

Transforming the Interagency System for Complex Operations

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Introduction

The Department of Defense has had to transform itself to meet the new challenges of the global war on terror. For the first phase of transformation, the military has made considerable progress in augmenting its war-fighting acumen with new technologies, hardware acquisition, precision weaponry, and force capabilities. In this “long war,” involving more irregular, asymmetric operations, transformation also requires renewed focus on interagency and international partners to build a full-spectrum civil-military capability for stability operations and other complex contingencies. The rapid military victories in Afghanistan and Iraq are a testament to the broad success of the first phase of transformation, but the challenges posed in the stabilization and reconstruction of both countries highlight the need for increased attention on the second phase. This case study examines one aspect of that transformation: efforts by the Executive Branch and Congress to improve the interagency system for stability operations.

History

While recent challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan have highlighted the need for interagency cooperation in stability operations, successive administrations have struggled with this issue for many decades, especially since World War II. This section takes a brief look at initiatives of the immediate post-war period (the Marshall Plan), the Cold War period (the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program in Vietnam) and the post-Cold War period up to September 11, 2001 (Presidential Decision Directive 56).

Marshall Plan

The process of creating an organization to oversee the management of American assistance under the Marshall Plan evoked a number of bureaucratic and political debates in the summer and autumn of 1947. President Truman envisioned a planning process involving extensive discussions among Executive Branch agencies, under the leadership of the State Department. Secretary of State George Marshall created an Advisory Steering Committee, chaired by an Under Secretary, to confer with the President’s staff, the Departments of War, Navy, Commerce, Agriculture, Interior, and the Budget Bureau. However, given that Congress would have to approve the appropriation of the huge sums of money to be devoted to the European Recovery Program (ERP), interest in participating in the planning process soon expanded beyond the Executive Branch to Congress.¹

A debate emerged as to whether the proposed administrative entity should be an agency of the State Department or an independent Government corporation. The Republican Party had taken control of Congress in the off-year elections in 1946. Some Congressional Republicans harbored a mistrust of the State Department and questioned the advisability of giving responsibility for administering economic development

¹ Hadley Arkes, *Bureaucracy, the Marshall Plan, and the National Interest* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), 59.

assistance to State. Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson worked with the Select Congressional Committee on Foreign Aid, chaired by Republican Congressman Christian Herter, to develop a proposal for an export corporation that would be authorized to market American financial surpluses at terms favorable to recovering client states. The Herter Committee wanted the corporation to be administratively independent, with a single administrator, a policy council, and a bipartisan board of directors. Such an independent organization, its backers argued, would spare the State Department from operational responsibilities for which it lacked experience and personnel. A corporate entity would attract managerial talent from the private sector and allow the ERP to be run in a bipartisan fashion. Private sector cooperation would be crucial, as individuals were needed with practical experience in stabilizing currencies and exchange rates, reviving industry, liberalizing trade, fostering integration, and boosting productivity.²

Marshall and the State Department disagreed with this approach on bureaucratic and policy grounds. One major concern was that giving an independent organization so much responsibility would undercut the President's authority over foreign policy and complicate coherent policy-making.³ Instead, the Department of State urged the creation of an office of foreign programs to be headed by a new Assistant Secretary of State, with cooperation from the departments of Agriculture and Commerce, and State as the executive agent for the ERP in the United States and Europe. Marshall and his colleagues soon began to harbor second thoughts about their position. Sensing that opposition to an independent ERP corporation might jeopardize Congressional will to fully fund the recovery effort and encourage Congress to enact burdensome policy restrictions, Marshall proposed instead the creation of a semi-independent Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), geared toward limited operations within Europe. The ECA would consist of a single administrator in Washington, a special representative of ambassadorial rank in Europe, and teams of experts that would advise and assist, but not direct, recovery operations in each of the participating countries. It would have a limited policy role, with the Agriculture and Commerce departments continuing to control export allocations, and, along with State, approving programs for specific countries, distribution of aid, and conditions for ending assistance. The special representative in Europe would report directly to the State Department, and State and the ECA would jointly recruit recovery experts, who would be inducted into the Foreign Service and overseen by U.S. missions overseas under terms decided jointly by State and the ECA.

Marshall publicly committed to this approach in testimony before Congress in November 1947.⁴ However, when Congressional hearings began on the proposed plan in early 1948, the State Department retreated further from its insistence on controlling the ECA, largely in deference to Congress. Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, played a large part in congressional deliberations over the administration of the ERP. He had long fought the expansion of executive power that had occurred during the war and had sought a greater role for Congress in foreign policy.

² Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 101–102, 105–106; Arkes, 64–65.

³ Arkes, 67; Hogan, 102.

⁴ Hogan, 103; Arkes, 67.

Vandenberg agreed with the arguments that the State Department was not an “operational” agency and that the problems of European economic recovery were best addressed by private sector specialists familiar with economic criteria and business judgment, as opposed to policy and politics.

Vandenberg and his colleagues largely carried the day in the Economic Cooperation Act of 1948, signed by Truman on April 3, 1948. The act established the ECA as an independent agency, with its director possessing cabinet-level status, who would be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Both the ECA director and the State Department could appeal disagreements on policy matters to the President. The ECA director would coordinate and cooperate with other cabinet secretaries, with private advisory committees, and with a bipartisan Public Advisory Board in making policy and operational decisions. Congress empowered the ECA to establish its own missions in each participating country separate from the State Department, which would be overseen by a United States Special Representative in Europe. Both the Special Representative and the mission chiefs were directly responsible to the ECA director.⁵

The first ECA director, Paul G. Hoffman, president of the Studebaker Corporation, negotiated the specific mechanics of the ECA’s overseas operations through long exchanges with the U.S. Special Representative in Europe. The concept they worked out came to resemble a civilian counterpart to the military theater command. It defined a clear line of authority from the ECA director in Washington, to the Special Representative in Paris, and on down to the various divisions, offices, and branches in the Paris headquarters. The divisions and branches in Washington maintained close liaison with their counterparts in Paris, but they could not give orders. Under the terms of the Economic Cooperation Act, the ECA mission in Europe had its own communication, compensation, personnel, and travel procedures. The Special Representative could hire and fire executive and professional personnel, raise or lower salaries, assign and reassign staff, and cut travel orders for the ECA mission in Europe. President Truman gave his full support to this arrangement.⁶

CORDS Program

As the American commitment to Vietnam increased, the U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) country teams expanded accordingly. All elements were nominally under the leadership of Ambassador Lodge, but the staffs of each of the civilian agencies outnumbered his, and all were dwarfed by the MAAG command. In 1961, President Kennedy superimposed the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), headed by a four-star general over the existing MAAG to command U.S. military activities. As a result, the activities of the U.S. agencies in Vietnam became disorganized. Lodge did not perceive his role as supervisory, but instead focused on representing U.S. interests and providing reports on

⁵ Hogan, 107–108, Arkes, 191–193.

⁶ Milton Katz, “Lessons for Administration and Policy,” in Stanley Hoffman and Charles Maier, *The Marshall Plan: A Retrospective*, (London: Westview Press, 1984), 79–80.

local conditions. Even if he had been so inclined, Lodge lacked the manpower to oversee and monitor their activities. Each of the governmental agencies was semi-independent, with Congressionally mandated statutory authorities and responsibilities. They disagreed among themselves as to which policies to pursue, but none had overall responsibility for Vietnam, nor the power to impose its views on the rest.⁷

Central to interagency disagreement was one of the fundamental conundrums of counterinsurgency policy: whether to pursue a strategy aimed at defeating the insurgents militarily, or to emphasize assistance to promote political, economic, and social development to deprive the insurgents of popular support. In general, the military and some of the civilians held that establishing a basic sense of security for the South Vietnamese population had to occur before development could succeed and the government could win their support. Most of the civilian agencies believed that development would win political support for the government and help undercut the insurgency over time by depriving it of the support of the populace.⁸

In 1964, President Johnson committed significant conventional forces to the effort, and retired Army General Maxwell Taylor replaced Lodge as Ambassador. Although Taylor reorganized the U.S. Mission, American support for pacification continued to lack overall coordination. The civilian agencies wanted pacification to be under civilian direction, but the military, which had responsibility for providing security and contributed most of the resources, preferred the existing arrangement to one under civilian control.⁹ Although the military situation in South Vietnam stabilized by the end of 1965, top-level decisionmakers in the Johnson administration concluded that the war could not be won by military means alone. A consensus emerged for placing renewed emphasis upon pacification. Much of the impetus came from President Johnson himself. Johnson viewed pacification in Vietnam as an extension of his vision for his domestic Great Society policies and began to describe the effort to help the Vietnamese people as the “other war.” Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy were frustrated over the lack of success from previous pacification support efforts and were ready to endorse a new approach.¹⁰

In March 1966, President Johnson assigned Robert Komer responsibility for “the direction, coordination, and supervision in Washington of U.S. non-military programs for peaceful construction relating to Vietnam.” Komer received authority over the seven civilian agencies participating in the pacification efforts, a large say in allocation of military resources to the program, and the power to support the U.S. Mission on matters within his purview. Perhaps most importantly, Komer had the right of direct access to the President, which empowered him to bypass the Washington bureaucratic decisionmaking process to solve problems directly.¹¹

⁷ Thomas W. Scoville, *Reorganizing For Pacification Support* (Washington DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1982), v–vi, 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

⁹ Scoville, 6–12.

¹⁰ Scoville, 7–22; Frank L. Jones, “Blowtorch: Robert Komer and the Making of Vietnam Pacification Policy,” *Parameters*, Autumn 2005, 105.

¹¹ Jones, 106.

Komer moved swiftly and decisively to implement Johnson's intent and soon established a close working relationship with the returned Ambassador Lodge and the commander of MACV, Army General William Westmoreland. In May 1966, he reported to Johnson that the civil side was a "mess." He pointed out the military's dominance in Saigon, the weak and apathetic South Vietnamese government, the inability of the U.S. civilian agencies to operate at the high tempo that war required, and Lodge's ineffectual leadership of the U.S. pacification effort. Komer argued that a military buildup would prevent a disaster but would not guarantee victory in a "political war." Further, he saw adverse side effects to the military buildup: "anti-Americanism induced by the visible military presence and pressures of inflation."¹²

Komer came to believe that the path to a successful pacification program lay in better management and large-scale efforts on the political, economic, and social fronts, rather than in solving any specific difficulty. Despite resistance from the Pentagon, he pushed for turning over more civil logistics functions to the military. He believed local security to be a critical component to the success of the pacification program. Military strategy should accordingly emphasize protection for Vietnamese civilians in the countryside, with more "clear and hold" operations by the U.S. Army and fewer "search and destroy" missions, along with allocating more regular South Vietnamese Army forces to local defense.

In March 1967 President Johnson put Komer directly in charge of pacification operations. Given the rank of ambassador, Komer served as Gen. Westmoreland's deputy for CORDS. He insisted that he be given status equal to MACV's deputy military commander, and the right of direct access to the new Ambassador, Ellsworth Bunker. The result was that a single manager now coordinated civil and military pacification activities from the local to the national level.¹³

Komer convinced Westmoreland to delegate him wide latitude. As their mutual trust increased, Westmoreland informally allowed Komer to bypass the MACV Chief of Staff to work semi-independently with the subordinate pacification field echelons. As a U.S. Army history of the CORDS program noted "to have civilians fully operating in a military chain of command was extremely rare in the history of the United States; it had certainly never before occurred on such a scale. Komer was the first ambassador in the country's history to serve directly under a military command and also have command responsibility for military personnel and resources."¹⁴ The military commanders down through the advisory chain, preoccupied with the "large-unit war," largely delegated responsibility for pacification tasks to their own CORDS deputies, who were in turn managed through Komer's informal chain of command. As Komer later recalled, "in practice the pacification business was run autonomously."¹⁵

¹² Ibid., 108.

¹³ Scoville, 48-53.

¹⁴ Ibid., 66.

¹⁵ Ibid., 73

Post-Cold War Period

After the withdrawal of most American military and civilian personnel from Vietnam in 1973, there was a lull in U.S. interventions abroad for most of the next two decades. Those that did take place were either on a small scale, as in Grenada and Dominica, or of short duration, as in Lebanon. The first significant involvement of U.S. forces and civilian agencies after Vietnam was Operation *Just Cause* in Panama between 1989 and 1991. The 1990s then saw significant operations in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

The Clinton Administration issued guidance for interagency cooperation with the release of the May 1997 Presidential Decision Directive Number 56 (PDD 56) entitled “Managing Complex Contingency Operations.” PDD 56 called on the Deputies Committee to establish interagency working groups to develop, plan, and execute contingency operations. The Deputies would form an Executive Committee, with representatives of all appropriate agencies, to supervise the day-to-day management of specific elements of the U.S. government response. PDD 56 also required the development of a political-military implementation plan to coordinate U.S. government actions in a complex contingency operation. The plan would include a comprehensive situation assessment, mission statement, agency objectives, and desired end state; identify preparatory tasks for conducting an operation, such as congressional consultations, diplomatic efforts, troop recruitment, legal authorities, funding requirements and sources, and media coordination; and identify major functional area tasks, such as political mediation, military support, demobilization, humanitarian assistance, police reform, basic public services, economic restoration, human rights monitoring, and social reconciliation. Executive Committee officials would be required to develop their respective part of the plan in full coordination with relevant agencies. PDD 56 also called for a rehearsal of the political-military plan, an after-action review, and the development of an interagency training program.¹⁶

PDD 56 defines complex contingency operations as peace operations such as the peace accord implementation operation conducted by NATO in Bosnia (1995–present) and the humanitarian intervention in northern Iraq called Operation *Provide Comfort* (1991); and foreign humanitarian assistance operations, such as Operation *Support Hope* in central Africa (1994) and Operation *Sea Angel* in Bangladesh (1991). Unless otherwise directed, it does not apply to domestic disaster relief or to relatively routine or small-scale operations, *nor to military operations conducted in defense of U.S. citizens, territory, or property, including counter-terrorism and hostage-rescue operations and international armed conflict.*¹⁷ (Emphasis added.) Presumably PDD 56 would not have applied to Vietnam, had it existed then, or to the ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, by which time it had been superseded.

¹⁶ Federation of American Scientists, “PDD/NSC 56 Managing Complex Interagency Operations,” May 1997. Available online at <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd56.htm>>. See also “Harnessing the Interagency for Complex Operations,” Neyla Arnas, Charles Barry, and Robert B. Oakley, Defense and Technology Paper 15, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, August 2005, 6.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Activities of the Bush Administration through September 11, 2001

At the beginning of the Bush Administration, the White House issued National Security Policy Directive Number 1 (NSPD 1) entitled “Organization of the National Security Council System.”¹⁸ NSPD 1 abolished PDD 56 and established National Security Council Policy Coordination Committees (PCC) as the main vehicle for interagency coordination of national security policy. There are six regional PCCs (Europe and Eurasia, Western Hemisphere, East Asia, South Asia, Near East and North Africa, and Africa) and 11 functional PCCs, for democracy, human rights, and international operations; international development and humanitarian assistance; global environment; international finance; transnational economic issues; counter-terrorism and national preparedness; arms control; and intelligence.

Congress Leads the Charge in the Post-9/11 World

In the wake of September 11, 2001, operations in Afghanistan and Iraq highlighted the need for increased interagency cooperation in stability operations. Difficulties experienced in these countries, combined with several independent studies issued on this topic, prompted Congress to introduce several bills calling for changes in the interagency collaboration structure.¹⁹

H.R. 2616

The first of these bills was the Winning the Peace Act of 2003, introduced by Rep. Sam Farr on June 26, 2003. The bill calls on the President to designate a “Director of Reconstruction” for each country in which U.S. armed forces have engaged in armed conflict or which will receive reconstruction services from the U.S. Government. The Director “shall provide oversight and coordination of, and have decisionmaking authority for, all activities of the United States Government.” The bill authorizes the Secretary of State to establish a permanent office to provide support, including administrative services, to each director, and the USAID Administrator to establish an Office of International Emergency Management, which would develop a database of individuals with expertise in reconstruction services, including cultural expertise, and help to mobilize such individuals at the request of the Director.

¹⁸ The White House, “Organization of the National Security Council System,” February 13, 2001. See also Arnas, 5.

¹⁹ A Congressional Research report identifies the following studies as among the most influential: (1) *Play to Win: The Final Report of the bi-partisan Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the U.S. Army, 2003 (a book-length version was published in mid-2004, *Winning the Peace: An American Strategy for Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, Robert C. Orr, ed.); (2) *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*, CSIS, March 2004; (3) *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, (Washington, DC: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, 2004); (4) *On the Brink: Weak States and US National Security*, Center for Global Development, May 2004; and (5) *Transition to and From Hostilities*, Defense Science Board, December 2004. “Peacekeeping and Post-Conflict Capabilities: The State Department’s Office for Reconstruction and Stabilization,” Congressional Research Service, January 19, 2005, 4.

H.R. 4058

The United States Assistance for Civilians Affected by Conflict Act of 2004 was introduced by Rep. Henry Hyde on March 30, 2004. This bill deals primarily with humanitarian assistance and authorizes the President to appoint a Special Coordinator to ensure integrated interagency planning and collaboration. The Special Coordinator would have the rank of Special Assistant to the President.

H.R. 4185

The International Security Enhancement Act of 2004 was introduced by Rep. David Dreier on April 21, 2004. This bill creates an Under Secretary of State for Overseas Contingencies and Stabilization, with primary responsibility for planning and administering non-military aspects of overseas contingency operations. The office would have three bureaus, one each for contingency planning, contingency training, and contingency coordination, each headed by an Assistant Secretary. The Bureau of Contingency Planning would work with intelligence agencies to identify weak and failing states, monitor developments in such countries, prepare pre-conflict stabilization operation plans, and prepare post-conflict reconstruction operations. The Bureau of Contingency Training would train members of the Federal Government for post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations, create and administer an International Contingency Training Center, administer a newly established Civilian Overseas Contingency Force, and maintain a newly created International Contingency Personnel Database. The Bureau of Contingency Coordination would serve as the permanent liaison with the Department of Defense and other relevant agencies, the intelligence community, the UN and NATO, and relevant non-government organizations. Based on the list of weak and failed states, the Under Secretary would then designate countries of “impending” risk or “immediate” risk based on established criteria. Within 15 days of the designation of a country of impending or immediate risk, the President would appoint a Special Coordinator, to be confirmed by the Senate, who would have the rank of Ambassador-at-Large. The Special Coordinator would be the lead executive branch official responsible for coordinating pre-conflict stabilization operations and post-conflict reconstruction operations.

The Lugar-Biden Bill

On February 25, 2004, Senators Richard Lugar and Joe Biden introduced S.209, the Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004, which has come to be known as the Lugar-Biden bill. Because this bill has gained the most traction (it passed the Senate on June 18, 2006 and is pending before the House), it is worth describing its provisions in some detail.

State Department Coordinator

The bill authorizes the President to engage civilian agencies and non-federal employees in stability operations if he determines it is in the national interest to do so. It creates the Office of International Stabilization and Reconstruction, headed by a Coordinator, in the Department of State. The Coordinator shall:

- Monitor worldwide political and economic instability.
- Assess civilian agency resources and capabilities.
- Plan to address requirements for stabilization and reconstruction.
- Coordinate with civilian agencies to develop interagency contingency plans.
- Identify state and local government and private sector personnel to participate in a civilian reserve corps.
- Ensure adequate training and education for civilians.
- Coordinate plans with UN, allies, and non-government organizations.

Response Readiness Force

The bill authorizes the creation of two response forces:

- Response Readiness Corps. This is an in-house, State/USAID corps of 250 persons trained in stabilization and reconstruction activities.
- Response Readiness Reserve. Intended to complement the Corps, the Reserve will be made up of federal employees from any agency, and from the judicial and legislative branches, as well as at least 500 persons from the private sector, who are trained in stabilization and reconstruction activities. Federal and private sector personnel in the Reserve serve on a voluntary basis.
- Persons serving in the Corps and Reserve would receive pay and promotion incentives.

The 250–person Response Readiness Corps at State and USAID would be subject to mandatory deployment. In contrast, the Response Readiness Reserve would be made up of volunteers.

Training and Education

The bill authorizes the establishment of a stabilization and reconstruction training curriculum at the Foreign Service Institute, the National Defense University, and the Army War College.

Funding

The bill authorizes \$100 million for a contingency fund, to be replenished each fiscal year as needed. It authorizes \$80 million for personnel and training, including the Response Readiness Force. Of this amount, \$8 million is to be used for personnel in the State Department Reconstruction and Stabilization Office.

Other Provisions

The bill contains a “sense of Congress” suggesting that the President establish a new directorate of stabilization and reconstruction in the National Security Council and a standing committee to oversee stabilization and reconstruction planning and operations that would include the heads of State, USAID, Labor, Commerce, Justice, Treasury, Agriculture, Defense, and other appropriate agencies. It suggests that Defense Department and other agencies set up a personnel exchange program to enhance stabilization and reconstruction skills and increase civil-military cooperation. Finally, the bill calls for an overview of the relevant responsibilities, capabilities, and limitations of

various Executive agencies and the interactions among them, as well as a study of the U.S. interagency system.

The State Department Takes Action

The State Department created the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in July 2004, after the Congressional bills had been introduced but before any of them had passed. State chose a formulation for S/CRS that derives from its Basic Authorities Act.²⁰ Congress had already created a “Coordinator” for counterterrorism, and one for HIV/AIDS. Both coordinators report directly to the Secretary and both have the rank of Ambassador-at-Large. The language used to create S/CRS in the Lugar-Biden bill appears to be directly borrowed from State’s existing legislative authority for these other two coordinators.

Congress endorsed the new office in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of Fiscal Year 2005, which was signed into law on December 8, 2004.²¹ The law endorsed the newly created S/CRS, specifies that the Coordinator shall report directly to the Secretary of State, and outlines six functions for the new office:

- Catalogue and monitor the non-military resources and capabilities of executive branch agencies, state and local governments, and private and non-profit organizations that are available to address crises in countries or regions that are in, or are in transition from, conflict or civil strife.
- Determine the appropriate non-military U.S. response to those crises, including but not limited to demobilization, policy, human rights, monitoring, and public information efforts.
- Plan that response.
- Coordinate the development of interagency contingency plans for that response,
- To coordinate the training of civilian personnel to perform stabilization and reconstruction activities in response to crises in such countries or regions.
- Monitor political and economic instability worldwide to anticipate the need for U.S. and international assistance.

Mission and Organization of S/CRS

The mission of S/CRS, as defined on its website, is “to lead, coordinate and institutionalize U.S. Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy. S/CRS works across the U.S. Government and with the world community to anticipate state failure, avert it when possible, and help post-conflict states lay a foundation for lasting peace, good governance and sustainable development.”²² The Office is subdivided into an Early Warning Branch, a Conflict Prevention Branch, a

²⁰ 22 U.S.C. Sec. 2651a.

²¹ H.R. 4818, P.L. 108-447.

²² U.S. State Department, “About S/CRS,” May 18, 2006. Available online at <<http://www.state.gov/s/crs/c12936.htm>>.

Planning Office, a Best Practices and Sectoral Coordination Office, and a Response Strategy and Resource Management Office.

Washington Management

S/CRS provides central Washington management of a U.S. conflict response and serves as a force multiplier across agencies. The core functions are to:

- Guide the U.S. planning process.
- Improve conflict prevention capabilities.
- Coordinate central management, and establish means for coordination in the field,
- Serve as a focal point for post-conflict outreach to the international community and international financial institutions, working with other bureaus and agencies,
- Develop in advance the people, resources, training and guidance needed for successful stabilization and reconstruction,
- Establish institutional memory by systematically capturing and applying lessons learned.²³

For each contingency plan, the Secretary of State will assemble a Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG), made up of interagency members of the permanent Policy Coordinating Committees (established under NSPD 1). The CRSG would be co-chaired by S/CRS and the National Security Council, and would report directly to the Deputies Committee. Committee competencies would include governance, economic stabilization, humanitarian assistance, resource management, and infrastructure.²⁴

Operational Management

S/CRS is in the process of creating a ready-response capacity within the State Department, drawn from the Civil and Foreign Services, to handle complex contingencies. The corps would train and exercise together, and have a range of political, economic, communications, security, and management skills. The principal functions would be to:

- Deploy as first responders to guide post-conflict efforts crucial to the transition process.
- Engage local communities and governments, and coordinate with international partners or peacekeepers on the ground to promote unity of effort.
- Augment the U.S. Embassy presence on the ground, or establish diplomatic operations where a U.S. embassy or mission does not exist.
- Support the Washington coordination group or other task forces that backstop U.S. teams in the field.
- Reinforce ongoing stabilization and reconstruction missions as needed.²⁵

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Arnas, 7.

²⁵ U.S. State Department, "About S/CRS," May 18, 2006. Available online at <<http://www.state.gov/s/crs/c12936.htm>>.

At the operational level, S/CRS would establish a Civilian-Military Planning Team (CMPT), which would deploy with a Combatant Command (COCOM) or a UN peacekeeping operation. The CMPT would provide civilian expertise to military planning processes and operations. The CMPT would report to both the CRSG and the COCOM.²⁶

Field-Level Management

S/CRS is establishing a Global Skills Network made up of persons with expertise across the U.S. Government. This could include permanent federal employees as well as contractors. The purpose is to provide skills on the ground in a range of areas, to include international civilian police, training indigenous law enforcement, supporting civil society, building independent media, providing financial advice, stimulating the private sector, repairing key infrastructure, strengthening governmental administration and developing the justice system.²⁷

At the tactical level, S/CRS would organize and deploy Advance Civilian Teams (ACTs). An ACT Integration Cell would deploy and co-locate with the military Joint Task Force headquarters and form the core of the permanent civilian presence. The ACT headquarters element and the military command would join together as an executive committee to coordinate civil-military activities on stability operations. The ACT headquarters element also would oversee and support subordinate ACTs that would deploy with each brigade in support of stability operations. Some key tasks would be to take requests for additional ACTs by military units, identify locations and priorities, resolve conflicts with military operations, coordinate support, synchronize operations with military Civil Affairs units, and coordinate with the CMPT. The multiple tactical ACTs operating with military brigades would deploy forward under military security and logistical support to provide direct humanitarian assistance and assist in restarting basic services, government institutions, and the local economy.²⁸

Bureaucratic Tensions

The creation of S/CRS caused some ripples within the State Department and USAID. Some persons in various State organizations, such as the regional bureaus and the Office of Political-Military Affairs, believed that S/CRS was encroaching on areas that were their domain, particularly with respect to issues like conflict prevention, political analysis, and coordination with allies and regional and international organizations. Others felt that S/CRS would not be able to do the type of political/military/economic analysis required under its mandate without the participation of their bureaus. For example, when S/CRS's Planning Branch drafted stabilization plans for Haiti, Sudan, and Cuba, it relied heavily on the expertise of the regional bureaus. Similarly, USAID expressed concern when S/CRS included humanitarian assistance in its mandate, when by law the USAID Administrator is the principal advisor to the President on humanitarian assistance and the coordinator for all U.S. humanitarian aid.

²⁶ Internal S/CRS document and Arnas, 15.

²⁷ U.S. State Department, "About S/CRS," May 18, 2006. Available online at <<http://www.state.gov/s/crs/c12936.htm>>.

²⁸ Arnas, 21.

Issues Facing S/CRS

The principal issue facing S/CRS is funding. The office has generally had strong verbal backing in Congress but weak financial support. Congress appropriated only \$12.8 million in fiscal year 2005 to S/CRS for operating and personnel expenses, and \$16.6 million in fiscal year 2006. S/CRS' fiscal year 2007 request is for \$20.1 million for operating expenses, and \$75 million in foreign operations (\$50 million for a conflict response fund and \$25 million for a civilian reserve corps). Another concern is personnel. As of this writing, S/CRS has about 50 staffers, many of whom are on temporary assignments from within State or on detail from other agencies.

NSPD 44

In December 2005, the President issued National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD 44), "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization."²⁹ NSPD 44 supersedes PDD 56. It establishes that the Secretary of State will be supported by a Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization to:

- Develop strategies for reconstruction and stabilization activities; provide U.S. decision makers with detailed options for stabilization and reconstruction operations; ensure program and policy coordination among U.S. Departments and Agencies; lead coordination of reconstruction and stabilization activities and preventative strategies with bilateral partners, international and regional organizations, and nongovernmental and private sector entities.
- Coordinate interagency processes to identify states at risk of instability, lead interagency planning to prevent or mitigate conflict, develop detailed contingency plans for integrated U.S. reconstruction and stabilization, and provide U.S. decisionmakers with detailed options for an integrated U.S. response.
- Lead U.S. development of a strong civilian response capability; analyze, formulate and recommend authorities, mechanisms and resources for civilian responses in coordination with key interagency implementers such as AID; coordinate stabilization and reconstruction budgets among Departments and Agencies; identify lessons learned and integrate them into operational planning by responsible agencies.

NSPD 44 calls on the Secretaries of State and Defense to integrate stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans with military contingency plans, when relevant and appropriate. It also calls on each agency to strengthen its capacity to respond to crises; mobilize expert staff; participate in deployed teams; and assist with planning, policy exercises, and training.

²⁹ The White House, "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization," December 7, 2005.

National Security Strategy

In March 2006, the President issued the National Security Strategy of the United States of America.³⁰ The document calls for S/CRS to integrate all relevant United States Government resources and assets in conducting reconstruction and stabilization operations. It calls for developing a civilian reserve corps, analogous to the military reserves, to utilize “the human resources of the American people for skills and capacities needed for international disaster relief and post-conflict reconstruction.”³¹ It also calls for improving the capacity of agencies to plan, prepare, coordinate, integrate, and execute responses covering the full range of crisis contingencies. It states that “[a]gencies that traditionally played only a domestic role increasingly have a role to play in our foreign and security policies.”³²

Meanwhile, Back at the Department of Defense . . .

The Department of Defense has issued several key policy documents stressing the importance of interagency cooperation in complex contingencies and its support for building capacity in the interagency system.

Quadrennial Defense Review

The QDR commits the Department to support substantially increased resources for S/CRS and its proposal to establish a deployable civilian reserve corps and a conflict response fund. It supports broader Presidential authorities to redirect resources to other government agencies that may be better suited to provide support in overseas emergencies. One of the eight “roadmaps” to implement the QDR focuses on “building partnership capacity,” which includes strengthening the interagency system. It calls for improving interagency planning, communications, training, and resources, and calls for the creation of a “national security officer” corps to be made up of interagency specialists in complex contingencies.

Directive 3000.05

In November 2005, the Department of Defense issued Directive 3000.05, “Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations.” The Directive puts stability operations on a par with major combat operations as a core mission of the Department and the Services and requires that military planning include plans for the post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction phase. It stresses the importance of integrated civilian and military efforts to succeed in stability operations, and it commits the Department to support and work closely with all relevant U.S. agencies.

³⁰ The White House, National Security Strategy, March 16, 2006.

³¹ Ibid., 45.

³² Ibid.

Transformation at the U.S. Agency for International Development

After September 11, 2001, and the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, USAID also re-examined its policies and practices. In January 2004, it issued a “white paper” entitled “Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century,” and in March 2005 it issued its “Fragile States Strategy.”³³ The white paper recommends five core operational goals for U.S. foreign assistance:

- Promoting transformational development.
- Strengthening fragile states.
- Supporting U.S. geostrategic interests.
- Mitigating global and transnational ills.
- Providing humanitarian relief.

All five of these components are related to stabilization and reconstruction, according to the paper.³⁴ In addition, the fragile states strategy has four principles:

- Engage strategically.
- Focus on sources of fragility.
- Seek short-term impact linked to longer-term structural reform.
- Establish appropriate measurement systems.

USAID has created several new offices to meet current challenges. The Office of Infrastructure and Engineering is linked to the Army Corps of Engineers to put a new emphasis on infrastructure development. The Office of Military Affairs is intended to promote closer coordination with the military in complex contingencies. It will place development advisors at each of the COCOMs. The Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance has been restructured. The objective is to integrate bureau operations, develop a fragile states lead, expand first responder capacity, increase the democracy input into fragile states, strengthen regional field hubs, and build direct ties to other Washington bureaus. A new Economic Stabilization Unit has been established in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade. Finally, USAID is developing a new handbook for complex emergencies, modeled on the existing disaster response handbook.

A Work in Progress, by Way of a Conclusion

At this writing, many issues remain unresolved or untested with respect to all the recent activity and changes made in the interagency system for complex operations. From the outset, the State Department decided that S/CRS would not get involved with any activities in Iraq and Afghanistan because there was already an intricate internal structure set up for those operations. Yet, the first active test case given to S/CRS was Sudan. Internally, some S/CRS representatives expressed disappointment at this choice because

³³ From an internal USAID document.

³⁴ Ibid.

the crisis in Sudan was ongoing and there was already an internal structure within the State Department as well as an interagency structure set up to deal with it. This would therefore increase the chances of redundancy and bureaucratic turf battles.³⁵ The Sudan case is emblematic of the catch-22 situation S/CRS often finds itself in at present: it has not been given the responsibility to take the lead on any operation, and even if it had, it lacks adequate personnel and other resources to execute the operation effectively. At the same time, Congressional overseers are looking for a good test case so that S/CRS can prove its mettle and convince appropriators to provide more resources.

Other issues remain untested. For example, it is unclear how well the Defense Department will coordinate with other agencies and what kind of support, in terms of force protection, logistics, resources, and interoperability, it will provide to civilian agency partners. It is unclear how command and control relationships will work out in the field. In addition, many commentators have raised the issue of whether NSPD 44 gives the State Department adequate authority to entice other agencies to participate in complex operations. Finally, the relationship between S/CRS and USAID will need to be worked out in a complex contingency. In theory, it would seem that S/CRS will be responsible for policy and interagency cooperation, while USAID oversees operations, but these lines could become blurred in Washington and in the field.

³⁵ S/CRS went ahead full bore with its work on Sudan. In August 2006, it announced the establishment of the Active Response Corps (ARC), a team of first responders who can support a U.S. mission, engage with a host country government, coordinate with international partners, and conduct assessments. ARC members are State Department officials serving one-year tours. Ten are now on-board, trained, equipped, and being deployed. By the end of 2007, the team is expected to expand to 30. In late June, four members of the Active Response Corps deployed to Sudan in support of U.S. efforts to promote implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. ARC personnel are supporting the Embassy in Khartoum and its field presence in Darfur for up to 180 days. In addition, S/CRS deployed its Senior Advisor for Transitional Security to Darfur to assist DPA signatories in implementing security arrangements called for in the agreement. ARC personnel have been chosen for their experience in conflict and unstable environments. As part of the ARC, they have undergone training and exercises focused on conflict transformation, and serve as initial surge capacity to supplement other Embassy and Department staff and initiatives.

Instructor's Guide to Transforming the Interagency Case Study

This case study is as much a study of politics and bureaucracy as it is of efforts to coordinate the interagency system for stability operations. In addition to the policy difficulties of coordinating and managing the interagency system, political and bureaucratic considerations will often have a considerable impact on the substance of the solution to the problem and may impede the path to an optimal solution.

The Political and Policy Context

Recent efforts by Congress, the White House, DOD, State, and USAID to improve the interagency system for stability operations stem largely from setbacks in Iraq, and to a lesser extent, Afghanistan. These efforts began in 2003 and continue as of this writing, early 2007. Yet references to Iraq, or Afghanistan, in official pronouncements addressing the interagency system are surprisingly sparse, if they exist at all. NSPD-44 does not mention Iraq or Afghanistan. The section in the National Security Strategy addressing interagency coordination for complex contingencies does not mention Iraq or Afghanistan. The section in DOD's Quadrennial Defense Review stressing the need for unity of effort and strengthening interagency operations does not mention Iraq or Afghanistan. There is no mention of Iraq or Afghanistan in Directive 3000.05. In the State Department, S/CRS was specifically *precluded* from working on Iraq or Afghanistan.³⁶ USAID's *Fragile States Strategy* contains barely any mention of Iraq, nor do its other new initiatives, including the launch of the Office of Military Affairs or the new Economic Stabilization unit. None of the four bills introduced in Congress highlights difficulties in Iraq or Afghanistan. Instead, Congressional findings typically refer to the two countries more generically, as in "major post-conflict reconstruction efforts in such places as Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, and Afghanistan" (H.R. 2616) or "reconstruction and democracy-building efforts in Germany, Japan, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq" (H.R. 4185).

The political context in which reforms are made is a key part of understanding the policy decisions and structure of the interagency system that has emerged. Administrations may be reluctant to admit that a problem exists, or slow to acknowledge it, especially if the problem is perceived as one of their own doing. Even once the problem is acknowledged, there may still be some reluctance to do anything about it, or at least to do anything major. In this case, the impetus for reforming the interagency system was clearly a series of setbacks in Iraq, but since Operation Iraqi Freedom was perceived as a war of choice, and postwar problems could be attributed at least in part to poor planning and implementation, the Administration did not rush to reform the interagency system.

³⁶ Iraq and Afghanistan were excluded from S/CRS' portfolio because the State Department already had in place an elaborate bureaucratic structure to deal with them, not because State was seeking to avoid addressing the complex issues associated with them. There was a strong feeling in many parts of State that including Iraq and Afghanistan in S/CRS' portfolio would at best create an unnecessary bureaucratic layer and redundant efforts and at worst competition for resources and decision-makers' attention, as well as turf battles. Nonetheless, excluding Iraq and Afghanistan meant that S/CRS' policies and action plans would be developed without particular consideration of the challenges faced in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Instead, Congress made the first moves, and although the Administration expressed rhetorical support for some of the Congressional initiatives, particularly the Lugar-Biden bill, a robust, behind-the-scenes push from Administration principals has been lacking.

The creation of S/CRS stands in sharp contrast to another recent reorganization of the interagency system -- the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. In the case of DHS, Congress and the Administration acted in concert within a matter of months after September 11 to create and fund an entire new federal agency, not just a small office within an existing agency. One major difference is that DHS was created in reaction to an *exogenous* event, the 9/11 attacks. This made the political calculus for both Congress and the Administration much simpler, and therefore easier to achieve.

Questions for Class Discussion:

- Were Iraq and Afghanistan downplayed in Administration and Congressional documents related to reforming the interagency system? If so, why?
- Vietnam is conspicuous by its absence. Why does none of the Administration or Congressional documents mention Vietnam?
- How do stability operations in non-permissive environments (occasioned by continuing war, insurgency, or civil war), such as in Iraq or Vietnam, differ from operations in more permissive environments, such as in Bosnia or Haiti, and how might these differences affect interagency organization and planning?
- Compare NSPD-44, which makes no mention of Iraq, with PDD-56, which specifically refers to Bosnia as a prime example of the type of peace operations that the directive is aimed at.
- Does NSPD-44 give the State Department enough authority to compel other agencies to participate in stability operations? What about resources? Where will other agencies find the resources to participate?
- Why was Congress first to act? Why has the Administration given only lukewarm support to the Lugar-Biden bill?

The Interagency and Bureaucratic Context

This case study offers valuable lessons about the nature of bureaucracy, agency culture, core missions, and interagency rivalries. How agencies view themselves and what they perceive to be their core missions may be the best indicators of an agency's inclination and ability to perform an assigned task. In this case, it is instructive to examine the core missions of the three principal agencies involved: DOD, State, and USAID. How do they view themselves? What do they perceive to be their core mission? What types of skills, expertise, and background are most prized and most likely to be rewarded (with promotions, increased responsibility, plum assignments) at each of the agencies?

Traditionally, DOD's core mission has been fighting and winning wars. While the military may have engaged in stability operations throughout the last century, it did so only reluctantly. The lack of attention to stability operations in terms of planning, resources, and training apparently was such a concern that the Secretary of Defense

issued a Directive *mandating* that stability operations be treated on a par with combat operations. The State Department's traditional mission has been diplomacy and the prevention of conflict; it has virtually no operational capacity and has not traditionally planned for post-war operations. USAID's mission is to promote long-term, sustainable development and institutions that will support democracy and open markets. Since Vietnam, USAID has not worked in a conflict environment. The bottom line is that none of the agencies has as its core mission stability operations.

On top of this, interagency rivalries come into play. There have been historical tensions and rivalries among DOD, State, and USAID, and many of those tensions were exacerbated by Operation Iraqi Freedom. DOD largely excluded State and USAID from the planning and initial operating phases of OIF, and State and USAID blamed DOD for the failures of the post-combat phase. Suspicions ran so high that some in State viewed Directive 3000.05 as an effort to nullify NSPD-44 and deny State the lead role in stability operations. Some in USAID viewed the creation of S/CRS as an attempt to usurp what they viewed as their logical role as the lead agency for stability operations.

Finally, intra-bureau rivalries within State have affected the formation and support for S/CRS. Some of the opposition to S/CRS within State was bureaucratic, some was philosophical. The regional bureaus believed that S/CRS would have no value added and that anything it would do should be the responsibility of their own bureaus. S/CRS did not help itself by casting a wide net in drafting its mission statement, including such things as conflict prevention and analysis of the underlying causes of conflict. Others in State opposed S/CRS on philosophical grounds, arguing that the mere existence of such an office would encourage militaristic interventions abroad.

Questions for Class Discussion:

- What motivated DOD to support S/CRS and provide partial funding? Compare the relationship between DOD and State before the launching of OIF and a year or two after the end of major combat operations.
- What prompted State to create S/CRS six months before Congress endorsed the office and before any of the bills authorizing the office had passed?
- Why does USAID want a greater role in managing stability operations?
- Which agency's culture is best suited to plan for and conduct stability operations?
- What is the purpose of Directive 3000.05, and does it contradict NSPD-44?
- Why did State's regional bureaus initially oppose the creation of S/CRS?
- Why did the Secretary of State create the new Director of Foreign Assistance?

Political and Bureaucratic Lessons from History

Experiences in administering the Marshall Plan and the CORDS program highlight the difficulties in organizing the interagency system for complex operations, and they offer stark contrasts in how the President and the Congress addressed interagency rivalries. Congress created a new agency to administer Marshall Plan funds, and President Johnson enlisted the aid of a close personal advisor, answerable to the President, to whip all of the

agencies into shape. In addition, the political circumstances and political pressures on Presidents Truman and Johnson were unique and helped to shape the interagency system that was ultimately adopted.

Questions for Class Discussion:

- How did the election of a Republican Congress in 1946 influence the Truman Administration's approach to the Marshall Plan?
- From a political perspective, why was it acceptable for both the President and the Congress to support the creation of a new agency to administer Marshall Plan funds?
- Discuss the role and operation of the ECA, and contrast its functions and responsibilities with those of State/DOD/ and USAID in managing stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Is the Marshall Plan an appropriate model for modern stability operations?
- How significant was President Johnson's personal involvement in coordinating the interagency system? And how significant was the appointment of Robert Komer and later William Colby in making the system work? What were the keys to the success of Messrs. Komer and Colby?
- Nowadays, there is much talk of the need for a "Goldwater-Nichols II" to coordinate interagency operations in the same way that the original legislation forced jointness on the Services. In light of the CORDS experience, is new legislation needed?
- How did the CORDS program relate to President Johnson's domestic legislative agenda (the "Great Society")?