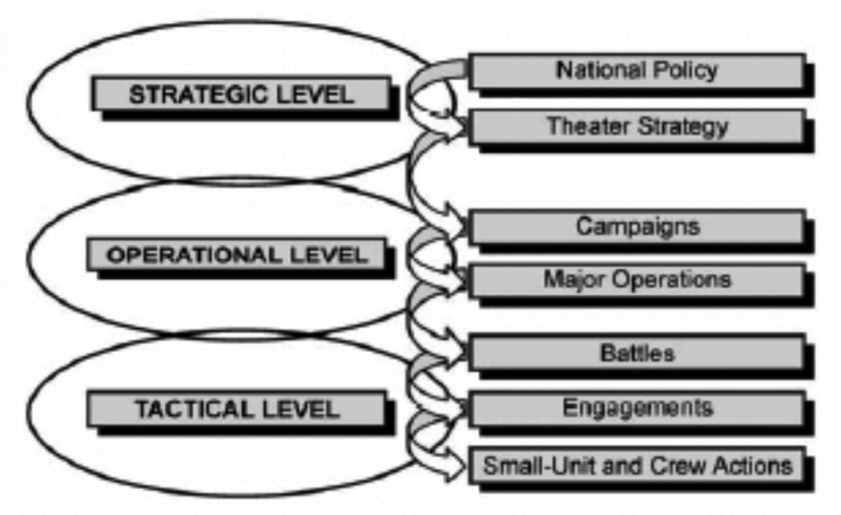
[21] One end of the spectrum of the operating environment is non-permissive. This consists of high-intensity combat where military forces must fight to gain freedom of movement and any supporting civilian elements or organizations are exposed to high risk of attack. The other end is permissive, such as typically found during humanitarian assistance following a natural disaster where there is there no risk of combat. Also called "low-intensity," semi-permissive environments fall somewhere in between: there is a risk to military units and supporting civilian elements but it falls short of full combat.

[22] 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. James Q. Wilson provides a detailed analysis in his classic book, *Bureaucracy* (New York: Basic Books, 1989). For the purposes of the argument in this paper, however, reference to a common "civilian" approach is adequate.

**Operational art**

The US Joint Publication 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."[23]

The following chart from US Army Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, illustrates the theoretical relationships between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war.[24]




Although the comparison is not exact, it could be argued that the civilian equivalent of operational art is *policy implementation*. This is 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

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[23] US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Change 1, February 13, 2008, pp. xiii and xix.
Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/**jp3_0**.pdf.
[24] US Department of the Army, February 27, 2008, p. 6-2.

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 military doctrine, as will be discussed further below, public policy analysts have been using it since at least the 1980s.)[25]

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 they would benefit from adding such an additional layer in most circumstances. The purpose of civilian mid-level 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.[26]

At least in Western militaries, modern planning at echelons above the tactical level (generally at corps and above) 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, and the line of communications to supply it, was a critical consideration.[27] Beginning at least with the concept of AirLand Battle adopted by the US Army in the late 1970s and early 1980s, US and other NATO member military doctrine began to recognize that the contemporary battlefield was "non-linear" and included a much deeper physical dimension and a time dimension.[28] However, the "line of operation" continues to be a basic organizing principle.

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[25] Peter deLeon and Linda deLeon, "What Ever Happened to Policy Implementation?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* Vol. 12, No. 4 (2002), pp. 473-474.

[26] The author thanks Allen Burch and Joseph Banavige for their insights on this topic as MBA 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 Vol. 4 ?No. 2 ?(2003), pp 1-19.

[27] Pierre Lessard has also described how fixation on the concept of Center of Gravity constrains contemporary campaign planning and design ("Campaign Desidn for Winning the War... and the Peace," *Parameters*, Summer 2005, pp. 36-50).

[28] The kernel of this concept was to attack Soviet-Warsaw Pact formations in depth, i.e. 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 very enthusiastic about the earlier concept. (Cf: John Romjue, "The Evolution of the Airland Battle Concept" *Air University Review* May-June 1984, at: http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1984/may-jun/romjue.html.

The US 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."[29] The figure below from US Army Field Manual 3-0, Operations, provides an example.

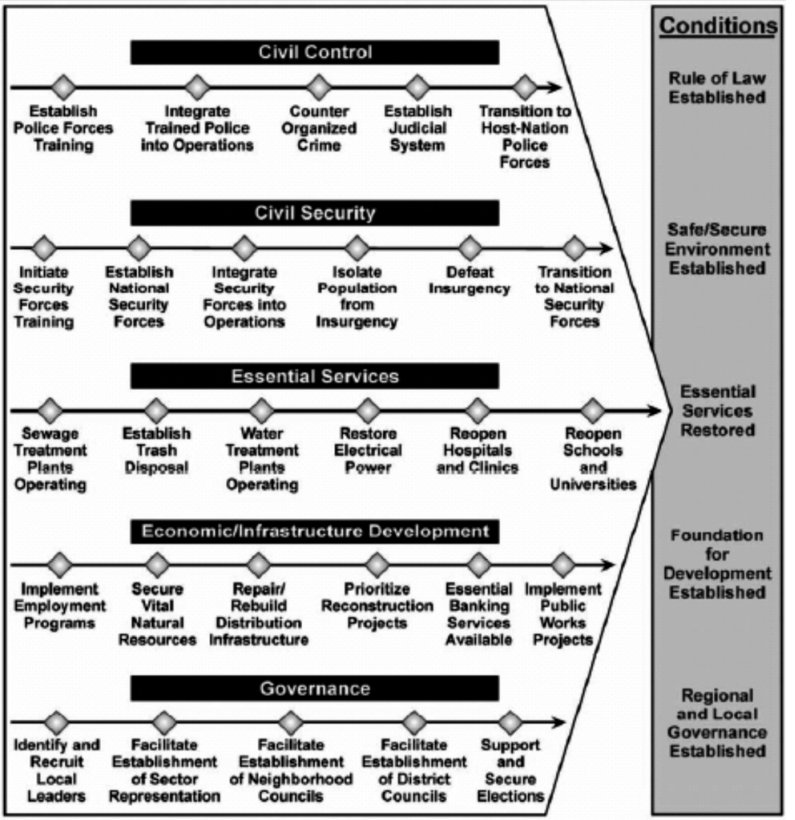


**Figure 6-6**. Example of lines of effort (stability)[30]

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[29] See Jack Kem, "Thoughts on Logical Lines of Operations" on the US Army Combined Arms Center "Thoughts from Dr. Jack" blog at: http://usacac.army.mil/BLOG/blogs/reflectionsfromfront/archive/2008/11/17/thoughts-on-logical-lines-of-operation.aspx (accessed February 13, 2009).

[30] Headquarters Department of the Army, February 2008, p. 6-14.

But of course, by definition "lines" are "linear." Trying to fit non-combat activities into such a framework has not thus far proved very 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.

Not to quibble with a diagram intended to illustrate a hypothetical example rather than depict an actual campaign plan, but the figure inadvertently demonstrates the problems with applying such a framework to activities other than traditional military operations. In the Napoleonic era, it was geographically necessary for an army to march from Point A through Point B to get to Point C. The line of effort for Essential Services depicted above may indicate the ordering of priorities if there are insufficient resources to pursue all the activities simultaneously, yet the tasks shown are not physically required to proceed in that particular order.

Most problematic, however, is the depiction of desired Conditions on the right hand side of the chart. Establishing a safe/secure environment is indeed a pre-requisite for functioning schools, hospitals, water, etc. These commodities may help reinforce security once it has been established and eventually minimize the level of security required, but security must come *first*.

**Making the pieces fit**

Just as the nature of the military and non-military challenges in counterinsurgency or stability operations are very different; the types of leverage, force, persuasion, technical assistance, and/or threats applicable to each realm are very different. Broadly speaking, the security outputs are more likely to be tangible, such as reductions in civilian casualties and numbers of host nation security forces that have been trained and equipped. While some components of economic development—such as miles of road built and amount of electricity produced can be straightforwardly counted or measured—many critical non-security outputs such as

political accommodation, progress towards reconciliation, legitimacy of governing institutions, and cooperation from neighbouring 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 non-combatant casualty rates.

Perhaps the biggest difference may be the inputs. Activities to implement the security line frequently involve well-defined tasks such 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 line tasks are to attend meetings and perform other activities in attempt to persuade political leaders to behave in a certain way.

For "traditional" high-intensity battles, we have a pretty good understanding of the physics and physiology of combat. The US Army has planning factors that suggest a 3 to 1 ratio of attackers to defenders is necessary for an assault to have a reasonable probability of success. Other planning factors predict that a battalion in the attack will probably win but then will be out of the fight for 24 hours after defeating a defending company at 3:1. The odds of success are significantly increased and the recovery time reduced if the attackers have a ratio of 6 to 1 or better against defenders.[31] There is no consensus, but much of the literature suggests a ratio of 20 security force members per 1,000 in population is needed for success in counterinsurgency.[32]

Not that combat—especially against insurgents—is simple or easy, but our understanding of how to produce political change (at least in

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[31] See US Army Field Manual 5.0, *Army Planning and Orders Production*, January 2005, p. 3-32. Available at: http://35.8.109.2/resources/FM5-0ArmyPlanningOrdersProd.pdf.

[32] Although commonly prescribed, this is a disputed figure. See James T. Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations." *RAND Review*, Summer 2003 at: http://www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/summer2003/burden.html.

the absence of military or economic threats—if not an outright military overthrow) and how to create economic growth is vague. The characteristic of *will* is a widely recognized factor in combat. For example, retired US Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege has described the differences between war and policing, with an emphasis on the difference between breaking an enemy's will to fight versus destroying his capacity to fight. He argues that "the logic of war may be significantly different from the logic of peaceful political intercourse, and that policing and warring are two very different things….Winning wars against determined enemies will always require eliminating the enemy's option to decide how and where the war ends."[33]

The relationship between our *will* to accomplish political and economic change and the ability to realize the desired changes is tenuous at best. If we sent ten thousand military (or civilian) governors to Iraq, as we did in occupied Germany and Japan after WWII,[34] this might have fixed governance but it would still have taken many years to produce a capable national and local governments that could provide for the basic needs of the population (including security, due process, and unbiased law and order). And the applicability to the current situations in Iraq and Afghanistan are unclear.

At the end of the war, Germany and Japan perceived themselves to be militarily defeated. Although Saddam's regime was destroyed, the Sunni insurgents did not subsequently believe they were defeated. Many of the Shia believed they were victors due a share of the spoils rather than participants in a political compromise. In Afghanistan, it is painfully apparent that the Taliban and other extremist groups such as the Haqqani Network, Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddun, and Al Qa'ida do not feel defeated; and many government officials seem to be out for themselves and their

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[33] "War with Implacable Foes: What All Statesmen and Generals Need to Know," *Army Magazine*, May 2006. Also see "On Policing the Frontiers of Freedom," *Army Magazine*, July 1, 2006 at: http://www3.ausa.org/webpub/deptarmymagazine.nsf/byid/khyl-6qlnqn.

[34] Cf. Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors (U.S. Army in World War II*. Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1964.

families rather than the general good of a nation-state called Afghanistan.

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. Again, this is not to imply that combat is more simple or easier than executing non-military lines of operations (it is certainly deadlier), but it is an empirical fact regarding what the military has done to train and prepare for combat operations.

The US Army has a large organization led by a four-star general, the Training and Doctrine Command, specifically to recruit, train and educate soldiers, develop leaders, support training in units, develop doctrine, and to establish standards.[35] Planners can use short-hand on Power Point charts for a task like "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 echelons of command and troop leading procedures and SOPs at the lowest echelons.

There is a standard, modular hierarchical organization from division headquarters down to squad. There are Joint and Mission Essential Task Lists and Battle Tasks that describe the key sub-tasks for accomplishing a mission and their inter-relationship between the next higher/lower echelons. There are task lists and cross walks for the leader tasks, collective tasks, and soldier tasks; and training and evaluation outlines for use in training units and troops to accomplish these actions and assessing their ability to do so. Military units have checklists to determine whether individual vehicles are mission capable. There are standard unit status reports that roll up the personnel, supply, equipment, and training levels of subordinate units to provide commanders up the chain with a snapshot of combat capability.

A typical operation will delineate unambiguous geographic boundaries (in military terms, an Area of Responsibility) that assign specific units to be responsible for every inch of ground and cubic foot of airspace. There is an

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[35] See: http://www.tradoc.army.mil/about.htm. The other US Armed Services have similar organizations.

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. The following is a schematic diagram, not drawn to scale, that 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 US Embassy and 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 US Ambassador nor the MNF-I Commanding General could *force* the sovereign Government of Iraq to do anything. The primary inputs were to monitor and persuade Iraqi officials to make decisions conducive to promoting security and stability, to include implementing policies that would promote democracy, good governance, economic growth, and good relations with neighbors and other states—particularly within the region.

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."[36] 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.

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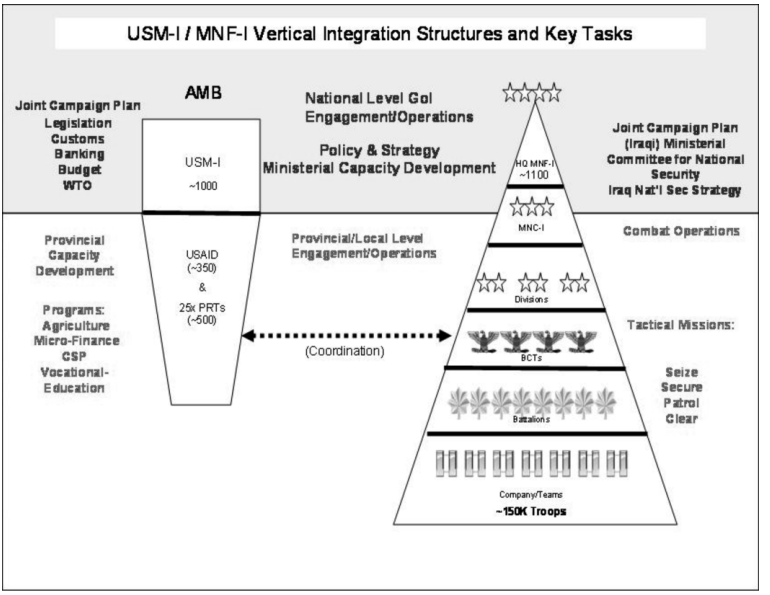
[36] For a detailed organization chart, see Susan B. Epstein, "U.S. Embassy in Iraq," *CRS Report for Congress* October 24, 2006, Figure 1 at: http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/76927.pdf.




Below the line, the disparities become 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 mid-level 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.[37] The vertical integration via a chain of command is unambiguous. While horizontal coordi-

[37] The "clear-hold-build" approach to counterinsurgency is described in Chapter 5 of US Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*. (A joint US Army-Marine Corps document, it is also "Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5.") 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: Provide continuous security for the local populace, Eliminate insurgent presence, Reinforce political primacy, Enforce the rule of law, Rebuild local HN institutions. The manual can be downloaded at: http://www.usgcoin.org/library/doctrine/COIN-FM3-24.pdf.

nation occurs, laterally between units at the same echelon and in some cases between units and local Iraq officials, most attention is downwards directed management or "command and control" as the military calls it.

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 downwards. The civilian side is nearly an inverted pyramid with more staffing and resources at the top than at the bottom.[38]

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 most 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 many *thousands* more civilian personnel. The so-called civilian surges implemented in Iraq and planned for Afghanistan involve the addition of hundreds of civilians at most.

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.

**Lines of effort versus policies and programs**

In the US and most other NATO members, the processes of political economy are defined more by what the government cannot do than by

[38] This is why the military must be a partner in executing development, security sector reform and rule of law tasks. No other organization has the operational reach. The crux is to have enough civilian expertise to provide policy oversight and technical expertise.

what it does or is supposed do.[39] In these cases, macro economic policy largely (but not solely) consists of establishing basic laws to protect individuals and property, establish mechanisms to enforce contracts and other basic rules of the road for commerce, and then keeping the government out of the way to allow private enterprise to flourish. The UK has a more vertically integrated government than does the US, but the Mayor of London does not report to the Prime Minister. In the US, mayors do not work for the governors, who do not work for the president.

Fiscal policy and monetary policy may influence the general direction of a developing economy but are not tools that are readily available to a failed or failing state. These require complex institutions that cannot be built quickly (and, the current economic crisis must put into question the validity of even these tools of national policy in developed states). The challenge in failed or failing states is significantly increased by the absence of effective local and intermediate governing organizations. Furthermore, civil society structures that might work in support of a national-level government are typically weak.

Another difference (asymmetry?) is that war is always a zero-sum game.[40] For something to be a benefit to one side, it generally must hurt the other side. Time is a great example of this. Historically, it usually benefits the defender except during a siege.[41]

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[39] The Heritage Foundation and Wall Street Journal " 2009 Index of Economic Freedom" ranks all of the NATO members as being in the "Free," "Mostly Free," or "Moderately Free" categories. None are in the "Mostly Unfree" or "Repressed" categories. See: http://www.heritage.org/Index/Ranking.aspx. Interestingly, Hong Kong has the highest Freedom score. The US and Canada, the highest ranked among NATO members, are numbers six and seven respectively.

[40] There may be exceptions, e.g. fair treatment of prisoners of war and avoiding unnecessary civilian casualties as required by the Geneva Conventions; but since terrorists and insurgents routinely ignore these constraints they are arguable examples.

[41] Cf. Victor Davis Hanson, *A War Like No Other*. New York: Random House, 2006 (paper back edition), p. 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.

Successful democratic governance and economic development, however, are usually not zero-sum. For a voluntary economic transaction to occur, both sides must perceive 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 non-competitive).

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 that of Coalition efforts in Iraq, timeline-driven legislative and political goals can be counter-productive 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 one with a legally required parliamentary majority but without consensus and thus results in driving the parties further apart. Intervening policy makers must be careful that by applying additional pressure on host nation political parties to reach a deal that they do not inadvertently push the parties towards violence instead of agreement.

One of the assumptions in early Coalition planning efforts in Iraq was that the fundamental conflict was between and among its ethnic and sectarian groups over the distribution of political and economic power. Arguably, this is an invalid, Western-centric view that is not only incorrect but counterproductive. It leads to approaches based upon the idea that differences can be resolved merely by selected statesmen agreeing upon a mathematical division of the pie. Religion and other values such as the desire for revenge and perceptions of what constitutes justice are key elements of many conflicts that are not readily resolved through a legalistic process—especially since most "comprehensive" interventions will take place in failed or failing states where the rule of law is absent.

There are at least two components to the governance problem in such situations. One is *technical capacity*, which is somewhat amenable to being developed more quickly through "surging" to provide expertise. This has to do with teaching/assisting 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 usually be without a capable, professional bureaucracy that will effectively implement even the wisest policy decisions.[42]

Within a wide range, there is a direct correlation between surging civilian resources to provide advice and the pace of improvement in technical capabilities. There is some saturation point where too much advice/too many advisors exceed the economic capacity to increase the pace of development. This concern may be most relevant for "traditional" development activities in permissive environments where peaceful intervention efforts may inadvertently disrupt local economies, but there hasn't been much risk of reaching such a point in Iraq or Afghanistan at the provincial or local level.

Even so, technical training can be ineffective unless the society has accepted and inculcated the values on which the principles are based. For example, anti-corruption 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 the 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, elec-

[42] One could argue that current US Army Civil Affairs Civil affairs need to better develop a governance advisor capability. Current skills are too focused on assessment and reconstruction/humanitarian assistance.

tricity, oil, services, medical care, and so forth. But, these cultural/societal shifts are likely to take decades or generations to fully achieve.

In Iraq, this has been especially challenging on the major "benchmark" issues such as de-Ba'athification reform, Disarming, Demobilizing, and Reintegrating militias, legal amnesty for former Ba'athists and insurgents, and the devolution of power between the central government and the periphery such as provinces and municipalities.[43] (The Hydrocarbons Law is an interesting case because it is the most fungible and should be the easiest to economically rationalize among the top contentious issues, but there has been little substantive progress towards passing a law. Oil revenue sharing has nonetheless been going on de facto without specific legislation.)

A key issue when assessing effectiveness of capacity building efforts in Iraq has been whether analysts are confounding the ability to do what the *American* (i.e. intervening) advisors want to be accomplished with what the host nation's leaders want to accomplish. In one sense, being able to set *its own priorities* and effectively implement *its own decisions* would be a milestone for an emerging government. However, this cannot be a sterile measure with no reference to the moral values of the intervening parties. Would NATO want to facilitate more capable repression of women or religious minorities or to better enable a dictatorship? Additionally, a significant number of government officials and party leaders in Iraq and Afghanistan personally benefit from corruption and the absence of rule of law. Even if the capabilities for efficient honest government are developed, are leaders willing to do the right things?

Lack of *willingness* is a problem that doesn't 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

[43] See http://www.gao.gov/htext/d071230t.html for a discussion of US Congressional benchmarks for operations in Iraq.

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.[44]

**Military planning**

Despite doctrinal recognition that military operations entail art as well as science, with increasingly more art and less science being applicable at the higher levels of war, the US military has traditionally tended to take a mechanistic approach to planning its operations. The US Army uses a seven-step decision making model called the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). According to Field Manual 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production*, the MDMP "establishes procedures for analyzing a mission, developing, analyzing, and comparing courses of action against criteria of success and each other, selecting the optimum course of action, and producing a plan or order."[45]

The following figure from FM 5-0 depicts the model.[46] While US Army doctrine recognizes 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.

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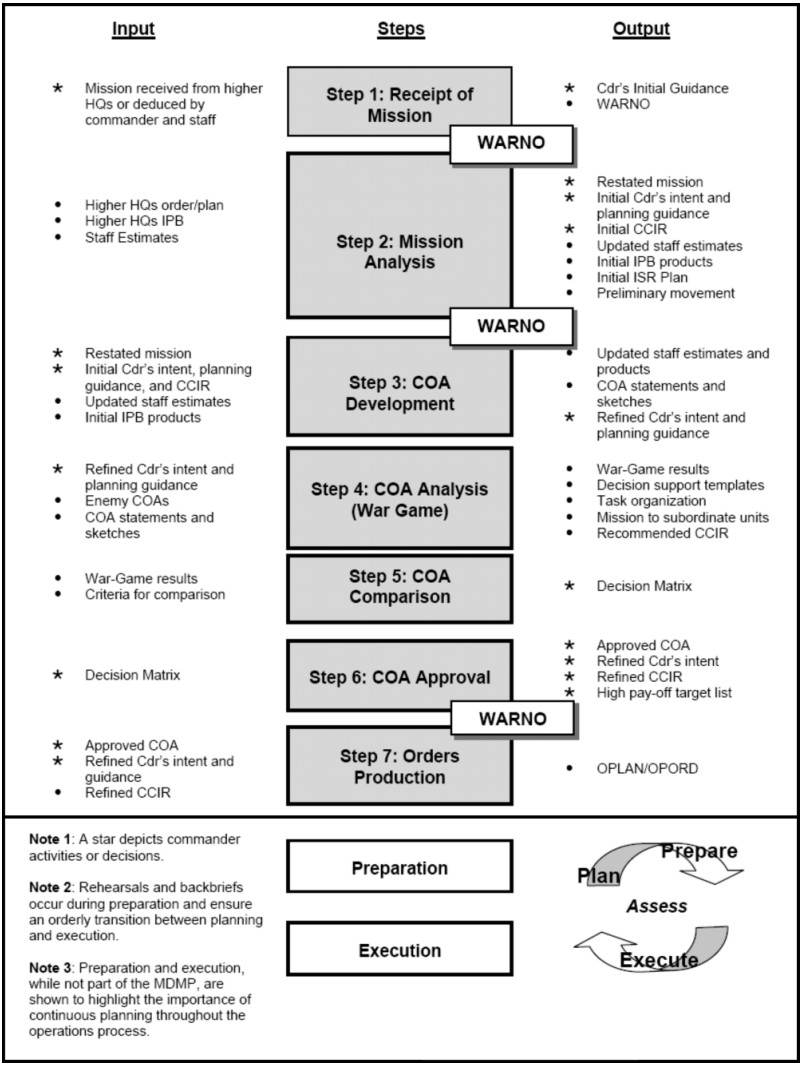
[44] However, recent research by Stathis N. Kalyvas on civil war violence implies that effective control by the government (or insurgents) can shift the pre-war preferences of the population towards the position favored by the group exerting control in a relatively quick period of time. This implies 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. (*The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 92-104, 112-132.)

[45] Ibid., p. 3-3. "WARNO" is a Warning Order that provides subordinate units advanced notice of what is being planned. This allows them to begin "parallel planning" and provides a head start versus waiting for the final order to be completed by the higher headquarters.

[46] Figure 3-1, which is found on page 3-3.




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 decision making is the best. Rather, they serve different pur-

poses that historically have operated in separate, unrelated spheres in which the coordination of military and civilian activities was not a consideration.

The military process is primarily deductive and designed for a specific set of problems (military missions) under a specific set of circumstances (usually combat or stability operations). This approach is rarely optimal for civilian decision making. 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 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 which, when it exists at all, is likely to be ambiguous and aspirational rather than precise and directive.[47]

Most military tasks can be synchronized in time and space and (this is the crux of "maneuver"), and given a known correlation of forces, have somewhat predicable outcomes that can be modeled using computer simulations.[48] Yet this is often not true for key aspects of political and economic development. While interdependent, the linkages between activities 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 like building a hospital or putting up power lines become unpredictable when workers are frequently threatened by violence or infrastructure is frequently attacked. Repairing or building schools does little good if teachers or students are routinely killed or afraid to come to class.

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[47] See James Q. Wilson, ibid.

[48] 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, at: http://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.

Tactical level military leaders, especially at echelons below division, can create relatively accurate time tables 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 given size, whether urban, sub-urban, or rural, for a given size military force of known capability.[49] When projected timelines go awry at the company, battalion, or brigade level they are likely to be off by a matter of hours or a few days rather than the months or even years that are the common range of error for political or economic estimates.

Yet, the "hold" task becomes problematic. This is not because maintaining security or defending a cleared area is uniquely difficult, but because of the question: for how long? 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 force to move on from holding an area once it has been cleared.[50] Yet, when an area is insufficiently "built" to keep insurgents out there is a high probability it will revert to enemy control and must be cleared again.[51]

**Jobs and violence**

A lesson that many military leaders have drawn from the problem of holding long enough is that the clear-hold-build activities must occur

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[49] Uncertainty is much greater, and the timetables are perhaps unpredictable, for host nation security forces that have yet to be "tested" in combat and when considerations of ethnicity or sect may play a role in whether such forces are reliable during missions among certain populations.

[50] Particularly during the 2006 election cycle, domestic politics in the US added strategic pressure to declare more areas cleared and ready to transition to Iraqi responsibility.

[51] For an example of this dynamic, see George Packer's description of COL H.R. McMaster and the 3rd Armored Cavalry's experience in "Lessons of Tal Afar," *The New Yorker*, April 10, 2006. Available at: http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/04/10/060410fa_fact2. Also see David R. McCone, Wilbur J. Scott, and George R. Mastroianni, "The 3rd ACR In Tal'Afar: Challenges and Adaptations." *Of Interest*, January 8, 2008, Strategic Studies Institute. Available at: http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/of-interest-9.pdf.

simultaneously rather than sequentially.[52] 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.

While part of the Joint Strategic Assessment Team established by General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker in 2007, this author interviewed several military commanders at the division, brigade, and battalion levels who expected civilian political and economic programs to quickly replace the need for security forces. Much of this belief seemed rooted in a questionable belief that a direct correlation exists between increasing the availability of jobs, which would in theory remove military-age males from the pool of potential insurgents, and a predicted reduction in the level of violence against Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces.

The posited relationship is probably spurious. Increases in economic growth depend more upon future expectations than current conditions. What rational person would invest in a business where his or her own life would be constantly under threat, customers routinely murdered, and the store front likely to be destroyed? There has been little rigorous scholarly research on the lag time between the provision of enduring security and increasing business investment, but such a lag time surely exists and complicates planning to shift forces from "hold" in order to clear elsewhere (or withdraw).

The popular media has lauded the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) for its contribution to stability. The State Department's equivalent Quick Reaction Funds (QRF) should have similar results. Yet many of the programs so funded are short-term efforts such as picking up rubbish and cleaning neighborhoods (sometimes called "trash-for-cash" by military and civilian planners) rather than sustainable

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[52] See John Burns "U.S. General Says Jobs and Services May Curb Iraq Violence," *New York Times* December 13, 2006 at: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/13/world/middleeast/13general.html?scp=1&sq=U.S.%20General%20Says%20Jobs%20and%20Services%20May%20Curb%20Iraq%20Violence&st=cse.

employment. Furthermore, the argument that there is a decisive economic component to the decision whether to be an insurgent is significantly weakened by the disparity in pay according to open source reporting. Planting a single IED or firing a rocket pays much better than most CERP or QRF funded jobs. A commonly reported figure is that insurgents pay approximately $100 for planting one IED, whereas cleaning up rubble earns about $8 per day.[53] Clearly, other factors such as revenge or concepts of honor must also play significant roles in influencing the size of the potential insurgent pool.

Strangely, many US military leaders seem to discount these intangible incentives in regards to insurgents; yet honor and duty to country are the highlights of US Armed Forces recruiting advertisements. Pay and education benefits are often mentioned only as an after thought. (Indeed, how many commercials for the US Marine Corps have you seen that mention pay whatsoever?)

Even if one assumes for the sake of argument a direct significant correlation between job satisfaction and insurgent attacks, how to create meaningful, sustained net employment via policy is somewhat of a mystery—even in peaceful, developed societies.[54] During the high water mark of US government intervention in the American economy, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal," unemployment actually increased as government spending and the number of jobs programs increased. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "From an estimated annual rate of 3.3 percent during 1923-29, the unemployment rate rose to a peak of about 25 percent in 1933. The economy reached its trough in 1933; but although unemployment had reached its peak, economic recovery was

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[53] Cf. Howard LaFranchi, "Life in a remote US Army outpost in Iraq," *Christian Science Monitor* May 30, 2007 at: http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0530/p01s03-woiq.html and Dana Hedgpeth and Sarah Cohen, "Money as a Weapon," *The Washington Post* August 11, 2008 at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/10/AR2008081002512_pf.html.

[54] In a recent review essay, Matthew Taylor writes that "the dismal science is in a foul mood….The real world has not been kind to the policy prescriptions of the 1990s." See "Development Economics in the Wake of the Washington Consensus: From Smith to Smithereens?" *International Political Science Review* Vol. 29, No. 5 (2008), p. 543-556.

slow, hesitant, and far from complete…the unemployment rate was still nearly 15 percent in 1940."[55]

Policy proposals are often informed by ideology or world-view rather than rigorous analysis of what has been demonstrably effective in the past. What frequently happens during employment-related interventions is that jobs are merely shifted from one place or group to another rather than increased in general.

This is not to suggest that political and economic development is not of equal or greater importance to military (and police) security in establishing a stable democracy. However as described above, these different aspects of stability operations move according to logic of their own and at a pace that seems to be 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.

Yet another layer of complexity is added when the important role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in a comprehensive approach is considered. Many NGOs operate highly independent programs with almost no hierarchical structure for managing their in-country activities. Furthermore, some NGOs and aid workers resist any connection between development assistance and security. In an *International Herald Tribune* Op-Ed, for example, Anna Husarska of the International Rescue Committee wrote that "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."[56]

Ironically, on the same day the Times of London carried a front-

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[55] Robert VanGiezen and Albert E. Schwenk, "Compensation from before World War I through the Great Depression" originally posted January 30, 2003 at: http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cm20030124ar03p1.htm.
[56] "Sending the wrong message," June 3, 2008, p. 8.

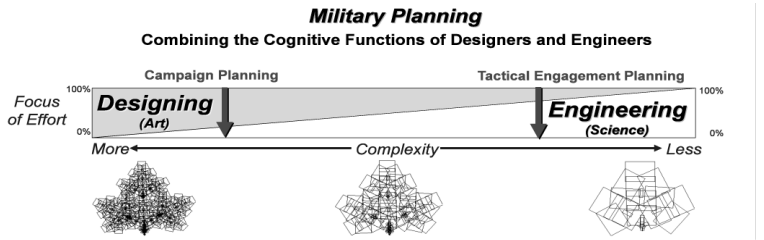
page article on development aid to Somalia being inadvertently used to fund militias and warlords. It was followed by an article on the UK Department for International Development having "taken over diplomacy in Africa" while "[naively] dealing with Africa's notoriously venal leaders, dragging Britain into unhealthy close relations with countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, which have poor governance records." It concludes by noting criticism "...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."[57]

**Military *design* versus *planning***

The collaborative "design" approach now being explored by the US Army seems to offer the most promising methodology to bridge the gap between traditional "military" and "civilian" activities in counterinsurgency and stability operations. The concept promoted in the US Army's TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5-500, *Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design*, may help to fill some of the planning void and provide an intellectual framework that could be useful to both military and civilian planners to begin meeting the challenge of aligning their disparate activities. It recognizes the limitations of the military's "traditional planning processes" in their assumption "that plans and orders from higher headquarters have framed the problem for their subordinates" and, as shown below, depicts a range of engineering to designing according to the complexity of the problem to be addressed. [58]

[57] http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article4046164.ece

[58] US Department of the Army, January 28, 2008. Figure 1-3, Military Planning, is on page 14. Available at: http://www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/p525-5-500.pdf. As a pamphlet rather than a field manual, this document proposes *Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design* as an "experimental process" that provides a conceptual basis for further development of doctrine.




The "campaign design" approach recognizes a class of complex, ill-structured—or "wicked"—problems that not only lack a single solution set, they lack a commonly defined frame for the problem. Furthermore, the problem evolves because the inputs intended to provide a solution causes shifts to the system. Traditional sequential step problem-solving approaches do not work for wicked problems.

Instead, the TRADOC pamphlet recommends an iterative effort that initially focuses on framing the problem, with key steps that include:

- *Establishing the strategic context*; what is the history of the problem and why is it now requiring 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?

- *Describe the systemic nature of the problem to be solved*; create a narrative to explain what problems must be addressed to achieve strategic goals—what factors, constituents, and relationships are relevant?

- *Establish 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 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 change and require an adjustment to the previous frame.

Perhaps the most significant change from traditional MDMP-style planning is the statement 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."[59] 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. While this approach is a step in the right direction, many challenges to implementing it remain.

The Army has yet to institutionalize the concept of "design" versus planning. Although Brigadier General (retired) 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,"[60] for most US 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 truly collaborative among multiple agencies and organizations. Civilian leaders will typically expect to be treated as equals rather than the subordinate to the military commander. In this author's experience, most senior military commanders work cooperatively and collegially with their civilian counterparts. The difficulties usually appear

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[59] Ibid. p. 15.

[60] "Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," *Military Review* January-February 2009, p. 2. Available at: http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20090228_art004.pdf.

at the next layer down within their staffs, who may sometimes be inclined to cut off the civilian side of discourse, *Magister dixit*, by saying "this is what the commander wants."[61] Commanders must not only be cognizant of their own interactions with their partners from other organizations, they need to ensure their staffs work collaboratively with their civilian counterparts.

Among the institutional differences that make it difficult to implement collaborative designing or planning is the fact that 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 Senior Foreign Service Officers to attend the National War College or one of the other DOD Senior Service Colleges, most have no formal education regarding the development of strategy or in planning. This situation is combined with a disparity in typical levels of management and/or leadership experience: The average company commander on the streets of Baghdad is charge of more people than the average US ambassador. Only a handful of American embassies have more staff than the number of soldiers assigned to a standard infantry battalion.

**Conclusion**

The obstacles to integrating the military and civilian aspects of a counterinsurgency or stability operation go well beyond a potential lack of willingness to get along, the relative shortage of civilian resources, or an insufficient number of mid-level headquarters. Even if these challenges are overcome, integrating civilian and military activities—making the pieces fit—is not something that will happen automatically. The lack of a venue for integrated civil-military design and planning compounds the difficulty. PRTs or similar planning and management organizations may offer a useful vehicle for designing and implementing a comprehensive approach at the operational and tactical levels. Serving as a collaboration platform to help the military and civilian pieces mesh together could be one of the most important functions a PRT could perform.

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[61] Medieval scholars would preclude debate by invoking the authority of Aristotle, saying *Magister dixit*—the Master has spoken.

# WE'RE ALL HERE, SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?

## On integrating host-government institutions into "whole of government" or "comprehensive" approaches toward stabilization and reconstruction operations.

Christopher A. Jennings

This paper examines the utility of so-called "whole of government" or "comprehensive" approaches to ordering post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction strategies in semi-permissive environments. Specifically, the paper argues that the call for "whole of government" solutions, though fashionable, is more or less a tautology. As an ordering principle, it provides no substantive rule for policymakers to use when weighting the elements of national power and distributing them across the vexing problems inherent in stabilizing and reconstructing conflict ridden territories—from Somalia to the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. The fundamental logic of any national security policy entails a consideration of all elements of power and levers a nation possesses.

While the modern operating environment for stability and reconstruction operations certainly poses a problem-set that cuts across multi-disciplinary civilian/military competencies, a naked "whole-of-government" solution absent strategic guidance from national level political leadership is an empty vessel. In this light, "whole-of-government" concepts are merely operational in their scope. Thus, the paper argues, a "whole of government" approach is less a substantive policy construct, and more of a process for informing national government leadership, receiving leadership's strategic guidance, and optimizing leadership's policy preferences by integrating the full scope of national power toward the policy's ends and objectives. Whole-of-government modalities are not concerned, therefore, with a singular dimension of

national interests—since from the perspective of a hammer, every problem looks like a nail. Instead whole-of-government approaches balance development, diplomatic, economic and security interests that often compete and sometime conflict in stabilization and reconstruction operations.

Finally, the paper argues that local ownership and capability sets an upper-limit on the effectiveness of even the most rigorously planned and well-coordinated stability operation. Ultimately, local government institutions must be integrated into planning and assessment efforts. Otherwise, the volumes of academic journal entries, think-tank reports, lessons-learned documents, consultant proposals, government audits, policy speeches and formal testimonies prescribing "whole of government" methods for donor-coordination, refined interagency processes, "joined-up" civilian/military assessments and strategic planning amounts to little more than navel-gazing.

**The changing face of conflict for conventional forces and civilian personnel**

The call of this paper is a reaction to a swelling current in the security-studies literature foretelling an "end of history" to the conventional state-to-state military conflict that NATO was built to defend. Instead, the literature warns, down-stream threats to NATO member states and their allies will involve forms of asymmetric warfare waged by non-state actors. Given NATO's overwhelming conventional military capabilities, would-be adversaries will not fight NATO "straight-up," but will attempt to neutralize NATO's comparative advantage by resorting to, for example, terrorist and guerrilla tactics common to insurgency. Gone are the salad days when wars were fought on desolated plains between states among soldiers, mediated by reciprocating laws of nations, and ended with the signing of treaties.

The literary picture recollects Shakespeare's *Othello*: "Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump, the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-

piercing fife, the royal banner, and all quality, pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war!"[1]

End of history? Doubtful, but certainly NATO forces in Afghanistan or the United Nations-sanctioned and United States-led Multi-National-Forces in Iraq (MNF-I) were not "built" for their respective operating environments, where mission success depends less on defeating "the enemy" on the battlefield and more on standing up a legitimate and effective indigenous government that can carry the confidence of a fractured population and safeguard their collective welfare. This sort of mission involves competencies and tasks that promote institution-building and the rule of law, economic development, training and equipping of indigenous military and police forces, internal reconciliation, good governance, basic services to the people, strategic communications, and more.

Most of the competencies and tasks critical to mission success in asymmetric security environments are the bailiwick of diplomatic and development personnel traditionally housed in civilian agencies. However, these professionals (along with their contract personnel, private-sector implementing partners and associated non-government organizations) are accustomed to operating in truly *post-conflict and permissive* environments within the cocoon of a peace agreement readily enforceable by a peacekeeping force.[2]

Like their defense counterparts, operating environments for civilian agency personnel and humanitarian actors in conflict zones are undergoing a sea-change, as Lt General Rupert Smith—Commander of the UN Protection Force in Bosnia—observed in 1995: "There is no such thing as impartial governance or humanitarian assistance. In this environment,

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[1] *Othello*, 3.3.347-50.

[2] With the exception, of course, to crisis relief aid organizations such as the International Red Cross, who has a conventional war time mission, but where parties to the conflict respect and are bound by law that recognizes the sanctity of the humanitarian worker's aid mission and neutral basis by which such aid is dispensed.

every time you help someone, you hurt someone else."[3] Or as David Kilcullen, Australian counterinsurgency expert and advisor to MNF-I Commanding General David Petraeus, puts it: "Governance, development, democracy are not universal goods. The enemy will perceive actions by political staff, NGOs, economic and development staffs…as a direct challenge to grass-roots control over the population, and will react with violence."[4] The harsh realities of this new operating environment renders quaint expressions such as 'espace humanitaire'—coined in 1992 by Médecins Sans Frontières president Rony Brauman—describing 'a space of freedom in which humanitarian organizations are free to evaluate needs, free to monitor the distribution and use of relief goods, and free to have a dialogue with the people.'[5]

Again, *Othello*: "O farewell the tranquil mind! Farewell content! Farewell the plumed troops and the big wars that make ambition virtue! O farewell!"[6]

**The call for "whole of government" solutions to new operating realities…**

These new realities have prompted some to call for a realignment of defense, diplomatic, development, intelligence, information, and humanitarian arms of international interventions into the modern day conflict zone. As Robert Gates observed in 2007, one year into his appointment as the U.S. Secretary of Defense:

> What we do know is that the threats and challenges we will face abroad in the first decades of the 21st century will extend well beyond the traditional domain of any sin-

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[3] David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency in Iraq: Theory and Practice,* 2007, power-point presentation available at <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullencoinbrief26sep07.ppt>.
[4] Id.
[5] *See* Johanna Grombach Wagner, "An IHL/ICRC perspective on Humanitarian Space," Humanitarian Exchange Magazine, December 2005. *See also*, Rony Brauman, "Introduction," in Francois Jean's POPULATIONS IN DANGER, London 1992.
[6] *Othello*, 3.3.347-50.

> gle government agency. The real challenges we have seen emerge since the end of the Cold War – from Somalia to the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere – make clear we in defense need to change our priorities to be better able to deal with the prevalence of what is called "asymmetric warfare." …. [T]hese new threats also require our government to operate as a whole differently – to act with unity, agility, and creativity. And they will require considerably more resources devoted to America's non-military instruments of power.[7]

U.S. Army Counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine internalizes the "whole of government" principle articulated by Secretary Gates, emphasizing "Unity of Effort" as "essential" and that it "must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation. Otherwise well-intentioned but uncoordinated actions can cancel each other or provide vulnerabilities for insurgents to exploit."[8]

U.S. COIN doctrine accords with the findings of a 2006 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) assessment of the "whole of government" policies of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The findings emphasize unity of effort as a critical means of maintaining policy coherence across "whole of government" operations. The study, evaluating stability and development initiatives implemented within "fragile states,"[9] found:

> In terms of benefits, it is apparent that in order to be more effective, policy coherence and [whole of government approaches] should go beyond providing a collection of independent policies guided by departmental mandates. If not, the risk of policy incoherence is magnified. The advan-

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[7] Remarks of Secretary Robert Gates at Kansas State University, November 26, 2007.

[8] United States Army, COUNTERINSURGENCY, FM 3-24 at 1-121 (December 2006).

[9] Democratic Republic of Congo (linked with Belgium and France), Haiti (linked with Canada), Solomon Islands (linked with Australia), Sudan (linked with Sweden and the Netherlands) and Yemen (linked with the UK). The case studies have been selected with a view to linking headquarters-level WGAs with specific in-country experience

> tages of coherence are clear: more coherent policies and activities can contribute to the overall objective of long-term development and stability in fragile states at a lower overall fiscal cost. In addition, the risk of these objectives either being compromised, or simply not being met, is reduced. Finally, from the perspective of harmonization and alignment, coherent policies and activities may have greater legitimacy in the eyes of the recipient country and will therefore be more likely to receive a positive response.[10]

Additionally, the report stressed, "greater coherence between security and development policies is recognized as key to establishing an effective [whole of government approach] on fragile states."[11]

**Implementing "whole of government" policies—planning and structures**

In terms of operational control, U.S. Army doctrine would "ideally" place "all government agencies involved in COIN operations" under "a single counterinsurgent leader"—entailing, presumably, military control.[12] Overtures in policy documents such as these make civilian-agency counterparts and their private-sector NGO implementing partners and affiliates skeptical that calls for "whole of government" approaches are anything more than attempts to militarize the civilian-led development and diplomatic sectors. Conspiracy theories notwithstanding, "usually," U.S. Army COIN doctrine acknowledges, "military commanders work to achieve unity of effort through liaison with leaders of a wide variety of nonmilitary agencies"—especially at the planning level, where the U.S. Ambassador, the diplomatic and civilian corps, along with host nation representatives must be "key players in higher level planning."[13]

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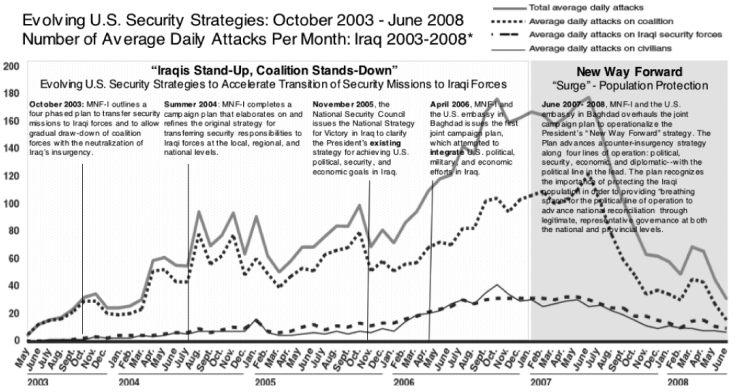
[10] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO FRAGILE STATES, 7 (2006)(Herein after, "OECD WGA Study".
[11] Id.
[12] "OECD WGA Study" at 7.
[13] Id.

The Iraq experience underscores the increasing premium COIN doctrine places on joint planning across military and civilian lines of operation. As the table below summarizes, MNF-I command developed and revised multiple strategies to address Iraq's security and reconstruction needs since the fall of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in 2003. All of the security strategies between 2003 and 2006 essentially called for a gradual drawdown of coalition forces as MNF-I hands off of the security mission to nascent Iraqi Security Forces. Remarkably, as reported by the United States Government Accountability Office, military and civilian planners did not attempt to integrate security, economic and political efforts under a common operation plan until April of 2006.[14] Joint planning found new relevance with the announcement of the "New Way Forward"—popularly known as the "surge" strategy—unveiled in January 2007 by President George W. Bush in concert with his appointment of a new MNF-I Commander in General David Petraeus (lead author of the above quoted U.S. Counterinsurgency Manual) and a new US embassy country team, lead by Ambassador Ryan Crocker.




* Source: Statement of Gene L. Dodaro, Acting Comptroller General of the United States Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, SECURING, STABILIZING, AND REBUILDING IRAQ, July 23, 2008.

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[14] Statement of Gene L. Dodaro, Acting Comptroller General of the United States Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, SECURING, STABILIZING, AND REBUILDING IRAQ, July 23, 2008. See also, GAO, REBUILDING IRAQ: MORE COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL STRATEGY NEEDED TO HELP ACHIEVE U.S. GOALS, GAO-06-788 (Washington, D.C.: July 11, 2006).

Drawing, no doubt, from the 2001-2004 Iraq and Afghanistan experience, the Bush Administration began in 2005 to implement "whole of government" reforms government-wide. One of these reforms included the creation of the office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization within the Department of State (CRS). CRS ostensibly functions as the nucleus of future reconstruction and stabilization operations, as made explicit in the legal authority establishing the office, National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD-44):

> The Secretary of State shall coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.[15]

Whether CRS will realize the full potential of its legal authorization is quite another question, and will depend on old-fashioned interagency and bureaucratic politics.

**Challenges and conceptual limitations to implementing "whole-of-government" approaches in stabilization and reconstruction Operations**

The political fights CRS will have to wage to establish its authority conjures up—with no bit of irony left unnoted—the problems of interagency coordination in the first place:

• Will the office capture the ear of the Secretary of State and drive

[15] National Security Presidential Directive, NSPD-44, December 7, 2005.

policy deliberations within the State Department's sprawling network of departments, bureaus and diplomatic posts?

- Will it win resources in annual budget battles and leverage the diasporic development fiefdoms distributed across dozens of executive departments and agencies?
- Will it counter-balance diplomatic and development prerogatives against the policy and methodological preferences of security-minded Goliaths across the Potomac at the Pentagon?

If not, the coordinating office will be sidelined and will not fulfill its basic mandate: to drive the strategic arch and direction of the "support relationships among elements of the United States Government" necessary to structure and cohere "all of government" activities and resource allocations around a common and clear reconstruction and stabilization plan.

From an operational standpoint, the text of NSPD-44 as a "whole of government" strategy is a tautology—it merely restates the logic inherent in coordinating interagency actors toward a common aim during complex foreign operations. Indeed, should CRS fail to assert itself in the interagency it will leave a planning and operational vacuum where the prerogatives of government reconstruction and stabilization experts will be outstripped by competing agency mandates, policy disputes and parochial interests of bureaucrats. (But, at least, it identifies an "accountable" official somewhere in the sprawling network of development and diplomatic departments, agencies and offices.)

Perhaps the most important determinate to the institutional development of CRS—or a CRS-like entity—is whether the White House will be interested in making use of the office's expertise at the high-stakes politics-of-the-moment when national security interests hang in the balance of a Presidential decision point. As Francis Fukuyama quipped in his volume on nation building, "had this office existed in the lead-up to the Iraq war, it probably would have been sidelined along with the rest of the Department of State." [16]

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[16] Fukuyama, Francis, "Guidelines for Future Nation-Builders," in NATION BUILDING: BEYOND AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ, 240 (2006)(Hereinafter, *Guidelines*).

To extend Fukuyama's implicit point that Presidential deliberative preferences ultimately drive the quality and nature of the interagency process, it is worthwhile to trace the administrative directives that preceded President Bush's signing of NSPD 44. Notably, NSPD-44 superceded the Clinton Administration Era Presidential Decision Directive/NSC 56, "Managing Complex Contingency Operations"—the embodiment of the Clinton Administration's "whole of government" lessons-learned from Bosnia.

President Clinton issued PDD 56 on May 20, 1997 to manage interagency civil/military operations as diverse as the peace accord implementation conducted by NATO in Bosnia (1995); and the humanitarian intervention in northern Iraq called Operation Provide Comfort (1991), Operation Support Hope in central Africa (1994) and Operation Sea Angel in Bangladesh (1991). Drafters of PDD 56 drew from the Clinton Administration's experience in Bosnia, where post conflict operations were led by a country team comprised of the local ambassador and ground forces commander, with two separate chains of authority leading back to the Departments of State and Defense, respectively.[17] Under the Clinton Administration's experience, this configuration posed problems for unity of command, as it was "the source of considerable infighting between military and civilian agencies over such issues as roles, missions, and the rules of engagement."[18] This PDD called upon the Deputies Committee of the National Security Council (NSC) to establish appropriate interagency working groups to assist in policy development, planning, and execution of complex contingency operations.

While PDD 56 constituted the basis for the interagency coordination of the Kosovo operation, it was scrapped by the Bush Administration in the run up to the Iraq operation, which "solved" the unity of command issue by putting the Defense Department (through the auspices of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)) in charge of Iraq's reconstruction. With the handover of formal sovereignty to an Iraqi interim government in June 2004,

[17] Id.
[18] Id.

the CPA dissolved and the Bush Administration shifted back to an early-Clinton era "country team" approach with two chains of military and civilian authorities tracing back to NSC. The Bush Administration retained this structure in Iraq through December 2008—the date of this writing—while, at the same time, issued NSPD-44 for future reconstruction operations.

No doubt, President Obama's Administration will likewise recalibrate the formal and informal structures that mediate the balance and influence of U.S. diplomatic, development and defense agencies over the formation and execution of his foreign and national security policies. No matter the result, it will reflect a "whole of government" approach. Indeed, the fundamental logic of any national security policy entails a consideration of all elements of power a nation possesses. An effective administration will tailor an institutional division of labor to execute the policy.

From the commanding heights of foreign and national security policy formation, the security-literature's call for "whole of government" solutions, though fashionable, is a tautology. As an ordering principle for the purposes of this paper's focus on stabilization and reconstruction operations, it provides no substantive rule for policymakers to use when weighting the elements of national power and distributing them across the vexing problems inherent in stabilizing conflict ridden territories—from Somalia to the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. The call for "whole of government" approaches simply restates the entire institutional function of a National Security Council.

In this light, a "whole of government" approach is less a substantive policy construct, and more of a process for integrating the policy preferences of national government leadership. Stated another way: while the modern operating environment for "post-conflict" stability and reconstruction operations pose a problem set that cuts across multi-disciplinary civilian/military competencies, a "whole-of-government" solution is an empty vessel without strategic guidance from national level political leadership. In the absence of an integrated strategic vision, agencies go rogue—driven by mandates, not strategy.

The OECD affirms, "effective political leadership is key for the implementation of all-encompassing approaches such as whole-of-government approaches … ."[19] Only political leadership has the elevation to identify a clear focus and a coherent agenda for the crosscutting government actors involved. The different actors need to understand from their political leadership the importance of their involvement.

> This is confirmed by the case of the UK, where sustained joined-up working on Yemen is related to Cabinet attention, as well as by other cases such as Canada's involvement in Haiti. The report on the Netherlands states that the Minister for Development Cooperation and the Minister of Defence have led the way in creating greater collaboration between the two policy fields, by publicly acknowledging the interaction and interdependence between both fields, by stepping out of their comfort zones and by advocating greater cohesion.[20]

"This implies," the OECD continues, "building coalitions among policy communities and negotiating various policy options … different actors will have different perspectives … (and stakes) … [ranging from] counter-terrorism to governance, conflict prevention and peace building, or trade promotion."[21] The challenge is balancing these different rationales and perspectives through clear, coherent strategic planning, along with clear-eyed, honest assessments.

**Joint-strategic planning as an "integrating" method for leveraging "whole of government" approaches in stabilization and reconstruction operations**

Strategic objectives should be identified at two levels by political leadership. First, strategic guidance needs to clearly state the overall objec-

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[19] *OECD WGA Study* at 22.
[20] Id.
[21] Id.

tive of the intervention, specifically detailing the vital and important national interests at stake in the intervention. Second, strategic guidance needs to specify why and how civilian and military agencies need to be involved. The assessments should not take place from a singular dimension of national interests—since from the perspective of a hammer, every problem looks like a nail—but needs to include balanced assessments from the standpoint of development, diplomatic, economic and security interests.

Concluding from the U.S. experience Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Balkans "that failed and defeated states can and do threaten the national interests of the United States and the stability of entire regions," *Winning the Peace,* a Center for International and Strategic Studies report, underscored that redressing "these threats clearly depends on much more than military might."[22] *Winning the Peace* served as a seminal document in ordering recent efforts lead by CRS to outline a template for comprehensive planning in future stabilization operations.[23] The template divides interagency efforts among five technical sectors: (1) security, (2) governance and participation, (3) humanitarian assistance and social well-being, (4) economic stabilization and infrastructure, and (5) justice and reconciliation.[24] Programming in these sectors and their associated implementing tasks, by necessity, require a "joined-up" integration of government activities across civilian/military departmental mandates.

Joined-up work requires joint planning and possible joint implementation mechanisms as part of an overall strategic process. At a minimum, it requires joint setting of objectives and priorities. Ideally, it will include the following:

1. A concise statement of the desired end-state;
2. Sector-by-sector development goals;

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[22] Robert C. Orr (ed.), WINNING THE PEACE: AN AMERICAN STRATEGY FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION (2004).

[23] Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, U.S. Department of State, RECONSTRUCTION AND STABILIZATION ESSENTIAL TASKS MATRIX, April 2005, <available at http://www.crs.state.gov/shortcut.cfm/J7R3>

[24] Id.

3. Associated with each of the development goals detailed implementing tasks along with the identity of the responsible implementing agents, timelines necessary for implementation, and the resources necessary to sustain the effort; and
4. Measures to determine whether the tasks are (a) being implemented and (b) having the desired strategic effect.

As stressed in *Winning the Peace,* there is no off-the-self, one-size-fits-all plan for stabilization operations since "countries emerge from conflict under differing and unique conditions. Therefore, the priority, precedence, timing, appropriateness, and execution of tasks will vary from case to case."[25]

This is not a linear or mechanistic process. In some respects, conflict ridden and traumatized societies are so turbulent, their social institutions so weak, that they defy prediction—and therefore—the precise level of coordinated planning that the military is capable of in conventional warfare. This poses difficult gaps for planning regimes within military and civilian agencies—while the military planning culture can aim to exert control over their operating environment, civilian planners cannot.

For instance, a policymaker may rightly ask the whole-of-government joint-planning team, "How much time and resources will it typically take to defeat the military regime and secure a democratic outcome in a country like X?". The policymaker will likely leave the policy brief with confidence in the assessment of the military planner, but scratching their head at the equivocations of the civilian planner.

This is because democracy assistance professionals have no control over the social deterrents and enablers of democratic transformation in the first place—such as preexisting government structures, international influences, standards of living, regional conditions—and their planning

[25] *Winning the Peace* at 305.

mechanisms could never portend to overcome those structures through predominately external forces. More to the point, democracy assistance is generally directed toward supporting the activity of committed individuals and groups within the foreign society. In other words, the mechanisms of democratic assistance are not calibrated to manipulate the society wholly from the outside. It is much more like venture capitalism—multiple investments spread across a range of market actors, all with high rates of failure. If one investment pays off, it pays off big, but there is no scientific way of predicting which one will yield dividends in advance. This is why, in general, democracy investments are loss leaders, but on the whole the investments make a difference. Certainly civilian planners can identify promising steps that can be taken—in both the short term and the long term—to promote democratic outcomes. However, at best, civilian donor agencies can only stand ready to assist willing local individuals and institutions when conditions change or openings present themselves. Civilian planners cannot, therefore, connect specific programs or tasks that will result in a democratic transformation. Thus, many elements of strategic planning on the civilian side of the ledger, such as democracy assistance, must be understood more as an opportunistic construct than a strategic mapping of social transformation.

Also on the civilian side of the ledger the same should be noted with regard to assignment of benchmarks for measuring progress toward overall mission success. Illuminating here is the July 2007 cautionary tail told by Ambassador Crocker to the U.S. Congress over the use of narrowly-crafted benchmarks as conditions-precedent for continuing appropriations of U.S. assistance to Iraq:

> I would like to add a general note of caution, however, about benchmarks. The benchmarks can be a useful metric; but the longer I am here, the more I am persuaded that progress in Iraq cannot be analyzed solely in terms of these discrete, precisely defined benchmarks because, in many cases, these benchmarks do not serve as reliable measures of everything that is important – Iraqi attitudes

> toward each other and their willingness to work toward political reconciliation.[26]

This does not mean that results of civilian led initiatives in a conflict society (particularly those impacting political will or transformation of social institutions) cannot be measured. Quite the contrary, experience underscores the importance of strategically focused programs to avoid the risk of spending scarce resources on ad hoc activities that fail to achieve discernable impacts. However, development tools and corresponding rules of measurement are too imprecise, too blunt to construct a tightly constructed strategy that successfully predicts results. Civilian led planning tends not to lend itself to an elegant list of indicators of whether the strategy is on the right or wrong track. Political change is a dynamic process—set backs are always inevitable, but does not entail that a strategy is "off track." To extend Ambassador Crocker's point—creation of measures, though important, grossly underestimates the range of variables that are important to assessing whether "the plan" is on the right or wrong track. In fact, indicators/benchmarks/measures can create a strategic myopia, where implementers quickly loose sight of the bigger picture and, in a sense, "play to the test" of the plan rather than political reality.

**The imperative of integrating international coalition members and host government institutions into "whole of government" strategies**

The logic and limitations of integrated strategic planning extends to international coalitions. Incoherence at the national level quickly compounds in theater when one nation's deployed assets meet the proliferation of international actors involved in post-conflict and stabilization operations. Too often the result is as a 1997 Stanley Foundation report on post-conflict rule-of-law program implementation describes:

> A veritable 'circus atmosphere' of UN agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and individual donor govern-

[26] Testimony of Ambassador Ryan Crocker before the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 19, 2007.

> ments all engaged in the often uncoordinated monitoring of human rights, policing assistance, judicial rehabilitation, investigating war crimes, training police, and administering prisons.[27]

Division within the international community creates opportunities for spoilers to co-opt aid and assistance instruments—derailing them or playing them off each other, diverting resources toward parochial ends, or, worse, fueling the underlying division and conflict driving the domestic struggle for power.[28]

As a 2000 United Nation's report on peace operations notes, "post-conflict operations" in the modern context is generally a misnomer and represents more of a goal than a description of the operating context:

> United Nations operations since [the 1990s] have tended to deploy where conflict has not resulted in victory for any side: it may be that the conflict is stalemated militarily or that international pressure has brought fighting to a halt, but in any event the conflict is unfinished. United Nations operations thus do not deploy into post-conflict situations so much as they deploy to create such situations. That is, they work to divert the unfinished conflict, and the personal, political or other agendas that drove it, from the military to the political arena, and to make that diversion permanent.[29]

The risks posed by the failed integration of all the elements of national and international civil-military power in reconstruction and stabilization operations are, therefore, considerably greater than mere administrative waste (duplication of effort, lost time, gaps in assistance) or policy incoherence (mixed messages, programs acting at cross purposes). Ham-

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[27] Post-Conflict Justice: The Role Of The International Community at 7 (1997).
[28] Stromseth, Jane, et al, Can Might Make Rights? Building Rule of Law After Military Interventions at 351 (2006).
[29] S/2000/809, para. 20, Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, August 21, 2000.

handed interventions risk compounding the underlying conflict that necessitated intervention in the first place.

In a word: failed integration can convert stability-operations into entropy-operations. Here, the Iraq experience between 2003 and 2006 is instructive, where David Kilcullen identified a "Kiss of Death" syndrome in MNF-I's stability operations:

1. MNF-I would identify a locality under insurgent control ➔
2. MNF-I would "clear" the active insurgency and introduce civil programs, which exposes moderates and cooperative leaders to insurgents ➔
3. As security improves, MNF-I reduces its presence in that locality ➔
4. Insurgents reenter the locality and kill those who cooperated with MNF-I ➔
5. Insurgents recapture control of the locality, requiring MNF-I to move in and reassert control.[30]

Well intended, but poorly executed interventions can serve as accelerants to the drivers of conflict—with deadly consequences.

The "Kiss of Death" syndrome not only speaks to the dangers of a myopic, security-mandate driven definition of "stability" as mere "absence of violence," but also to a catastrophic failure to assess the capacity of local actors to *sustain* the "progress" of a foreign intervention. As Fukuyama underscores,

> If countries do not develop the indigenous capabilities to provide basic public services, they will remain wards of the international community. It is often the case that extensive international reconstruction can actually impede long-term development, because involvement by the international community can breed dependence and weaken local institutions.[31]

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[30] Presentation of Dr. David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency Seminar*, Quantico, VA September 26, 2007.
[31] *Guidelines at 240.*

That a foreign intervention can breed dependence and weaken local institutions (or that long-term sustainability is dependent upon local buy-in and capacity) is hardly an original insight. However, for a volume devoted to "whole-of-government" approaches, it bears underscoring that local ownership and capability sets an upper-limit on the effectiveness of even the most rigorously planned, well coordinated stability operation. Ultimately, local government institutions must be integrated into planning and assessment efforts. Otherwise, the volumes of academic journal entries, think-tank reports, lessons-learned documents, consultant proposals, government audits, policy speeches and formal testimonies all prescribing modalities for donor-coordination, refined interagency processes, "joined-up" civilian/military assessments and strategic planning amounts to little more than navel-gazing.

Integration of indigenous governmental decision-makers and institutions into "whole-of-government" approaches requires, at minimum, joint setting of objectives—meaning broad-based buy-in on the desired end-state of the foreign-led intervention and substantial agreement on sector-by-sector development goals. If there is fundamental agreement between the foreign interveners and domestic political and technocratic leadership on the strategic arch of the country's developmental priorities, then, what remains, is principally a capacity/capability gap. To the extent there is not agreement on the fundamentals, then the interests of the foreign intervention will not only have to fight a capacity/capability gap, but also engage in forms of coercion and persuasion to impose or induce the requisite domestic prioritization of the intervention's goals and objectives.

Here, the risks of "mirror-imaging" are particularly acute. Namely, foreign interveners—especially those not adept at reading the cultural norms, histories, agendas, motivations and interests of local political factions—attempt to craft and shape domestic institutions in their own image, instead of seeing domestic politics for what it is. Or worse, foreign interveners back or elevate locals who share the values of the foreign intervener, but are viewed as illegitimate or somehow suspect by the domestic population. Both are not sustainable in the long term.

Ideally, civil/military strategic planners will not stop at assessing local buy-in of intervention goals and objectives, but will also regularly assess whether local institutions are capable of implementing mission-critical tasks on their own or with little or no foreign subsidy.

A cliché, for certain, but T.E. Lawrence warrants the final word: “It is better that they do it imperfectly than that you do it perfectly. For it is their war and their country and your time here is limited.”

# CIVILIAN ADVISORS: BATTALION WISE, CORPS FOOLISH

Stephen J. Mariano

*"A ... task we can take on together is to design and establish a volunteer Civilian Reserve Corps. Such a corps would function much like our military reserve. It would ease the burden on the Armed Forces by allowing us to hire civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad when America needs them. It would give people across America who do not wear the uniform a chance to serve in the defining struggle of our time."*
President George W. Bush,
*State of the Union Address, 23 January 2007*

The American military is experiencing firsthand what humanitarians have long known: short term security solutions are no substitute for long term capacity building victories. Just as sacks of wheat thrown off the back of a truck temporarily reduce famine but fail to provide long-term agricultural capacity, developing tactical military capability without building the sustainable civilian institutions to control forces will not provide long-term security. This paper joins the chorus of voices that supports a whole of government approach to developing a corps of civilians to build capacity in foreign governments during international stability and reconstruction missions.[1]

## Integrated or comprehensive?

Building sustainable security capacity requires the delivery of civilian and military capabilities to new or fragile governmental institu-

[1] Richard Mereand, "Civilian Response Corps," National Security Watch 08-4, *Institute of Land Warfare*, Association of the United States Army, Washington DC, 2 Oct 08.

tions. In December 2005, the United States formalized an "integrated" approach to the "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization" when President Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44:

> The Secretary of State shall coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.[2]

The idea of an integrated approach gained attention as the war in Iraq confounded policy-makers but it had more to do with integrating American civilian and military institutions than of bringing in coalition partners or international organizations.

NATO's current attempt to name and then integrate civil and military efforts has its origins in the *Comprehensive Political Guidance* (CPG), but the idea is not new.[3] The North Atlantic Council issued the CPG as a substitute for a revised NATO Strategic Concept – a concept last updated in 1999 at the 50th anniversary of the Alliance and prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer has described the initiative simply as the "comprehensive approach":

> A broader, concerted international effort by the whole of the international community is required. And this is what

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[2] George W. Bush, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44, Washington DC, 7 Dec 05.

[3] *Comprehensive Political Guidance*, Endorsed by the NATO Heads of State and Government, Riga, Latvia, 29 November 2006, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b061129e.htm; See Annex A for a brief description of prior uses of the term "comprehensive" in the NATO lexicon.

> we, in NATO, mean when we talk about a comprehensive approach;… for me, a comprehensive approach is one that fosters cooperation and coordination between international organisations, individual states, agencies and NGOs, as well as the private sector.[4]

So, the US and NATO are both searching for better ways to deliver security, whether in a "comprehensive" or "integrated" manner.

Reforming America's national security apparatus has become synonymous with the names Barry Goldwater and James Nichols. These two US Senators are the principle authors of landmark legislation formally titled, "The Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986." This sweeping legislation mandated increased cooperation between the US Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps in at least four ways: it cemented the position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a *primus inter pares*; it increased the authority of a Joint Staff within the Department of Defense; it extended the idea of the unified combatant command – both geographic and functional; and it dictated promotion requirements to the services based on "jointness," a relatively rare Congressional intrusion into the internal workings of the uniformed services.

Goldwater-Nichols improved effectiveness within the Department of Defense to such an extent that the idea of transferring its principles to the whole of the US security apparatus has been widely suggested. In 2004, several bills were presented to Congress calling for increased civilian capabilities to deal with the demands of post-conflict operations. In 2004 and 2005, the Center for Strategic and International Security (CSIS) issued a comprehensive series of reports titled, "Beyond Goldwater-Nichols." The CSIS report promoted legislation that would increase integration between several executive departments and agencies,

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[4] Speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the Microsoft-BBC-NATO - Defence Leaders forum Noordwijk aan zee 23 April 2007; http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070423a.html

essentially all departments participating in National Security Council activities. Defense and State were not the only departments targeted but they were the most prominent.

The report did not prompt Goldwater-Nichols-like legislation but Congress did provide for the establishment of the Office for the Coordinator of Stabilization and Reconstruction (S/CRS) within the Department of State. Ambassador Carlos Pascual was selected as the first director of the new organization which was intended to

> "…address longstanding concerns, both within Congress and the broader policy community, over what is seen as inadequate planning mechanism for stabilization and reconstruction operations, lack of inter-agency coordination in carrying out such tasks, and inappropriate capabilities for many of the non-military tasks required. Effectively distributing resources among the various executive branch actors, maintaining clear lines of authority and jurisdiction, and balancing short- and long-term objectives are major challenges for designing, planning, and conducting post-conflict operations."[5]

AMB Pascual conceptualized three levels of change: (1) the functional equivalent of the military's joint staff; S/CRS was designed to take on this role; (2) creation of some type of operational level headquarters on the ground in the theater of action; Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are a glimpse of a construct; and (3) foot soldiers to man the PRTs, to develop, design, and manage the programs that build capacity.[6] These organizations and foot soldiers, however, were intended not only to operate across various US departments or agencies, but also in direct support of a legitimate host nation authority, providing access to US resources and expert advice.

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[5] Nina M. Serafino, and Martin A. Weiss, "Peacekeeping and Post-Conflict Capabilities: The State Department's Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization." *Congressional Research Service Report for Congress*, Washington DC: Library of Congress, Order Code RS22031, 19 January 2005.

[6] Carlos Pascual, "Building Capacity for Stabilization and Reconstruction," Testimony before the House Armed Service Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, 29 January 2008.

**Foot soldiers**

In a 2006 New York Times Op-Ed piece, Andrew Krepinevich highlighted the importance of 4,000 combat advisors when compared to the 160,000 combat troops in Iraq and in 2008, John Nagl described the substantial contribution his battalion made in training a small number of advisors.[7] Nagl also referred to the civil-military challenges in developing a grand advisor strategy. Few would argue the important role advisors played in pushing forward an Iraqi "surge" to complement America's own – coalition advisors coached their counterparts into achieving incredible growth rates, over 100,000 uniformed members were added in 2007, and nearly the same was added in 2008. But strategic success will require more than a battalion's worth of tactical trainers; winning the capacity building battle will require an equivalent corps of civilian foot soldiers.

The idea has bounced around think tanks, academia and congress for several years but did not take root. The *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols* report, for example, proposed a *Civilian Stability Operations Corps and Reserve* that could have been "charged with assessing and preparing for stability operations; organizing, training and equipping civilian capabilities for such operations; and rapidly deploying civilian experts and teams to the field."[8] Kurt Campbell and Michael O'Hanlon recommended "a quickly deployable" corps of "Diplomatic Special Forces" with a "capability large enough to coordinate an effort in a country the size of Iraq or Afghanistan or even Congo."[9] The Iraq Study Group noted that civilian agencies [State, USAID, Treasury, Justice] have little experience with stability operations overseas and that the US has had "difficulty filling civilian assignments… with properly trained personnel at the appropriate rank"; "if not enough civilians volunteer to fill key positions in Iraq, civil-

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[7] John Nagl, "A Battalion's Worth of Good Ideas," *New York Times*, April 2nd, 2008.

[8] Clark Murdock, et al., *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 1 Report* (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2004); p. 64.

[9] Kurt M. Campbell and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Hard Power: The New Politics of National Security* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), p. 115-116; as seen in Benjamin H. Friedman, Harvey M. Sapolsky, and Christopher Preble, "Learning the Right Lessons from Iraq," *Policy Analysis*, no. 610; The Cato Institute, Washington DC; February 13, 2008.

ian agencies must fill those positions with directed assignments."[10] All of this effort seemed to culminate in President's January 2007, State of the Union address where he called for a Civilian Reserve Corps. While Presidential attention seemed to be a major victory for proponents of the American-version of the comprehensive approach the concept is only slowly being pushed into reality.

**The Civilian Stabilization Initiative**

According to a 2008 presentation at the National Defense University, the S/CRS contains only 32 people – most of whom appear to be more staff officer than foot soldier.[11] The Civilian Stabilization Initiative, however, is designed to create three civilian advisor corps elements: an interagency Active Response Corps, a Standby Response Corps, and a U.S. Civilian Reserve Corps. The Active Response Corps should be 250 persons strong and ready to deploy within 72 hours. The Standby Response Corps will have 2,000 trained US government civilians from State, USAID, Justice, Commerce, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security and Treasury, deployable within 30 days for up to 180 days. The Civilian Reserve Corps is intended to be approximately 2,000 people drawn from jobs outside the federal government in order to provide sector-specific expertise. It may take 30-60 days to train them, but once mobilized, they become government employees for up to one year. This construct significantly elaborates President Bush's state of the Union speech idea but suffers from its association with a previous administration. A question remains whether the Obama Administration will adopt the concept as its own and push the initiative forward.

**More musicians than diplomats**

Unfortunately, filling civilian advisor corps positions with quali-

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[10] James Baker III and Lee H. Hamilton, *The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward—A New Approach* (New York: Vintage, 2006), p. 93, recommendation 74.

[11] Melanne A. Civic, Senior Rule of Law Advisor, U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization "A US Government Coordinated Stabilization Initiative," http://www.ndu.edu/ctnsp/Stab_Ops/Civic%2017%20Apr.pdf

fied nation-builders will be problematic because demand has outstripped supply, (the New Embassy Compound in Baghdad is alone designed to hold 1,000 people). In 2008, Eliot Cohen told reporters that the Department of Defense has nearly more musicians than diplomats: the State Department employs 12,000 people, of whom 5,500 are Foreign Service officers. Conversely, the Pentagon's workforce includes 1.3 million men and women on active duty, 1.1 million reservists in the National Guard and 669,000 civilian employees. Military bands alone count for 7,500 people.[12]

Accordingly, the State Department now relies heavily on temporary hires under the provision of section 3161, Title 5 of the United States Code.[13] Many of these "wannabee" diplomats are former defense experts and extremely capable – more capable than many of their homegrown Foreign Service counterparts in physically and psychologically demanding environments – but they are outsiders, not fully embraced by the wider community of diplomats and development specialists and not inculcated in either of those organizational cultures. A stinging memorandum was released earlier this year by one of those temporary employees at a US Embassy.[14] Its author noted that the State Department is skilled at diplomacy but that the standing up of governments should be left to "more competent hands." The question of competency is akin to the question of jurisdiction: which department has prime jurisdiction for building capacity within a weak or failed state? Unfortunately, the answer is none…and all three.

The Department of Defense has resources and some expertise, even if not the authority to conduct institutional capacity building, unless in times of crisis. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) has more competency "building" weak or non-existent institutions than its State Department cousin, whose diplomats are professional "persuaders"

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[12] Agence France-Press, "More Musicians than Diplomats," 29 Apr 08.
[13] Pascual, Testimony, 29 Jan 08.
[14] Manuel Miranda, "Memorandum: Departure Assessment of Embassy Baghdad," Office of Legislative Statecraft, United States Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq, 5 Feb 08.

comfortable relating to extant institutions. Unfortunately, the development and diplomatic missions are frequently conflated, not only when addressing the functions they perform, but also in discussing business practices, qualification, education and career progression.

> When it comes to money, the Department of Defense clearly outguns State and USAID. As an example, Kristin Lord noted that the Pentagon's $100 million annual price tag for a strategic communication effort in one country is equivalent to roughly one-eighth of the State Department's entire public diplomacy budget for the entire world. $100 million per year is big money for public diplomats but "is small change for the military," which spends $434 million per day in Iraq.[15] As for USAID, its website proudly notes that it spends less than 5% of the entire federal budget. Even Secretary of Defense Gates acknowledges the mismatch in funding and has openly called for increased funding for USAID and the State Department despite being accused of "blasphemy."[16]

America's defense, development and diplomatic institutions need longer views for longer wars – especially those requiring civil capacities as much as military ones. A Civilian Corps may not be the Rosetta stone for deciphering the capacity building conundrum but it's foolish not to further explore the option. The concept would allow the government to hire "civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad" and help address a long term institutional deficit. If nothing else, both the State and Defense Departments and USAID, should improve their individual advisory concepts in order to help achieve sustainable security in destroyed or developing countries.

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[15] Kristin M. Lord, "The State Department, not the Pentagon, should lead America's public diplomacy efforts," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 29, 2008; accessed 24 Nov 08; http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/1029/p09s01-coop.html

[16] Ann Scott Tyson, "Gates Urges Increased Funding for Diplomacy," *Washington Post*, November 27, 2007; Page A02, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/26/AR2007112601985.html

**Enduring elements of a civilian advisor concept**

A 2008 RAND Study, "Stabilization and Reconstruction Staffing: Developing US Civilian Personnel Capabilities," tackled long-term systemic problems with developing a corps of deployable civilian experts. A major finding was that no civilian department or agency has "playbook for identifying, obtaining, and organizing human resources into an unstable area."[17] The report summarized the problem in a brief generalization of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq; "staff could be characterized as short-term…and they were generally not what would be considered well-qualified. Almost none were experts on Iraq or the Middle East. Many worked in positions outside their professional expertise and well above the level of their previous experiences."[18] The study's three main recommendations were that the President needs to appoint a lead agency to align human resource planning and execution across departments, that the S/CRS should develop the workforce plan, and that a program of inducements should be developed in order to recruit and retain the best individuals.[19] While the RAND report addressed multiple factors in the cultivating a civilian staff for stability and reconstruction missions, the following section recommends three work force plan elements for further exploration: selection, preparation, and utilization.

**Selection**

Seniority, expertise, availability and deployability are the most pressing criteria in selecting potential advisors. Seniority is important of course, but no substitute for technical competence; a popular example is the having a US Ambassador from European or Asian country assume similar duties in the Middle East. The strategic assumption is that all ambassadors and regions are created equal, an assumption that many would agree has been proven false. Also, US diplomatic skills do not easily equate to foreign national, provincial and district political structures or functions;

[17] Terrence K. Kelly, Ellen E. Tunstall, Thomas S. Szayna, and Deanna Weber Prine, "Stabilization and Reconstruction Staffing: Developing US Civilian Personnel Capabilities," (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008) p. xiv

[18] Ibid., p. xiv

[19] Ibid., pp. xvi – xix.

that is to say that Foreign Service officers may have little gubernatorial or mayoral experience but have been tasked by the US government to provide "advice" to foreign counterparts performing these executive functions.

The government might also do better by considering personality types when selecting advisors but rarely does so. "Type-A" personalities may be perfectly suited for running Wall Street board rooms or rugby locker rooms, but cases show that overly aggressive advisors can undercut their counterpart's authority and create an adversarial climate between advisor and advisee.[20] Finding advisors with the right personality is an often overlooked key to success.

Regional experience matters too, of course, but it is no guarantee of foreign language proficiency. While the State Department does have foreign language proficiency exams, the requirement is not so tight as to restrict employees to those countries where their language is spoken. Algeria and Angola, Morocco and Malawi, for example, share the same continent but few "Africanists" have linguistic expertise in every region of Africa.

Other factors are worthy of consideration when examining advisor selection processes, a few of which are taboo. Foreign Service and civil service personnel can make meaningful contributions to a mission but their core competencies should not be confused with one another. On one hand, Foreign Service officers are not well-known for the organizational skills though usually lauded for their diplomatic abilities. On the other hand, civil servants are not usually rewarded for the interpersonal skills, but instead receive esteem by knowing the bureaucratic system and being able to use the system to achieve desired results. Each can be career-minded in a way that the aforementioned 3161 employees may not. For example, temporary hires may be less worried about evaluations, promotions or being part of the system.

Contractors are another option to fill civilian positions and they

[20] The example is from a military study but the principle applies to civilian advisors as well. See Ramsey, "Advising Indigenous Forces," p. 53

have stepped in to fill the government's advisor capability gap. Companies like Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI) and DynCorp International not only provide military and police advisors at unit and station level, but they also embed advisors at the cabinet ministry level. These high-level advisors have access to sensitive and sometimes proprietary information that influence key government policy decisions on a daily basis. Excessive dependence on contractors may not be in America's best interest, however, due to lack of standardization and potential conflicts of interest.[21] The government may want to reconsider oversight of contractors in certain influential positions and reassess hiring them directly into government service. The Civilian Stabilization Initiative provides an opportunity to consolidate America's nation-building expertise under one governmental roof.

The two unspoken considerations in the selection process are age and gender. The US government has steadily reduced promotion and assignment restrictions due to age and gender, but these two factors play an important role in determining how advisors are perceived by culturally different counterparts. In many cultures, for example, age commands as much respect as rank, quite possibly more. Having 20-something year old desk officers advise Arab, Asian or African males twice their age is not a culturally enlightened approach. Likewise, breaking down abusive or demeaning male attitudes toward females is a worthwhile goal, but in certain cultures female advisors may not be well-received. They risk being marginalized. Neither age nor gender should disqualify a person from advisor duty but they are two variables worth considering before selecting, training and assigning someone to an advisor position.[22]

Another way to improve the pool of predisposed advisors might be more formal use of personality tests. Nearly every Foreign Service or civil service officer has taken the Myers-Briggs Personality Type indicator test

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[21] Peter W. Singer, "The Law Catches Up to Private Militaries, Embeds," *Brookings*, 4 Jan 07; http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2007/0104defenseindustry_singer.aspx, accessed, 23 Jan 09.

[22] Michael J. Mentrinko, The American Military Advisor: Dealing with Senior Foreign Officials in the Islamic World, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA, August 2008, p. 19-21

but these results are not used in any systemic way except for one's personal edification. Advisor self-awareness is essential, of course, but allowing decision-makers and human resource managers to see personality types is equally important. The use of the Myers-Briggs terminology - ESTJ for Extraverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging and INFP for Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Perceiving – or a similar system, could be formalized not only to identify suitable advisor candidates, but also to better match people and positions. Test results could change as employees mature and gain experience, so formalizing periodic testing provides decision-makers with a relatively objective perspective on a candidate's suitability for advisor duty at various stages of one's career.

**Preparation**

An "old school" view is that any subject matter expert can be an advisor. While technical competence is necessary prerequisite for any advisor, it is also insufficient. The collaborative nature of the advisory mission requires getting an indigenous leader to internalize someone else's idea. Persuasion in a foreign culture requires as much theology as psychology– aspects of knowledge steadily gained through formal education and supplemented by practical experience. This new school approach manifests itself in programs like the US Army's Human Terrain System, a controversial innovation that assigns social scientists – mostly anthropologists - to combat brigades in an effort to increase unit cultural awareness and improve effectiveness in counterinsurgency operations.[23]

An enduring component of every advisory mission is providing advisors with the appropriate training and education, not so much in their

[23] Much has been written about the Human Terrain System and its teams; one of the first articles to appear in a military journal was, Jacob Kipp, Lester Grau, Karl Prinslow and Don Smith, "The Human Terrain System: A CORDS for the 21st Century," *Military Review*, Sep-Oct 06, pp. 8-15; the controversy surrounding the teams has been covered in the *New York Times* and *Harpers Magazine*; see for example David Rhode, "The Army Enlists Anthropologists in War Zones," *New York Times*, 5 Oct 07; and Steve Featherstone's feature in September 2008 edition of *Harper's*, "Human Quicksand for the US Army, a Crash Course in Cultural Studies." The following websites maintain health bibliographies: http://culturematters.wordpress.com/2008/08/21/annotated-bibliography-on-hts-minerva-and-prisp/ and http://blog.wired.com/defense/2008/09/controversial-a.html

technical field where they should already be proficient, but in the areas of negotiation techniques and working through translators. To be truly effective, advisors must know the language and culture. Language training and cultural education are cited as the most important components of an advisors development. Without language and cultural knowledge, advisors are said to be environmentally "deaf" and socially "blind."[24] Language skills are not acquired overnight so effective language training requires foresight, planning …and a budget. Culture can be learned through various pedagogies but without substantial foreign language proficiencies, advisory doors will never be fully opened.

The State Department and USAID place priority on different skill sets. Both organizations have made faulty assumptions about the prerequisites for successful Foreign Service and civil servant advisory duties. For diplomats, understanding a foreign culture is a skill. Writing an Embassy cable is also important but not esteemed duty for the diplomat. Preparing a program statement of work is an expected technical skill for a development official, but if the advisor is not well-versed in running a meeting, managing a budget, supervising the work of others, committing resources – then the advisors' credibility is at risk. Emphasizing lower-ordered technical skills or cultural comprehension is not wrong; they are just woefully incomplete approaches to the advisor mission. Preparing advisors with a package of technical and diplomatic skills will increase the chances of mission success.

The confluence of expert technical and cultural knowledge is important to understand, but they do not together imply universality to all countries. Advisors, no matter how well-suited for their position and no matter the extent of their training, still need time to build rapport with counterparts, to gain trust and then find ways to apply their knowledge to specific situations.

Increased educational opportunities are a powerful incentive for would-be advisors. University education – frequently Ivy League - is syn-

[24] Ramsey, "Advising Indigenous Forces," pp. 110-111

onymous with passing the Foreign Service examination. The State Department does have programs that afford officers opportunities to obtain graduate degrees but a significant number these degrees – seen as valuable assets in a promotion packet – at their own expense. Moreover, senior State Department officials move back and forth between government employment and academia, so many possess advanced degrees in everything from economics to international relations.

Any training and education curriculum should contribute to the advisors credibility and improve their rapport with their host nation counterpart. Curriculum should strike the balance between depth and breadth, between the general and the specific. Advisors need a basic understanding of the region, the country, its history, culture, geography and demographics but they should also be familiar with the nation's contemporary political-military activities, its organizations and key leaders, particularly those leaders dealing with senior officials. The program should be inter-disciplinary as well as practical.

In addition to a rigorous academic program, exercises that develop an advisor's "teach-coach-mentor" skills should also be part of a curriculum. Learning how to be credible in the eyes of a counterpart, acquiring negotiation skills, exploring influencing strategies, recognizing symbols, speaking through a translator, and appreciating the extent of a foreign language's right-to-left or top-to-bottom orientation are just a few examples that advisors cite as things they wish they would have known before assuming advisory duties. Using country or region-specific case-studies and instruction on the right combination of these subjects will help future advisors not only understand the political-military environment they are working in, but also give them the tools to perform their job.

A final note on preparation is also a controversial one. Advisors should receive training on US government intelligence organizations and processes. This proposal is not to suggest that diplomats and USAID program managers should become intelligence "collectors," but by understanding the intelligence cycle and principles, civilian advisors will better

contextualize their roles and gain an appreciation for operational security during field missions.

**Utilization**

Once an advisor is properly trained, the third main component of an effective advisor capability is proper utilization of the human resource. As the RAND study noted, proper alignment of skills and requirements is a key aspect any personnel management system. Too frequently individuals are training for one mission and employed in another.

Properly utilizing advisors means determining the appropriate tour length. By way of comparative example, a military report found that, "Longer, repetitive tours increase the effectiveness of advisors."[25]

Despite general agreement that advisor success depends on a positive personal relationships with a counterpart, most military and civilian advisors perform one year tours. Unfortunately, this flawed logic seems to remain as valid in 2008 as it did in 1968. Given in-processing times, mid-tour leaves, passes, and out-processing, most advisors spend less than 10 months with their counterparts. Another recent military report noted that about one-third of an advisors time is spent with his host nation counterpart while the other two-thirds were spent on administrative tasks.[26]

Increasing tour lengths for advisors would allow more contact hours with counterparts and provide more opportunities for American personnel to advise. A final note on utilization includes ensuring that field experience is then recaptured by the institution. Too frequently an advisor's experience is squandered in the period following deployed service. Follow on assignments need to be connected to preparation and employment processes.

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[25] Ibid., p. 116

[26] James Warden, "Adviser Duties Include More than Mentoring Iraqis," *Stars & Stripes*, Middle East Edition, 24 May 08, p. 5

Admittedly, developing an integrated human resource work plan that provides a pool of suitable advisors will be difficult to achieve without Goldwater-Nichols like legislation. Well-meaning human resource managers can try and punch through the personnel system stovepipes within the three organizations at low and mid-levels but it occurs in a strategy and policy vacuum at the highest level. And since there will be no cabinent-level, "Department of Nation-Building" in the Obama Administration, the bottom-up approach will have to suffice.

**Back to the future**

In 1941, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox and Secretary of War Henry Stimson anticipated a postwar civil-military advisory requirement. They agreed to create the School of Military Government at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and provide education for future governors and advisors. In 1943, the secretaries established informal meetings "at three" and by 1944, they agreed to create a "formal, interagency organization dedicated to planning postwar operations."[27] The result was the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee which contained the components necessary to achieve true coordination with the interagency.[28] The three secretaries established a comprehensive approach to developing a required capability and the school in Virginia was an example of product following process.

Producing a corps of specially selected and well-trained civilian advisors for use in stability and reconstruction missions is a worthy effort but it will take Secretarial-level direction and coordination they way Hull, Knox and Stimson and their successors worked together to create the SMG. After getting the cabinet on board, the Congress will need to exercise its power of the purse. A commitment to adequately fund a civilian

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[27] Peter F. Schaefer and P. Clayton Schaefer, " Planning for Reconstruction and Transformation of Japan after World War II," in Stability *Operations and State Building: Continuities and Contingencies: A Colloquium Report*, Greg Kaufmann, ed., Dewey A. Browder, Colloquium Organizer, Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle, PA, October 2008, p. 76. In 1945, Edward R. Stettinius Jr. succeeded Hull and James V. Forrestal succeeded Knox.

[28] Ibid., p. 77

corps will turn concept into reality. Lacking Secretarial collaboration and Congressional activism, Presidential involvement will be required to improve America's own stability and reconstruction capabilities. Executive authority could push a corps of foreign and civil servants out of their comfort zone and into the contested zone. If managed correctly, sending a corps of these specially selected and well-trained civilians into the capacity building fight will reap benefits, not just for the struggling and youngest democracies but also for the strongest and oldest.

# PRT LESSONS FROM IRAQ

Terrence K. Kelly

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are the current U.S. solution to providing a diplomatic, political and developmental presence in provinces in Iraq and Afghanistan. They have been in being now for several years, and by looking at their experiences the U.S. government could learn many important lessons. PRTs are not a "doctrinal" solution to any problem. That is, there is no agency of the U.S. government designed for the PRT mission, nor any single government-approved way of performing it (though there are separate PRT procedures in Iraq and Afghanistan). PRTs have not been, and there is no indication that they might be, institutionalized in this way. However, the set of problems they were created to address is widely seen as being important for the foreseeable future. As such, it is useful to examine what we know about PRTs, and see what lessons could be learned. This paper will focus primarily on PRTs led and staffed by civilians, though some lessons are applicable for those run primarily by the military, such as U.S. PRTs in Afghanistan. It explores a number of these issues, based in large part on the author's research on and experience in Iraq.[1] The goal of this paper is to provide major lessons for current and future PRT efforts, though not to provide an assessment of Iraq's or Afghanistan's PRTs.

Although the focus here is on U.S. PRTs in Iraq, there is no theoretical reason that PRTs could not be broadly multi-national. For example, Italy and the U.K. both led PRTs (in Dhi Qar and Basra, respectively) and the Koreans led the Regional Reconstruction Team that assisted the Kurdistan Regional Government, all of which included U.S. staff.

[1] Kelly spent five months as the Director of Militia Transition and Integration with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq from February – June 2004, fourteen months as the Director of the Joint Strategic Planning and Assessment Office at U.S. Embassy Baghdad from February 2006 – April 2007, and conducted research on PRTs in Iraq in August and October 2008.

Development could be multilateral, as it is in many normal development efforts, with USAID and other nations' development arms working in partnership (e.g., the U.K. Department for International Development). Similarly, diplomatic and political tasks might be more effective if a number of allied ministries of foreign affairs could agree on goals and work closely with the U.S. Department of State. Coordination for multinational efforts such as these would pose additional requirements on already busy staffs, but in certain circumstances these extra efforts might be worth the effort.

**What are PRTs and when are they appropriate?**

The first observation is that PRTs are not elements of the permanent organizational structure of the U.S. government. Rather, they are *ad hoc* organizations created with a mix of permanent government employees detailed from other jobs, temporary hires and soldiers. Their composition differs significantly between Iraq and Afghanistan; in the former country they are mostly civilian organizations led by Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), whereas in the latter they are overwhelmingly military organizations in which a small number of civilians operate. There is no agency of the U.S. government responsible for fielding PRTs in the future, no military or civilian personnel specialist for PRTs, and little that could pass for doctrine.[2]

In general, PRT programs are U.S. and other friendly government attempts to create a political, diplomatic and developmental presence in the provinces of a country to help indigenous governments and peoples recover from prolonged periods of misrule and perhaps occupation.[3] For example, in Iraq the program was created in 2005 with goals that emphasized provincial government development and transparency – goals that

[2] There is a developing body of PRT lessons learned, though no formal doctrine. See for example the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, Center for Army Lessons Learned, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) Playbook*, Handbook 07-34, September 2007. As of January 27, 2009: http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/call/docs/07-34/toc.asp.

[3] This statement applies to the two areas in which PRTs have existed – Iraq and Afghanistan. They could be used in other places in the future for other purposes. This highlights the fact that there is no doctrine or accepted practices for PRTs, though "handbooks" and other guidelines are being produced.

remain largely consistent to this day.[4] What differentiates PRTs from normal practices is that development is often undertaken from the PRT "platform" in non-permissive situations, and political representation is extended to subnational levels of government – issues that I will expound upon below. Though PRTs are not necessarily tools used exclusively in violent circumstances, that has arguably been the case to date. One way to view PRTs is that they are an attempt to recreate, in an *ad hoc* manner, the capabilities that the civilian agencies of the U.S. government possessed as part of its much larger development structure during Vietnam, when it was a major participant in the successful Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program.[5]

PRTs can make a significant contribution, but are not always appropriate. If we view conditions in a country in which PRTs are being considered on a spectrum of violence ranging from very violent to peaceful, PRTs are useful in the middle. In Iraq, the violence that began to mushroom as the program was reaching maturity initially prevented much progress. PRT members were often unable to meet with their Iraqi counterparts, and when they could the pervasive atmosphere of fear prevented much progress. However, when violence subsided to a level at which it is possible for PRT members to meet and work regularly with indigenous actors, they became more effective. At the peaceful end of the violence spectrum, PRTs are not necessary. In these circumstances, normal development processes involving not only U.S. and friendly government actors, but importantly the collection of international organizations and NGOs that have great capabilities will provide more assistance than PRTs can provide due to their greater development experience and expertise, and often due to the fact that they will be better accepted as they are not part of a foreign government. Furthermore, in these circumstances it is unlikely that a foreign government would acquiesce to the foreign nations having diplomatic representation at their subnational levels of government, or meddling in

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[4] These goals were codified in Baghdad/MNF-I Cable 4045. See paragraphs 6 and 7 of this cable, in particular. This cable was recently superceded by the *Strategic Framework to Build Capacity and Sustainability in Iraq's Provincial Governments*, September 7, 2008, published by the U.S. Embassy, Baghdad.

[5] USAID manpower is an order of magnitude less than it was during the latter days of the Vietnam war.

politics at the local level. In other words, the diplomatic and political missions of PRTs are not likely to be needed or wanted by the host nation.

A further consideration on whether PRTs should be considered is the considerable amount of time and resources needed to create a functioning system. Since there is no corps of PRT personnel who can deploy quickly when a need arises, PRTs – or at least those primarily run and staffed by civilians – will take long to create, and longer to establish the needed relationships with local actors. If current experience is any guide, initial interactions will be "transactional" – that is, providing things and services to local officials. Among the critical changes will be moving from "transactional" relationships to one that emphasizes creating indigenous government capacity. However, due to the challenging circumstances in which PRTs have been used, the PRT system footprint nation-wide, and in particular resources and staffing, are often insufficient to the task if no other serious efforts are undertaken in parallel. Indeed, I will argue that this is almost necessarily the case given the limited resources for this kind of task in the U.S. government. This can be summarized as follows:

- PRTs exist somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of conflict; they are not appropriate at the end points. Where they are appropriate is a judgment call, but it seems that
    - There are levels of violence above which no PRT can function, and personnel should not be placed at risk on PRTs unless there are other compelling reasons.[6]
    - During peaceful times, normal (multilateral) development efforts are usually more appropriate than PRTs, and political and diplomatic relationships are controlled and limited to a greater extent by the host nation.
- PRTs are extraordinary undertakings.

[6] One such compelling example was the PRT in Basra in 2006. This PRT was established in reasonable times, but the level of violence rose to a level that prevented it from functioning. However, to withdraw it under those circumstances would have been viewed as giving a victory to the militias that controlled Basra, and so it was left in place.

- It is very unusual for a foreign country to have diplomatic and development relations with sub-national levels of a host nation's government. PRTs very existence implies a level of U.S. influence that most nations would not accept, and that the U.S. should not expect over the long-term. Only extraordinary circumstances justify PRTs.
- No U.S. government agency is staffed or funded to run PRTs. The personnel staffing them are either temporary hires or are taken "out of hide" by the agencies of the U.S. government represented in a PRT.

• The costs of the PRT program are significant and controversial, particularly in a country like Iraq that has the funds to undertake much of its own developmental needs.
• Many of the changes in provincial government and society that PRTs seek to produce are only likely to be realized, if at all, over an extended period of time as they require significant political and social changes. PRTs will not last long enough to see these changes through, so normal development practices are needed.

**What should be the PRT focus?**

PRTs are not a panacea for all the social, political and economic woes of a country in chaos. A firm understanding of what is to be done and strong management that keeps PRT members focused on defined goals rather than what is easy to do is essential.[7] Observation and study of PRT effectiveness in Iraq and Afghanistan seem to indicate that PRTs have the potential to add the most value in helping provincial governments develop the knowledge and capacity to govern. In Iraq, which is in transition from a heritage of central government control to one of limited devolved authority to provincial governments, PRTs also help connect the

[7] See discussion below on the need for robust management capabilities in PRTs. PRTs in Iraq have no organic billets to assist the PRT leader manage his or her efforts. As a result, the PRT Leader often cannot assure that team members remain focused on defined tasks.

provincial and central governments.[8] PRTs also provide political and diplomatic presence, which is a separate and important task. These tasks can be indispensable in resolving lingering disputes that could turn – or may remain – violent. But, if the U.S. goal for an intervention is to help create a viable governance system that will help secure U.S. interests, then the governance development task must be the central focus. Political and diplomatic efforts, in the long-term, do not help a province develop ability to govern.

In almost all conceivable cases in which a U.S. or international intervention is called for and PRTs are established, the need for provincial government capacity building, political development, reconciliation, economic development and advances in respect for the rule of law will remain for years to come, past the time when PRTs are likely to draw down. Since many of these tasks require fundamental changes in society and the way politics is conducted in a host nation, they are not actions that are likely to come to fruition in a few years.

An important question with regard to focus is which agency should lead PRTs. Based on the arguments presented above, it would seem that one conclusion is clear – PRTs should be led by a civilian agency that can field development or diplomatic experts – that is, either the U.S. State Department or USAID. Security is not one of the PRT's principal goals, so giving the PRT mission to the military might not be the best choice.[9] It is important to recognize that development in the middle of a counterinsurgency (if one exists in a country in which PRTs are created) or other contested complex situation is as much a political effort as a developmental one. In the author's judgment, the political concerns dominate if the situation in a country is dangerous to the point that development cannot take

[8] In one interview conducted by the author in August 2008, the head of a provincial council economic committee in an Iraqi province made clear that prolonged U.S. presences was needed more to help them understand how shared authority between the provincial and central levels of government should work, than for security reasons. Such basic questions as who gets to keep revenues raised by provincial governments and how disputes between levels of government should be adjudicated indicate that much work remains to be done.

[9] Note that this would not preclude putting civilian led PRTs under a military command in some circumstances. This worked well in CORDS, for example. We recognize that military solutions are often needed due to the simple fact that DoD has far greater resources than civilian agencies.

place without significant security measures to protect civilian actors, or the agreement of key political players. But, there is the tipping point at which a Department of State lead should transition to an USAID lead. It is likely to be reached at different times in different parts of a country. This implies the need for a transition strategy to some combination of a more traditional development approach led by the host nation government and USAID. In all cases, USAID reps on the PRT should be charged with developing the long-term development strategy for the province, as this is their area of professional expertise. Host nation representatives should be engaged, and eventually take the lead, in creating and updating these plans.

Given this discussion, the following general guidelines seem reasonable:

- Provincial government capacity development should be the principal focus of the PRTs. It is their country, and preparing them to manage it is the central task.
- USAID should be charged with strategic planning for PRTs and should work with their host nation counterparts to prepare plans for development and transitioning the lead to host nation officials. As part of this effort, the United States should be prepared to help host nation officials at the national and provincial levels with recommendations on what support is needed, lists of contractors who could provide such support (e.g., technical advisors), and advise on how to structure their efforts.
- In cases in which the political situation dictates a Department of State lead in PRTs, plan early for handing off key development tasks to USAID. This should include conditions in which the transition is appropriate, with the goal being to consolidate ownership of the long-term effort, and identifying areas of the host nation in which a development presence can and should remain, and how to staff it.

**ePRTs– what are they and when are they appropriate?**

Embedded PRTs (ePRTs) are small PRTs that were deployed to Iraq in 2006 as part of the "Surge" to work within the Brigade Combat

Team (BCT) and Regimental Combat Team (RCT) structures so that the deploying BCT/RCT/ePRT team would have the ability to deliver not only kinetic effects, but also political, diplomatic and developmental ones. They were a central element of the Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I) counterinsurgency (COIN) approach. ePRTs work on immediate problems associated with the mission of the BCT/RCT, but do not supplant the mission PRT in the province. A simple way to think about it is that the ePRTs focus on the COIN mission, whereas the PRT focuses on developing provincial governance capacity. The two missions are related, but not identical. In 2008 in Iraq, ePRTs were put under the oversight of the PRT in the province in which they operate (more on this below). By all reports ePRTs added considerable value. However, maintaining a large number of civilian led ePRTs places a large strain on a small Foreign Service. While they might be worth the cost during active COIN efforts, they may not provide sufficient return on the investment to make them worthwhile after the COIN mission subsides, particularly if there is a dearth of human and fiscal resources in country or world-wide (e.g., the rising demand for more assets in Afghanistan creates a pull on those in Iraq). In places in Iraq where the COIN mission has largely been successful, ePRTs have adopted the mission of assisting local levels of government. Here, there are further reasons to seriously considering disbanding them. In particular, since the province is currently the lowest level at which Iraqi budgeting and spending occurs, ePRTs will only provide short-term humanitarian and community advocacy assistance to lower levels of government.[10] Keeping ePRTs in circumstances such as these also runs the risk of creating conflicts among the various levels of government rather than helping to resolve them, as ePRTs have been known to bring the concerns of their local governments to the attention of central government officials when they failed to get what they wanted from the provincial government.[11]

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[10] The Provincial Powers Law that goes into effect after provincial elections gives additional powers to sub-provincial levels of government, but it is unclear when, if, or how, it will be implemented. In any case, their budgets are submitted to the next higher level of government for approval. As most provincial governments are not currently capable of developing and administering their own budgets, it seems unlikely that most Qadas or Nahyas will be able to effectively budget for and execute programs in the near future.

[11] Author interviews with ePRT members in August 2008.

However, there remains a need for the military units that operate in their areas of operation to be connected to development and diplomatic professionals, so long as they are in country. If ePRTs are no longer called for due to a change of mission, they should be replaced by PRT liaisons in deployed BCTs and RCTs to retain connectivity to the maneuver forces that operate in country. This would help the PRT and maneuver unit have situational awareness in all lines of operation, and the PRT to control development efforts and reporting province wide.

**Transition to host nation leadership**

Since PRTs do in fact act as political players in the provinces – providing assistance to any group also provides political advantages or disadvantages – the relationship with the host nation is critical. If central government leaders are not aware of the program, they will act on incomplete information, be affected by rumors and may come to view PRTs as unwanted meddling at best. If PRTs are important for U.S. and allied efforts, then so are efforts to get the host nation on board, provide it with information on PRTs, and eventually to involve them in PRTs or PRT-like activities. During interviews in Iraq in August and October 2008, it became evident to the author that many Iraqis at the provincial level were not aware of what the PRTs were trying to accomplish in some provinces. Many saw them as part of the military force, or simply as a place to get resources when they could not get them from their own government. Furthermore, the acceptance of the PRTs as a valuable partner on the part of provincial and central government representatives resident in different provinces varied considerably. Some found the PRTs to be essential partners, while others would not meet with them. As such, a robust communication with central and provincial government officials on the role of PRTs, as well as public diplomacy/strategic communications effort, would contribute significantly.

As PRTs are not permanent organizations, planning to hand off critical developmental tasks to the host nation is critical. As noted above, a continued USAID and international development community effort may

be called for, but recognition of need and buy-in on the part of the host nation will be important. Key steps in this regard include:

- Ask the central government to provide a representative to the PRT coordinating headquarters and USAID, and provide him or her a workspace. This would help ensure that the host nation feels part of the program, and help dispel rumors about what the PRTs are doing.
- Place a PRT liaison with the host nation government, and host nation personnel into PRTs to build connections and get buy-in. This would help ensure that the needs at the provincial level are communicated to the central government, and add hope that key programs would continue after PRTs disband. Host nation presence in PRTs could grow over time to take on the PRT mission.
- If host nations do not want to place personnel in U.S. or ally PRTs, encourage the host nation to create its own structures for provincial capacity development (and in places like Iraq, connectivity between provincial and federal government), either by creating PRT-like offices in the provinces or by leveraging the central government ministry representatives resident in the provinces, where they exist, in a more effective way.

**How should the PRT System be managed?**

The PRT system in countries like Iraq is large, complicated and expensive. It needs managerial and operational capabilities appropriate for its size, complexity and missions. Unlike embassies, which have primarily diplomatic roles, PRTs are operational – they deliver service, provide security for themselves and their employees, and manage programs, as well as do diplomatic functions. One major conclusion stemming from this is that there needs to be real unity of effort within the PRT and between the PRT and military forces in the area. That is, one leader at the national level and a single leader in each province need to be responsible for PRT efforts. Policy direction and line responsibility should flow through these leaders. In this regard, the PRT System should not be struc-

tured like an embassy. In an embassy, the policy leads are typically the sections heads. For example, the Political Counselor provides political advice to the Ambassador and guidance to the rest of the embassy staff on political issues. Similarly so, the Economics Counselor on economic issues, and in areas where PRTs might be deployed, the Rule of Law Coordinator on rule of law issues. With respect to PRTs, the national PRT System Director must be aware of this guidance and responsible for its execution.[12] Direction provided by the policy heads directly to the PRTs without the PRT System Director's cognizance may result in conflicting direction to PRTs and less than optimal performance.

The national PRT System Director's organization and PRTs themselves need to be organized to manage their own efforts, and where applicable subordinate organizations. Operations, planning and logistics support elements appropriate for the size and complexity of the mission must be in place for PRTs to function well. This is particularly important for large PRTs that have large subordinate sections, and conduct many movements and have frequent contact with host nation counterparts, as well as for those overseeing the work of ePRTs. The ability to plan for long-term development, as noted above, is also important. Planning needs to look to the success of the overall enterprise, not just current efforts.

The PRT management structure in a large country needs to address span of control. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the number of PRTs or similar organizations is over two dozen – far too many entities reporting to one office to manage. During the initial year after the invasion of Iraq, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) established positions for "Regional Coordinators" who supervised the actions of "Governate Coordinators" – similar to today's PRT Leaders. These no longer exist, and span of control issues have been sited in several PRT assessments in Iraq.

In order to manage the PRT effort, an assessment tool is needed. This tool should judge provincial government progress in critical areas, not

[12] In Iraq, the U.S. Embassy's Office of Provincial Affairs (OPA) oversees the PRT effort nation-wide. The OPA Director leads this effort.

the PRT's ability to execute programs.[13] Embassy Baghdad's PRT effort uses a Maturity Model, which relies on PRTs to subjectively rate their provinces' progress in five categories, but then compares the results of the Maturity Model to other inputs (e.g., USAID and MNF-I assessments and data). These validity checks create a strong argument for accepting the results of the Maturity Model. Arguments for more objective assessments are often compelling, but must be tempered by the fact that collecting data in dangerous circumstances may be problematic if not impossible, and may require far more assets than are available. Baghdad's method likely renders the best practical picture of progress if these assets are not forthcoming.

These observations can be summed up in three guiding principals for managing a PRT system:

- Align policy/operational direction with line authority. Note that this need not require the person providing direction to be the policy lead in any given area – e.g., if properly staffed, the PRT System Director could provide such direction even though PRT members continue to work with embassy policy leaders such as the political and economics counselors. Organizational arrangements to do this could take several forms. The simplest and least expensive would be to create liaison officers for each policy section who would work closely with the policy-setting sections to ensure that the PRT leadership is interacting with the policy leadership, and aware of what direction is being given. More aggressive changes, such as giving the PRT Systems Director a policy staff that would act as a subordinate role to Embassy policy leads should be considered.
- Provide the organization and staff needed for the PRT System Director and large PRTs to conduct planning and supervise operations. Without staffs capable of planning, managing operations, and providing logistics coordination, the PRT Systems Director

[13] We differentiate between three types of metrics: input, output and outcome. Input metrics evaluate the resources spent on an effort – e.g., dollars, people. Output metrics evaluate program execution – did our program do what we said it would do – but not whether it was effective with respect to what we want to achieve. Outcome metrics measure effectiveness.

can do nothing more than provide administrative and logistical support, and large PRTs cannot adequately supervise their own or ePRT efforts. Creating subordinate organizations such as the CPA's regional coordinators and their staffs should be considered to address span of control challenges when many PRTs are operating in country.

- Develop and use a Maturity Model-like tool and validation process that measures the progress of the province. Connecting it with other national assessments, where they exist, would be useful and should be considered. For example, in Iraq the PRT and provincial assessments naturally feed into, and inform, periodic national assessments briefed to the Ambassador and Commanding General.

**What resources are needed?**

The PRT systems fielded today suffer from a lack of adequate human, security and fiscal resources. In this section I address the implications of this, and in following sections the system for providing human and security resources. While the challenge of getting greater resources – particularly during current economic times – is difficult, a mismatch in ends and means implies either that one should acquire more means or change the ends. However, what the PRTs in Iraq have done in the past and are currently doing now goes well beyond the tasks noted as of principal concern above. However, it may be that the current levels of staff and resources are sufficient if the PRTs transition to a principally developmental focus. In addition to the issue of organization and staffing of the PRT system noted above, the following resource issues are relevant during the time period in which PRTs are active in more than just traditional development work.

- Human Resources – Short tour lengths and frequent rest and relaxation (R&R) breaks (for civilian personnel) leave numerous gaps and frustrate host nation counterparts.[14]
- Security – PRTs need greater ability to move and meet with host

[14] The author and his colleagues heard this comment frequently from American and Iraqi interlocutors on their trips to Iraq in 2008.

nation counterparts. The ability to regularly meet with host nation leaders is a critical contributor to PRT success. In Iraq, some PRT members only see an Iraqi once a week or less frequently.[15] The inability to meet regularly with host nation officials is most often due to security restrictions, but not necessarily due to failures of security providers – often, it is simply a lack of available assets. In those cases in which PRT members do not actively seek to engage with their host nation counterparts, they should be asked to leave the PRT.

- Funding – Available PRT funds are not adequate. Those funds available to PRTs in Iraq are dwarfed by MNF-I resources and other U.S. Mission programs, and not nearly as responsive as CERP funds. Current PRT funding and mechanisms may be sufficient for capacity building, but are problematic in an environment in which military funding and ability to move and interact with Iraqi counterparts competes with PRT efforts. On top of this, the military's ability to use kinetic operations is an important aspect in host nation political calculations. This pervasive military influence warps the environment in which PRTs operate and causes many host nation leaders to gravitate towards military partners. At a minimum, the military presence has more profound influence on host nation efforts than the PRT's influence. This warping of the environment in which PRTs operate means that short-term military efforts are often undermining the longer-term civilian effort (more on this conflict in objectives and planning horizons below).

To address these shortcomings, a few steps should be taken to make PRTs more effective:

- Recruit people willing to stay longer than one year, and increase staff sizes so that critical portfolios are covered despite R&R and rotation schedules. This would be expensive, but would also cut down on overtime charges.[16]

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[15] Interviews conducted by the author in Iraq in 2008.

[16] During interviews in Iraq in 2008 we met many PRT members who had, or were willing, to stay on for longer than a year.

- Focus PRT efforts primarily on facilitating capacity development – deny all funding for construction and "give away" programs (i.e., purchasing items that the host nation government should provide) unless there is some compelling security argument for doing so, even for provinces who have very limited capacity. It is imperative that the host nation develop the capacity to do this for themselves through their own systems, and programs that retard this development harm the PRTs' ability to accomplish their principal mission.
- Provide each PRT with the ability to move in their province that is equivalent to that of their military counterpart (e.g., PRT leader equivalent to the Deputy Commanding General of a division; ePRT leader – if ePRTs are maintained – equivalent to a brigade commander).
- Synchronize military and PRT efforts to eliminate working at cross purposes (e.g., require that a responsible PRT and military official sign off on all significant projects such as CERP, PRT spending). Coordination could be institutionalized and reutilized so as not to overly slowing down responses.

**What human resources are needed**

Human resources (HR) really matter – and the provision of them is currently struggling if not failing.[17] This section will focus on civilian HR issues only. The U.S. government has struggled in this area since 2003, and this issue is not restricted to PRTs.[18] The civilian HR systems of the civilian side of the U.S. government are not designed for filling wartime operational billets. Due to the pressure on a system not designed for the PRT mission, one hears of many shortfalls, including people being hired without interviews, skill sets that do not match requirements, person-

[17] This is one of the most common comments heard in places where civilian manpower is needed in large numbers. The author and his colleagues heard this often in Iraq in 2008. In Kelly's opinion, this is because the civilian HR systems required to produce human resources are not designed for wartime, or for this mission.

[18] See, for example, Terrence Kelly et. al., *Stabilization and Reconstruction Staffing: Developing U.S. Civilian Personnel Capabilities*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2008.

alities and goals that are not suitable for PRT work, and very long hiring timelines that do not permit adequate flexibility in a war zone. However, one human resource practice that stands out positively was employing local nationals to do capacity development – the Local Government Program (run by RTI) and the Community Action Program (run by IRD) in Iraq are programs that were noted by Iraqis as great successes.[19] Additional observations include:

- Host nation personnel and first- or second-generation American (who retain their language and cultural skills) with technical skills are extremely effective partners for their host nation government counterparts, but have in some places been under-utilized and under-appreciated.
- Personalities matter, and the required skill sets for work on a PRT are not identical to those needed for success in normal civilian government or private sector positions (e.g., the Foreign Service, commercial sectors employment in the west). For example, there is a greater need to work harmoniously with others in a stressful environment.
- One year tours of duty and generous leave policies make it impossible to be consistently effective with current staffing levels.
- Good leadership and high morale in some Iraq PRTs have led to a large percentage of the technical staff extending beyond their initial one-year commitment, and at least one PRT leader in Iraq is removing people who do not fit with the mission and demands. This further emphasizes the need for strong leadership and an effective HR program.

To address these shortcomings, some simple steps would go a long way.

- Ask senior personnel with Iraq experience to interview candidates for PRT leadership positions and provide input to the hiring authority (not the administrative staff). Leaders in-country and in the United States must be involved in hiring. Their focus

[19] Author interviews, August and October 2008.

should include skills and personality. The Ambassador should provide guidance on what he or she is looking for in PRT leaders. This is one of the Mission's most important tasks.

- Give PRT leaders sufficient time to review resumes and interview potential candidates by phone. The PRT leader is in the best position to do this – this is a critical leader task.
- To the extent possible, employ host nation personnel and first- or second-generation Americans from the host nation (who retain their language and cultural skills) to provide technical services and support, as well as to lead efforts.
- Consider other HR models.
    - Consider outsourcing elements of the HR function to improve responsiveness and recruit people with both cultural/language and technical skills.
    - One military deputy team leader in Iraq thought that there should be a "deployment package" of personnel for each PRT that is comprised of the team leader, deputy team leader (who should be a LTC), sections heads for each of the major tasks, and a civil affairs component among other elements.[20] This would address the problem of understaffing and redundancy that we often encountered. A standardized "base" package of personnel may help smooth out resource concerns while still be tailored to each specific area of responsibility. In addition, the PRT system director needs to ensure that there is a way of prioritizing which PRT needs which staff.

**What security is needed?**

Security concerns and restrictions limit effectiveness – this is not avoidable, but may be improved. In Iraq there has been a well-publicized criticism of civilian security that concludes that PRTs that depend on the military for security are more effective at getting out to meet Iraqis than

[20] Interview in Iraq, October 2008.

those that depend on the Regional Security Officer (RSO) of the U.S. Embassy, and that Iraqis who want to meet with PRT members have better access at military installations than at Embassy compounds. Data and the author's personal observations in Iraq in late 2008 indicate that this seems to have changed during the past year. The RSO support to Mission personnel getting out has improved significantly. However, a critical question is whether this can be institutionalized, or if it depends on the right combination of personalities.

Note that the RSO and the military offer different kinds of flexibility, and people that the author and colleagues interviewed in Iraq in 2008 were conflicted in their preferences. For example, the RSO security usually includes movements in SUVs or sedans and strong site preparation (e.g., security personnel and bomb sniffing dogs might visit a location ahead of time), whereas the military uses military vehicles such as the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle (MRAP) and are not always as meticulous in site preparation as the RSO. Those who think that sedans are reminiscent of Mukhabarat (Saddam's intelligence service) are of the view that soldiers and MRAPs are more inviting and encourage fewer suspicions among the locals. These people often thought that the RSO's use of several vehicles, sniffer dogs and other activities undermined their efforts to forge relations with their counterparts. On the other hand, those who prefer the RSO to the military did so because they thought the RSO could be more flexible in other ways (e.g. use pistols instead of long guns, and because they believed the RSO sedans were more inviting than MRAPS). It seems that what matters is what local nationals think, pointing to the importance of flexibility and tailoring PRTs to their specific area of responsibility.

The U.S. Mission in Iraq has also adopted an innovative "FOB (forward operating base) within a FOB" concept for PRT security in Najaf and Karbala. This approach places a PRT and movement support team (and other related efforts, such as an Military Training Teams) on a small self-contained U.S. FOB collocated with an Iraqi army FOB. This model seems to work well. In particular, it lowers the footprint and therefore the

perception of intrusiveness of the PRT. It would also provide the U.S. Mission the ability to maintain a PRT presence with far fewer resources and U.S. military support while encouraging host nation cooperation and coordination and possibly facilitate the eventual handover of its functions to host nation organizations.

Some steps that could help improve security for future PRTs include:

- Capture the lessons learned from the current security approaches and institutionalize them broadly in the State Department (e.g., regional, Diplomatic Security and Political-Military Bureaus) and DoD.
- Maximize the use of efforts that employ local nationals. Models that rely less heavily on American or coalition personnel have fewer security requirements and may be more effective in challenging security environments (and would be far less expensive).
- An effort to understand local sentiment about security and how that affects U.S. goals should be designed and undertaken. The ability to be flexible on providing security will remain important.

**Civilian – military cooperation – Help or hindrance?**

Coordination between civilian-run PRTs and military units that "own" an area of operations can be problematic, and depends on personalities. There is often little unity of effort, particularly when there are active hostilities that the military must address. The principal set of problems occurs when a PRT and a military unit work on issues in parallel, develop their own solutions, and do not coordinate – either due to an oversight or, not infrequently, because they do not agree on goals and approaches. The military is often – and rightly – focused on security conditions, and civilians on building capacity. Both of these foci are important, and this could work well with proper coordination, but because there are in some places few formal linkages between the military and civilian sides below the team leader and military commander, things do not always work well. To address this problem, PRTs and military units in Iraq develop "Joint

Common Plans" that guide their actions, but the best model at facilitating cooperation that I observed in Iraq entailed collocating and integrating PRT sections and military staff sections in the same physical space. Observations include:

- In some provinces there is no common understanding or a joint vision for how the military and PRTs are to operate on the ground. Choosing a military Deputy PRT Leader who can help facilitate this relationship could help with this challenge.
- The "culture" clash between the civilian PRT members and the military is real and presents significant challenges and points of friction (e.g., in goals, expertise, timelines, funding). However, it is not unique – for example, there are also clashes between Department of State and USAID FSOs, and between FSOs and 3161s.[21] These facts further emphasize the need for superior leadership, management, and HR selection in general.
- Because they are embedded in BCTs, ePRTs seem to do better at this than PRTs. This may be due to better physical integration and shared mission.
- Examples of military and PRTs working at cross-purposes are numerous – and host nation authorities are adept at playing both sides.
- The current structure also creates a situation in which the civilians are building the capacity of the military to run development programs instead of focusing on building the capacity of the provincial governments. This is another example of warping the policy and focus of the US engagement.

To address these challenges, the PRT System Director and Military Commander need to provide direction to PRTs and military units that establish procedures for creating unity of effort. This means that they need to agree on goals and priorities before hand.[22] Such efforts could

[21] "3161s" are temporary employees hired under the authorities provided by U.S. Code, Title 18, paragraph 3161. We observed this latter conflict, but it has also been memorialized in the writings of FSOs in their professional journals.

[22] A mechanism for this might be a Joint Campaign Plan, co-written by the senior military and civilian headquarters.

include:

- Establishing shared goals for what is to be done and priorities for doing them.
- Establishing procedures for assuring that PRTs and their military counterparts coordinate their efforts (e.g., requiring joint planning and sign-off on all projects above a certain cost).
- Insisting on the collocation of at least sizable portions of the military and PRT counterparts

**Conclusion**

PRTs are innovative attempts to circumvent shortcomings in U.S. institutional capabilities and permit the delivery of developmental aid and diplomatic representation at sub-national levels in conflict zones. Unfortunately, their operations are not captured in doctrine, and their experiences are only starting to be captured in lessons learned. This should be rectified. As their mission is to deliver assistance in inherently civilian activities, they should be run by civilians when the security situation permits and when sufficient resources are available. However, PRTs are not appropriate in all circumstances, and when needed should be well coordinated with the host nation.

PRTs should not perform government functions unless there is a critical need to do so, but rather should prepare provincial government to succeed. This means that they should have long-range developmental plans, crafted by development professionals, and plans to work themselves out of business. Transactional relationships should be avoided barring over-aching needs (e.g., pending humanitarian crises). The host nation and international community should be brought into the developmental element of the PRTs' mission as soon as possible. Key political tasks such as aiding in reconciliation must be taken on if the need exists, but this need also signifies an immature situation in which the core developmental tasks cannot succeed until tensions are lessened.

For PRTs to do well, the responsible agency needs to recognize the

significant gap that likely exists between its human resource and fiscal capabilities and the demands for well-resourced, civilian-led organizations that operate in conflict zones – circumstances for which the responsible agency is not designed. This may require innovative approaches to resolve challenges, such as outsourcing some aspects of recruiting personnel. In the author's judgment fixing the human resource problem is the most critical, as with the right people a lot can be accomplished even if fiscal resources are lacking, whereas with the wrong people there are significant limits on what can be done even with abundant resources – indeed, it is not unlikely that more harm than good could be done with the wrong people in such sensitive circumstances.

Security concerns are real, but solutions are possible. Those responsible for the security of PRTs and their personnel need to capture lessons learned from current successes in Iraq, in particular, and institutionalize them so that future efforts will be able to avail themselves of these hard-learned lessons. In particular, risk calculations on the part of security professionals need to take into consideration the risk to the overall mission, not just to people and facilities.

Finally, for PRTs to succeed, unity of effort if not command between the civilian and military elements that operate in a province needs to be achieved. This could best be done by having one headquarters for the overall mission, as was done in Vietnam when CORDS – an inherently civilian endeavor – was placed under the military command even though it was staffed by FSOs and military personnel. As a minimum, the military commander and PRT Systems Director need to agree on goals and priorities, and mechanisms must be created and put in place to ensure that U.S. military and civilian efforts are not working at cross purposes.

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# CONTRIBUTING TO A STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN – THE ROLE OF PRTS

Barbara J. Stapleton

## Background

"*Politics is the enemy of strategy*"
Gordon M. Goldstein, *'Lessons in Disaster'*,
Times Books, New York, 2008

The inception of PRTs in late 2002 in Afghanistan was driven by a growing sense amongst leading donors that the state building project was already slipping behind. The limited human and financial resources on offer in the first few years that followed the dismantlement of the Taliban regime was epitomized, and to an extent legitimised, by the phrase 'the light footprint'. A radical underestimation of the problems faced in Afghanistan - where knowledge based on first-hand experience of its localised and complex socio-political landscape has remained in very short supply - was apparent in the limited funds pledged for reconstruction at the first donors conference in January 2002 in Tokyo, which ultimately were diverted to address the humanitarian crisis that had followed a devastating drought. Following the Bush Administration's increasing focus on Iraq during the course of 2002, PRTs were heavily promoted, if not oversold, by coalition spokesmen as a key means of facilitating tangible results in reconstruction and development, extending the authority of the central government and in so doing, (indirectly) improving the Afghan security situation. These broadly stated goals were never backed up by a detailed strategic plan laying out how PRTs would assist in achieving these objectives however. Nor were PRT project outcomes subjected to any sustained evaluation against other measures of cost effectiveness. This, plus the issue of shrinking 'humanitarian space' with the increased involvement of the military in assistance type projects, contributed to ongoing tensions with civilian development actors

including the Afghan government. The increased resourcing of PRTs and PRT numbers from the end of 2004 saw a US-led utilisation of PRTs as a means of driving the Bonn agenda forward and keeping its ambitious timetable (with respect to the 2004 presidential and 2005 parliamentary elections) on track. Arguably, the PRT contribution, though premised and sold on its ability to impact security and reconstruction, was essentially a political one helping to maintain the momentum of the political transition in Afghanistan. It also facilitated the promotion of perceptions of Afghanistan as "the good war"[1] both within and beyond the country, during a period when the situation in Iraq verged on the catastrophic.[2] PRTs also provided the primary means for Nato member states' engagement (as PRT lead nations) and formed the basis of Nato's phased expansion country-wide.

That PRTs have remained a key mechanism for international engagement at the local level illustrates the ongoing weakness of the Afghan government, but, in attempting to bridge the gaps that frequently exist at provincial and district levels, they formed a parallel structure that assumed Catch 22 dimensions given the overriding goal of 'Afghanisation' which, along with plans to accelerate numbers and capabilities of Afghan security forces, constitute the way out. Without thorough systemic reform (at the centre as well as the periphery) as well as time for sustained evaluation and ongoing support, PRT efforts to build local capacity will not be sustainable. The critique that PRT efforts have too often fostered dependence rather than built local capacity[3] has been taken on board by Nato and the US military but, within the Nato context, the absence of a detailed PRT mandate has resulted in each lead nation implementing disparate individual approaches that include the national caveats which were conditional to the commitment of many Nato member states' forces to Afghanistan in the

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[1] David Rohde and David E. Sanger, 'How a "good war" in Afghanistan went bad', New York Times, August 12, 2007.

[2] Barbara J. Stapleton, 'A Means to What End? Why Provincial Reconstruction Teams are Peripheral to the Bigger Political Challenges in Afghanistan', Journal of Military and Strategic Studies, 2007. <http://www.jmss.org/2007/2007fall/index.htm>

[3] The World Bank, 'Service Delivery And Governance At The Sub-National Level In Afghanistan', July 2007, 46.

first place. Though ISAF has had some success in introducing more PRT coherence indirectly,[4] via ISAF HQ's PRT engagement teams, a PRT Handbook, training courses at the Nato school in Oberammergau as well as regular PRT conferences at ISAF headquarters in Kabul, "there is now such extreme diversity in the size and structure and role of PRTs that it is almost impossible to actually define what constitutes one any more."[5] Moreover, PRTs have also contributed to an increasingly marked 'Balkanisation' of the aid and development effort as donors have tended to respond favourably to line ministry requests and/or fund individual projects where their respective PRTs are deployed. The fact that civilian advisers embedded in the PRTs report to capitals rather than ISAF HQ undermined Nato/ISAF's efforts to introduce more coherence to PRT approaches which also suffered from the extenuated chain of command from centre to periphery.

The hypothesis informing the PRT plan, that the delivery of reconstruction and development confers a peace dividend, has not been rigorously examined.[6] References to Afghans "sitting on the fence" inferring that they can choose to support the government and that this support can be generated by better service delivery, (re)construction and development are unquestioningly recycled in the international media. The problem is that a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since the early years of the intervention when a 'window of opportunity' in which the security gap could have been bridged, existed. Most damagingly, the Afghan authorities, supported by the international community, failed to set a clear moral tone at the outset by delivering on leading Afghan concerns, which include the absence of the rule of law and the re-establishment of impunity, perceptions of sky rocketing corruption at all levels of government including

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[4] ISAF headquarters can only command the military elements of PRTs and the extenuated chain of command between centre and periphery is an additional problem. Civilian elements report directly to capitals.

[5] I D Westerman, 'Provincial Reconstruction in Afghanistan: An Examination of the Problems of Integrating the Military, Political and Development Dimensions with Reference to the US Experience in Vietnam', Cambridge University MPhil thesis, July 2008.

[6] The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) in Kabul is currently researching this hypothesis.

the police and deteriorating human security.[7] The security gap which widened from 2002, provided, in conjunction with highly conducive regional factors, multiple openings for non-state actors, both criminal and insurgent, to take advantage of. To some extent the 'insurgency' has been a self fulfilling prophecy and one that has only been acknowledged dangerously late in the day.[8]

The international community as well as many Afghans had unrealistic expectations regarding the viability of political processes engendered under the 2001 Bonn Agreement. Though the political benchmarks punctuating the Agreement were met, the foundation of any sustainable stability also depended on a meaningful security sector reform process if reconstruction and economic development were to be expedited. Instead both the security sector and economic developments lagged far behind the fragile political process. Former Jihadist commanders and/or organized criminal syndicates were able to restore networks (essentially unopposed) thereby establishing control over the black economy and the opium trade in particular. This was facilitated by their links to illegal armed groups (where linkages to mid-level commanders remained largely in place despite the DDR/DIAG processes), access to political protection at all levels of government - if not direct co-option of state security structures where necessary - including the police, which was and still is composed largely of entire militia groups. Concurrently, armed opposition groups linked to the Taliban, the Haqqani network and Hizb-i-Islami, re-penetrated the Afghan hinterland along the Afghan-Pakistan border, and expanded by exploiting tribal alienation, inter-tribal schisms and tensions and frus-

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[7] The findings of the 2008 Asia Foundation survey of Afghan public opinion lead with the increase by one-fourth in the proportion of respondents who cite insecurity as a reason for pessimism. However the survey produces some surprisingly positive findings with regard to public opinion on the police. In The Asia Foundation's 2008 analysis of the survey, 'State Building, Security, And Social Change in Afghanistan', William Maley emphasises the dangers of drawing conclusions from the 2008 survey data in that "only 40 per cent of respondents agree that most people feel free to express their political opinions in their local area...reflecting a genuine shrinkage of political space." And that "Ostensible normative support may actually mask a set of attitudes that are much more complex and ambivalent."

[8] As early as 2003 UNAMA field officers informed the author that they had repeatedly warned coalition forces of armed opposition groups penetration into remote areas of Kandahar and Helmand provinces for example, reportedly to no effect. Coalition spokesmen consistently responded to reports of insurgent success as signs of the insurgency being "in its death throes".

trations over poor to non-existent governance. In Uruzgan and Helmand provinces for example, local support to insurgent groups was fuelled by a highly inequitable tribal policy implemented by the respective provincial governors. Once in place, insurgent groups were able to consolidate control through a mix of well publicised terror tactics, their ability to offer effective if rudimentary 'Islamic' dispute resolution and a degree of security that often compared favourably with the government's. As the security situation deteriorated it also mutated, becoming more unpredictable with links between organized criminality and the insurgency deepening and widening, as shown by the trade in opium to the north of the country (for refinement and export) and weapons to the south (mainly bought by insurgent groups, security analysts in Kabul have estimated that fifty to sixty per cent of weapons used by insurgent groups are bought internally from IAG commanders or 'disappear' from security institutions) as well as by the ever-growing kidnap industry. Meanwhile, international discourse, particularly within Nato and the UN, focused on the need for greater 'coordination' and a 'comprehensive approach' for greater 'effect' on the ground and better governance, as a means of reversing negative security trends. In reality the Afghan government and its international partners did not commit in a timely fashion the necessary degree of political will and resources to prevent internal (as well as regional factors) worsening. As the political crisis deepened it was increasingly viewed (from 2006) through the lens of an insurgency. The weakness of SSR outcomes which were stovepiped and the failure of the five country leads,(US-ANA; Germany-Police; Japan-DDR & DIAG; Italy-Justice; UK-counter narcotics), to incorporate an integrated approach across aspects of what should have been addressed as a whole, further compounded the situation.

## US plans

*"We have no strategic plan. We never had one."*
Senior US military commander commenting on the Bush years in Afghanistan, 'Afghan Conflict Will Be Reviewed', Karen DeYoung, Washington Post, January 13, 2009

The Obama Administration has shifted foreign policy focus from Iraq and placed Afghanistan and Pakistan at the forefront of US concerns. Though details of US policy on Afghanistan have yet to be made clear at time of writing, preparations for change have been underway for some time. Five strategic reviews were conducted in the last few months of 2008 in Washington DC led by various US government departments and the incoming Administration. The indications (Iraq permitting) point to up to 20,000 or more US military forces being committed over the course of 2009-2010 with significant additional air resources aimed at breaking what by 2007 had become "a bloody stalemate" between NATO and armed opposition groups across southern Afghanistan.[9] However, the increase in troop numbers is reportedly a means of buying time while the Obama Administration decides on a new comprehensive strategy for Afghanistan.[10] The 'key strategic goal' is seen to be 'breaking the Taliban's momentum by inflicting some painful battlefield defeats'[11] on them first and subsequently forcing them to accept 'reconciliation'. From 2007 as the number of airstrikes significantly increased, perceptions grew amongst some international observers as well as Afghans that the international military forces (IMF) were becoming part of the problem in Afghanistan and that any increase in IMF numbers could increase "hostility" due in large part to the highly sensitive issue of civilian casualties.[12] The argument that ultimately there can be no military solution to Afghanistan also appeared to have gained traction. US interest in more actively exploring 'reconciliation options' will be part of an enhanced regional diplomatic strategy led by the new US special envoy on Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke. It has already been made clear by members of the new Administration including the Secretary of State, that conditionalities will be imposed on US aid to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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[9] David Rohde, 'Afghan forces suffer setbacks as Taliban adapt', International Herald Tribune, 1 September, 2007

[10] Karen DeYoung, Washington Post, 13 January 2009.

[11] Tony Karon, 'Will the U.S. Stick by Karyai in Afghanistan?', Time, 30 January 2009.

[12] See 'From Hope to Fear, An Afghan Perspective on Operations of Pro-Government Forces in Afghanistan, Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, December 2008; Lachlan Carmichael, 'Obama looks for regional allies to stabilize Afghanistan', AFP, 21 January 2009; Pamela Constable, 'Troop Boost Complicated by Growing Taliban Influence, Anger over Airstrikes and Civilian Deaths', Washington Post, 16 January 2009;

The disappointing results regarding the sustainability of US-led police reform efforts at district level (via Focused District Development) which do not seem to have matched the high expectations originally held for the programme, has led to the consideration of 'community defence initiatives' of some kind as an alternative security strategy at the local level by the Afghan government[13] with some international support. This has most obviously signaled the failure of police reform efforts to date and may indicate slower than expected outcomes in Afghan National Army (ANA) and National Directorate for Security (NDS) developments and reforms. Existing policy to accelerate the pace of the planned doubling of ANA numbers, and building local administrative government capacity, are likely to remain key objectives of US policy. Major development projects such as 'Nangrahar Inc. The Nangrahar Regional Development Plan' are intended by the US embassy in Kabul to set the paradigm for "economically transformative" reconstruction and development projects that aim to change the agricultural base of the economy from a subsistence to an export basis, starting in Jalalabad in the east. Implementing such projects will require a civilian 'surge' which will also depend on the US government's ability to transfer civilian experts from Iraq and to make sure that they have more than sporadic access to rural areas. Within key areas of this US-led framework, (which the January 2009 visit to Kabul by the US vice-president elect, Joe Biden, emphasised is intended to make a difference in three key areas: governance, corruption and narcotics, PRTs will constitute primary delivery platforms.

Whether these US-led, top down development approaches, involving such major injections of additional resources can be effectively managed to produce the sought-for effect on the ground will depend, given security and other constraints to oversight, on establishing effective partnerships with the right Afghan actors as well as time for foreign

[13] The Afghan Public Protection Force Policy presented in January 2009 as a component in the Afghan government's counter insurgency operations being test run in Wardak province. The recruitment process is entirely Afghan led (recruits are nominated by IDLG appointed shuras and vetted by the Interior Ministry and the National Directorate for Security). Local sources report, however, that there is little vetting and that compact groups of fighters of certain commanders are inserted into this force.

experts to acquire the localised understanding that is critical to prevent projects proving to be counter-productive. The continued development of bottom-up approaches, such as the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) which, with informed support and guided by more robust monitoring and evaluation, could introduce badly needed transparency and accountability to partner top-down processes at local levels, is widely viewed as essential. The incorporation of NSP Community Development Councils as village councils (until elections in 2011) within the central government's Independent Directorate for Local Governance's (IDLG) national strategy is a welcome development. The IDLG had been criticised in some quarters as essentially representing another top down approach which could threaten successful grass-roots programmes such as NSP which are credited with strengthening local ownership, though the security situation renders objective oversight of NSP on the ground problematic in large parts of the country.

**The case for moving PRT focus to SSR**

ISAF's counter insurgency plans: to shape, clear, hold and build, did not work due to the inability of the Afghan police to hold cleared areas. This situation was the basis for the US military's and NATO's case for an increase in international troop levels. Whether the acceleration of development will prove viable in the highly militarised context that obtains in insurgency-affected parts of the country, given limited absorptive capacity and weak government capacity, remains to be seen. Chances of success will depend on the security situation being improved to the point that it can enable development and not the other way round.[14] To achieve this, the Afghan people will have to be placed at the centre of the state building equation and provided the protection needed to allow them or their community leaders to exercise choice. Accelerating the development of Afghan security forces, which is easier said than done, as a way out of the Afghan

[14] International NGOs working in insurgency affected areas via local staff in the north, such as Faryab, are concerned that the 'clear-hold-build' military strategy ignores the continuum of development. They point out that NGO withdrawal during military operations will break trust with communities which it may not be possible to re-establish.

imbroglio will not be enough and may even prove counter-productive with respect to maintaining the quality of the ANA and reforming the ANP.[15] If the state building agenda remains a priority, then concrete steps to instill momentum into the largely failed security sector reform process are required, thereby closing the disjuncture between the building of state institutions and perceived counter insurgency priorities.[16] The failure to enforce the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) process, as well as weak police reform outcomes, to say nothing of the Afghan government's failure to try and imprison a single major drugs trafficker are all cases in point. In addition to DIAG forming the primary means for the state to establish control over the means of violence, it is also intimately linked to the fortunes of police reform and counter narcotics strategies as well as better governance and the establishment of the rule of law. The fact that both DIAG (and its predecessor Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration - DDR) have so far delivered such limited outcomes indicates continuing government and international ambivalence towards processes that to succeed must alter the status quo. The government's new community-based security approach, called the Afghan Public Protection Force Programme or AP3 being piloted in Wardak province, is the latest example of policy flying directly in the face of DIAG objectives.[17]

Given the above, the question that presents itself is: what exactly is the international community seeking to achieve in Afghanistan? Bearing in mind the situation unraveling on the Pakistan side of the border, if it is unaffordable to lose Afghanistan then a reinvigorated and much more honest partnership between the Afghan government and donors, and between donors themselves, based on unity of purpose is of critical importance. Arguably, with the ending of the Bonn process the informing concept of a 'grand strategy' (if indeed the Bonn Agreement amounted to that), was lost. If stabilising Afghanistan remains the central objective

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[15] Author's interview with a US General in Nato with extensive experience of the Afghan security sector, November 2008.

[16] See Daoud Yaqub and William Maley, 'NATO and Afghanistan: Saving The State-Building Enterprise', The Bucharest Papers, 2008.

[17] The creation of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police in 2006 forms an earlier example.

then this will depend on the implementation of an integrated approach where it counts for the Afghan people[18] - across the inter-related pillars of the disbandment of illegal armed groups, police reform, counter-narcotics and the development of the army, along with the pre-ANDS pillar of Justice. In reality, the absence of an enabling environment for civil society and civilian development actors in many parts of the country now amounts to a life threatening situation. A 'grand strategy' based on security sector reform (SSR) may well seem naïve at this point, but what else would deliver on human security and justice, key areas which the Taliban are able successfully to exploit? Human security concerns combined with extremely weak local adminstrations and diminishing access leave PRTs uniquely placed to act in many parts of the country if they venture outside 'the wire'. Bringing an integrated approach into play across PRT resources (diplomatic, economic and military) and moving the PRT focus to SSR could rationalise the case for PRTs, improve human security and remove the grounds for existing tensions with other development actors including the Afghan government.[19] However, to avoid merely alienating the de facto powerful, who benefit hugely from the strategy of *realpolitik* currently pursued by the government and its international supporters, such changes to PRTs' focus must be supported by a strong commitment by all stakeholders to the implementation of a realistic strategy into which PRTs would fit. Conversely many Afghans fear that dabbling in highly complex tribal politics through village/community defence schemes may contribute to security problems 'downstream' by creating yet more militias operating unaccountably outside any effective chain of command or central government oversight in a country where the Ministry of Interior does not yet fully control the actions of the police.[20] Grounds for concerns are found in

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[18] Police reform efforts for example cannot be separated from justice and prison reform as CSTC Alpha is only too aware of as it rolls out its very costly Focused District Development police training programme.

[19] This argument first surfaced in 2003-2004 led by UNAMA with the support of some leading international NGOs, a PRT focus on SSR was also central to the changes recommended in the PRT Review conducted by ISAF HQ in 2008 but which is an internal document.

[20] See 'US Military to Launch Pilot Program to Recruit New Afghan Militias', Anna Mulrine, US News & World Report, 18 December 2008; 'Afghans fear US plan to rearm villagers', Jon Boone, Financial Times, 13 January, 2009; 'Troop Boost Complicated by Growing Taliban Influence', Pamela Constable, Washington Post, 16 January 2009.

the very recent experience of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police which started in 2006 but which had been officially disbanded in failure by the end of 2007.[21]

**The risk of blowback**

It is essential to understand that the tribal structures and the values represented therein were profoundly distorted during the mujahideen decades. During this period the elders and khans who had traditionally wielded influence and power at local levels (along with a largely quiescent *ulama*) were replaced by commanders and their militias who controlled access to new resources as the agricultural base of the economy was destroyed or fell into disrepair following the Soviet invasion and the Afghan refugee exodus. Unfortunately, the security situation has prevented renewed anthropological field work (last conducted in the 1970s) on the workings of power and influence at local levels. This has prevented an accurate understanding of changing tribal dynamics. Olivier Roy, a leading scholar on Islamist political developments has argued that the powerful global ideology that Salafist schools of thought, offered to the Pashtun tribes on both sides of the Pakistan/Afghan border, has been underestimated.[22] The political attractions of the Islamic concepts of *ummah* emphasized by the Salafists, which leapfrogs over the demands of the nation state (which divided the Pashtuns in the first place), in his view puts international attempts to negotiate with tribal elders on the wrong foot, as either "elders" who have lost power are selected, (as he argues the British did in Musa Qala in 2006) or internationals are referring to different rules of the game. Thomas Ruttig, a respected scholar on Afghanistan, views the historical background of attempted and actual occupation which, coupled with the conservative Hannafi School that the majority of Afghans adhere to, as factors responsible for the increase in anti-Western verging in some areas to the point of xenophobia. Tribal power, he points out, is not a given

[21] Barbara J. Stapleton, 'The role of DDR and DIAG and its impact on peace building', November 2008, upcoming publication, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, Stockholm.

[22] Olivier Roy, Briefing paper for UNHCR on the Taliban and tribal traditions (2006)

and has always had to be re-negotiated.

A devastating Taliban ambush of Afghan security forces guarding a supply convoy in Badghis province in the north-west in November 2008 may provide a case in point. The ambush was reportedly led by Maulavi Ghulam Dastagir, who had been released from police custody (on charges of aiding the Taliban) by President Karzai in September. His release was apparently triggered by guarantees proffered to the President by tribal elders who had interceded on Dastagir's behalf. This incident not only illustrates the blowback that "tribal engagement" can lead to (for Afghans as well as internationals) it also highlights the exposed position of tribal elders in increasing areas of the country. According to a parliamentarian from Badghis, the elders had been forced to intercede with Karzai due to fears of revenge attacks on their families by insurgents, who, local officials report, dominate large areas of Badghis.[23] However, Badghis has been a Taliban stronghold since the late 1990s rendering the MP's explanation insufficient. Tribal solidarity or pressure from families of those killed couild equally well have impelled the tribal elders to lobby the president. Another example of the complexity of the operating environment was the attack on 31 December 2008 on the district governor of Musa Qala in Helmand province, Mullah Salam. Twenty-four of his bodyguards were killed allegedly by a significant number of Salam's private bodyguard who had switched sides to support the insurgents, murdering loyal members of Salam's militia during the night. Such tactics, believed in this case to be ordered by a former governor of the province, illustrate the fluidity of allegiances in pursuing interests. With regard to tribal engagement it should also be noted that insurgents have carried out a mounting and highly successful assassination campaign against elders and mullahs who do not support them since 2005.

## Critical areas of engagement for PRTs in SSR

The absence of an overarching, functioning, coordinating structure for SSR objectives on the national and international side has led to a

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23 See 'Ambush Raises Unsettling Questions in Afghanistan', New York Times, 21 December 2008

loss of momentum. The Policy Action Group (PAG) deals mainly with operational issues and only in limited areas of the country. The ANDS Secretariat was an *ad hoc*, temporary body rather than a permanent ministry linked to the security sector. The National Security Council (NSC) was set up to act as a neutral broker to mediate over tensions arising between line ministries over security coordination and to define missions and roles with regard for example to the army and police. The movement of justice out of the earlier five-pillared structure of SSR to the Governance sector, via the Afghan Compact and the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), has also negatively affected the implementation of an integrated approach. Tensions within and between Afghan justice institutions and also between Afghan justice institutions and the international community have largely gone unmediated. Another side effect of de-linking justice from police reform was the boosting of the paramilitary aspect of police training with reduced emphasis on the law and order side, which is of such importance for improving governance, addressing rising crime levels and establishing the legitimacy of the government. At present whatever coordination exists is mainly based on personalities.

- An information-sharing body across all the security reform sectors is a minimal requirement into which PRTs in particular as well as other international actors could contribute to via reports.

**The Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG)**

Effective steps to address the core issue of impunity and thereby start to close the gap between the Afghan government and people have yet to be taken, while international will to tackle the underlying and linked causes of violence in a coherent and sequenced way - appears to be diminishing.[24] The international community led by the Obama Administration should provide the Afghan government with the necessary support to reach DIAG goals, thereby connecting the building of state institutions to count-

[24] See Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Nato chief attacks lack of will on Afghanistan', The Guardian, 21 October 2008

er-insurgency (COIN) objectives. Currently, DIAG objectives remain very much a secondary affair. In the event that attempts at a negotiated compliance with DIAG fails, the only recourse to date has been the sending of a letter to the recalcitrant commander and instructions by letter to the provincial governor to act. Subsequent negotiations are led by DIAG staff. However, the DIAG process had theoretically been given teeth by a secondary enforcement phase using national security forces with ISAF support available *in extremis*. This was agreed in principle in 2006 via the PRT Executive Steering Committee's Policy Note No 2 "PRT engagement in DIAG" (endorsed by the PRT ESC on Dec. 7th, 2006 at HQ ISAF)[25] which outlined how stronger support could be contributed by ISAF in support of DIAG objectives provincially. In practice the Note has had no discernable impact in terms of increasing PRTs' involvement in DIAG. At central and provincial levels neither ISAF nor international staff working within DIAG mechanisms appeared to even be aware of the Note's existence a year and a half after its creation. As the enforcement phase has never been implemented, DIAG was effectively reduced to all carrot and no stick.

**Afghan ownership**

Of all the previous pillars making up the security sector reform process, it is interesting to note that DIAG is the only one that is Afghan owned under the direct control of the Disarmament and Reconciliation Committee, headed by the second Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili. The movement of DIAG into the Ministry of Interior (MOI) which will now be completed by March 2010 instead of March 2009 (as previously planned) will mean that the government will control DIAG implementation as well. Material support for this will be derived from the lucrative private security company and weapon registration programmes and financial support from UNDP will then end. But, apart from the Presidential decree establishing DIAG there has been virtually no government-led documented way forward. Those working towards DIAG objec-

[25] An amended DIAG Policy Note was on the agenda of the first meeting on January 29 of the resurrected PRT Executive Steering Committee.

tives have instead had to utilise political opportunities where possible.

Reportedly it has been a constant struggle to get the relevant senior government representatives to sign off on DIAG initiatives, with a marked tendency by elements within the government to stall wherever possible. A four month delay in the official signing off (in September 2008) on the remapping process to revise IAG lists simultaneously across the country meant that a complex and challenging process had to be conducted on an even tighter timeline.

The limited ability of many PRTs to gather accurate and timely information is a related factor, linked to a tendency to remain 'behind the wire' and only moving in heavily armoured convoys even in relatively permissive areas. This leaves UNDP's Afghan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP)[26] – whose national staff find it difficult to access PRT compounds in the first place - reliant on official Afghan sources for information such as the National Directorate for Security (NDS). Moreover the information on which IAG lists is based is two and a half years out of date and was compiled at a time when enmities between local stakeholders were rife. Difficulties faced by DIAG personnel in building up a more accurate picture include the strong likelihood that information provided by the DIAG provincial committees (DPCs) that compile information gathered on the IAG situation at district level, will be biased. The DPCs, (where revisions to the IAG lists will also be agreed), are composed of district or provincial police chiefs and district or provincial governors who may themselves be closely linked to IAGs. Thus the role of UNAMA and ISAF is essential in cross-checking the accuracy of revisions made. Cooperation over such endeavours would give some substance to the much lauded goal of a 'comprehensive approach', but according to analysts the response from ISAF has been less than robust, so far. Yet the remapping process is a particularly important one for a number of reasons: it defines insurgent groups as IAGs and brings them into the DIAG process for the first time, thus providing an opportunity to converge security sector, state building and counter insurgency objectives. Remapping is also a pre-condition (amongst oth-

[26] ANBP jointly administers the DIAG process with the government until March 2010

ers) for the establishment of a more effective vetting process for the 2009/2010 elections, which in turn would confer badly needed credibility on the electoral processes and outcomes.[27] Remapping is also a pre-requisite for any serious reconciliation effort. ISAF is exploring ways to improve liaison mechanisms to DIAG.

On another front PRT contributing nations met in January at a PRT Executive Steering Committee (ESC) meeting co-chaired for the first time on the government's side by the IDLG. The revival of the PRT ESC under the IDLG will, ISAF hopes, be a means of introducing more transparency and alignment with the government regarding PRT projects. The PRT ESC Policy Note No.2 (strengthening PRT engagement on DIAG) was an Agenda item.

- Ways to ensure that the DIAG policy note has more impact in the field this time must be found, increasing PRT assistance to the remapping process would constitute a first step.

The disjuncture between the building of security institutions and COIN objectives is again apparent in the fact that despite well-founded arguments for combining district level processes such as FDD and DIAG, which is of critical importance given the degree to which MOI and ANP positions have been filled by militia members, concrete steps to do so have yet to materialise. Yet sustainable police reform depends on such integrated approaches being implemented.

**Police reform**

In countries marked by conflict, trust is established primarily through face to face contact. The police form the main interface between the government and the people, determining perceptions about the govern-

[27] See Grant Kippen, 'Elections in 2009 and 2010: Technical and Contextual Challenges to Building Democracy in Afghanistan, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, November 2008; Ayub, Deledda & Gossman, 'Vetting Lessons for the 2009-10 Elections in Afghanistan', International Center for Transitional Justice, January 2009.

ment locally and by association as a whole. In many parts of the country the 'police' still represent nothing more than predatory armed gangs linked to the local administration with a shared interest in engaging in 'rent seeking' activities. Recognition of this all too common reality drove the renewed focus on police reform from 2005 onwards primarily led by the US government which has spent billions of dollars on police training and resourcing and has also committed significant numbers of mentors to the (still) heavily factionalised Ministry of Interior. The US military (CSTC-Alpha) designed the Focused District Development (FDD) police training programme which focused on combat training and security first and foremost, (rather than the rule of law per se), and has consistently prioritised districts where the insurgency is strongest. The FDD process provided ample confirmation of the linkages between an often corrupt local administration and the local police.[28] This meant that the effectiveness of FDD outcomes, already constrained by a lagging justice and prisons sector, largely depended on oversight and continuing support as well as the quality of training provided. However, the debate about the type of police force Afghanistan needs is still unresolved. Arguments center on counter insurgency (COIN) demands and the primacy of a paramilitary police force on the one hand while the urgent need to produce a civilian police force capable of covering CID, crime prevention and implementing law and order, (as well as having a robust arm in light of COIN requirements including survival skills), exist on the other hand. It should be noted that if the insurgency ended immediately very significant security problems linked to crime, narcotics and factionalism would remain, which particularly affect the Afghan people and development actors such as NGOs. While the need to roll back the insurgency has dominated the FDD approach, poor governance, amongst other factors, has resulted in more supporters of, and fighters for, armed opposition groups. A multi-faceted approach to policing needs however depended on sufficient numbers of qualified civilian police trainers to build capacity as well as provide oversight and support over the longer term. This situation is well understood, but the traditional European approach to civilian policing has not only been marginalised by the virulence of the insurgency but also by an hitherto limited European contribution apparent in the

[28] Author's interview with CSTC-Alpha commander, General Cone, Kabul, May 2008

low numbers of EUPOL mentors and trainers committed. Brussels and capitals are actively exploring ways of boosting recruitment to a ceiling of 400 personnel by April 2009, the EUPOL deployment at time of writing totals 177, however recruitment difficulties may render this target date unlikely. Discussions are underway in Kabul in coordination with the revived PRT Executive Steering Committee to examine ways in which a PRT role in support of police reform can be strengthened, including: providing the security framework in support to FDD and EUPOL endeavours and supporting national programmes in support of police reform as designed and implemented by the Afghan government. During a recent visit to Brussels the Interior Minister, Hanif Atmar, specifically requested greater support from PRTs for police reform. The following steps would help the coordination and coherence of policing efforts.

**PRTs and EUPOL**

- Deploying more police officers under the EUPOL umbrella by re-hatting all national police officers in the PRTs to EUPOL. This has already happened in many instances where Technical Arrangements have been signed with the PRT lead nation but there are still a number of bilateral police officers in the regions and provinces
- Establish multilateral funding mechanisms so that EUPOL can complement its mentoring and training activities
- Set up processes whereby EUPOL mentors and trainers could advise on the funding needs in their respective fields and direct much of the bilateral funding already earmarked for the PRTs to support EUPOL's mentoring and training activities.[29]
- Technical arrangements with most host countries operate "within means and capabilities" meaning that EUPOL is not a first priority if there are logistical shortages. The necessary resources to ensure EUPOL can operate at the height of its powers should be committed.

[29] A donor conference is planned by EUPOL for the end of February.

**PRTs and FDD**

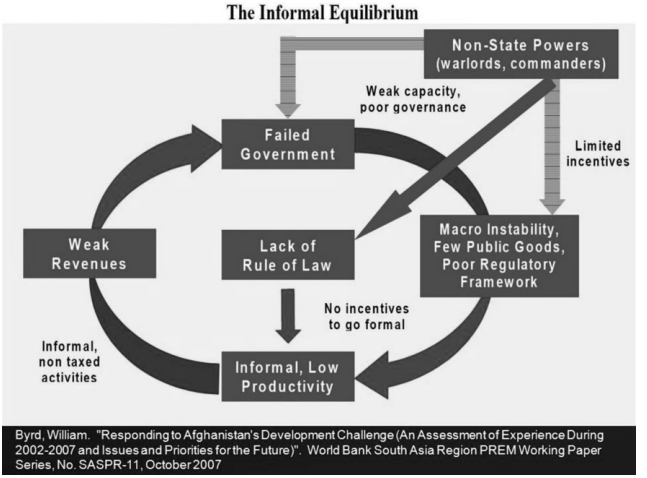
Under FDD the local police are removed for eight week training periods by civilian US police trainers. The better trained Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) are brought in to provide 'backfill'. Unsurprisingly, following an all-too-brief taste of life under the sort of policing that Afghans expected the government to provide, local elders have begged the authorities to retain ANCOP and not allow the local police to return after training. But plans for a limited oversight period following the return of trained local police have not gone as anticipated. Instead FDD gains have proved short-term in effect as the police have repeatedly returned to former bad habits when FDD mentors and trainers have tried to phase out.

- The role that PRTs could play in providing longer-term oversight and support to sustain improved policing needs to be examined beyond the facilitatory role currently being explored by ISAF.

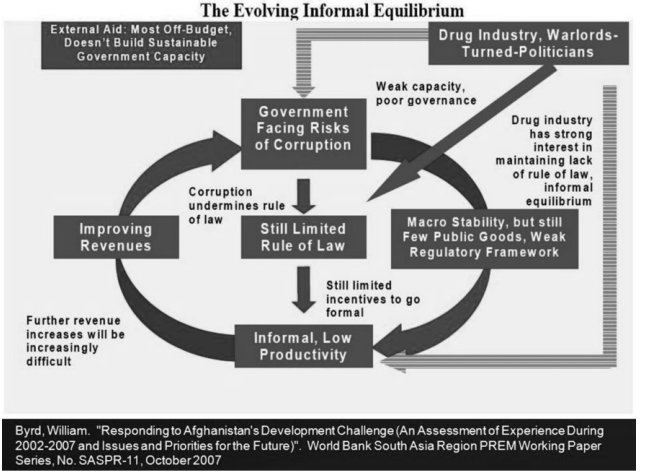
Serious questions also remain over the actual numbers and identities of the police registered on the *tashkeel* whose salaries are paid via the Law and Order Trust Fund For Afghanistan (LOTFA) by the international community. UNAMA has estimated that at any point in time it is difficult to prove whether up to half of these registered police are actually working.

- PRTs could provide more effective support to police reform by supplying a verification role at local levels to help ensure that the actual number of police on the ground correspond to the *tashkeel*

## Conclusion




Byrd, William. "Responding to Afghanistan's Development Challenge (An Assessment of Experience During 2002-2007 and Issues and Priorities for the Future)". World Bank South Asia Region PREM Working Paper Series, No. SASPR-11, October 2007




Byrd, William. "Responding to Afghanistan's Development Challenge (An Assessment of Experience During 2002-2007 and Issues and Priorities for the Future)". World Bank South Asia Region PREM Working Paper Series, No. SASPR-11, October 2007

These World Bank charts graphically depict the main argument of this paper – that root causes of insecurity, as well as its main symptoms pre-

sented as an insurgency, must also be addressed if governance is to improve and Afghan institution building progress to allow sustainable stability and an exit strategy. This requires that the protection of Afghans and law enforcement is brought to the top of national and international agendas. The security situation which is both highly complex and often opaque, (in which a tendency to blame all on the 'Taliban' has been used by multiple actors since 2003), requires a much better understanding of mutating and shifting power dynamics at the local level. It is well known that Kabul has been unable to protect Afghans who have taken risks to support the government from insurgent attacks, such as the mullahs in Kandahar province who during 2005 were assassinated one by one for signing a document supporting the central government. Insurgents are now targeting district administrators in the south in addition to a long-standing policy of assassinating independent elders and locals of influence. However, other egregious security incidents, attributed to the 'Taliban' had other causes. For example, the car bomb attack on the UN compound in Kandahar in 2004 was reportedly linked to rival police elements; the murder of the Medecins sans Frontieres team in the same year in Badghis province was allegedly carried out by a disgruntled district police chief. Journalists have been killed for reporting objectively on local problems with threats from warlords, drug barons, corrupt government officials and police as well as from armed insurgent groups. The kidnap and execution style murder of a BBC stringer, Abdul Samad Rohani, in Helmand in June 2008 was widely believed to have been conducted by powerful non-Taliban elements.[30] On 4 September 2008, the Chief Judge of the Central Narcotics Tribunal Appeals Court Alim Hanif who headed the drug-related Crimes Investigation Commission, was professionally killed. He was well regarded as one of the very few uncorrupt judges. His assassination was linked to the drugs mafia. In these and many other incidents virtually no action has been taken by the government.

Security dynamics have markedly changed over the last three years, NGOs now consult non state actors in many areas to enable project delivery. The trend towards the merging of insurgents, criminal and illegally armed

[30] 'Afghanistan: Death Threats, Intimidation Part Of Journalists' Daily Lives', Ron Synovitz, Radio Free Europe, June 10 2008.

groups first identified by UN and NGO security analysts in 2007[31] has exponentially increased the threat to the state building endeavour and all development actors as well as Afghan citizens. At the same time the very success of international and national military operations which have targeted mid-level Taliban commanders have created a vacuum which analysts report is being filled by younger, more radicalised Taliban.[32]

A clear overall strategy for Afghanistan is still missing while the problems posed by the increasingly dangerous insurgency in Pakistan (which a leading regional analyst believes will not, given Pashtun migrant linkages throughout Pakistan and in Karachi especially and linkages between Punjabi jihadi groups and the Pashtun insurgency, be possible to contain), increasingly impact Afghan developments and the considerations of US and Nato planners.[33] One of the biggest challenges the Obama Administration faces is establishing international consensus on the seriousness of regional challenges confronted in which Pakistan as well as Afghanistan is at risk. Given the Bush legacy, domestic opinion in many European countries links Afghanistan to what is viewed as an ill-conceived if not illegitimate invasion of Iraq and the commitment of forces to Afghanistan, as recent polls have illustrated, is increasingly unpopular. At this critical stage of Afghan history the renewing of the partnership between the government, the people and the international community is vital but requires levels of political will on all sides which are so far absent.

The international community's difficulties in reconciling the objectives of the 'war on terror' are being repeated with the counter insurgency whereby short-term, reactive responses are being implemented at a cost to longer term institution building, despite counter insurgency theory which emphasises the reverse. This is epitomised, in the view of many Afghan and international observers, by the highly controversial and unpopular moves to create yet more armed militias under the Ministry of

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[31] A similar phenomenon is occurring in the FATA and other border areas of Pakistan according to reliable interlocutors.

[32] These reports are backed up by Afghan NGOs working in the south.

[33] See 'Obama to step up battle in Afghanistan, aides say', Helene Cooper and Thom Shanker, International Herald Tribune, 27 January

Interior which, as the Auxiliary Police experiment demonstrated, will operate de facto beyond the MoI's flimsy command and control structures. History also shows – from the experience with the Soviet-inspired 'tribal' militias of the 1980s to the ANAP – that as soon as payment stopped these groups became freelancers and drifted into criminality. Unofficial data available in Kabul shows that up to 40 per cent of the ANAP weapons could not be retrieved. Afghans have had negative experiences of such policies in the past and are opposing these developments via op-eds in the local media and in lobbying efforts to diplomatic offices in Kabul, demanding instead more formal security provision via the police and army.

In the difficult task of weighing the implications and costs of strategic options in Afghanistan at this turning point, US policy makers face the primary challenge of restoring peoples' confidence[34] that the political process, flawed though it is, is capable of delivering Afghanistan from conflict. The imposition of aid conditionalities that are both nuanced and directed at key nodal points must be harnessed to driving forward sequenced steps that deliver systemic reforms, genuine anti-corruption measures and above all else an integrated approach to a reinvigorated security sector reform process, all of which requires time. The mandating of PRTs as 'Provincial Stability Teams' where possible,[35] and PRT support country-wide for DIAG and police reform, would be a step towards reinforcing the positive connection between state building and the counter insurgency. Recent US official references to 'downsizing ambitions' in Afghanistan however and a reported "shift in priorities"[36] to focus primarily on Al Qaeda and the Taliban, run the risk that public opinion, already growing hostile to the international community due to the issue of civilian casualties, combined with profound disillusionment with the political dispensation engendered by the Bonn process, may well flip over.

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[34] Afghan suspicions have reportedly reached even greater heights from the long-standing belief that the US was behind the insurgency to enable them to establish permanent strategic bases, prevalent in the south since 2004. Reportedly many in the south now take the view that the sooner European forces leave and US forces return, the sooner fighting will end and the comparative peace of 2002 will return. Allegedly some militias are even fighting with the insurgents to hasten this outcome.

[35] 'HQ ISAF PRT REVIEW', Lieutenant General Jonathon Riley, Deputy Commander ISAF, and Stacy Crevello, Development Adviser ISAF, July 2008

[36] 'Obama to step up battle..'

# THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE APPROACH

## Adding structure to international cooperation in Afghanistan

William C. Butcher

*"If the individual members of the organizations were of the same mind, if every organization worked according to a standard pattern, the problems would be solved. Is this not precisely what a coherent, well-understood, and accepted doctrine would tend to achieve?"*
David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006) 65*

### Introduction

The international community has actively supported the Government of Afghanistan in the pursuit of a stable and prosperous nation for more than seven years; despite their efforts stability in Afghanistan remains bleak. While a determined enemy, with popular support and near uninterrupted sanctuary can explain some of the reasons for the current ominous situation, the incomprehensible lack of consistent international cooperation bares an ever-increasing portion of the responsibility.

The failure of the international community to cooperate in Afghanistan has garnered the concern of some for many years; yet not until recently have the alarms been so foreboding. In January 2008 the Atlantic Council released a report entitled *Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action* in which it warned that "the international community is not winning in Afghanistan." Among their chief concerns was that "little cooperation existed amongst the disparate actors involved

in the country."[1] The report called for the appointment of a High Commissioner to "cajole, convince, or even coerce"[2] coordination and integration of the international effort. But the alarm bells and warning didn't stop there.

Lord Paddy Ashdown, supported by the West for the High Commissioner position, but not by the Afghan President, commented recently that the international community in Afghanistan remains "dangerously fractured" and that "there is no coordination between them that is worthy of the name."[3] While Ashdown's comments could be taken as excessive, his analysis is shared by countless contributors to the Afghan cause. In fact, most recently Richard Holbrooke, the new U.S. Special Envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan commented on the poor coordination in Afghanistan stating "I've never seen anything remotely resembling the mess we've inherited."[4] Yet, probably the most insightful comment of late comes from an International Crisis Group report in which the author remarked that "disunity in Afghanistan is about not just structural issues or coordination but also priorities and preferences, goals, means, and increasingly, endgames, exit strategies and perhaps most importantly, the reasons for being in the country at all."[5] Ultimately our failure to coordinate is the result of a lack of common purpose and common vision among the stakeholders charged with administering the ingredients for stability in an integrated manner.

The *U.S. Stability Operations* manual, FM 3-07, states that the process of uniting the diverse capabilities necessary to achieve success in stability operations requires both "collaborative and cooperative para-

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[1] The Atlantic Council of the United States. '*Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action'*, (Washington D.C., The Atlantic Council of the United States , 2008). 5.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Lord Paddy Ashdown "What I Told Gordon Brown About Afghanistan," 15 September 2008, linked from Spectator.Co.UK http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/2083801/ashdown-what-i-told-gordon-brown-about-afghanistan.html (accessed 5 January 2009)
[4] Craig Whitlock, "National Security Team Delivers Grim Appraisal of Afghanistan War," The Washington Post, 09 February 2009
[5] International Crisis Group "Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve," (Asia Study 145, International Crisis Group), 2008: 12.

digms" that provide disparate actors a framework with which to produce a "unity of effort" towards common objectives.[6] However, within Afghanistan the overarching paradigms for cooperation and coherence, including the UN's Integrated Approach (IA) and NATO's Comprehensive Approach (CA) are yet to move significantly beyond conceptual definitions and recognition of need and are not sufficiently structured to permit the level of integration required to achieve the stated vision and objectives of the stakeholders in Afghanistan.

For this reason the Government of Afghanistan and the international community presently rely on national level fora to coordinate security, governance and reconstruction and development. In some sense, these multi-national/multi-organizational coordination bodies are Afghanistan's last best hope. While they are not the panacea for changing all of the ills of the current Afghan condition, they contain powerful nations, organizations and regional actors and if properly supported, offer a substantial framework with which to better integrate the vast capabilities of Afghanistan's stakeholders. Yet, despite their importance, the effectiveness of these bodies is challenged by a lack of structured mechanisms for coordination, standards for participation among the various actors, rules of conduct and agreed methodologies for achieving unified objectives. This paper will focus on demonstrating through case study how cooperation among the national level fora in Afghanistan can be enhanced through the application of shared principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures.

## International Cooperation Theory

In the 1980s political scientists began explaining the structure of organized "voluntary" cooperation among nations and organizations through the concept of International Regimes. Steven Krasner defined regimes as "implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-

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[6] U.S. Department of the Army, *Stability Operations,* Field Manual 3-07 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, October 2008), 1-3.

making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations."[7] Although this is the first formal definition, international relations theorists refined the concept over a period of years. For example in his 1984 book entitled "*After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*" Robert Keohane further defined regimes as "sets of governing relationships that include networks of rules, norms, and procedures that regularize behavior and control its effects."[8] The important nuance to Keohane's interpretation is his recognition of how structure impacts the "regime" by providing it with the agreed to components which voluntarily bind the stakeholders to actions aimed at managing the associated problem for which the regime was formed.

In 1989 Oran Young took the theory even further asserting that regimes were "specialized arrangements that pertain to well-defined activities, resources, or geographical areas and often involve only some subset of the members of international society."[9] Young's interpretation is useful in that he recognizes that "regimes" are interest-based entities which form their identities based on the problem sets which they encounter. In a sense they become an amalgamation of institutions and/or actors with authorities not only granted from their varied superior structures (nations and organizations) but from the agreed methodologies for interaction within "regime" itself. As such, a regime is formed when groups, organizations, institutions and nations, apply sets of agreements to their behavior in order to create and maintain a state of order. The common denominator in these formal and informal relationships is the shared principles, norms, rules and procedures. When these structural variables exist, they can provide a sense of governance, without authority. When they don't exist or when they are poorly defined, outdated, or confusing they can lead to ineffective cooperation.

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[7] Eric Brahm, "International Regimes," September 2005, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/international_regimes/?nid=6584 (accessed 6 January 2009)

[8] Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the Wolrd Political Economy,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 6.

[9] Oran R. Young, *International Cooperation: building regimes for natural resources and the environment* (Uthica, NY, Cornell University Press, 1989):13.

**Incomprehensible approaches to conflict management cooperation**

Following the end of the Cold War the vast majority of countries in the West anticipated prolonged peace, but as the bipolar world faded away, a new era characterized by intra-state conflicts and complex emergencies arrived. Over a very short period of time, in places such as Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda, conventional force on force fighting gave way to vastly more complex system characterized by ethnic violence, corruption, poverty, religious fanaticism and other drivers of conflict. This dramatic change in the nature of conflict created a threat to human security the likes of which no single agency, government or organization were able to manage on its own.[10] Quickly, a world typified by "order of battle" where the enemy could be weighed and measured, gave way to a more anarchic system state, which demanded resources, personnel and capabilities from across the spectrum of crisis responders including international organizations, non-governmental organizations, nations, agencies, military forces, civil society groups, and a variety of others. While, early on it was assumed that these multi-disciplined actors would conduct non-integrated but parallel activities; it didn't take long for organizations and nations alike to realize the value in harmonizing their responses to conflict management through the creation of internal and external approaches to cooperation. Unfortunately beyond the stated desires for integration, international conflict management doctrine such as the UN's Integrated Approach and NATO's Comprehensive Approach have yet to effectively bear fruit.

Within Afghanistan, while many have turned to these emerging concepts to demonstrate their desire for increased harmonization and unity, their dogma has yet to match their intent. The words "comprehensive approach" or "integrated approach" are now common vernacular throughout Kabul and its surroundings. In some cases the terms have become interchangeable and even taken on lives of their own. Political pundits, military commanders' and ambassadors use them regularly to describe the need for increased integration. In fact the concepts are so prevalent that the Government of Afghanistan even adopted the term inte-

[10] Cedric de Coning, "The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach,"Danish Institute for International Studies, no 14 (2008):14.

grated approach to help describe their desired implementation framework for the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS).[11] The problem is that both Comprehensive Approach and Integrated Approach are thrown around so often that they have become, in a sense, doctrinal concepts, but regardless of their popularity neither is prepared for fully achieving that level of significance.

The Integrated Approach (IA) concept can be traced back to 1997, when then Secretary General Kofi Annan announced it as a priority for the UN. However until January 2008, when the United Nations Department of Peace Keeping Operations (UN DPKO) published its *Peace Keeping: Guidelines and Principles* manual there was no unified definition of the IA concept, nor were there set templates for its integration.[12] This still remains questionable as the new guidelines and principles manual simply devote only a few pages to the concept, leaving much to the imagination. The UN's stated purpose for integration is to create coherence between their political, military, humanitarian, and development elements in close collaboration with other partners.[13]As such, the UN concept envisages "processes, mechanisms and structures" to be in place to orchestrate a common strategic objective.[14] Yet in reality there are numerous caveats within the doctrinal guidelines, which act contrary to their structural desires. For example, despite the guidelines within DPKO manual charging the Senior Civilian Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) with "coordinating the activities of the entire United Nations system in the field," the same manual states in the next paragraph that "integration does not mean that all United Nations actors on the ground should be physically integrated or subsumed under a single structure."[15] This is somewhat of a dichotomy in that while the SRSG is mandated to coordinate the entire

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[11] Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), *Afghan National Development Strategy* (Kabul, Afghanistan, GIRoA May, 2008):167.

[12] Kristiina Rintakoski and Mikko Autti. *Comprehensive Approach: Trends, Challenges, and Possibilities for Cooperation in Crisis Prevention and Management*. (Helsinki, Finland., 2008) 13.

[13] United Nations Department of Peace keeping Operations, *United Nations Peace Keeping Operations: Principles and Guideline,* (New York, NY: United Nations Department of Peace Keeping Operations, 18 January 2008), 54.

[14] De Coning, "United Nations Comprehensive Approach,"3.

[15] UN, Peace keeping Operations Guidelines, 69.

UN mission, there are no demands on the subordinate structure to ensure compliance. But where there is cause for even greater concern with the UN integrated concept is regarding its process for synchronizing efforts. A recent study entitled "Multi-Dimensional and Integrated Peace Operations" stated that "the UN still struggles with integrated planning due to its huge institutional and bureaucratic decision-making system."[16] Furthermore, while the UN DPKO manual states that "integrated planning is at the heart of the United Nations efforts" to develop a UN system-wide response, there is presently no approved guidance for what is referred to as the Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP).[17] Although development of an implementation process began over two-years ago, the UN has failed to produce an agreed IMPP. While the UN's doctrinal manual states that "every effort should be made to ensure that planning is conducted in close coordination with relevant United Nations system partners and other key stakeholders,"[18] there is no agreed framework or process, with which to ensure integration. This is clearly a deficit which has a severe impact on the ability of a given UN mission to synchronize its effects. Unfortunately, the UN is not alone with regard to establishing concrete structure for its integration desires.

The genesis of NATO's Comprehensive Approach is credited to a Danish initiative which was introduced into the NATO agenda in late 2004.[19] Like the UN concept, NATO's CA is based on the ideal that in order to effectively stabilize war ravaged societies, security, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development, governance and rule of law

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[16] Niels Nagelhus Schia and Ståle UIriksen, "The UN, EU and NATO: Common Challenges in Multidimensional Peace Operations," Norsk Utenrikspolitisk Institutt No 728 (2007): 44.

[17] The UN Peace Keeping: Principles and Guidelines Manual (Pages 53-57) address the Integrated Approach concept in general terms including a brief discussion on the Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP), however the manual points out that while the IMPP was formally endorsed through a decision by the Secretary-General's Policy Committee, a comprehensive set of implementation guidelines are currently under development. Additionally in pages 69-74 the manual addresses the challenge of mission integration, citing the overall responsibility for the integrated mission with the SRSG; some components of an integrated mission and a brief summary on coordination with external partners.

[18] UN, Peace Keeping Operations Guidelines, 55.

[19] Friis Arne Peterson and Hans Binnendijk, "The Comprehensive Approach Initiative: Future Options for NATO," *Defense Horizons* 58 (Sep 2008): 1.

must all be delivered in a concentrated and coordinated manner. NATO formally recognized the concept of CA at the Riga Summit in November 2006 and to its credit, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) understood that its operations in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan demonstrated the need for greater collaboration with other actors in the field, which in turn led to their tasking for the development of an Action Plan focused on how NATO could incorporate CA into its functions.[20] However, even as the security situation began to turn for the worse in Afghanistan, the Action Plan development crawled along in Brussels. After a laborious 16 month process, the Action Plan was ultimately endorsed at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, "comprising of a set of pragmatic proposals to develop and implement NATO's contribution to the comprehensive approach."[21] The Summit specifically addressed planning and conduct of operations; training and education; and enhancing cooperation with external actors as key areas needed to improve the "coherent application of NATO's own crisis management instruments and enhance practical cooperation."[22] But this too, is proving to be woefully inadequate. In a recent comparative study between Effects Based Approach to Operations (EBAO) and CA, Brooke Smith-Windsor noted that compared to the voluminous EBAO handbook, NATO's Action Plan and its "CA discourse is general and malleable with text numbering just a few pages without a single graph or explanatory figure."[23] So now after three years of development, the CA concept has yet to be translated for practical employment which inevitably impacts the ability of NATO to apply integrated and comprehensive effects to its operational missions.

Establishing conflict management doctrine remains an absolute necessity. But in fact, the current multi-national and multi-organizational dogma lacks the level of inculcation and agreement required to ensure its intended affect among those supporting the Afghan cause. The bottom line

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[20] Ibid., 3.
[21] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Bucharest Summit. *Public Declaration* (Bucharest, Romania., 2008), 1.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Brooke Smith-Windsor, "Hasten Slowly NATO's Effects Based and Comprehensive Approach to Operations," *Research Paper* No 38 (July 2008): 4.

is that neither of these conflict management tools is mature or accepted enough among their UN and NATO stakeholders to create the appropriate level of synergy required in the stabilization effort.

**Afghanistan's national level coordination fora**

While the architects of the Integrated Approach and Comprehensive Approach continue to develop the implementation plans for their divergent processes, the mission of coordinating Afghan stability mission remains exclusively in the purview of national level fora. Two of the most prominent of these bodies are the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) and the PRT Executive Steering Committee (ESC). To differing degrees, each of these structures is responsible for coordination of security, governance, and reconstruction and development related support to Afghanistan. In fact, truth be told, these fora might well be the most important substructures in Afghanistan. For example, the JCMB is responsible for coordination of Afghanistan Compact (AC), which is the only UN endorsed strategic framework document for cooperation between the Government of Afghanistan, the United Nations and the international community, for programmatic delivery along three interrelated pillars of activity including: 1) Security, 2) Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights; and 3) Economic and Social Development.[24] On the other hand, the PRT ESC is responsible for providing guidance and oversight for all existing and proposed PRTs and is the single most important tool for ensuring PRT coherence across Afghanistan.[25] Yet neither of these structures is effectively accomplishing its coordination role.

Early last year the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) led an international coordination conference in which they developed a problem statement relative to the AC. As a result, more than fifty participants agreed that the "realization of the vision of the Afghanistan Compact through the Afghan National Development Strategy

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[24] Ibid., 177-179

[25] International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), *Provincial Reconstruction Team Handbook* (Kabul, Afghanistan, ISAF, 2008): 2.

(ANDS)[26] is threatened by incomplete synchronization, weak institutions, and a lack of coordination within the international community, between military and civilian actors and between the international community and the Government of Afghanistan itself, and that the result is incoherent and ineffective implementation – where wasted effort is measured in lives, money and lost time." [27] While these multi-national/multi-organizational coordination bodies might well hold the key to successful delivery of a stable Afghanistan, their effectiveness remains a problem due to poorly developed procedures and mechanism with which to coordinate the divergent interests of their members. The question is how voluntary cooperation can be effectively enhanced?

The reality is that cooperation in complex emergency environments like Afghanistan is not black and white. While there are numerous stakeholders and donors contributing to the Afghan cause, there is no entity which supra-nationally directs the orchestra of divergent resources and capabilities towards a common direction. Some look to the UNAMA for this function, due to their enhanced coordination role in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1806."[28] However, regardless of mandate, UNAMA is no leviathan; therefore nations and organizations continue to act within their own interests. The bottom line is that there are few, if any coercive means for cooperation, which leaves voluntary unification toward a common objective the only option. In order to achieve the level of cooperation anticipated among voluntary parties to stability, an agreed structure of some kind is required.

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[26] The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) will be the central framework for Afghanistan's development, aiming to promote pro-poor growth, support the development of democratic processes and institutions, and reduce poverty and vulnerability. It will lay out the strategic priorities and mechanisms for achieving the government's overall development vision and will serve as the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP, p. 43) a key document used by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in assessing a country's creditworthiness. The development of the ANDS was first proposed at the 2005 Afghanistan Development.
Forum (ADF, p. 11), and the final ANDS is scheduled be completed by March 2008. http://www.areu.org.af/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13&Itemid=17

[27] (United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan and Allied Joint Forces Command Brunssum 2008).

[28] (United Nations Security Council 2008).

**Case Study Analysis**

In the two case studies below a model of analysis based on the regime concept is used to analyze the existence and effectiveness of principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures within these national level coordinating structures using the four step analysis process below:

1. Do agreed principles exist among stakeholders? Is there an agreed common vision which binds them through fact, cause, and relevance to the problem?
2. Do norms, standards and obligations exist among the stakeholders and are they adhered to within the given institution?
3. Are there existing rules for behavior among the relevant actors including instructions and exclusions for action? Are the rules agreed, followed and adhered to within the institution?
4. Do procedures exist among the stakeholders and are they habitual, effective and agreed to within the institution? [29]

At the conclusion of the case studies, a summary of recommendations is provided in order to offer a way ahead for restructuring national level coordination bodies within Afghanistan.

**CASE STUDY I- Joint Coordinating and Monitoring Board (JCMB).**

Constituted three years ago, the JCMB is the main forum for strategic coordination, joint policy formulation, and problem solving among the various parties to the Afghan Compact.[30] The JCMB is Co-chaired by a senior government representative of the President and UN SRSG, Ambassador Kai Eide. The Board consists of 7 ministerial representatives of the Government of Afghanistan, which form the JCMB's Oversight Committee (OSC); and an additional 25 delegates from the International Community including UNAMA, ISAF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank; and member nations like the US, UK, Japan,

[29] The process for analysis is based off of Stephan D. Krasner's Rationalist definition of Regimes, which is the most widely used definition. It is derived from his work entitled "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables" 1989, p2.

[30] United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Strengthening the JCMB*, (Kabul, Afghanistan, Unpublished 2008): 2.

Pakistan, India, China, Iran, Turkey Russian and several others.[31] These same entities, coupled with Afghan ministries, form its subcomponent structures of 28 Technical Working Groups (TWG), 8 Consultative Groups (CG) and 5 Cross Cutting Consultative Groups (CCCG) all responsible for quarterly reporting on the Security, Governance and Development related Pillars of ANDS.[32] As the JCMB is only designed to meet quarterly, its Co-Chairmen recently agreed to establish three standing committees, focused on the three pillars of the Compact and ANDS and led by an Afghan government and international co-chair.[33] While the membership and the process are seemingly impressive, there remains a lack of structure with which to align these vast players.

**Analysis.** The JCMB might well be the most important coordinating body in all of Afghanistan. In fact, it could be the key to achieving the elusive strategic integration often cited by commanders, politicians and pundits alike. Its membership includes all of the most influential and powerful stakeholders in the region and across the globe. Yet, despite the potential of the JCMB, it has yet to function in the coordinated and integrated manner in which it was envisioned. For example, in the November 2009 UNSC Mission Report on the Afghanistan, Ambassador Kia Eide, reported that coordination remained limited by "the continued unwillingness of some donors to fully back the existing coordination mechanisms, especially the JCMB."[34] Undoubtedly, a key reason for the impasse in cooperation is due to a lack of shared vision and principles among the members of the JCMB.

There presently is no vision statement or specific principled terminology within the JCMB Terms of Reference with which to bind its 32 members by fact or cause. Although the sole purpose of the JCMB is to enable the security, governance and development components of the Afghan Compact through effective coordination, implementation and

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[31] (Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) 2008).
[32] (Joint Coordinating and Monitoring Board (JCMB) June 2008).
[33] UNAMA, Strengthing the JCMB, 2.
[34] (United Nations Security Council 2008).

monitoring; the JCMB charter fails to characterize the importance of its mission in relation to success or failure in Afghanistan. Despite the large membership of the JCMB, the Co-Chairmen have an obligation to ensure the Board's members agree to some form of shared principles which describe the consequence of coordination failure. The mission of the JCMB is far too important to remain malleable and without a common vision. It is exceedingly difficult to fully obligate the stakeholders to norms, rules and decision making procedures that would effectively enhance coordination of the Compact.

At first glance, in terms of norms (standards and obligations) among its national, ministerial and organizational members, the JCMB Terms of Reference seems relatively effective. The document provides the required sense of oversight, monitoring and reporting for which the JCMB was established, but based on the recent Afghan Compact review conducted by the JCMB Co-Chairs, the JCMB requires strengthening in joint policy formulation, problem solving and strategic coordination, which are not adequately addressed within the existing terms.[35] More importantly, there are other obligations of the JCMB which are noticeably absent. For example, during the Paris Conference in June 2008, a number of priority challenges were identified and agreed to among the attending stakeholders including: governance, policing, rule of law, corruption, agriculture, energy, and private sector development.[36] Yet, presently there is no existing obligation among the same members to ensure that strategic priorities take precedence over other competing interests. The JCMB's role should be to make sure that donor money and resources are coordinated and delivered in support of these priorities.

Regarding rules, few among the members of the JCMB are focused on meeting frequency, quorum consistency and the function of the JCMB Secretariat. Yet, these elements are in need of updating and

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[35] Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board Co-Chairs, "Report on the Implementation of the Afghanistan Compact," The International Conference in Support of Afghanistan (Paris, France 12 June 2008): 1-8.

[36] (United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA) 2008).

strengthening. The JCMB is designed to meet quarterly in its full membership forum to fulfill its monitoring and coordinating role, but to date the process has remained ineffective. The current JCMB Terms of Reference states that the JCMB will meet four times a year, but since its inception it only met three times in 2006, 2007, and 2008, which is 75% of its requirement. On two of those occasions, meetings were conducted outside of Afghanistan leading some to refer to it as a "traveling Jamboree."[37] The JCMB manages the most important process in stabilizing Afghanistan today, yet it has only met nine times in its three year history. A process of this nature must be nurtured more frequently in order to remain effective.

In terms of decision making procedures, the JCMB's current 32 member configuration makes it near "unwieldy" and prevents the level of efficiency required for effective implementation. While it is certainly true that within an organization of this nature "pressure for inclusion creates sometimes irreconcilable tension,"[38] the efficiency of the process must take precedence over its membership. Unfortunately, despite some cosmetic changes to the JCMB structure, including the newly established standing committees, there are presently no further efficiencies in the works for decision making. For example, while the new standing committees were originally set up to make decisions and support delivery related to their three specific pillars, in reality they have only the authority to "prepare policy papers and make recommendations" for discussion in the JCMB.[39] This inevitably removes any efficiency gained by establishing standing committees in the first place.

**Recommendations**. The Co-Chairman should immediately call for a revision of the JCMB Terms of Reference in order to redefine its overarching purpose, enhance its authorities and responsibilities and streamline its decision making procedures in support of the three components of the Afghanistan Compact and the ANDS. The JCMB as a coordinating mechanism should establish within its Terms of Reference a vision

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[37] International Crisis Group, International Resolve, 14.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board Co-Chairs, "Report on the Implementation of the Afghanistan Compact," The International Conference in Support of Afghanistan (Paris, France 12 June 2008): 1-8.

statement and principles for its overarching function including coordination, monitoring and prioritization. Rules should be applied to the JCMB members to obligate them to support their political commitments to the Afghan Compact and ANDS. Furthermore, the subordinate structures of the JCMB should be empowered to make decisions on a habitual basis in order to prevent the level of stagnation the JCMB's current quarterly process engenders. This means that rules should be applied, which not only empower the working groups, consultative groups, and standing committees, but ensure their effectiveness through manning, resourcing and habitual engagement. Finally, the JCMB should address some form of recrimination for failure to adhere to the norms and rules agreed within the current Terms of Reference. The JCMB's role must be strengthened within the international community and the Afghan government. Afghanistan can ill afford for this vital body to continue on life support.

**CASE STUDY II- PRT Executive Steering Committee (ESC)**

The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) is a tactical level entity led by 14 separate nations in 26 of Afghanistan 34 provinces. According to the NATO PRT Handbook, "a PRT is a civil-military institution that is able to penetrate the more unstable and insecure areas because of its military component and is able to stabilize these areas because of the combined capabilities of its diplomacy, military, and economic components."[40] The PRT Executive Steering Committee (ESC) is the overarching coordinating body in Afghanistan and it has "authority" based on its multinational and multi-organizational membership to provide guidance for all existing and future PRTs.[41] Its consists of some, if not all of the most powerful representatives involved in the Afghan cause. The Committee is led by the Director of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) and Co-Chaired by the UN SRSG, the NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) and ISAF (Commander or Deputy Chief of Staff Stability).[42] Its members include the ambassadors of all the PRT Troop-Contributing

[40] International Security Assistance Force, PRT Handbook, 5.
[41] Ibid., B-1-2.
[42] Joint Forces Command Brunssum, PRT Annex to OPLAN 30302 rev 4 (NATO Unclassified), December 2008, 2.

Nations (TCNs), potential contributing nations, Deputy Ministers from the ministries of Finance, Foreign Affairs, Public Works, Rural Rehabilitation and Development and Urban Development; the European Union Special Representative (EUSR), as well as World Bank, European Commission, US Forces Afghanistan, and EU Police representatives.[43] Despite the ESC's esteemed cast of supporters and its "authority" the Committee has accomplished little since its inception.

**Analysis.** Although there are new initiatives forming to revive the PRT ESC, the body itself remains stagnant and requires substantial changes to its Charter, its authority and its international support in order to accomplish its role as the policy coordinating body for 26 PRTs as well as their lead and contributing nations. Within the current Charter there are no principles directly related to the purpose of the ESC. The closest statement of fact or cause is the PRT mission statement, which was approved by the ESC in January 2005 and states "Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) will assist the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to extend its authority, in order to facilitate the development of a stable and secure environment in the identified area of operations, and enable Security Sector Reform (SSR) and reconstruction efforts."[44] While the mission statement serves as direction for PRTs, it fails to reflect the actual vision and purpose of the ESC's coordinating role among its member nations and organizations. Furthermore, the ESC's charter presently fails to account for the committees' obligations to coordination within the overarching purview of the JCMB. There is an inevitable linkage between the stability related mission of PRTs and the ANDS, which needs to be monitored and accounted for, within the framework of the nation's strategy for development. Finally regarding the ESC principles, unlike the JCMB, there is no specific international accord or resolution which establishes the authority of the PRT ESC. The ESC boast co-chairmanship from the UN, ISAF, NATO and the Afghan Government, as well as ambassadorial members from both lead and contributing PRT nations, the EUSR, Afghan Ministers and other important representatives, but it has no authoritative vision statement or

[43] Ibid., 2.
[44] International Security Assistance Force, PRT Handbook, 5.

endorsement from any overarching international governing body. Not only should the ESC Terms of Reference be modified to establish a set of principles for the ESC's conduct, but its authority and purpose must be reflected and endorsed within the Security Council under the existing ISAF resolution. A mandate of this nature would strengthen the authority of the ESC and heighten its legitimacy among the lead and contributing nations to PRT operations. Unfortunately, its legitimacy is equally challenged by its present ineffectiveness.

The ESC charter states that "the Committee has the authority, based upon its multinational and interagency membership, to provide guidance for all existing and future PRTs."[45] Their consolidated tasks consist of:

- Developing policy and guidelines for implementation, operation and expansion of the PRT concept;
- Determining verifiable measures of progress and periodically assess the situation;
- Assessing the success of PRTs in achieving measurable goals; and
- Conducting semi-annual review of their Charter to ensure Committee goals and actions evolve concurrent with the strategic and operational goals.[46]

Of these arguably the most important is the mission of the ESC to "develop policy, guidelines and priorities for all PRTs. Yet to date the ESC has only issued three policy notes including: *PRT Engagement in Provincial Development,* Dec. 2006; *PRT Engagement in Disbandment of Illegally Armed Groups*, Dec. 2006; *PRT Coordination and Intervention in Humanitarian Assistance*, Feb 2007.[47] Therefore the only organization charged with directing policy to the 26 PRTs currently conducting divergent operations in Afghanistan has only provided guidance on 3 occasions

[45] Ibid., 2.
[46] Ibid., B-1-3.
[47] Ibid., B-1-5.

in the past 3 years. More to the point, during the past 36 months, while Afghanistan has literally fought for its survival, the PRT ESC has failed to provide guidance on necessary support to development of the Afghan National Police, implementation of the five-year plan for local governance, support and assistance to the Afghan National Army (ANA), implementation of NATO's recent guidance on Counter Narcotics[48] and countless other new initiatives, which could have supported an increased level of integration within Afghanistan.

Yet another obligation of the ESC is to provide a sense of overarching analysis of how PRTs are impacting their operational environment. While ISAF, and in particular the CJ9 (CIMIC) section has supported PRTs with an information forum over the past couple of years, the ESC has provided virtually no input to the metrics of analysis tracked by the CJ9.[49] Further to the point, although the military component of ISAF's PRT section edits, synthesizes and reports on the activities of PRTs, the ESC neither uses the information for analysis nor directs the information theme, focus or frequency in accordance with its charter. By not fulfilling this specific aspect of their responsibility, Ambassadors, Ministers, and the leadership within the international community are left individually analyzing the impact of PRTs on Afghanistan. This inevitably leads to nations and organizations providing their own interpretation of the effect that PRTs are or are not having on their surrounds. If however the PRT ESC were to fulfill this analytical component of their charter by establishing well-defined PRT metrics and periodically assessing their overarching impact; the consolidated committee could more effectively inform the international community and the general public of the actual impact (good and bad) which PRTs provide to stability.

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[48] According to the NATO Website: Based on the request of the Afghan government, consistent with the appropriate United Nations Security Council resolutions, under the existing operational plan, ISAF can act in concert with the Afghans against facilities and facilitators supporting the insurgency, in the context of counternarcotics, subject to authorization of respective nations.

[49] Based on Author's experience working within the Higher Headquarters of ISAF CJ9 over a two year period, between July 2006 and June 2008.

**Recommendations.** The ESC is billed by NATO as the single most important tool for ensuring PRT coherence across Afghanistan. Though there are some ongoing efforts to correct its deficiencies, over recent years the ESC has suffered considerably from insufficient terms of reference, limited support from its members, and infrequent meetings. As a result the ESC has practically provided no guidance in over two-years, leaving international cooperation on PRT Operations at a near standstill. Achieving coherence among all 26 PRTs remains a challenge, if for no other reason than the fact that there are 14 different nations leading PRTs. A consistent and coherent approach to PRT operations in support of Afghan stability remains a constant concern for both friends and foes of this concept. The provision of guidance, direction and information to those nations leading and working in PRTs across Afghanistan is paramount to the accomplishment of its integrated effect on the nation. The ESC Charter must be modified sufficiently to accomplish its intended function and endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution to add emphasis to this ever-important necessity in Afghanistan. The PRT ESC must be strengthened within the international community and fulfill its obligations to provide policy guidance, modify the PRT concept and assess PRT performance. However, more importantly, the ESC must become an integrated coordinating structure to the JCMB in support of its obligations to the Afghan government's development strategy. NATO, UNAMA and the Government of Afghanistan need an effective body to coordinate both the civil and military components of PRTs. The ESC will only be able to fulfill that obligation when its purpose, method and intent are agreed and supported by its member nations and organizations.

**Summary**

Voluntary cooperation among the stakeholders in Afghanistan requires a strategic approach. For too long, political pundits, military commanders and a host of others have bemoaned the lack of cooperation within Afghanistan, but have done little to ensure its success. As publically recognized now more than ever, there is no solution to Afghanistan (and the region) which doesn't include the application of security, governance and

development in an integrated and synchronized manner. Emerging doctrine such as the Integrated Approach and the Comprehensive Approach are clearly steps in the right direction towards the integration of stakeholders involved in complex emergency environments. However, to differing degrees, the current dogma lacks the structure and implementation required to effectively change the current impasse on cooperation in Afghanistan. For this reason, the last best hope for security, governance, and development related cooperation among the stakeholders is to create greater efficiencies within the existing national level structures for coordination. In order to turn the tide on the current incomprehensible situation, the international community and the GoA must seek to establish within these national level coordinating bodies, shared principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures which effectively create the level of convergence demanded of this complex mission.

The people of Afghanistan, plagued by decades of violence, as well as the thousands of men and women supporting this mission deserve the full attention of the international community and the Afghan government in stabilizing the nation. Yet, the consequence of failure is far greater than just one state or one mission. In reality, the future of international cooperation in complex emergencies might well depend upon the outcome in Afghanistan. The UN's reputation, NATOs future role in security and the trust and confidence in international institutions in general, are all at stake. These organizations and their member nations have cooperated on numerous complex issues in the past. In order to ensure its future, Afghanistan can be no different.

**Conclusion**

While in the process of writing this project, UNAMA, ISAF and others have taken steps in the right direction towards revitalizing the JCMB and the PRT ESC, continued efforts within these and other national level fora are required. Coordination among the vast range of international actors in Afghanistan is not only critical to achieving stability, it's paramount. The key to cooperation lies in the structural integrity of the

existing multi-national and multi-organizational coordination bodies within Afghanistan. Without it, the overarching mission is certain to fail. As Ambassador Holbrooke, General Petreaus and others analyze the present impasse to stability in Afghanistan, they would be remiss to not apply an equal amount of attention to solving the current coordination crisis among its stakeholders. More troops, more civilians and more money are all likely ingredients for turning the tide on the current situation in Afghanistan. However, none of these remedies will effectively cure the present malady without better international cooperation.

# THE WHOLE OF REALITY SOLUTION FOR AFGHANISTAN

M. Chris Mason

*"All truth passes through three stages: first, it is ridiculed. Second, it is vehemently denied. Third, it is accepted as having been self-evident to everyone from the beginning."*
Schopenhauer

As the military and political situation in Afghanistan deteriorates, a number of reviews and studies are currently underway to determine what should be done to reverse what most observers agree is a grim prospectus. While many of the superficial reasons for the challenges in Afghanistan are understood — corruption, narcotics, an insurgency going viral — the fundamental, underlying structural reasons are generally not. The purpose of this paper is to explain these reasons — *why* the visible issues have surfaced, and particularly, what can still be done to stabilize the situation. The first portion of the paper will therefore go into some detail about the decisions taken in 2001 and 2002 which created the current problems — not to ascribe blame to the decision makers responsible, or to engage in an "I told you so" exercise — but rather to explain the real root causes of the failures. Because if these causes are not properly understood and accepted, then I fear what will emerge from the current "strategic reviews" will simply be "more of the same" - - more treating the visible symptoms, rather than the causes, and ultimately more failure with a higher price tag in blood and treasure. Such review processes often proceed from the launching point of the symptoms, without an understanding of the real fundamental structural problems, and therefore tend to result in a plan to (1) maintain the same failed strategic paradigm while (2) directing an incremental increase in resources toward the problem coupled with (3) some new catchy but meaningless buzzwords, like the

"whole of government approach," to make old wine in new bottles more palatable. Instead, military and political policymakers need to understand that unless they are willing to accept strategic failure in Afghanistan as the price of inaction, this time the standard "same approach but try harder" solution will not suffice.

Time is running out. Some hard cultural realities need to be faced, and faced soon. Thus, with Schopenhauer's dictum firmly in mind, and cognizant that what I am about to say will likely be met with reactions reflecting his stages one and two, I will explain why the international effort in Afghanistan today is on the brink of failure.

Afghanistan is not a country in the sense that NATO members conceptualize that word. It has never, except in the most superficial sense, been a country. With the exception of a handful of educated urban elites in Kabul, many of them expatriates, there is no real national sense in the Afghan populace. Beyond this handful of elites, with whom unfortunately the international community communicates almost exclusively (such as former Voice Of America program manager *cum* Interior Minister Ali Jalali, to cite one archetypical example), almost no one inside the modern borders of Afghanistan thinks of themselves as a "citizen of Afghanistan." Outside of Kabul, virtually all identity is ethnic, tribal, and local. The "Kabul-centric" experience of American and European scholars, diplomats, military officers, and the current coterie of shake-and-bake "Afghan experts," has given them a very badly, and very dangerously, skewed perception of Afghanistan's potential to form a viable state in the western sense in the near term, and thus the potential for success of the current strategy. If the only people one talks to are those educated, nationalist, urban elites in Kabul, one will form an educated, nationalist, urban elite, perspective of Afghanistan. Such Afghans are indeed highly intelligent, highly educated, worldly, sophisticated, and urbane; they think like we do and are easy to converse with, as they are familiar with our patterns of conversation, and many of them speak English. Unfortunately, they also present a viewpoint that is representative only of a tiny fringe minority of less than one percent of the population.

A corollary of this reality is the fact that Afghanistan was, historically, essentially defined in negative terms as what countries and peoples it was *not* (i.e., it was south of Russia and not Russia, it was east of Persia and not Persia— although historically Iran would argue that Khorasan was part of Persia — and it was north of British India, and thus not India — although Afghan kings would maintain that Peshawar paid tribute to the Afghan *Dost*). It has never, in the last century, had anything which NATO states would think of as the strong central government which the current constitution mandates. Indeed, governments which have sought to *be* a strong central government, such as those of King Amanullah in the 1920s and Babrak Karmal in the 1980's, have been quickly and violently deposed by rural insurrections. The people living inside the borders of Afghanistan have demonstrated over and over again that they *do not want* a strong central government. Those who ignore the lessons of history, as Santayana said, are doomed to repeat it, as NATO and the United States now appear to be. The reality is that governance outside of Kabul, like identity, is ethnic, tribal and local.

Furthermore, governments in Kabul have been suffered to exist, to a greater or lesser degree, based on their perceived *legitimacy*. In this regard, the pioneering "father of modern sociology," Max Weber, identified three basic sources of governmental legitimacy for any nation or group of people: traditional legitimacy, religious legitimacy, and legal legitimacy. By "traditional," Weber included dynastic, hereditary leadership — monarchies — and patriarchal systems, which included segmentary tribal organizations. The meaning of "religious" leadership is self-explanatory, but would obviously include, as archetypes, the former Caliphate of Islam and the Vatican of Catholic Europe. By "legal," Weber included all of the forms of representative government which the democracies of Europe and North America embody, which have in common a basis in the rule of law and elective popular representation.

<u>Without exception</u>, for 2,000 years, Afghanistan has known only the first two of these sources. Afghanistan has been ruled by kings, emirs, satrapies, and tribal leadership, with the former three often endorsed by

Caliphs. Afghanistan, for all intents and purposes, has no experience whatsoever of the third source of legitimacy of governance, i.e., democracy, the rule of law, and representative government. The international community, in the form of the United States in the thrall of the minority "Northern Alliance" of Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara warlords, and the United Nations led by Lakhdar Brahimi and allied to the educated expatriate urban Kabuli elites, stormed into this world of traditional and religious legitimacy in 2001 and 2002. Working together with western scholars who shared the nationalist views of the handful of educated urban elites and the anti-monarchial northern ethnic groups, the international community proceeded to create a new Afghan polity which comprehensively eliminated or marginalized the only two culturally acceptable sources of legitimacy, the *traditional* and the *religious*. The monarchy, which remained deeply popular with the people and critical for social stability, was foolishly eliminated, even in a ceremonial role which could have conferred secular legitimacy on a new government. The rural *mullahs* and *ulemas* whose leadership the Taliban embodied, were not invited to the conversation at all. The result was a government of northern warlords and Kabuli elites which was, and is, based almost entirely on the (totally alien) third source of legitimacy, (i.e., legal), wrapped up in a thin veneer of the linguistic trappings of an "Islamic state" — trappings which are interpreted and enforced essentially only by the Kabuli *ulema — not the rural ulemas*.

As the year 2009 begins, seven years into the international engagement in Afghanistan, the US, the UN, and NATO are now expressing surprise and frustration that President Hamid Karzai is actually unpopular, ineffectual, and increasingly seen as illegitimate by the Afghan people. "But, he won the election," they all say, then add: "If only he had shown strong leadership." Instead of accepting the foundational cultural explanation for this state of affairs, the western institutions and their academic advisors, whose entire world paradigms are built on the Westphalian model of the nation-state, have built onto their lack of understanding of Afghanistan by coming up with all sorts of alternative explanations for state failure. Thus, although we're still arguing in the United States about absentee ballots, "hanging chads," "black box voting machines" and

"ACORN" more than 300 years into *our* experiment with democracy, the failure of democracy after six years in a country with a literacy rate of 15 percent and no prior knowledge of it whatsoever is attributed to the "weak leadership" of President Hamid Karzai, or a lack of funding, or more troops, or other equally superficial, self-deluding explanations. So far, in my experience, no one in the UN or the US government, which both know only their single template, one-size-fits-all model of post-conflict resolution, are able to think outside the box of the Treaty of Westphalia to even consider the *possibility* that there might be other models for human existence, or even to accept the basic premise that "culture matters."

That's the root of the problem, but it gets worse. It would be one thing to pay lip service to the Westphalian model of government, and try to build one slowly while acknowledging reality outside Kabul. But unfortunately, the "Westphalian paradigm" has been accompanied for the last seven years by a delusional strategy for stabilizing Afghanistan which is built almost exclusively around the principle of "extending the reach of the central government." The standard UN and NGO catechisms of "capacity building," "reconciliation," "security sector reform," and so on, have been and continue to be invoked ceaselessly, an endlessly repeated mantra which has created a hegemonic discourse around the problem which has proved all but impossible to break through. In fact, however, the top-down model of "extending the reach of the central government." is <u>exactly the wrong strategy in Afghanistan</u>. For the last 2,000 years, all attempts to "extend the reach of the central government" in Afghanistan have resulted in virulent rural insurgencies. Only the Iron Emir, Abdur Rehman, succeeded briefly, and then only through a harsh and brutal reign of terror. The hard truth is that ironically, if our goal had been from the outset in 2001 to help the Taliban return to power, the Bonn Process coupled to this strategy is what we would have pursued.

- ***In short, we are attempting to create something which has never existed, a strong central government, based on a source of legitimacy which has never existed, democracy, by implementing a strategy of "extending the reach of the central gov-***

***ernment," which for a thousand years has always provoked a virulent, rural, conservative insurgency based in Islamic models of resistance. To even a casual observer, it should be obvious that more of this same formula is not likely to lead to rapid, short-term success.***

The reality is that the central government of Afghanistan is irrelevant and has, for the last century, always been irrelevant. The Karzai government is illegitimate, not because it is hopelessly incompetent and massively corrupt, although that certainly doesn't help, but *because it is elected and there is no Afghan king to confer upon it a secular, dynastic legitimacy.* Elections are not a source of legitimacy for governance in Afghanistan, and the attributions of western motivations for high voter participation in elections there are a fallacy of cultural mirroring which continue to be fobbed off by the very same Kabul-centric western scholars and diplomats who presided over the creation of the current train wreck of a constitution. There is no anthropological evidence whatsoever to support the contention that Afghans participated in the Bonn Process-mandated elections for the same reasons, or with the same democratic consciousness, that western voters would do so. However, the fact that people voted became its own *a priori* proof that a nation of illiterate feudal peasants somehow transformed into Jeffersonian democrats overnight, and the assumption has never been questioned. That assumption, however, is wrong.

This is not to say that the Westpahalian model state is not a good future ideal for Afghanistan, or that the current efforts to create a capable, competent and reasonably honest government in Kabul are a bad thing *per se*. The point is, rather, that the sand is running out of the hourglass; the Taliban insurgents (or Jihadists) are almost literally at the gates of Kabul, as the planned deployment of thousands of new U.S. troops around the capital evidences. Much of the south is under *de facto* Taliban control, and it is essentially now no longer possible to travel anywhere outside of Kabul by road. Any rational analysis of the situation indicates that the massive human social engineering project implied by the current constitution and

the current model of "top-down nation building" is not going to achieve success before the insurgency reaches critical mass. We are on a trajectory to failure, and "rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic" with new buzzwords like "whole of government approach," and some new resources are not going to significantly change that trajectory. We are losing, and more of the same, with more twiddling at the operational and tactical margins, and more "imperial stormtroopers" deployed in the same failed operational patterns are not going to change the fundamental sociological factors at work.

Building Afghanistan, or making Afghanistan into a reasonably stable geographical area, using the current top-down strategic approach is a model for perpetual failure. This is heresy to the United Nations, of course, and to the army of consultants, "international development experts," and academics who inhabit or visit compounds in Kabul, and who are deeply invested professionally, academically, and financially in the Kabul-centric model for an Afghan state. It is equally anathema to the State Department, which only knows how to relate to the nation-state model of state formation and how to conduct capital-to-capital diplomacy. From this group I fully expect Schopenhauer's stage one and two reactions, i.e., ridicule and vehement denial. However, I was correct when I predicted in writing in December 2002 in the State Department precisely the current situation existing today, complete with maps showing, down to the district levels, the exact locations where Taliban insurgency would be in 2007, and I am correct today.

So what is to be done? The answer lies in an already-proven concept, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, or PRTs. While the concept that these Civil Affairs -centered entities *can be established and defended* has been proven in both Afghanistan and Iraq, in Afghanistan they have had no strategic impact on the course of the war for one simple reason: The troop-to-task ratio makes their *de facto* mission impossible. As initially conceived, the PRTs were intended to be coordinating bodies which would integrate and facilitate the work of NGOs and other aid actors in their provinces. (I was not only present as a member of the Afghanistan

Interagency Operations Group, or AIOG, which created the PRT concept and got it approved by the Deputies Committee, I later served as the State Department political officer on one of them in 2005, so I know whereof I speak.) But the *de jure* intent of the PRTs in the south of Afghanistan was quickly overtaken by the *de facto* reality that the Taliban succeeded in chasing out and scaring away all the NGO and aid organizations, and the PRTs were left with almost no one with whom to coordinate and facilitate. Thus the PRT mission on the ground in the south, where the insurgency is raging, quickly morphed into doing the development work themselves through contracting with local agents. And for that new task, the PRTs were simply too small, too few, too naïve about Afghanistan, and too far between. The current ratio of PRTs to Pashtun tribesmen living at the dawn of the iron age, is one PRT for every 1.2 million Pashtuns. The best ten Army civil affairs soldiers in the world working with CERP funds and the Army's bizarre budgeting system, while handicapped by the standard endemic local corruption issues, cannot possibly bring meaningful reconstruction efforts to 1.2 million people, even if they weren't in the middle of a virulent insurgency.

The PRT concept today is also shackled to the recipe-for-failure "top down paradigm" discussed above. The unfortunate aspect of this structure, of provincial organization, is that, in reality, provinces don't exist in the sense of meaningful political organization in Afghanistan. The only real-world place where "provinces" exist is as red lines on a map of Afghanistan. But because we, the United States and NATO, come from countries where these red lines (around states in the United States, or provinces in Canada, or counties in the United Kingdom, or Länder in Germany), where these red lines are drawn around meaningful levels of identity or governance, we do more cultural mirroring on Afghanistan, and project that same meaning onto the Afghan countryside.

However, it is safe to say, there is not one Afghan alive today who would identify himself or herself as coming from a province. Where an American might well, in response to the question "where are you from?" answer, for example: "I'm from California" or "I'm from Virginia," no

Afghan would ever say, "I'm from Zabul province" or "I'm from Paktika province." Thus, the international community is trying to organize effective government at a level where it does not exist conceptually. American planners should reflect for a moment on what the challenges might be in creating a new conceptual level of government in the United States, such a "Governor of New England," for example, today. "Province" is a level of organization which does not relate to the rural Afghan consciousness. This might not be a major problem, except that we are in the middle of a war. If we were not in the middle of a war to prevent the creation of a new *Jihadistan* which will provide a safe haven to *al Qaeda*, operating at the provincial level would simply be another harmless, ineffectual waste of taxpayer money in the form of the usual ill-conceived, culturally clueless, and poorly executed aid projects. If a fire is burning down your house, is it the best time to be planning a new addition? If the people who live there don't organize themselves that way, why are we trying to force it into being to suit our own governance models? In essence, the answer to that question today is "so that their maps look like our maps."

- ***At the operational level, we are operating from a fantasy vision of Afghanistan, an artificial construct called "provinces" which the rural tribal Afghan people are totally unable to relate to, or even comprehend.***

Every military officer knows the fundamental precept of counterinsurgency is to protect the people. And virtually all realistic observers of Afghanistan today would agree that this is not happening in Afghanistan. In this war, the enemy, who for shorthand I will refer to as "the Taliban," (but in fact is an enormously complex set of opponents with an increasingly factionalized and atomized command and control), is operating daily — hourly — at the local village level. The Taliban enemy is a 24/7/365 presence in most of the south. In comparison, a strong, efficient, well-run and energetic PRT will visit each district assigned to its province perhaps once per quarter, for 3 or 4 hours, during daylight, for a cup of tea with local elders of secondary or tertiary importance in their communities, who then report to the Taliban exactly what was said. Most small villages

in southern Afghanistan see an international or Afghan soldier perhaps once a year. Meanwhile, we have ten of thousands of personnel sitting on FOBs around Afghanistan, going to the gym and playing video games in their spare time. There are 7,000 American soldiers and contractors on Bagram Airbase alone, which is equipped with a Burger King, a Dairy Queen, and a massage parlor. In effect, we don't have a *quantity* of personnel problem in Afghanistan, we have a *distribution* of personnel problem in Afghanistan.

- ***In summary, then, in Afghanistan today, we have an incompetent, corrupt, "strong" central government model where one has never existed, built on an alien concept of legitimacy (democracy), operating on a strategy which historically foments insurgency among a proto-insurgent population ("extending the reach of the central government"), operating from a fantasy (provincial) model of administrative organization, which is protecting the population by visiting contested villages once a year. I respectfully submit that more of the same, coupled with the latest buzzword, such as the "whole of government approach," is not going to solve this problem set.***

So what can be done? In fact, there is a pragmatic, operationally-feasible, implementable solution at hand, and there are already enough international troops in Afghanistan to carry it out. The solution to the entire problem set lies in understanding <u>and accepting</u> where governance and legitimacy lie in Afghanistan. The level of governance which matters in the south and east of Afghanistan, and arguably in all of Afghanistan, is the district level. The answer is to "go local" in the south and east.

District boundary lines in the south and east, unlike provincial boundary lines, are typically drawn around a single tribe or clan of Pashtuns. This is the fundamental level of identity in Afghanistan, the largest entity to which virtually all Afghans would claim allegiance, but this is particularly true in the south and east, the areas in which the Pashtun tribes make up the overwhelming majority of the population. It is time to

turn the strategy right side up, and instead of trying to build a pyramid from the capstone down, we need to focus on building the pyramid from the base stones up. The base stones in southern Afghanistan are the districts — the traditional *Woleswali* and *Alaqadari*. This is where the bulk of the stability effort should be focused in Afghanistan, not the capital city. We need to accept that the central government is irrelevant, stop internally reciting the failed UN catechisms of "nation-building," "capacity-building," and "whole of government approach," and so on, and understand that the only level of government which really matters in southern and eastern Afghanistan is the local level. If we want to prevent the reconstitution of a *Jihadistan* in Afghanistan, we need to be operating at the local level, as the enemy is, 24/7/365.

The current model of "clear, hold, and build," with all due respect to its architects, is the wrong model in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, the result of this sequentialization of these functions results in the current Groundhog Day loop familiar to all military officers who have served in RC East and RC South: "clear, return to FOB… clear, return to FOB….clear, return to FOB." Conceptually, if not tactically, "clear hold and build" in Afghanistan is essentially backwards: Conceptually, you would build, then, having built, you would "hold," and by having built and held, you would ultimately "clear," because the insurgent enemy would no longer have an alternative vision which makes sense or has an appeal to villagers.

Tactically, of course, this is not possible. "Clear, hold and build" doesn't work because we're not holding after clearing. "Build, hold and clear" won't work, because you have to have security in order to build. So, the logical conclusion is, one has to do all three — "clear, hold, build" - - *simultaneously*. The way that one does this is to own the districts, by pushing the PRT unit model down to the level of governance which matters — the district level — by creating District Development Teams in every district in southern and eastern Afghanistan.

The "DDT," to apply a shorthand nomenclature to it, looks like a PRT at 80 percent size, with an ANA platoon or *demi-companie* attached,

to bring each one up to 130-150 personnel, of whom roughly 100 would be non-Afghan. These DDTs would house a ramped-up US or NATO-country civilian government effort as well, to include Department of State diplomats, Department of Agriculture experts, ANA ETTs, and police trainers. These locally-based personnel could then operate daily in their district, visiting villages, elders, collecting intelligence, and preventing much of the local police corruption which fuels the insurgency merely by their presence, such as shutting down illegal police "shakedowns." To complete this "localization" of the counterinsurgency throughout the east and south would require about 200 "DDTs," to have one in each district in the counterinsurgency zone. This in turn would require approximately 20,000 international personnel, less than one third of the international troops currently in Afghanistan.

Obviously, there are enormous planning concerns and implications for such a revolutionary reorganization of international forces, including huge challenges for aerial resupply, communications, intelligence coordination, command and control, fire support, and force protection, to name just the obvious ones. Furthermore, the design of the DDTs has to be such that it does not appear to represent a foreign occupation, by putting a very real Afghan chassis on each one. Each DDT would have to fly the Afghan flag, have ANA troops providing the visible security, and be sited in each district on tactically defensible terrain which is "out of sight" of most Afghans in their daily lives but nevertheless not "out of mind." In other words, DDTs should not be sited inside or on the edges of villages, which would be culturally intrusive, but should be sited on unused wasteland in each district (one resource which Afghanistan has plenty of) in a position with good 360 degree fields of fire. Each would require a combat medical team, a helipad, at least a trained mortar section to provide local fire support and illumination rounds, and a fire control team trained in calling in air strikes *in extremis*.

Why will this work? For two reasons: Political and Military. Politically, because it will allow the traditional Afghan governance system and social organization, the local tribal structure — which is governed by

the councils of elders in each village — to regenerate, recover and then to re-create the effective, stable, traditional political counterbalance to the currently-outsized role of the now-radicalized village religious leaders which existed for a thousand years before 1979. How? Militarily — by providing meaningful daily protection and security to the elders in each district in the form of three concentric layers of force: first, the Afghan National Police in each district, now with embedded foreign trainers who live on the DDT compound but mentor the police daily, second, Afghan National Army personnel, who are based at the DDT compound as reinforcements to the civil power, and third, when necessary, foreign quick reaction forces and firepower who operate from within the DDT compound. Afghan National Police, thus emboldened with this kind of backup, will fight harder and longer, and win. And winning firefights, as every combat leader knows, is the magic elixir of morale.

Some will say that the tribal structures are "too damaged" or "too diffuse" now for this to work. However, those academics who listen to the voices of the old, tired expatriate Kabuli nationalist elites, and argue that the tribal structures are too badly damaged to recover are simply wrong. This is the bill of goods which best serves their own personal nationalist agendas, but it is not true, and too many western diplomats and academics have "drunk this Kool-Aid." In point of fact, today's village elders, the men aged 50 to 70, are the same men who sat in their village tribal *jirgas* and *salah-mashwarah* 30 years ago as 20-to-40 year old men. The living knowledge of how the system works is very much still present.

- ***The central point is that it makes more sense to return to what worked 30 years ago in order to create a traditionally stable, non-radicalized society and then slowly build a country from there, than trying to build an entirely new and alien governance structure while the "roof is on fire." In other words, create stability first, then work on utopia.***

In this concept, the existing PRTs would become Provincial Reconstruction Logistic Hubs (PRLHse, or "Pearls," for short) which pro-

vide the bases from which the new DDTs are launched, supplied and protected *in extremis*. A Quick Reaction Force (QRF) at each PRLH could be on stand-by to support a beleaguered DDT garrison. However, they do not perpetuate the failed top-down model by coordinating the work of the DDTs. It is absolutely undesirable to create some huge, Stalinist bureaucracy of centralized control and planning. The DDTs should be local, independent organisms which respond to the local demand signal. Remember, the model is "bottom-up," not "top-down." The PRLHs would push supplies — reconstruction materials, bullets, beans, medical supplies — on demand down to the DDTs, provide a transit barracks for DDT personnel going on leave and so on, and provide a hub for certain "high-demand, low-density" assets like Veterinary Civil Affairs Patrols (VetCAPS). They could also serve as intelligence gathering hubs for each grouping of district teams, as the enemy easily moves across district boundaries, and the mid-level bad actors have larger territories than districts.

If NATO and the United States can't get themselves realigned to the reality of local governance in Afghanistan, and begin to get control of the districts quickly, we are going to recreate almost exactly the Soviet misadventure with Babrak Karmal. Right now, the international mission in Afghanistan is on a glide path into mission failure, and a major change of course and strategy is required which is based on local control and a new model of governance which lets go of the fantasy of a traditional nation-state based in Kabul. The model of DDT-like units, the PRTs is already proven. "Proof of Concept" is done. We know what works, and we know what doesn't work. We know we're not going to win this fight by killing our way out of the insurgency, and we know we have to protect the local populations. We know the police are a long way from being able to stand on their own. We know we need better intelligence. It's time to connect the dots and push out DDTs. You might say it's been self-evident from the beginning.

# COUNTERINSURGENCY IN AFGHANISTAN: SNATCHING VICTORY FROM THE JAWS OF DEFEAT

Thomas H. Johnson

## Introduction

There is little doubt that the Taliban insurgency has become an existential threat to the current Afghan government of Hamid Karzai. In a very real sense the greatest challenge facing Kabul from the insurgency is the fact that in numerous areas, especially in the east and south Pashtun hinterlands, the Taliban are "out governing" Kabul and securing the population. The Taliban are instituting systems of justice in areas where there was no perceived justice before. A central lesson of the last few years in Afghanistan is that the Afghan people are more than willing to accept "security" and "justice" provided by Taliban if Kabul and its coalition partners can't provide it. Kabul and NATO quite frankly have not been able to bring security and stability or justice to the traditional Pashtun homeland of south and east of the Helmand River. This must change.

Just as Vietnam was in 1967, the conflict in Afghanistan is at a critical juncture. Recent years have witnessed the Taliban gaining significant strength and a presence throughout most of Afghanistan. Indeed, recent actions in Kabul seem to suggest that the Taliban can now operate in Afghanistan anywhere and at any time. The situation has gotten so bleak that President Obama has recently suggested that the United States is *not* winning in Afghanistan[1]. When you are not "winning" a counterinsurgency you are losing because winning implies securing the population – the center of gravity of all insurgencies/counterinsurgencies. It is quite clear that we can not "kill" or "capture" our way to victory in Afghanistan. We need a new strategy for Afghanistan if we are to snatch victory from

[1] Helene Cooper and Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Obama Ponders Outreach to Elements of Taliban," *New York Times*, March 8, 2009, p. A-1.

the jaws of defeat by simultaneously "clearing," "holding," and "building" at the Afghan local level.

The purpose of this essay is to discuss what has gone wrong and how the tide can be turned in Afghanistan; its basic message is that we critically need to develop a tribal/community engagement strategy that recognizes Pashtun culture and traditions and builds from the bottom up, rather than from the top down from Kabul. Ultimately what is needed is a strategy that will allow for traditional legitimacy in Afghanistan to flower and gain the support of the people while isolating the insurgents.

**Afghan regime legitimacy**

Insurgencies and insurrections are not new phenomena in Afghanistan. The threats presently facing Kabul in its attempt to establish effective control and governing capacity today are similar to threats that earlier Afghan regimes have faced. Earlier Afghan regimes have been fairly successful in subduing insurgency and generating a relative degree of state capacity. Much of this control has ultimately relied on the regime being viewed an explicitly legitimate entity in the eyes of the population.

Afghan history has suggested that the legitimacy of Afghan governments has flown from two immutable historical sources: either *dynasty* (usually in form of the monarchy) or *religion*, and frequently both.[2] Often in Afghan history, legitimacy was *enhanced* by other means. For example, the monarchy under Amir Abdul Rahman "The Iron Amir" (1880-1901) and the Taliban regime (1996-2001) were predicated on legitimate authority, even though their rule was totalitarian and brutal. This historical trend poses a major problem for the current Government of Afghanistan whose

[2] The monarchy was foolishly written out of the Afghan constitution. As Afghanistan's last monarch, Zahir Shah, died in 2007, the opportunity is past for reviving the monarchy under his eldest surviving son, Crown Prince Ahmad Shah. However, even the ceremonial re-establishment of the monarchy could have proved an important source of legitimacy and nationalism reconciliation for the Afghan people, who hold a nostalgic view of the monarchy. A new Afghan monarch could have potentially conferred some political legitimacy upon an elected ruler, and provided a legitimate source of stability and inspiration, similar to how the English and Japanese monarchs are still revered.

rule is based on rational (legal) sources of legitimacy (e.g., western-style elections), which have no historical basis for singularly legitimizing Afghan rule. This is especially problematic at the local and village level of Afghan society.

Backed by the external power of the British, the "Iron Amir" was faced with establishing his own legitimacy and authority over an occupied territory populated by the ethnically diverse and independent tribes within his borders.[3] This situation is analogous to the conditions under which Hamid Karzai assumed Presidency of the interim Afghan government in December 2001, following the US-led military coalition that toppled the Taliban regime but did *not* defeat the Taliban as an organization. American and NATO forces continue to conduct security, reconstruction and counter-terrorism operations within Afghanistan's borders, attempting to perform many of the state-making tasks undertaken by the Amir over a century ago. In theory these military operations should have alleviated some of the logistical burden on the Karzai regime, who should have then placed increased focus on extending bureaucratic and administrative consolidation and control of the government. In reality, however, Kabul squandered an opportunity and did not deliver to the people what they so desired – security and development to include jobs and economic reconstruction. This has had a tremendous impact on the disdain most Afghans outside of Kabul hold for the Karzai Government.

The Karzai government is in need of significant and radical reform into order to end the widespread corruption and nepotism that dominate Afghan politics. President Karzai's own brother is alleged to be one of Afghanistan's biggest drug warlords. Moreover, some provincial governors and influential members of parliament, including Cabinet Ministers, are criminals, warlords and military commanders from former regimes, many of whom still maintain strong private militias and who rule their provinces like their own personal fiefdoms, using their government position to protect them in their illicit activities.

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[3] Abdul Rahman quelled a variety of local revolts against his regime such as Sayyid Mahmud of Kunar in 1881, the Shinwari revolt of 1883, and the Ghilzai rebellion of 1886-1887.

The authority of the current government in Kabul is additionally undermined by foreign military forces and advisers, whose mere presence serves to delegitimize the government and provide a strong source for political mobilization and resistance. Yet, overcoming the fundamental issue of political legitimacy is just one facet of the many challenges facing this government and coalition forces. *The central task remains one of establishing stability and government at the local level, amidst an insurgency that has not only engulfed a vast portion of the countryside, but has exponentially escalated in the number and severity of attacks against coalition forces and government representatives over the past four years*.

Judicial reform provides another avenue which is critical for an Afghan government to gain inroads toward the development of legitimate authority. The government needs to be perceived as amenable toward, and not in opposition against traditional conservative Islamic and community/tribal customs. Judicial reform that integrates aspects of Islamic *Shari'a* law with modern criminal and civil law could go a long way toward promoting a virtuous image for the secular government, which could translate such a move into political capital as both the defender of Islamic values and dispenser of Islamic justice—claims that have resided for too long in the domain of radical Islamists and terrorists instead of the government. This last aspect is key, as the application of the *Shari'a* would be respectful of human rights and largely compatible with international law, as long as no strict or puritanical interpretation of the *Shari'a* or adoption of the *Hadith* (punishments) are adopted. The critical importance is to restore public confidence in the justice system, based on the equitable implementation of a legal code amenable to Islam, tribal customary law and international norms and laws concerning human rights. Our counterinsurgency strategy must involve strengthening traditional systems and structures that are the epitome of legitimacy in Afghanistan.

**Reconciliation and Negotiations**

National reconciliation must be another critical component of any strategy intended to extend the writ of the state to the local level. An ongo-

ing dialogue with the Taliban should be part of our counterinsurgency strategy, but such a venture is marred in danger. Since 2006, various ISAF partners have pursued a dialogue with regional Taliban figures as well as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. None of these efforts have borne fruit. It's been difficult to identify who can in fact speak for the Taliban insurgent leadership. While these talks proceeded, the insurgency became more violent and casualty rates soared for ISAF.

While Taliban hard-liners, especially Omar's inner shura, and members of HIG and the Haqqani Network, are irreconcilable, other "moderate" elements of insurgent factions must be brought into the political process such as those part-time fighters part-time farmers that constitute a large percentage of the Taliban foot soldiers. This must be the goal of the reconciliation process.

The problem of a negotiating strategy, of course, is finding "moderate" Taliban who can speak or negotiate for the insurgents at the *strategic* level. Those that support dialogue and negotiations believe that talks can split the insurgency between "moderates" and the extremist global *jihadists*. I am frankly unsure of who the moderate, *important* Taliban are that can negotiate at such a level. The structure of the Taliban is complex. The organizational structures at the local, provincial, regional, and national levels are not all necessarily tied together in a unified hierarchy and the political leaders (Quetta *Shura*, Haqqani Network, al Qaeda) remain outside of Afghanistan

Another problem is that *historically*, Pashtuns (who constitute the core Taliban constituency) have negotiated only when they perceive themselves in a position of strength. If their public statements are to be believed – the Taliban today think they are in a position of strength. Taliban spokesman Qari Yusuf Ahmadi recently stated: "We struggle for almighty Allah and we sure are winning."

Negotiations as well as policies of reconciliation should start by reaching out to local Taliban leaders. This is a double edged sword, how-

ever, since reaching out to these figures also potentially exposes us to dealing with criminals and corrupt politicians – in addition to the insurgent leaders. For long-term, success, however, I think we need a process that starts at the local level that builds from the ground up. Maybe this is the way to really identify leaders worth talking to.

**Some points to ponder concerning the Pashtun[4]**

As the prominent French sociologist and anthropologist, Louis Dumont, has suggested: People do not behave, they *act* and their actions are based on cognitive underpinnings and ideas.[5] A nuanced understanding of the Pashtun cognitive structure is critical for shaping the operational environment for US and NATO/ISAF strategy, operations, and tactics. The problem, of course, is that this cognitive structure is not a monolithic consideration, but rather a mosaic comprised of many divergent and often contradictory layers and facets.

I believe that one of the greatest problems confronting our Afghan policies is the simple fact that we continue to misunderstand and underestimate the rural Pashtuns who arguably are the most important characters in the entire Afghan drama.

Pashtun Afghanistan is primarily a "contact' society and its characteristics are often difficult to understand by westerners who live in basic "contract" societies. While the "group," social structure, and tribal honor

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[4] I focus primarily on the Pastum because they are absolutely critical to the ongoing Afghan insurgency. Indeed, the Taliban is almost an exclusively Pashtun organization. As argued elsewhere, the fact that the portion of the country most embroiled in the insurgency is the traditional Pashtun homeland and "the border region that is home to extremist groups such as the Taliban and al-Qaida coincides almost exactly with the area overwhelmingly dominated by the Pashtun tribes is critically important. The implications of this salient fact - that most of Pakistan's and Afghanistan's violent religious extremism, and with it much of the United States' counterterrorism challenge, are contained within a single ethnolinguistic group – the Pashtuns – have unfortunately not been fully grasped by a governmental policy community that has long downplayed cultural dynamics." (Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier," *International Security*, Vol, 32, No. 4, Spring, 2008, p. 42.

[5] See Louis Dumont, *Essais sur l'individualisme: Une perspective anthropologique sur l'ideologie moderne. (*Paris: du Seuil, 1983).

are paramount in Afghanistan, western society revolves around the "individual," statutes and regulations, and a refined legal system. At the expense of being over simplistic, the Pashtun personality is defined by the individual's "group," a shame/revenge culture, and a sense of well-being (honor) that is very public. Westerns, on the other hand, reside in a "guilt" culture where a sense of well-being is more private and where the individual is king. Quite simply our cognitive structures are completely out of whack with those of the Pashtun. And we have a tendency to culturally mirror. This has contributed to failed policies.

Afghanistan as suggested by Sir Olaf Caroe is a place where the land fashions the people, rather than the people fashioning the land.[6] When trying to understand the motivations and aspirations of a typical Afghan, it is important to understand the impact of the land in which they live. A clear understanding of these geographic dynamics is vitally important to the development of congruent and effective policies, strategies, and tactics towards Afghanistan.

The various physical and human geographic characteristics of this fascinating land have certainly created a very distinctive Afghan strategic culture that infuses all aspects of the present Afghan insurgency. Overall, the physical geography of Afghanistan presents a harsh and austere environment that engenders a distinctive "frontier toughness" in the Pashtun hinterland. Traditionally, competition for limited resources has been fierce and arable land is sparse and hotly contested. For example, "Durrani Pashtuns of southern Afghanistan came into possession of large tracts of lightly taxed agricultural land during the founding of the Durrani Empire. These rich irrigated lands located around Kandahar and Peshawar supported a hierarchical political system that required large agricultural surpluses to sustain them. It supported an elite of landowners whose tribal followers had in many cases been reduced to their economic clients".[7] Encroachment

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[6] Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans*, London: Kegan Paul, 2000, p. xii.

[7] Thomas J. Barfield, "Weapons of the not so Weak in Afghanistan: Pashtun Agricultural Structure and Tribal Organization for Times of War & Peace," Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series," Yale University, February 23, 2007, http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/papers/19weapons.pdf .

upon vital resources by peer competitors over the millennia has led to the development of a culture in which martial prowess is among the most esteemed of personal virtues.

The isolating characteristics of the Afghan landscape have lead to acephelous tendencies. For millennia, a *strong central* Afghan authority has rarely existed, and when one has, it rarely projected authority into the isolated valleys of the Hindu Kush or remote southern plateaus. As a result, Pashtuns have typically ruled themselves and have rarely submitted to external rule beyond their local tribal or clan structures.

The vast majority of the Pashtun homeland has never fully submitted to the rule of any country. The colonial British as well as the Mughuls and pre-Mughul Muslim powers in India before them were unable to conquer the region's Pashtun tribes and finally and correctly just allowed them to run their own affairs according to local custom. In exchange, the tribesmen protected the British subcontinental empire from northern invaders. Following independence in 1947, Pakistan continued the arrangement with the tribals living in the Pashtun-belt**.**

A frequent and more facile observation applied by Western intelligence analysts to this region is that these areas are "ungoverned." Indeed, this observation has helped to create the central pillar of the international effort in Afghanistan since 2001, which is to "extend the reach of the central government" into these areas. I believe such approaches, outside of heavily and systematically interspersing them with traditional tribal structures and institutions, are fundamentally bankrupt. They are synonymous with pouring gasoline on a fire to put it out. In other words, strengthening the central government isn't the cure for the insurrection; it's one of the causes, especially when it comes with corrupt governors, corrupt policemen, and warlord thugs. It's not a coincidence that the insurgency has grown more intense with more rural support every year since this misguided policy was put in place.[8]

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[8] See: Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "No Sign until the Burst of Fire," pp. 54-55.

A central government with an extended reach is exactly what the conservative rural Pashtun people *don't* want. This policy has been concocted by the United States in concert with the primary Afghans we talk to – educated urban elites contemptuous of anything *tribal* – and is merely fomenting insurgency among a proto-insurgent people. Neither the rural Afghan Pashtun nor those living in Pakistan's border area want the central government regimes telling them what to do. Indeed, they are increasingly taking up bombs and guns to prevent it. We need to stop the utterly wrong-headed policy approach of attempting to extend the reach of Kabul (or Islamabad) into the Pashtun hinterlands**.**

The rural Pashtun of eastern and southern Afghanistan as well as Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Aras (FATA) have their own system of governance – tribal governance – and its own system of laws –tribal law – and it doesn't want western ways. Instead of working against them, the international community should be working with them, doing everything possible to strengthen the much-weakened tribal elders, because they alone can counterbalance the ancient political network of rural mullahs now being radicalized by the Taliban. As suggested elsewhere:

> The absence of Western-like state structures of governance in large swathes of the tribal areas should not be conflated, as the policy described with the absence of governance. Complex and sophisticated conflict-resolution mechanisms, legal codes, and alternative forms of governance have developed in the region over millennia. Moreover, the rural Pashtuns prefer their own mechanisms to alien, external ones because, in their perceptions, theirs are clearly superior to ours. Depictions of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and frontier area as a lawless land of endless feuds and bloodthirsty tribal raids owe more to Victorian romanticism than to objective reality. To be sure, parts of the region, particularly those dominated by the Pashtuns, are often witness to bloodshed and are not infrequently hobbled by feuds. Yet despite poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, maternal and infant

> mortality, and human longevity rates at or near the worst in the world, when not subjected to external pressure, most of the Pashtuns are peaceful pastoralists and subsistence farmers in a feudal economy who have few of the rising economic interests historically present in people's revolutions. Revolution, when it has come to southern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan, has historically been less economically driven, as it is in many cases in other parts of the world, than culturally and religiously driven. Thus it is a dangerous mistake to misinterpret or dismiss the cultural customs that have so frequently conjured Pashtun jihads against nationally based forms of governance.[9]

The harsh physical environment, the relative absence of a central authority and a tremendous environmentally imposed self-reliance have made the Pashtun people who they are today. They are proud, acephelous, and xenophobic. They embrace a warrior culture defined by honor and often revenge-driven violence. Geographic dynamics influenced a social system in which authority flows from familial relationships vice civil political authority and remains a major point of contention within Afghan society today.

Traditional Pashtun society is an outgrowth of the tribal system in which kinship is the defining characteristic of social organization. The family unit is the focal point from which all other kin relationship emanates. This nuclear family unit is called the *koranay* and is comprised of immediate, local family groups. The next concentric ring is the *kahol*, which is comprised of extended family and is also typically local. Various *kahols* form a *khel,* which is most analogous to a clan and begins to become more regional in disposition. Clans form tribes (*qawm*) and tribes confederate. Figure 1 graphically depicts this structure, using specific *Karlanri* kin relationships (confederation) to demonstrate the linkages.

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[9] Ibid, p. 55.

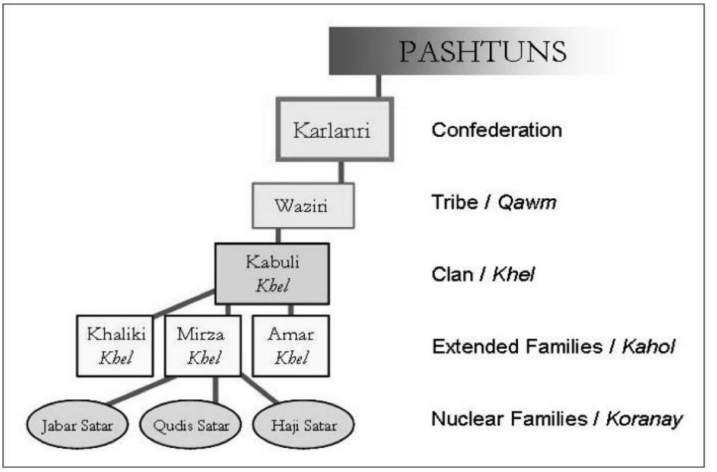


**Figure 1 - Tribal Organization**[10]

Not only does the tribal system provide social organization and lineage, but it also provides control structures that help regulate human interaction. I'll briefly discuss a few of these that are useful in understanding tribal behavior.

*Qawm* is the term used for tribal differentiation within a confederation. In addition to having organizational connotations, the *qawm* is also an institution whose function is "to provide its members with mutual aid and protection from outside groups; ...they are the most efficient structures at providing proximity services to the Afghans."[11] In many real ways, the *qawm* provides the services that central government authorities would under normally functioning systems, and in the case of Afghanistan, in a more efficient and meaningful fashion**.**

*Jirga* – a traditional assembly of all the tribes' adult male members – is a significant and time-honored local decision making and dispute settlement institution. The egalitarian character of the jirga and the *salah-mash-*

[10] This figure was developed by M. Chris Mason.

[11] Senlis Group, The International Community is part of the Governance crisis in Afghanistan, Afghanistan Five Years Late: The Retrun of the Taliban; Spring/Summer 2006; available from http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/Afghanistan_Five_Years_Later/documents/5y_chapter_04.

*warah* (a "discussion," where all important issues are discussed and resolved) are in direct contrast with a hierarchical state power structure. Both are driven by the consensus of the group, composed of equal individuals. It is understood that representation is a bottom-up structure, operating within a system based on the concept of equality.[12] Jirgas are typically used more to settle disputes such as boundaries, property, personal injury, or property and inheritance issues. The decisions of the jirga are binding upon members of the tribe. I find it fascinating that it has recently been estimated that jirgas resolve 95 percent of the cases in which they are invoked.[13] *Shura* is a semi-formal decision making institution that deals with issues at a large-village level, at which local government officials may participate."[14]

Structurally, there are a number of informal social control mechanisms that are derived directly from the tribal system. Figure 2 shows a hierarchy of these control mechanisms that begin with the *Koranay* at the most local level, and progress in scope to the *Wolaswali* at the district level. At the lowest level, these mechanisms are designed to handle less serious issues and social problems.

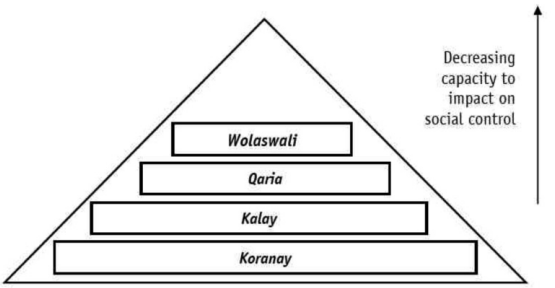


**Figure 2 - Social Control Mechanisms** [15]

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[12] Jolanta Sierakowska-Dyndo, "Tribalism and Afghan Political Traditions" (Warsaw: Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw, January 2003), http://www.wgrs.uw.edu.pl/pub/uploads/aps04/5Sierakowska-Dydo_Trybalism.pdf.
[13] Carl Robichaud, "Afghanistan's Three Legal Systems," *Afghanistan Watch*, January 9, 2007, http://www.Afghanistanwatch.org/rule_of_law/index.html.
[14] Senlis Group, p. 19.
[15] Ibid, p. 20.

Leadership within the tribe brings another important facet of social interaction within Pashtun society. Among the various levels of tribal power brokers, there are two categories that hold particular significance; the village elders – the so-called *arbabs* or *maliks*, and the *khans*. *Maliks* exercise limited power on a local level and typically preside over issues such as water-disputes and intra-village conflict. *Khans* possess much greater power and economic resources and typically are responsible for inter-village relationship with the government or other *khans*.[16]

So what does this all mean to our present engagement in Afghanistan? In operational and strategic terms, the U.S. effort has been thus far with its emphasis on body counts and air strikes much in common with the failed Soviet intervention in Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989.[17] *What the two Afghan involvements have most strikingly in common is that they are both based on a strategy of administering andsecuring Afghanistan from urban centers such as Kabul and the provincial capitals.* The Soviets held all the provincial capitals, just as we presently do, and sought to exert their influence from there. The Taliban enemy, meanwhile, like the *mujahideen* before them, operates much further down the administrative chain, knowing that provincial boundaries in Afghanistan are meaningless.

Afghan identity— and thus the critical level of engagement – as suggested above is rooted in the *wolaswali* (approximately, the district level) and the *alaqadari* (sub-district level). Historically, unrest has always bubbled up in Afghanistan from these strata. The Taliban are well aware that the center of gravity in Afghanistan is the rural Pashtun district and village. As one US officer there recently noted, "[the Taliban] are taking a page from the Hezbollah organizations in Lebanon with their own public works to assist the tribes in villages that are deep in the inaccessible regions of the country. This helps support their cause with the population, making it hard to turn the population in support of the Afghan Government

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[16] Antonio Guistozzi and Noor Ullah, Working Paper no. 7 - "Tribes" and Warlords in Southern Afghanistan; London: Crisis States Research Centre, 2006. pp. 2-3.

[17] As the Russian ambassador to Afghanistan recently pointed out.

and the coalition."[18] Our policies have virtually ignored these important Pashtun institutions.

**District Development Teams**

A crucial element of counterinsurgency success is the establishment of a counterinsurgent (and government) presence at the local level. We need to employ a "population-centric" strategy that engages and empowers the local Afghan village leaders discussed above and in so doing gain the support and insight into the political, economic and social needs of the people. We basically need to separate the population from the insurgency by deploying into the Afghan villages where the Taliban are presently operating.

This can be achieved through the inclusion and participation, not exclusion or direction, of local solidarity groups in local civic decisions of governance. Quite simply, we need to rebuild and strengthen the traditional tribal and community leaders in the Pashtun districts. This endeavor connotes the need for massive assistance and protection from the center, as well from the international community, that has been wanting to direct development spending on its own parochial objectives.

Increased security and government presence is also conducive to counterinsurgent strategy aimed at separating insurgent activities from the civilian populace, thereby aiding in their elimination. For this to work, the central state and its security apparatus must be the single guarantor of peace, security and relative economic prosperity, wielding not only a Weberian monopoly on violence, but equally important, a monopoly on social livelihood and welfare.

To gain legitimacy, develop local governance, curb the insurgency, and ultimately extend the reach of Kabul, we need to establish and deploy District Reconstruction Teams (DRTs), replicating the Provincial

[18] Interview, March 2008.

Reconstruction Team construct at the district level. Advocating this idea is not something new or unique, but it is rooted firmly in the historical dichotomy between Afghan State and tribe. In addition, the establishment of DRTs offers a construct for combining local level security and civic governance based on something both familiar and in wide use, thereby making it easy to replicate. Finally, DRTs offer the same marriage between Afghan civilian government and security forces and international military forces and advisers that has been the model for Provincial level development, but at the district level where it is woefully missing and most urgently (and historically) needed.

These DRTs need not be large, but they do need to be visible, providing basic security and public services while communicating and implementing the government's National Development Plan. Detachment and Afghan military leadership could focus on supporting these decentralized units by collating the information gathered and ensuring necessary enabling support while the decentralized forces interact with local political, economic and social leaders inside the area's local networks. Selected villages should have a full-time platoon or company-sized element of self-defense forces that:

- Assist the "police force" with implementing personnel resource control measures
- Act as the village Quick Reaction Force—responding to any villagers in need and disrupting any insurgent attacks on the Special Forces, police force, or fellow villagers
- Provide expert advice and funding via developmental specialists (civilians)

This security force should be complemented with members of both the Afghan National Army (ANA) as well as National Police (ANP). The ANA while small has proven itself to be a professional military force. Deploying elements of the ANA in local areas with an international security force can help to embed the ANA with the local population. The ANP is a different story. Practically speaking the ANP is an overly corrupt force

which has become part of the problem in Afghanistan instead of part of the solution. The Afghans have a saying that "the Afghan National Police rob us during the day while the Taliban rob us at night." This is especially damning considering the critical role police forces have usually served in a counterinsurgency. We need to provide the village with the capability to eventually protect itself and defeat the insurgent infrastructure. This can never be accomplished if Afghanistan has no reliable police or similar force.

Having the ANA embedded with an international force at the local level has a variety of probable payoffs. Such an arrangement can help train the ANA, weed out corrupt miscreants and hinder the ANA from "shaking down" the local population. In the long run such an arrangement will allow the construction of a police force that can be trusted and endured by the people.

Key departments and programs, such as the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the National Solidarity Program, whose sole task is the establishment and strengthening of local governing structures such as Community Development Councils, need to be integrated into the DRT construct, whose information campaign should be to put an overwhelmingly Afghan face on security operations, reconstruction, and local governance. In addition, these local government programs need as much exposure, funding and support from the central government and international community security, which currently monopolizes political discourse and media attention, but only to the profit of the Taliban.

Established in the immediate[19] wake of a counterinsurgent offensive to recapture district capitals and villages, DRTs need to be created in combination with a massive information operations campaign, not only aimed at discrediting the Taliban, but on promoting national values, common ideals, and on strengthening the central government's support and commitment to local government and development.

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[19] District Reconstruction Teams and relief supplies should be imbedded in second echelon forces, establishing government presence as part of COIN security operations, and not arrive or weeks later.

Reclaiming local territory and sources of livelihood from insurgent and criminal groups, security forces and government officials must not be risk averse. The establishment of district and local level presence must be centrally coordinated and implemented in unison by international security forces and the civilian government. In areas of heavy insurgent, terrorist and criminal activity, the establishment of district reconstruction centers and district elections may not come at the same time for the entire country or even the same province. The territory lost to the Taliban and other insurgent forces is indicative of the amount of territory that needs to be retaken, by force, so that governance and security can be restored in these areas. The risk assumed by military and civilian personnel in COIN operations aimed at the restoration of district-level governance must not limit or prevent these objectives. However, national strategy and operational prudence should of course dictate the timing and coordination of such operations.

In much of the south and east, the systematic retaking of insurgent strongholds must be accompanied with universal poppy eradication, but not before sufficient economic means are provided the civilian populace to lift them out of immediate subsistence living or indentured farming and service to criminal organizations. This endeavor in itself connotes massive expenditure, and a plan for immediate but sustained agricultural development that would educate, supervise and subsidize farm transition to alternative crops and facilitate delivery to market. An alternative strategy aimed at undermining Afghanistan's illicit drug trade may be to legalize and regulate poppy production for the international medicinal market, as Turkey does. Although controversial, this avenue may create the opportunity for pharmaceutical companies' investment in Afghanistan, and a source of employment and the future development of a science and technology industry.

As with the composition of DRTs themselves, the monies and supplies needed for the immediate humanitarian relief of the local populace must be acquired and staged before the commencement of operations so that they can flow into district centers as part of the liberation

campaign, once the main thrust of military forces have routed the insurgents. In all cases, the 'liberation' of district centers, towns and villages must be met with direct, overwhelming and permanent state institutions. In some provinces in the east (Loya Paktia), this may only connote a small constabulary, or the re-armament and utilization of traditional tribal militias such as *arbokai*, which are akin to a neighborhood watch. In all cases, the free-flow of information between the center, provincial capitals, district centers and villages is critical to both maintaining vigilance (as village elders can point out who the insurgents are, and more importantly, where they are) as well as meeting the provision of local needs, whether it be food subsidies, water, roads or other basic services and public works projects.

Part of the tragedy of Afghanistan is that many of these recommendations and development goals are already outlined in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), and targeted for implementation over the next five years. However, there appears to be no concerted effort on the part of the international community to either adequately fund these development projects or align greater COIN strategy and ISAF military operations in cooperation with the ANDS. The two are still not largely viewed as mutually inclusive, although many top military leaders in Afghanistan have made the realization that military means alone is not going to win the war. Only by coordinating the GoA's development strategy with the international community's COIN strategy would the government be able to achieve a relative capacity for state making, the historical imperative of each Afghan regime. That these two strategies are not being implemented in concert, and are being attempted on the cheap, at the wrong level of government (provincial), and with risk adversity dictating the scope, scale and area of operations, there is little basis for hoping that the development goals outlined in the 35 Provincial- 22 Sector-, and 37 Sector Annexes of the ANDS will be met. Therefore, the direction and scope of the coalition's COIN campaign and international development effort must be met with the same responsiveness toward the achievement of deliberate government development goals that the ANDS aims to accomplish on an ambitious, but not unachievable, timeline.

**Conclusion**

Past attempts to extend the reach of Kabul outward have all been met with heavy resistance. A primary reason for this is the existence of solidarity groups such as the Pashtun, which are the root cause of Afghan political mobilization and resistance. Known as a *qawm*, these local tribal, ethnic, and regional social relationships remain the fundamental basis of individual Afghan identification and relations with the central state. Afghan political power and legitimate authority resides in these solidarity groups, at the local level.

In order to extend the reach of government to the local level, a fundamental shift in thinking is required, although not by leaders in Kabul, but by leaders in the west, who continue to view the creation of government as a top-down phenomenon. What this historical analysis has shown, and of what Afghan leaders must already certainly be keenly aware, is that governance, political power and legitimacy in Afghanistan are a bottom-up phenomenon.[20] The desired methodology then, is the establishment of strong representative and participatory civic local municipal and district governance, as a means of extending government upward to the center, not the other way around.

This will require the difficult, but necessary, reprioritization of international developmental assistance and its subordination to the Government of Afghanistan, in order to distribute more equitably, resources based on the development goals outlined in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). The ANDS is, after all, the embodiment of the very kind of prioritized master development plan that the international community sought, reconciling the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals under the development priorities and capabilities of the Afghan government. However, such a shift in focus and commitment has not been realized, and the international community continues to place security at the forefront of any development strategy, as evi-

[20] Hence, the Government of Afghanistan's focus on the creation of District and Municipal-level governance through programs such as the Indipendent Directorate for Local Governance and National Solidarity Program.

denced by the overwhelming preponderance of spending on security, vice governance and infrastructure. While an obviously essential component of state-making, the provision of security, as history has shown, should not be the only, or even primary, means of combating rural Afghan insurgency.

While each Afghan regime has had to contend with substantial armed resistance and tribal revolt, successful rulers, those who achieved a relatively high degree of state capacity, each did so not solely by militarily eliminating state opponents, but also by establishing effective government rule at the local level. Therefore, for an Afghan government to be effective it needs to establish strong centralized control at the center, but decentralize its authority down to the local level where solidarity groups reside. Historically, the establishment of local governing structures, whether eliminating, displacing, co-opting, or using pre-existing structures, has been synonymous with Afghan counterinsurgency efforts and the creation of a strong central government. Only in this way can the central government in Kabul hope to quell the insurgency and expand governing capacity.

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

*The views expressed in these chapters are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of the NATO Defense College, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the EU, the UK government, the US government, or any of the institutions represented by the contributors.*
*All information and sources are drawn from unclassified materials.*

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Visiting Fellow and Infantry officer, Colonel Alderson was commissioned from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in April 1984, and has since served in a wide range of Armoured, Mechanized and Light Infantry appointments in Germany, the Middle East, Northern Ireland, and Africa. He served on operations in the 1991 Gulf War, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, and, most recently, Iraq, where he was Chief of Campaign Plans for General Petraeus in Headquarters Multinational Force Iraq.

A graduate of the Army Staff College, Camberley, and the Joint Services Command and Staff College, Shrivenham, Colonel Alderson has held a variety of staff appointments principally in the operational field. After commanding 1st Battalion The Highlanders, Colonel Alderson was promoted to Colonel in 2004 to run the Army's Mission Support Group, before establishing the Land Warfare Development Group to develop the Army's doctrine and its experimental programme. He has instructed at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and at the Joint Services Command and Staff College, where he specialised in Campaign Planning, and Counterinsurgency.

In 2007, he led the team that rewrote British Counterinsurgency doctrine. He is currently researching a Ministry of Defence-sponsored PhD, examining the impact of contemporary campaigns on the British approach to COIN.

**William C. Butcher**

Colonel Bill Butcher was commissioned in 1986 as an Infantry Officer where he served as a Rifle and Specialty Platoon Leader in South Korea, a Company Executive Officer and an Aide-de-Camp in Fort Benning, Georgia, and a Company Commander in Fort Stewart. Georgia. Colonel Butcher transitioned to Civil Affairs in 1995 culminating his training program in Fort Bragg upon earning a Masters Degree in International Relations from Troy State University. After completion of his training in 1997, Colonel Butcher served in the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion as a Team Leader, Company Commander, and the Battalion S-3 (Operations) Officer. Bill attended the French Command and General Staff College in Paris, France in 2000 and then served as a Civil Affairs Officer in Izmir, Turkey with Joint Command South East (NATO). Colonel Butcher commanded 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group in Fort Bragg, North Carolina from 2004-2006 and was subsequently assigned for the past two-years as the Chief of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Plans in Joint Forces Command Brunssum, Netherlands (NATO).

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Christopher A. Jennings is a legislative attorney based in Washington DC, specializing in parliamentary development, legislative process, constitutional law and election monitoring. Between 2006 and 2008, he served two tours in Iraq under the auspices of the U.S. State Department—first, as an embedded advisor to Iraq's National Parliament under a grant administered by State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; and second, as a political affairs and governance advisor to

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Professor Johnson also directs the NPS Program for Culture and Conflict Studies. This Program is involved in comprehensive assessments of provincial and district tribal and clan networks in Afghanistan and the anthropological assessments of Afghan villages. He spent much of summer 2008 in Afghanistan conducting field research.

Johnson has published in the areas of Central Asia and Afghanistan, insurgencies, foreign policy analysis, and peace research/conflict resolution. For over two decades, Professor Johnson has conducted research and written on Afghanistan and South Asia. He has published numerous studies on Afghanistan and its politics, culture, and anthropology. He is a member of the Afghanistan Editorial Board of the National Security Archive.

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In 2005, Mr. Mason was deployed as the Political Officer on a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) on the Pakistan border. As the senior US government civilian in the province, he traveled widely with the provincial governor and U.S. Army maneuver elements. Before and after that assignment, Mr. Mason has traveled frequently to Afghanistan and Pakistan on a variety of security-related projects. He has published extensively on the region, including, most recently: "No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier," (*International Security*, Vol, 32, No. 4, Spring, 2008) and "All Counterinsurgency is Local," in the October 2008 issue of Atlantic Monthly, both co-authored with Professor Thomas Johnson.

Mr. Mason currently lectures on counterinsurgency and information operations in Afghanistan at the National Defense University, the Joint Special Operations University, the Naval Postgraduate School and elsewhere. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Mr. Mason served as a Peace Corps volunteer, and a Naval Officer on active duty from 1981-1986. He holds a Masters Degree in Military Studies from Marine Corps University and is now a PhD candidate in South Asian History at the George Washington University in Washington, DC.

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Dr. Schnaubelt has published numerous articles on security issues and interagency and civil-military operations; the most recent are "Whither the RMA?" in the Autumn 2007 issue of *Parameters*, NDC Research Paper 40 "What NATO can learn from "the surge" in Iraq," and an Op-Ed in the *International Herald Tribune* on "Lessons of Iraq."

**Barbara J. Stapleton**

Barbara J. Stapleton studied Middle East history and politics at the School of Oriental & African Studies at London University and completed her LLM in the international law of human rights at the University of Essex in 1991. She spent the 1980s working in Eritrea, Iranian Kurdistan, Pakistan,

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She worked as an independent consultant for Amnesty International, the EC and others on media and democratisation projects from 1991. She was closely involved in developments in Iraq from 1991 onwards, producing an extensive report on the human rights situation of the Shias of Iraq for the British All Party Parliamentary Human Rights Committee based on field research in southern Iran and interviews with Iraqi refugees fleeing the suppression of the 1991 uprising in southern Iraq. Her field research based on extensive interviews and travel through northern Iraq on the implementation of the Food for Oil programme (administered by the UN) was published in 1996 by Christian Aid, a British NGO.

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NATO's expansion throughout the country she was a keynote speaker at a number of NATO conferences and addressed the North Atlantic Council in November 2005 on PRT best practices focusing on PRT support for the development of an enabling environment in particular.
In May 2006 she joined the Office of the Special Representative of the EU for Afghanistan in Kabul as senior political adviser becoming deputy to the EUSR from December 2007.