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U.S. Air Force (Marc I. Lane)

Afghan National Police recruits receive weapons training during security course

Security Is More Than "20" Percent

BY RONALD E. NEUMANN

Security is only 20 percent of the solution; 80 percent is governance and development." "There is no military solution to insurgency."

These and similar statements have rightly refocused counterinsurgency doctrine and popular thinking away from purely military solutions to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet these catchphrases have become substitutes for deeper consideration of the role of security in the current conflicts and in insurgency in general, hiding some important points and leading to assumptions that are an insufficient basis for policy.

In some cases, military force alone has quelled insurgencies. The importance of security can shift as an insurgency grows. Whether security and stabilization/development are sequential or simultaneous may vary in different parts of the same country. However, at some point,

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whether security is 20 percent of the solution or 50 percent is less relevant than that it is an essential foundation without which none of the other factors can succeed. Moreover, since security in this sense is not only security of the population but also safety that locals see as a credible development, security involves the actions of local forces. This in turn requires a reexamination of several issues. One question is the ratio of local forces to the task at hand. Another is whether such forces are seen as providing freedom from oppression or are the source of oppression. A third is whether our current practice of trying to use local police to manage the gap between foreign forces and the time needed to build a competent local military is strategically sound. A fourth is whether we need to reexamine our current methods of building local forces—practices that are very different from many U.S. experiences of the 19th and early 20th centuries. These are the questions that this article considers and in some measure challenges.

security forces have historically ended a great many insurgencies from ancient times to modern

Use of Force in History

While I agree that military victory by foreign forces alone is not possible as a sole source of victory in Iraq or Afghanistan, it is intellectually useful to pull apart the belief that military victory against insurgencies is never possible.[1] James Dobbins points out in RAND's study of eight cases of nationbuilding that in the four cases that failed, either initially or totally, the basic cause of failure was in security.[2]

Security forces have historically ended a great many insurgencies from ancient times to modern. Spartacus's rebellion was ended by savage repression, negotiation having been refused. After many bloody years, insurgencies were thus crushed from the Muslims in Dutch Indonesia, to Abdul Khadar's 19th-century revolt against the French[3] in Algeria, to the late 20th-century insurgency in Algeria. Powerful Afghan rulers, such as Amir Abdul Rahman, who put down numerous rebellions in Afghanistan, would have found puzzling if not simply foolish the notion that insurgency could not be stamped out by force. The United States used force as a primary tool in suppressing revolts in the Philippines, Haiti, and elsewhere in the Caribbean in the early 20th century, although improvements in civil administration, health, and education also played a role.[4] The Greek civil war of 1943–1950 was ended by force of arms.[5] The long years of insurgency in Sri Lanka seem finally to have reached a military solution.

This is not to argue that military means are always successful, still less that they are the best means of dealing with all insurgencies. However, these cases are a reminder that one needs to think more deeply about what is at issue in a particular insurgency than simple sound bite logic might suggest.

Why have some insurgencies been suppressed by force while others have not? Each had its own specificity, but a few defining characteristics stand out. One is the use of methods generally not acceptable to Western public opinion today. Confining civilian populations in camps was a feature of separating them from the insurgents in campaigns such as those in Malaya and the Philippines. Brutal repression that made little distinction between the innocent and the guilty marked other campaigns. The approach "Kill them all—God will know

his own"[6] would not be found acceptable today. However, the Sri Lankan refusal to allow a ceasefire for beleaguered civilians in the final campaign to end the Tamil rebellion clearly put protecting civilian lives at a lower priority than the judgment that might be made by a Western army answerable to a different public opinion. All this is to note that means unacceptable to Western forces might still be used successfully by indigenous forces and can often present Westerners with difficult policy choices. In some cases, local forces can win using methods we would find impossible and repugnant. To observe this fact is not to advocate it, but it does remind one not to be too categorical in statements of what is possible.

Security in Modern Counterinsurgency

More important for America's role in insurgencies is to consider carefully the importance of security in the context of the repeated assertion that the majority of work in counterinsurgency is nonmilitary.

This statement requires some qualification. A RAND study of how terrorist groups end[7] examined 648 groups that existed between 1968 and 2000. It indeed concluded that the majority did end through political compromise, although some 7 percent did succumb to security means. But this generalization begins to change when terrorist groups expand into insurgencies. In such cases, 25 percent ended because of military force.[8] The same study showed that where terrorist groups had goals that precluded bargaining, security methods were most effective in ending such groups.

Thus, while policing, political negotiation, governance, and development all have their part, the importance of security grows as terrorism morphs into insurgency. The late Bernard Fall noted that in "revolutionary war," the objective is "to establish a competitive system of control over the population."[9] Fall noted that in the war against the French in Indochina, and later in the Vietnam conflict, substantial portions of the countryside were under insurgent civil control even as the French and then the Americans declared they were winning.

"When a country is being subverted it is not being outfought; it is being out-administered," Fall wrote.[10] The killing of village headmen, destruction of education, and control of taxation can take place when government security forces are unable to prevent insurgents from exerting control. Until security is sufficient to allow local government administration, the quality of that governance is irrelevant, although it may be crucial later. This lack of population security is very much the situation against which I and my civil and military colleagues struggled in my time in Afghanistan (2005–2007), and it is still the challenge today.

Trying to decide the percentage of the strategy that security plays, or asserting that all parts of counterinsurgency are at all times equally important, risks misunderstanding the importance of security as a foundation without which other elements cannot be built. When insurgency is weak, allegiance can be won through better and more just governance, development, justice, and so on. Thus, in some parts of Afghanistan where there is general calm,

trying to decide the percentage of the strategy that security plays risks misunderstanding the importance of security as a foundation without which other elements cannot be built

good governance and economic development are extremely important. But in other areas, where insurgency can threaten and deliver death to those who accept the government's writ, the calculation changes.

Survival is the most basic requirement of people. Individuals may risk their lives for a greater cause, such as to protect loved ones or in the name of honor. But for people as a group to resist, they need to believe they can survive. When the insurgents can convince large elements of the population that survival can only be achieved through passive or active support of the insurgency, then none of the nonsecurity measures of counterinsurgency can come into effective play. This became the condition in parts of Iraq until a combination of local Iraqi resentment against al Qaeda, increased U.S. forces, and changed U.S. tactics came together in Anbar Province and then other areas to begin reestablishing security. That did not mean victory, or even an ending of violence. But it did create the space in which reconciliation, politics, governance, and development may play a part in bringing Iraq together in peace. Despite success, the point here is to understand how the role of security in counterinsurgency shifts depending on the situation. Buzzwords and catchphrases that treat security, development, and the other parts of counterinsurgency doctrine as fixed misunderstand the dynamic nature of insurgency's challenge.

It remains true that a government will be more stable and capable of resisting insurgency with the support of the people. It is not true, however, that such support can be built in the absence of security for the bulk of the population. As the *U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* recognized, "Without a secure environment, no permanent reforms can be implemented and disorder spreads."[11]

Population Security in Afghanistan

The current reorientation of policy in Afghanistan by the Obama administration to put security for the population at the center of strategy is undoubtedly correct. To repeat, protection of the people is the essential ingredient without which the other elements of development and governance are not possible. As John Nagl argues, "The populace must have confidence in the staying power of *both* [emphasis added] the counterinsurgency and the [host nation] government."[12] But the concept of protecting the population is one thing, and achieving it is something else.

How is population security to be achieved? Who can do it? What resources does it demand and where do they come from? These questions are beginning to be more sharply considered within strategic reassessments but are largely absent from popular discussion. There is no single answer for all times, but some central questions can be defined and the case of Afghanistan provides a useful template in which to draw them out.

Population security has several aspects. One is that people must be reasonably secure in their homes, workplaces, and travel. It also means that government can function. Teachers can be sent to teach, and they and their schools can survive. Administrators must be able to live and function in their towns and villages. Clinics must be open, supplied, and able to function. It is by measuring whether these things are happening without threats of assassination and disruption that we can judge whether security is being achieved.[13]

This leads to the question of who can provide population security. Initially, foreign forces can fill that role, but Iraq and Afghanistan both demonstrate limits to the capability and capacity of these forces. In neither case were foreign forces sufficiently numerous to deal

with assassinations, protect roads, and still manage the missions of taking the fight to the enemy. The intercommunal strife of Iraq and the daily harvest of bodies showing extensive torture were a commentary on the limitations of foreign forces as well as on the corruption of some of the Iraqi forces that were supposed to assist. One problem is numbers. Even if the United States had begun the Iraqi occupation with larger forces, it would have still been difficult to stretch far enough to deal with all the needs, especially once the insurgency began to gather strength.

In Afghanistan, the increased dangers of travel on major roads along with regular assaults on small Afghan government forces, especially police, testified to the loss of civilian security, as did the increase in roadside and suicide bomb attacks against military targets. But the problem was not only one of numbers. Even in areas largely considered cleared, the ubiquitous delivery of threatening "night letters" reminded Afghans that they were far from secure. One example was in the Arghandab District of Kandahar Province in 2008. After the natural death of Mullah Naquib, who had largely kept the district secure, the Taliban moved in. International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and some Afghan forces were able to push them out.[14] However, while the district was considered secure, the Taliban were able to continue targeted threats down to the level of village bakers to warn against cooperation with ISAF and the Afghan government.[15] The insurgent ability to operate below the level of foreign control illustrates that the problem of local security is one not only of numbers but also of intelligence and awareness of who is who in an environment where villagers are likely to be too frightened to come forth and provide the necessary information.

Problems of Depending on Regional Forces

Local forces must be part of the answer to security, but they too have limitations. Even moderately trained armies need extensive time to develop. The situation may not wait for our methods of building forces. In Iraq when the second Shia revolt broke out in November 2004, the problem suddenly became acute. Moqtada al-Sadr's forces took the holy shrine of Imam Ali. While U.S. forces could fight their way close to the mosque, having foreign forces actually attack the shrine risked a major expansion of the revolt. Only three Iraqi army battalions had been formed, and they had to be extracted from other missions, given minimal training in fighting in a built-up area, and transported to Najaf. The delay was costly, particularly as it allowed Moqtada to withdraw from the shrine and go into hiding.

Limitations are also an issue of different types of local forces. Police have proven one of the weakest links in counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are a number of reasons for this, and as the problems are going to be difficult and time consuming to fix, we need to think strategically about the role assigned to police in the future.

the situation may not wait for our methods of building forces

Local law enforcement makes a great deal of sense for community policing but suffers serious vulnerabilities when the problem becomes one of insurgency; we must focus more on this difference as we consider how to build, advise, and use indigenous police forces. In Algeria, where I served during an insurgency from 1994 to 1997, the police lived in the community,

U.S. Air Force (Angelita Lawrence)

Female members of Afghan National Police in women's affairs building in Zabul Province

which was effective for police work. However, their homes, lives, and families were easily targeted by the insurgents, and the police were virtually forced out of many communities as a result. Thus, other Algerian security forces, primarily military and intelligence elements, dominated in the bloody counterinsurgency campaign.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the police were not only vulnerable, poorly trained, and corrupt but also were or became the instruments of local political and militia leaders, who used their domination of the police to exert political control by force. Police suppression of dissent, along with turning a blind eye to or being part of criminal networks, reduced police effectiveness and created resentments and grievances that assisted insurgent recruiting. It took a number of years in each country for the U.S. Government to recognize that the political problems of the police could not be dealt with only by improving training and equipment. When the police are thugs, creating better trained and equipped thugs does not equal progress in counterinsurgency.

Since it was never possible to disband the police and start over, as we did with both the Iraqi and Afghan armies, we belatedly began the task of pulling apart and rebuilding police and interior ministries even as we tried to work with the existing forces. The result was that the local police, intended to fill the gap between foreign forces and the development of new armies, were not up to task.

If foreign forces cannot by their nature meet all the needs of population protection, local armies take a long time to build, and local police are manifestly weak for counterinsurgency, how is the

crucial need for population security to be met? There is no single answer, but among the issues to be considered is whether our model for building local security forces is best.

Different Models to Consider

Currently, we are struggling to implement a difficult model of force generation in which foreign forces must carry the brunt of the fighting for the years necessary to build local security forces that we advise but do not lead. The slow pace of the process in Iraq and Afghanistan is well known, as is the debate about force quality and readiness.

Because the process is long, there has been a constant search for short-term fixes to reduce the strain on our forces. The results are not inspiring. In Iraq, local police and civil guards recruited by the divisions were heavily sectarian. They fell apart during the Shia revolt of April 2004. I well remember standing on the roof of our beleaguered Coalition Provisional Authority outpost in Najaf to watch police and civil guards in uniforms and vehicles that we provided besieging us during the day and turning their guns on us at night.

In Afghanistan, we tried repeatedly to find a way of providing short-term reinforcements to counter offensives we knew were coming in 2006 and 2007. Police "rebalancing"[16] failed. So did our effort to use auxiliary police[17] to supplement the regular forces. We are trying other approaches now in Afghanistan. They may prove more successful, but it is important to understand that while we have theories modified by experience of what has not worked, we do not yet have a proven model for producing large numbers of effective police in the midst of an insurgency.

The point is not to criticize previous efforts but to illustrate the horrible problems of trying to bridge the gap between force generation and force readiness within the limitations of our advisory personnel and knowledge. Yet history has provided other models. While we may not be able to turn the clock back to use these lessons in Afghanistan, we should still consider them there—and for the future.

One alternative is to take direct charge of local levies, providing the officers and some of the noncommissioned officers ourselves and gradually turning the force over to the locals from the bottom up as the leadership matures. This was the model the British used in Jordan where British officers under Sir John Bagot Glubb (Glubb Pasha) commanded the Arab Legion. That force performed credibly against bandits and then, still under British loan officers, in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Even after all British officers left, the Jordanian forces for many years were the most efficient of Arab armies.

This was also the pattern American forces followed in the early years of the 20th century. U.S. officers commanded constabulary forces in the Philippines, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic.[18] The results were impressive. It is worth considering whether the political problems of police in Iraq and Afghanistan might be different if we had chosen a similar model.[19] Perhaps a colonial model cannot be used in the 21st century because of the development of nationalism, but there are variations on the theme to consider. These could include expanding partnering with our forces to include integration of units, putting our personnel in direct command at lower levels, integrating the best foreign officers into our own forces, or taking command of some local forces for a period of time. It is not necessary to adopt a "one size fits all" model on a theoretical basis. What is necessary is to recognize the limitations of our current way of working and to seek new solutions.

Strategic Issues

Whatever the mix of solutions we adopt, we must think systematically about three related issues. One is the size of forces necessary for civilian protection as well as the other tasks of counterinsurgency. We need to think about force numbers in terms of security tasks rather than in terms of the enemy. We apparently are beginning to think on that basis in Afghanistan, but it is very late in the day.

Second, we need to be more explicit in considering how the various missions of counterinsurgency are to be shifted over time from foreign to local forces. We talk about this in generalities, but during my service in Iraq and Afghanistan, I am not aware that we integrated realistic local force planning and deployment into our consideration of the size for U.S. forces, nor did we until recently include extensive civilian protection in our calculation of force needs. The result was a gaping hole in planning.

we would have been much better off in the past and would be in the future if we underpromised and overperformed; instead, we have repeatedly done the reverse

Whatever models and methods we choose in the future for building local forces, time will remain a limiting factor. Therefore, the third point is that we need to be realistic in understanding *and explaining publicly* the time lags for generating competent local forces. For many reasons, principally our own domestic pressures, we have repeatedly created unrealistic public expectations followed by disappointment and loss of credibility. Part of the reason lies in language usage.

We have used the word *trained* to mean fielding units with only the most rudimentary skills. Generally, the word was technically caveated to mean trained to a specific level, Corporate Management (CM)1 through CM4 being the usual terms for evaluating unit readiness to perform.[20] However, this distinction was largely lost in public discussion and briefings. General public expectations that "trained" meant the task was completed came up against limited performance and led to disappointment and a loss of credibility for official pronouncements.[21] We would have been much better off in the past and would be in the future if we underpromised and overperformed; instead, we have repeatedly done the reverse.

Having been more honest with ourselves about time constraints, we need to include realistic numbers for our own deployments. For this, we need equally to be honest with our own public about why forces of a necessary size are needed. If the public cannot support the needed sacrifice at the beginning of a struggle, they are most unlikely to sustain the project for the time needed for any counterinsurgency.

The focus of this article has been on rethinking not only what security must accomplish in a counterinsurgency, but also what it requires in planning to fill gaps until trained local forces are available. To focus thus on security is not to downplay the importance of the quality of governance and development. Ultimately, popular loyalty must be achieved if a government is to survive. A government that produces only repression of its own population is unlikely to be seen as conveying security. In the long term, if repression is linked to foreign occupation, the result may be to bolster the insurgency. Security is not an answer to everything. But we need to do it better to gain the time to make the rest work. And we need to explain better what we are

doing—and make good on the explanations—if we are to secure public support for the time needed to succeed in a project that joins counterinsurgency with armed nationbuilding.[22] **PRISM**

Notes

[1] Some of many examples of the maximum statement of the issue follow: "There can be no military solution to insurgency," in "Imran Khan advises US to strike a deal with Taliban," *Pak Tribune*, February 23, 2009; "There can be no military solution to counter-insurgency campaigns, and no talk of a military 'victory,'" in Richard Norton Taylor and Owen Bowcott, "Army learned insurgency lessons from Northern Ireland," *The Guardian*, July 31, 2007. The formulation that counterinsurgency is 80 percent political and only 20 percent military traces back at least to the French writer David Galula. That formulation was also cited officially, for example, in a speech of March 27, 2007, by then–Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Eric Edelman, "A Comprehensive Approach to Modern Insurgency: Afghanistan and Beyond," given at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, Garmisch, Germany, March 27, 2007.

[2] James Dobbins, "Organizing for Victory," *PRISM* 1, no. 1 (December 2009), 51–62.

[3] John W. Kiser, *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kadar, A Story of True Jihad* (New York: Monkfish, 2008).

[4] See Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). While in these cases the United States also worked to bring about more honest and effective governance, this was seen largely as a separate endeavor. Insurgency was ended by force of arms.

[5] It is often asserted that the end of the Greek civil war was caused by Josep Broz Tito's shutting the Yugoslav border, but as David H. Close and Thanos Veremis argue rather conclusively, the war had largely been won before the border closure came into play. See "The Military Struggle: 1945–1949," in *The Greek Civil War 1943–1950: Studies of Polarization*, ed. David H. Close (London: Routledge, 1993), 121.

[6] The quotation has been attributed to Abbot Arnaud Amaury, head of the Cistercian Order and papal legate, in response to how to differentiate between Catholics and Cathar heretics after the taking of the French town of Beziers in 1209. While the quotation's accuracy has been contested, the fact of the execution of all survivors of the town has not been—a dismal episode during the Albigensian Crusade. A summary account appears at <www.crusades-encyclopedia.com/arnaudamaury.hmtl>.

[7] Seth Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008).

[8] Ibid., 30.

[9] Bernard Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," *Naval War College Review* (Winter 1998), available at <www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/navy/art5-w98.htm>.

[10] Ibid., 7.

[11] U.S. Army Field Manual 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (CFM) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 42 (sec. 1–131).

[12] Ibid., 43 (sec. 1–134); see also John A. Nagl's foreword to CFM: "The key to success in counter insurgency is protecting the population" (xv).

[13] Fall's discussion of how rural control was lost in both Indochinese wars before battle was joined is instructive, as are the ways he was able to document this despite official French, Vietnamese, and U.S. pronouncements to the contrary.

[14] Noor Khan and Jason Strazuiso, "NATO, Afghans kill 36 in ops outside Khandahar," Associated Press, June 19, 2008, available at <www.militarytimes.com/news/2008/06/ap_afghanistan_061808/>.

[15] Author's conversation with a well-connected foreign worker who had extensive Kandahari contacts.

[16] There was a plan to move police billets from more secure areas in Afghanistan to the combat provinces and to disband the corrupt highway police and use the positions to reinforce the regular police. Not enough of the highway patrolmen would move and recruitments to replace them lagged.

[17] The Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP) tried to recruit individuals, not militias, to man fixed posts under police control. It suffered from numerous problems, such as insufficient numbers of qualified police officers to supervise the ANAP, local attempts to politicize the force with militias, and a lack of resources, particularly trainers to maintain scheduled refresher training as well as other training programs to which we were committed in order to advance the training of the regular police.

[18] Boot, 99–155.

[19] The idea of U.S. officers taking command of local forces is neither new nor original. Fall suggested the same thing 44 years ago. See Fall, 3.

[20] *CM1*: capable of operating independently; *CM2*: capable of sustaining counterinsurgency operations at the battalion level with international support; *CM3*: partially capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations at the company level with support from international forces; *CM4*: formed but not yet capable of conducting primary operational missions.

[21] Anthony H. Cordesman has been detailed and correctly scathing in his criticism of public reporting of this and other aspects of military training in Afghanistan and Iraq. See, for example, Anthony H. Cordesman, *Afghan National Security Forces: Shaping the Path to Victory* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS], July 27, 2009); "The Afghan-Pakistan War: 'Clear, Hold, Build,'" briefing, CSIS, Washington, DC, May 21, 2009; and Erin K. Fitzgerald and Anthony H. Cordesman, *Resourcing for Defeat: Critical Failures in Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Resourcing the Afghan and Iraq Wars* (Washington, DC: CSIS, August 6, 2009).

[22] I first heard the term *armed nationbuilding* from Anthony H. Cordesman. It is an accurate formulation of the task we are attempting.

DOD (Chad J. McNeeley)

Secretary of State leads and coordinates U.S. response across all agencies involved in stabilization and reconstruction and works with Secretary of Defense to harmonize civilian and military activities

Adjusting to Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations

BY ROBERT HOEKSTRA AND CHARLES E. TUCKER, JR.

Drawing on the lessons learned from coalition interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, by mid-2004, a consensus developed within the executive branch, Congress, and among independent experts that the U.S. Government required a more robust capacity to prevent conflict (when possible) and (when necessary) to manage "Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations [SROs] in countries emerging from conflict or civil strife."[1]

In July 2004, Congress authorized the reprogramming of funds to create the Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). In December 2005,

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President George W. Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44, "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Stabilization and Reconstruction," to respond to the continuing need to strengthen whole-of-government planning and response to crises abroad. The goal of NSPD 44 was to promote the security of the United States through improved coordination, planning, and implementation of stabilization and reconstruction assistance. To accomplish this, NSPD 44 empowered the Secretary of State to lead and coordinate the U.S. response across all agencies involved, and to work with the Secretary of Defense to harmonize civilian and military activities.[2] Notwithstanding this mandate, funding initially appropriated to fund S/CRS was woefully inadequate.

in the foreseeable future, complex interagency stabilization and reconstruction operations will remain a staple of U.S. foreign interventions

History did not prove kind to the decision to underfund S/CRS. Therefore, in response to the lack of systemic SRO coordination in Afghanistan and Iraq, in October 2008, with broad bipartisan support, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2008 (Title 16 of Public Law 110–417). The law charged the State Department with leading the interagency effort to significantly improve the ability of the United States to respond to conflict, and to create a civilian counterpart to the U.S. military that is ready and able to assist countries in the transition from conflict and instability. To pay for these efforts, in fiscal year (FY) 2009, S/CRS received about $45 million for its Civilian Stabilization Initiative (CSI). The President's proposed FY 2010 budget (released May 7, 2009) sought $323.3 million for the CSI to build U.S. civilian capacity for SRO efforts. A cornerstone of this strategy is the development of a Civilian Response Corps (CRC).

S/CRS is currently composed of an 88-member interagency staff, including 11 active members of the CRC. However, it has begun hiring additional personnel, and if the 2010 budget is passed, the CRC initiative will be expanded to establish a permanent government-wide civilian SRO response capacity. In fact, the President's budget request supports the recruitment, development, training, and equipping of a 4,250-person CRC composed of 250 active component members, 2,000 standby component members, and 2,000 reserve component members. Furthermore, the CRC will span seven Federal departments and an agency (State, Justice, Treasury, Commerce, Agriculture, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, and U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID]) and, with its reserve component, will also allow the government to tap the expertise of state and local governments, as well as the private sector.

As S/CRS begins to grow the CRC, we are presented with a unique opportunity to help it meet the needs of future complex operations. In this regard, the lessons learned from previous SRO engagements, as well as from other government and international agencies, can provide important clues to help make State's efforts in this regard more productive.

Background

Federal Government engagement in complex interagency SROs ranges from tsunami relief to nationbuilding and counterinsurgency.

It is not a new phenomenon. What is new is the number of failed/failing states, transnational terrorists, and manmade/environmental ecological disasters with which the government has recently had to contend. There appears to be no end in sight; in the foreseeable future, complex interagency SROs will remain a staple of U.S. foreign interventions.[3] That said, a fair assessment of recent efforts clearly demonstrates that the United States has not been executing SROs with aplomb.[4] NSPD 44 and its progeny recognize this fact and highlight the importance of creating an effective coordinating mechanism to oversee the interagency process in future complex operations.

Broadly speaking, contemporary interagency SROs typically involve at least one of the following types of foreign engagement or intervention:

- traditional combat
- counterterrorism
- peacemaking/peacekeeping
- counterinsurgency/nationbuilding
- monetary development assistance
- disaster relief.

While not exhaustive, this list illustrates the wide variation in levels of conflict, purpose, duration, and demand (on monetary, capital, and human resources) for which the United States must prepare as it contemplates engaging in future complex interagency SROs. Furthermore, the difficulty in preparing for such exigencies is exacerbated by the fact that more than one of these factors will be playing out at a time.[5] Although SROs could be made incrementally more efficient by better training in and execution of the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) involved in each of these areas of engagement, exponential increases in overall SRO effectiveness would be obtained by simply improving the coordination of U.S. interagency efforts, as well as by establishing an interagency institution able to balance conflicting priorities.[6]

SRO Overview

Many of the organizational structures, tools, and doctrines that inform the way the United States currently engages in SROs were developed following World War II. This has led some observers to opine that U.S. engagement in SROs—as well as the development of doctrine and TTPs used in such operations—was either an aberration of Cold War politics or a temporary anomaly of the post–Cold War security scene. This, in turn, has led some critics to argue that SROs were being overemphasized within the government in general, and within the U.S. military in particular—that is, the United States has been focusing on SROs and international capacity-building ("nationbuilding") at the expense of the military's supposed "core mission" of traditional combat.[7] However, NSPD 44 and its military corollary, Department of Defense (DOD) Instruction 3000.05,[8] have now weighed in on these arguments and emphasized that SRO is a core mission of the U.S. interagency and military.[9] In this regard, it is instructive that notwithstanding the aforementioned criticisms, the government and military have been engaging in complex interagency SROs since well before the advent of the Cold War; the number and tempo of such operations have steadily increased; and the need for institutionalized interagency coordination is greater than it has ever been.

In this regard, we must consider that as early as 1868, the U.S. Navy transported doctors, nurses, and supplies to areas affected by a tsunami in Chile.[10] Civil-military involvement in similar humanitarian relief operations

(HUMRO) has continued ever since. While the overall incidence of the United States providing disaster relief in complex environments has grown in recent years, it has not been the result of ad hoc decisionmaking. For more than 140 years, policymakers have routinely mandated that to further U.S. national interests, the government and military must engage in SROs. Policymakers have likewise indicated that coordinated interagency military assistance to foreign populations affected by disasters (of human or natural origin) is vital to peace, security, and stability in today's world.

U.S. civil-military operations (CMO) have also had a rich and sustained history.[11] In fact, the military's engagement in CMO can be traced to the earliest days of the American Revolution. CMO continued throughout the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) and was instrumental in numerous interventions in the Caribbean and Latin America in the early 20th century.[12] Furthermore, in 1943, the military recognized the necessity of institutionalizing CMO capacity when it created the U.S. Army Civil Affairs Division to train officers for postwar reconstruction and other nationbuilding operations. The importance of CMO for strategic interests cannot be overstated.[13] Simply put, since at least the end of World War II, CMO have ensured that the international community would not experience a repetition of the war-peace-war scenarios of earlier decades.[14]

the phenomenon of U.S. and coalition agencies engaging in stabilization and reconstruction operations while simultaneously conducting more combat operations has substantially complicated the "battlespace"

U.S. counterinsurgency operations are also nothing new. They predate the Philippine War (1899–1902), continued through Vietnam, and culminated in operations in Latin America in the 1960s and 1980s. Now they find their resurgence in Afghanistan and Iraq, but with a twist: they are often conducted concurrently with HUMRO assistance, counterinsurgency operations, and CMO efforts. They are also often conducted alongside more combat and/or counterterrorism operations. The phenomenon of U.S. and coalition agencies engaging in SROs while simultaneously conducting more combat operations has substantially complicated the "battlespace." This, in turn, has led to renewed calls for the creation of more robust mission deconfliction mechanisms and interagency coordination.

The battlespace has been further complicated by the fact that U.S.-led interagency SROs routinely take place alongside internationally funded development assistance programs. Thus, interagency personnel conducting SROs often bump into an overlapping myriad of civilian monetary agencies. The fact that these agencies routinely acquire, administer, and distribute funds "on the ground" can greatly complicate unity of effort.

There has also been an explosion in the number of international organizations acting in the battlespace. For example, United Nations peacekeeping and peacemaking missions have become ubiquitous in the security environment, thus emphasizing the need for not only national, but also internationally coordinated, responses to SROs.

Need for Coordination

Following World War II, the proliferation of civilian agencies involved in SROs (including the International Cooperation Agency,

Development Loan Fund, and Department of Agriculture's Food for Peace program) led to an ever-increasing need for civilian interagency cooperation and coordination. In 1961, this culminated in the creation of USAID. A noteworthy feature of USAID was that it was supposed to have enhanced the coordination of civilian agency efforts regarding the distribution of international aid. However, because the agency was made independent of State, it often worked at cross purposes with the political guidance being formulated within State. That, in turn, led to disconnections between policy formulations and the money needed to fund them. Although numerous attempts to restructure USAID's distribution methods have been undertaken, to date no major coordination reform efforts have succeeded.[15] Thus, State and USAID find that they are often singing off of distinctly separate sheets of music with regard to SROs.

In the meantime, the creation of numerous, often overlapping international aid agencies (including the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization) has led to an ever-increasing need for whole-of-government/unity-of-effort coordination. In fact, lessons learned from recent SROs highlight the fact that in order to be effective, national and multinational development assistance agencies *must* coordinate with one another, as well as with coalition militaries, to ensure that reconstruction aid is administered through a rational strategy designed to achieve agreed-upon outcomes. Lessons learned similarly demonstrate that if international aid is not coordinated, single sector development measures will often impede measurable economic growth. This can—*and has*—worked to the detriment of SRO endstates. Thus, whole-of-government/unity-of-effort stabilization and reconstruction measures must focus on coordinating opportunities for growth, while minimizing naturally resulting income divergences between subgroups within a population. Unfortunately, such coordination is usually lacking even now.

Compounding these problems is the fact that there is virtually no coordination with or among the plethora of privately funded international and transnational nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) found in the modern SRO battlespace. Admittedly, NGOs are notoriously independent. However, they fulfill a vital role in SROs by providing critical engagement and capacity-building capabilities often lacking in the government or military. Furthermore, NGOs typically furnish long-term continuity because they are often found working in countries well before the arrival of the "SRO international community," and will usually remain long after an SRO endstate has been declared. Further still, many NGOs are administratively efficient. Thus, the international community could learn much from NGOs. For instance, by establishing clear and largely nonconfrontational methods of operation that are widely accepted by assistance-receiving populations, many NGOs are able to gain entry into countries more quickly and less expensively than governmental organizations. Therefore, greater coordination and cooperation between government and NGO communities would make attainment of SRO objectives more efficient and effective.

the U.S. military must harmonize its counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations

With specific regard to the U.S. military, joint doctrine has moved away from the concept of the sequential battlefield (where

Air Force (Sarah R. Webb)

Afghan women and children wait at Afghan National Police outpost for medical care from Provincial Reconstruction Team

combat/counterterrorism operations come first and nationbuilding comes last) to a more nuanced, complex, high-tempo, and multilayered environment. This has increased the feeling that there should be more coordination between civil-military SRO actors. However, much remains to be done even within the military community itself. In this regard, recent SROs have clearly demonstrated that there must be far greater internal coordination of means and methods within the military, particularly with regard to the U.S. military's engagement in kinetic and nonkinetic operations. Most acutely, the U.S. military must harmonize its counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations. At the same time, the military's external coordination with other U.S. agencies, as well as with the international community and other SRO actors, must be enhanced. Until then, complex SROs such as Afghanistan are unlikely to succeed.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Until recently, the U.S. institutional commitment toward the adoption of effective SRO coordination mechanisms has largely been aspirational. Despite this, certain ad hoc mechanisms have been implemented. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan are the clearest example.[16] PRTs are the primary mechanisms through which the international community delivers assistance at the provincial and district level in Afghanistan. As noted by USAID, "As a result of their provincial focus and civilian and military resources, PRTs have a unique mandate to improve security, support good governance, and enhance provincial development. The combination of international civilian

and military resources . . . allows the PRT to have wide latitude to implement their mandate."[17]

The United States first implemented PRTs in 2002 as part of Operation *Enduring Freedom*. They initially met with little success. In part, this was because they were imperfectly realized, haphazardly implemented, and inadequately resourced. They were also not doctrinally integrated with U.S. coalition partners. In fact, the International Security Assistance Force did not integrate them into its operational plan until 2006. Since then, success has been mixed and somewhat difficult to gauge. In part, this stems from the loss of momentum and harm done in the battlespace due to previous uncoordinated actions. Despite this, indications are that since 2006, cooperation and coordination in Afghanistan have increased among the various multinational agencies involved and that this coordination has been paying dividends. And yet we *still* find ourselves struggling to adequately define their mission and doctrine, let alone appropriately resource them. This undoubtedly *helps* explain the predicament in which we find ourselves. Therefore, one lesson that should be internalized from our experience in Afghanistan is that for optimal effectiveness, coordinated response mechanisms utilized during conflicts, natural disasters, and political crises need to be institutionally recognized, doctrinally supported, adequately staffed, sufficiently trained, and appropriately resourced. Simply put, to be effective, SRO coordination mechanisms cannot be an afterthought.

Another lesson learned in Afghanistan relates to response time, strategic communications, and sustainability. On the one hand, quick responses to conflicts, natural disasters, and political crisis undoubtedly help minimize destabilizing effects from them. They also demonstrate willingness on the part of the international community to help. However, premature, uncoordinated, ill-executed, and poorly articulated international SRO responses may also backfire since they can unreasonably raise local expectations (which cannot possibly be met) and lead to the opinion that the international community may have the wherewithal to help, but not the inclination. In Afghanistan, for example, local uncertainty about coalition intentions arose *after* Afghans observed 6 years of largely post hoc, uncoordinated, and ineffective PRT executions. Uncertainty increased after Afghans observed the often capricious and largely "international-centric" nature of PRT resourcing.[18] And uncertainties were exacerbated when Afghans continually heard about an amorphous endstate (when the international community could go home) rather than about true coalition intentions. Such actions made dealing with local leaders more difficult. Simply put, clear institutional mechanisms and parameters must be established—and articulated—before initializing SROs.

the issuance of NSPD 44 has led the State Department to begin marshalling the resources to accomplish its mission

Recommendations for the CRC

The issuance of NSPD 44, which designated State as the lead in SRO efforts, combined with the provision of initial funding to begin implementing the directive, has led the department to begin marshalling the resources to accomplish its mission. Unfortunately, State has virtually no institutional capacity to help it undertake such a task. Despite this, S/CRS has been directed to immediately begin developing, recruiting, training, and equipping a CRC.

As S/CRS initializes its development plans, it should be mindful of its institutional limitations and take into account the lessons learned from previous SROs.

Assuming S/CRS receives all the FY 2010 resources sought in the President's budget, it will still be comparatively ill resourced and positioned to replicate the institutional capacity levels and functional expertise found in other agencies (for example, USAID and DOD). This could be a problem, especially over the next year or so, when S/CRS will be establishing its doctrine, TTPs, and other methods of operation. The bottom line is that a freshman staff of 100 or so CRC officers, spread across seven Federal departments and an agency, cannot be expected to independently develop a significant SRO hands-on capability. Because of this, S/CRS should primarily focus on its coordinating mission. Even to do that, however, it will need to reach out to other agencies for assistance. In this regard, we offer the following recommendations.

because it lacks logistical capacity, it is clear that S/CRS will seldom be the first on-scene U.S. agency involved in stabilization and reconstruction operations

The primary nature of the S/CRS intragovernmental coordinating role will undoubtedly dictate that it hires experts in Federal governance. Thus, it will either need to accept intragovernmental transfers, or hire former U.S. Government employees with relevant governance experience. Considering the historical nature of Federal employment, however, it is unlikely that many of these government employees will have significant nongovernmental work experience and/or technical subject matter expertise. Furthermore, unless it intends to hire military retirees, most U.S. Government employees will have limited deployment experience.[19] Given its funding and staffing constraints, S/CRS should not try to develop such experience. Instead, it should work with its employees, as well as with other Federal agencies, and civil and academic institutions to develop staffing models that will allow it to excel in its managerial and coordination roles.

When contemplating the development of its overarching mission, S/CRS should resist the temptation to reinvent "solutions," particularly with regard to complex SRO implementation. Instead, it should focus on (re)evaluating resources and lessons learned already on hand. As noted, there are numerous sources of expertise/experience available, and S/CRS would be well served to access them. Assuming it did so, in addition to its managerial and coordination roles, S/CRS could also become an SRO best practices clearinghouse for the rest of the interagency community.

By virtue of its position within State, S/CRS is not only uniquely situated to access other agencies, but is also uniquely qualified to coordinate with foreign governmental institutions, international organizations, and NGOs. It should immediately take advantage of that and begin developing the international networks necessary to help it effectively carry out its coordination role.

S/CRS does not possess significant planning or training expertise. Therefore, it should immediately begin working with civil and academic institutions—and with DOD/coalition military partners—to develop scenario-driven training and exercise modules, as well as standard operations plans for execution during the most likely types of contingencies.

In regard to its coordination role, S/CRS should consider modeling its interagency

managerial and coordinating structures on organizational structures already developed and proven reliable, such as those utilized by the interagency community during domestic emergency response situations. Off-the-shelf coordinating structures that could be adopted, modified, and replicated include the Incident Command System and National Incident Management System. Both have proven adaptive for a wide variety of organizations, and both have been effective in interagency disaster response scenarios. In addition, replicating such nonhierarchical, multiorganizational coordinating structures could foster flexibility and enhance interest in managing operational, logistical, and informational mission needs. Moreover, adoption of such civilian structures (versus replication of quasi-military structures) would provide a nonthreatening framework (particularly for NGOs and international organizations) and could reduce tensions in complex operations. In short, it would enhance the ability of diverse actors to work together, as well as to work with the interagency community.

S/CRS should work with DOD to help it restructure its SRO doctrine and organizational structures. Simply put, SROs need to be more accessible to civilian partners. Current military doctrine/structures are often viewed as antithetical to such relationships. Structures that enhance civilian accessibility and reflect local population input and needs are critical to optimum interagency mission accomplishment.

Because it lacks logistical capacity, it is clear that S/CRS will seldom be the first on-scene U.S. agency involved in SRO efforts. Thus, it should not attempt to become a global emergency first responder. Instead, it should understand that this function will continue to fall to the military. In this regard, to improve coordination and develop a common understanding of operational methodologies, S/CRS should work, train, and exercise with military Civil Affairs and National Guard units. That should help it to leverage its organizational expertise and foster better working relationships with the military.

S/CRS should also make it a priority to engage/train with foreign governmental agencies and militaries. Such engagements should concentrate on harmonizing national policies and encouraging unity of effort during SROs.

Provision of services during most SRO contingency operations primarily involves interactions with local, as opposed to national level, officials. In preparing for such contingencies, therefore, S/CRS should access the expertise of domestic and foreign police forces, school systems, state licensing agencies, bar associations, and other state and local entities.

With regard to the CRC, S/CRS should work with Reserve and National Guard personnel specialists to help it develop a reserve capacity that could realistically be called upon to deploy during times of increased demand. Simply put, if S/CRS wants to develop a deployable reserve capacity, it should model it after the world-class Reserve and National Guard units already in its midst.

S/CRS should consider utilizing private contractors to augment the CRC. Advantages to using contractors (versus Reservists) include minimizing recruitment, education, and retention costs; obtaining comparatively inexpensive access to personnel with experience that is in low demand (and thus supply) in the government but is readily available in the public sector (for example, business managers, agriculture experts, and so forth); and obtaining private sector buy-in and political support.

S/CRS should immediately undertake efforts to coordinate monetary relief planning and assistance policies with USAID

and international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund. S/CRS must also work with Federal and international partners to increase flexibility regarding the distribution of aid funds. Moreover, it should advocate for a revision of the Foreign Assistance Act so as to obtain discretion in spending, as well as to promote more vertical integration with USAID.

Recommendations for the Military

While S/CRS faces core capacity challenges, the same may be said of DOD. In particular, lessons learned from recent operations clearly demonstrate that a number of military organizations lack the internal capacity, institutional desire, and/or coordinating mechanisms to adequately execute the functions required of them during SROs. Given probable limitations on future funding and staffing for S/CRS, DOD organizations cannot expect to pass a large number of unwanted tasks to State. Therefore, notwithstanding what has been said above, S/CRS and DOD must be prepared to develop additional nontraditional, SRO-relevant expertise. In this regard, we must consider that combat operations are a core competency of the military. They are also a functional area that no other Federal agency has the capability to implement. Many future complex SRO interventions will have significant requirements for combatant utilization. This is particularly true vis-à-vis counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and peacemaking/peacekeeping operations. Therefore, DOD must continue focusing on organizing, training, and equipping for its combat-related mission.

one area requiring immediate attention will be the implementation of interagency cost control mechanisms

The Services cannot forsake their obligation to become as proficient in conducting stability operations as they are in combat operations. Thus, notwithstanding the pushback that they may receive from certain Service-centric, combat-centric "traditionalists," each Service must develop full-spectrum SRO capabilities.[20]

The Services must understand that during SROs, their actions cannot be conducted independently of one another or of the U.S. Government interagency decisionmaking process. Additionally, their actions may not be undertaken without adequate attention to the nonkinetic aspects of SROs. Simply put, in the past, when nonkinetic stabilization and reconstruction efforts have been placed under the operational control of the military, interagency civil engagement and reconstruction priorities have often been left unrealized. For this reason, in future SROs, as soon as security allows, it will be vital to prioritize and institutionalize State Department input into DOD decisionmaking.

Although information and intelligence operations are beyond the scope of this article, it is worth noting that both areas need to be reevaluated in light of the changing relationships fostered by NSPD 44. Moreover, SRO informational/intelligence doctrine should be refocused to include greater emphasis on political-military areas of concern.[21] Since DOD is vested with these missions, it will need to develop significantly improved methods to disseminate information and intelligence to interagency and coalition partners, as well as to local national and nongovernmental agencies.

State and S/CRS have virtually no security and/or logistical support capabilities. DOD does. Clearly, these matters will continue to call for close coordination. One area requiring immediate

attention will be the implementation of interagency cost control mechanisms. In particular, cost reduction strategies need to be implemented vis-à-vis the delivery of supplies and personnel to SROs.

In December 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report that noted:

> *S/CRS is developing a framework for planning and coordinating U.S. reconstruction and stabilization operations. . . .* [A] *guide for planning stabilization and reconstruction operations is still in progress. We cannot determine how effective the framework will be because it has not been fully applied to any stabilization and reconstruction operation. In addition, guidance on agencies' roles and responsibilities is unclear and inconsistent, and the lack of an agreed-upon definition for stabilization and reconstruction operations poses an obstacle to interagency collaboration.* Moreover, some interagency partners stated that senior officials have shown limited support for the framework and S/CRS. *. . . S/CRS has taken steps to strengthen the framework by addressing some interagency concerns and providing training to interagency partners.* However, differences in the planning capacities and procedures of civilian agencies and the military pose obstacles to effective coordination.[22]

Over 2 years after the issuance of this report, many of the underlying GAO findings remain unaddressed: planning for stabilization and reconstruction operations is still in progress, guidance on roles and responsibilities is still unclear and inconsistent, some interagency partners continue to show limited support for S/CRS, and differences in the planning capacities and procedures of civilian agencies and the military continue to pose obstacles to effective coordination.

Whether S/CRS can effectively transform interagency stabilization and reconstruction coordination processes remains to be seen. In large part, however, its success will depend on the willingness of its interagency partners, particularly DOD, to assist it. To date, progress in this regard has not been encouraging, but the near future will present many opportunities where the development of those relationships and cooperation will be essential. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] See, for example, Clark A. Murdock, ed., *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era (Phase I Report)* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2004), 9:

> *Complex U.S. contingency operations over the past decade, from Somalia to Iraq, have demonstrated the necessity for a unity of effort not only from the armed forces but also from across the U.S. government and an international coalition. In most cases, however, such unity of effort has proved elusive, sometimes with disastrous results. The U.S. national security apparatus requires significant new investments in this area. Otherwise, the United States' ability to conduct successful political-military contingency operations will continue to be fundamentally impaired.*

See also Phase II Report, July 2005. Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 2007), ii, notes that "At the strategic level, unity of effort requires coordination among government departments and agencies within the executive branch, between the executive and legislative branches, with [nongovernmental organizations], [international governmental organizations], the private sector, and among nations in any alliance or coalition."

[2] Under National Security Presidential Directive 44, the role of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) is to 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 efforts, and coordinate preventative strategies with foreign countries, international and regional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and private sector entities.

[3] Nora Bensahel, Olga Oliker, and Heather Peterson, *Improving Capacity for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2009), 2.

[4] Christopher Preble and Justin Logan, *Failed States and Flawed Logic: The Case against a Standing Nation-Building Office*, Policy Analysis no. 560 (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, January 2006), 10, available at <www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa560.pdf>.

[5] For example, over the past 8 years, the situation in Afghanistan has sometimes involved the *simultaneous* application of *all* of these types of engagement. However, unity of effort in the execution of these actions has routinely been lacking. In this regard, combat operations (such as civilian casualty-prone counterterrorism engagements in Helmand and Kandahar Provinces) have routinely adversely affected coalition interagency *priorities* by impeding the development of effective governance mechanisms and infrastructure necessary to complete counterinsurgency operations and/or nationbuilding. In situations such as those transpiring in Afghanistan, there must be a *coordinated* and institutionalized recognition that counterinsurgency operations are a prerequisite to nationbuilding, and nationbuilding is the prerequisite to an effective endstate.

[6] See *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, February 6, 2006), 85: "The QDR recommends the creation of National Security Planning Guidance to direct the development of both military and non-military plans and institutional capabilities. The planning guidance would set priorities and clarify national security roles and responsibilities to reduce capability gaps and eliminate redundancies. It would help Federal Departments and Agencies better align their strategy, budget and planning functions with national objectives."

[7] Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., "Forget the Lessons of Iraq," *Armed Forces Journal* (January 2009), available at <www.armedforcesjournal.com/2009/01/3827971>.

[8] According to Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 3000.05, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations," it:

> *is DoD policy that: (a) Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct with proficiency equivalent to combat operations. The Department of Defense shall be prepared to: (1) Conduct stability operations activities throughout all phases of conflict and across the range of military operations. . . . (2) Support stability operations activities led by other* [U.S. Government] *agencies . . . foreign governments and security forces, international governmental organizations. . . . (3) Lead stability operations activities to establish civil security and civil control, restore essential services, repair and protect critical infrastructure, and deliver humanitarian assistance.*

[9] Section 3 of DODI 3000.05 defines *stability operations* as "an overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief."

[10] Naval Historical Center, "Tsunami (Tidal Wave) Disasters and the U.S. Navy," May 10, 2007, available at <www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq130-1.htm>.

[11] Joint Publication 3–57, *Civil Military Operations* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 8, 2008), defines *civil-military operations* (CMO) as the:

> *activities of a commander that establish collaborative relationships among military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile operational area in order to facilitate military operations are nested in support of the overall U.S. objectives. CMO may include performance by military forces of activities and functions normally the responsibility of local, regional, or national government. These activities may occur throughout the range of military operations. CMO is the responsibility of the command and will be executed by all members of the command. It is not the sole purview of the* [Civil Affairs] *team. CMO are conducted across the range of military operations.*

[12] As noted in U.S. Army Field Manual 3–07, *Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, October 2008), para. 1–1:

> *During the relatively short history of the United States, military forces have fought only eleven wars considered conventional. From the American Revolution through Operation* Iraqi Freedom, *these wars represented significant or perceived threats to national security interests, where the political risk to the nation was always gravest. These were the wars for which the military traditionally prepared; these were the wars that endangered America's very way of life. Of the hundreds of other military operations conducted in those intervening years, most are now considered stability operations, where the majority of effort consisted of stability tasks.* Contrary to popular belief, the military history of the United States is one characterized by stability operations, interrupted by distinct episodes of major combat [emphasis added].

[13] David M. Tressler, *Negotiation in the New Strategic Environment: Lessons from Iraq* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2007); and Thomas R. Mockaitis, *Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Operations: The Case of Kosovo* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2004).

[14] Christopher Holshek, "Scroll and the Sword Synergizing Civil-Military Power," research project, U.S. Army War College, 2006.

[15] A 1999 reorganization of foreign affairs agencies led to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) being placed under the general purview of the Department of State. However, it remains a distinctly separate agency from State.

[16] According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq*, GAO–08–905RSU (Washington, DC: GAO, September 26, 2008):

> *PRTs are a means of coordinating interagency diplomatic, economic, reconstruction, and counterinsurgency efforts among various U.S. agencies in Afghanistan and Iraq.* [They] *are intended to be interim structures; after a PRT has achieved its goal of improving stability, it may be dismantled to allow traditional development*

efforts to occur. In Afghanistan, the first PRTs were created in 2002 with the mission of facilitating security and reconstruction by helping the central government extend its authority to the provinces. Since then, PRTs have expanded their purpose to include strengthening local governance and community development. In Iraq, PRTs were initiated in 2005 with the mission to increase the capacity of provincial and local governments to govern effectively and, for newer embedded PRTs (ePRT), to support moderates and assist in the military's counterinsurgency efforts. To accomplish their missions, PRTs engage in and fund a variety of activities, such as developing the capacity of local governments through engagement with local stakeholders; promoting budget execution, business development, agriculture, public health initiatives, and governance; and supporting the delivery of basic social services.

[17] See USAID Web site at <http://afghanistan.usaid.gov/en/Page.PRT.aspx>.

[18] Although there are significant variations, PRTs are typically commanded by military officers and staffed with "internationals." This feeds local concerns about the relative priority of noncoalition objectives—in other words, that the internationals do not adequately understand and/or effectuate local needs. Greater coordination and communication could help ameliorate such concerns.

[19] Thus, even assuming that it wished to, it is highly unlikely that S/CRS could ever obtain the resources necessary to develop a fully staffed group of hands-on "journeymen" nationbuilders.

[20] For example, CMO capability needs to be greatly expanded and institutionalized within each of the Services and the National Guard. Notwithstanding current doctrine, lessons learned during recent SROs clearly validate the point that Civil Affairs—a functional area within CMO—should not remain the functional responsibility primarily of the Army Reserve. In addition, DOD needs to refocus its joint doctrine to emphasize the strategic nature (versus tactical expediency) of CMO. Furthermore, CMO curriculum and training needs to be greatly expanded, as well as accomplished in conjunction with interagency partners (especially S/CRS). In particular, interagency CMO training needs to include far greater emphasis on interagency processes, fiscal and human rights law, language and communication skills, and regional, historical, cultural studies.

[21] As regarding the use of information/intelligence in supporting SROs, see Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), *The National Intelligence Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: ODNI, August 2009), Mission Objective 6.

[22] See GAO, *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps*, GAO–08–39 (Washington, DC: GAO, December 6, 2007). Emphasis added.

U.S. Marine Corps (James Purschwitz)

British soldier takes part in civil affairs patrol in Helmand Province

Leaving the Civilians Behind

The "Soldier-diplomat" in Afghanistan and Iraq

BY EDWARD BURKE

The militarization of aid in conflict zones is now a reality and is likely to increase exponentially in the future. Stability operations are critical to the success of any viable counterinsurgency strategy.[1] Yet in much of Afghanistan and Iraq, civilian officials working alone have proven incapable of successfully distributing and monitoring stabilization funds or implementing associated operations; thus, they have required close cooperation with the military. Many

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North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries have not adequately addressed deficiencies in models of civil-military cooperation, with severe repercussions for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and some government development agencies complain that the delivery of aid by the military can exacerbate the targeting of civilian aid workers.[2] Highlighting the failure of civilian agencies to cooperate effectively with the military may provide temporary vindication to skeptics within the NGO community, but such criticism does not solve the critical dilemma of how to deliver reconstruction and humanitarian assistance to the most violent parts of Afghanistan and Iraq or other nonpermissive environments.

Where the targeting of civilian officials and aid workers is a key insurgent tactic, there is often no alternative to delivering aid through the military. Consequently, the military has found itself forced to blur conventional distinctions by taking the place of civilian aid agencies. This is to the detriment of humanitarian concepts of neutrality, but vital to the successful prosecution of a counterinsurgency strategy. It presents an uncomfortable choice between permitting the military to intrude upon "humanitarian space," or upholding the concept of neutrality and risking total failure. Stuart Bowen, the outspoken Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, in a nod to Carl von Clausewitz, has aptly summarized the highly political nature of humanitarian and development assistance during a counterinsurgency campaign: "If war . . . is an extension of politics by other means, so too is relief and reconstruction an extension of political, economic and military strategy."[3]

today, we risk overlooking one of the most important tenets of counterinsurgency strategy: maintaining a firm civilian lead

In highly insecure areas, the protection of civilian officials is overly burdensome and inefficient. Due to restrictions on their movements, civilian officials cannot adequately monitor local dynamics and ensure that the delivery of aid is not counterproductive to long-term political objectives. The military is therefore better equipped to provide reconstruction and humanitarian assistance, being able to assume a number of different roles as required. The U.S. Army has observed that "even though stability operations emphasize non-lethal actions, the ability to engage potential enemies with decisive lethal force remains a sound deterrent and is often a key to success."[4] In the United Kingdom (UK), the cross-departmental Stabilisation Unit has conceded that the military's "greater mobility enables them greater access to manage projects implemented by local partners in highly insecure areas."[5] During Operation *Panchai Palang* in Afghanistan last summer, the U.S. military reiterated old complaints about the "near total absence" of civilian experts, but then assembled the largest ever Civil Affairs (CA) or civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) contingent attached to a combat brigade—mostly Reservists with backgrounds in local government, business management, and policing.[6] Soldiers occasionally grumble about either the absence or ineffectiveness of diplomats and humanitarian assistance/development officials. They have essentially moved on, now willing to take on tasks conventionally seen as the remit of civilian agencies.

The influential French counterinsurgency expert David Galula astutely observed that

during a counterinsurgency campaign, "tasks and responsibilities cannot be neatly divided between the civilian and the soldier, for their operations overlap too much with each other."[7] The insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq require such a "comprehensive approach," utilizing the full range of civilian and military capabilities to stabilize both countries. Today, however, we risk overlooking one of the most important tenets of counterinsurgency strategy: maintaining a firm civilian lead. This was emphasized by Galula, who warned that "giving the soldier authority over the civilian would thus contradict one of the major characteristics of this type of war."[8]

The need for a civilian lead on setting policy for stability operations does not mean that the military cannot undertake political/humanitarian tasks where civilian officials are unable to do so. However, civilian supervision is required to monitor such activities to ensure that policy is not set by the military. Crucially, civilian leadership helps to dispel the perception of the host population being under military occupation. It is important, however, that civilian officials should not be a rigid, bureaucratic obstacle to a more flexible military approach. They must adapt according to the evolving situation on the ground, listening and responding to military advice, while ensuring that government policies are not compromised by the military for the sake of expediency. To undertake this complex task requires a *civilian* doctrine and an unconventional diplomat.

The Political Military

The U.S. military has undergone a radical shift in how it prepares for war. This shift can be traced back to 2005 when the Department of Defense (DOD) implemented a landmark new directive that unambiguously referred to stability operations as a "core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct and support. They shall be given priority comparable to combat operations."[9] More recently, Secretary Robert Gates has set about reorienting the defense budget toward counterinsurgency and stability operations.[10] DOD spending of U.S. Official Development Assistance (ODA) has rapidly proliferated, rising from 3.5 percent before 2003 to almost 26 percent in 2008.[11]

In response to its experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq, in 2008 the U.S. Army produced Field Manual (FM) 3–07, *Stability Operations*, which effectively offers a coherent set of guidelines on how the military can assume responsibility for defense, diplomacy, and development. The introduction to FM 3–07 observes that "expeditionary civilians exist neither in the numbers, nor with the skill sets, required for today's operations," and even if these were to exist, "there will still be many instances in which it is too dangerous for these civilians to deploy."[12] The manual goes on to describe potential U.S. military involvement in not only the emergency provision of essential services but also in how to assume a full range of political responsibilities—essentially the functions of government—until these can be transitioned to a civil authority. It offers a careful set of guidelines on various governance tasks that the military may be expected to assume, including the preparation and supervision of elections. It seeks to learn the lessons of Iraq by foreseeing "military forces quickly seizing the initiative to improve the civil situation while preventing the situation from deteriorating further."[13]

FM 3–07 is a natural extension of counterinsurgency doctrine within the U.S. military. The manual does not offer guidance, however, on the division of political labor between the

military in theater and the diplomats whose task it is to lead on bilateral relations. It also assumes a capacity within the U.S. military that does not exist. CA officers (predominantly Reservists from administrative or construction professional backgrounds) lack training in political and linguistic skills, as well as an advanced knowledge of their local environment upon deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq.[14] The U.S. military is quickly adapting, however, and has substantially increased funding for language and cultural training since 2007.[15]

UK officers have spoken enviously of the U.S. Foreign Area Officer concept and training

The U.S. military has developed a tendency to design and make policy in Iraq without sufficient civilian oversight. The local agreement reached in 2006 and 2007 by the U.S. military to "turn" significant parts of the Sunni insurgency was initially the brainchild of a U.S. Army officer, Colonel Sean MacFarland, who transformed former insurgent militia into U.S. allies without the consent of the Iraqi government. This decision "took the United States into the dangerous and complex new territory of supporting an armed group that was opposed to the government in Baghdad that the United States also supported."[16] The "surge" strategy bypassed the Department of State and military chain of command. The fact that this policy has been vindicated in part does not lessen the worrisome implications that such actions have for civil-military relations. More recently, the appointment of General Karl Eikenberry as Ambassador to Kabul in early 2009 gives the impression that senior U.S. military officers are better at making policy in Afghanistan than their civilian counterparts.

Although the UK military has been quick to blame the Labour government for not deploying enough personnel or materiel in either Afghanistan or Iraq, the passing of blame has obscured what one former officer at the British army's Development, Concepts, and Doctrine Centre (DCDC) has described as an "insular, conformist culture" that has sapped a "capacity for international reflection and rapid change."[17] Despite such criticism, it is obvious that some senior UK officers do wish to learn from the mistakes in Afghanistan and Iraq. UK officers have spoken enviously of the U.S. Foreign Area Officer (FAO) concept and training, which allow U.S. officers to acquire a wide range of skills, whether in international development or languages.

The evolution of the UK military has been much less ambitious than that of the United States since the beginning of the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Labour government has not undertaken a Strategic Defence Review in more than a decade. Despite a reduction in defense spending from 4.1 percent of gross domestic product in 1990 to under 3 percent today, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) proposes to spend a large part of this limited budget on a new nuclear deterrent and two new aircraft carriers that many UK defense experts believe to be surplus to requirements. Given the shortage of specialist skills and vital equipment for British troops deployed in Afghanistan, one serving officer bluntly observed, "The choice we face is 'Fortress Britain' versus 'intervention'. . . . What we really need is to develop armies that can get out into the world, helping to stabilise conflict situations, conducting 'war among the people.' We're not preparing for that at all."[18]

The UK military in Helmand Province has learned from the experience of Iraq by moving to improve civil-military relations. Military personnel are both willing and well placed to gather knowledge on local contractors and monitor projects. They have also worked to ensure that training and monitoring teams, while maintaining "the necessary force protection capabilities," operate in a deliberately less overt manner. The British army has established a unit of CIMIC officers, the Military Stabilisation Support Group, with a range of stabilization skills and has also acknowledged a need to improve training in linguistic and cultural skills, including knowledge of local political structures. In September 2009, the MoD moved to address this knowledge deficit by creating a Defence Cultural Specialist Unit to advise commanders on operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Although the UK military has faced the same dilemmas as its U.S. counterpart, it has reacted differently, in part due to a lack of funds with which to undertake stability operations unilaterally. Senior UK officers have been reluctant to change the political game in the areas under their command in Afghanistan and Iraq. Such an enduring preference to "leave politics to the civilians" has allowed civilian agencies to improve performance in Afghanistan and reassert political primacy at every level of operations. It has also enabled the emergence of a unique model of civil-military cooperation in Helmand Province. The DCDC at Shrivenham drew upon these experiences to produce a long-awaited stability operations doctrine at the end of 2009.

Unlike the U.S. military, the hesitancy of the UK military to adopt a unilaterally political approach should not be taken as indicating a general satisfaction with the policy set for Afghanistan and Iraq by the UK government. This is far from the case. The UK military primarily sees its role in Afghanistan as one of "buying space" for the civilians to provide political solutions, but it is deeply frustrated at the lack of a coherent narrative and realistic strategy for success.[19] This has led to a worrying trend of the military launching political broadsides at their civilian masters. Prior to his retirement from the British army in November 2009, General Sir Richard Dannatt joined the opposition Conservative Party as an advisor and robustly criticized the Labour government's strategy in Afghanistan. This followed a number of public speeches criticizing UK policies prior to the end of his term as chief of staff of the army.[20] Such political activity by a serving British officer is without precedent in recent times and reflects a strain on civil-military relations at both the highest levels in London and in Afghanistan.

The evolution of the U.S. and UK forces toward an increasing role in stability operations contrasts with the relative inertia of many of their NATO Allies, who continue to deploy insufficient CIMIC capacity to Afghanistan. The role of Spain in Badghis Province in northwest Afghanistan is a case in point. Despite the Spanish government's insistence on terming the mission of Spanish troops in Afghanistan as "reconstruction, stabilization and democratization," the Ministry of Defence has repeatedly chosen to deploy elite troops to Afghanistan, including members of the Parachute Regiment.[21] These soldiers have the combat skills to undertake an offensive counter-insurgency capacity, which their government is unwilling to utilize, but they are neither trained nor equipped to undertake CIMIC tasks, for which Spain only allocated 10 to 15 military personnel in 2009. Consequently, insurgents

have extended their control over large parts, if not most, of the province. There is an obvious contradiction in structuring ISAF policy around a "reconstruction mission" in Badghis if Spanish and Afghan troops do not hold territory on which to reconstruct. Meanwhile, the Spanish government development agency (*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo*), although unable to monitor projects in most of the province due to the escalating insurgency, has refused to allow the military to do so on its behalf, claiming that this would blur lines between Spain's civilian and military commitments to Afghanistan.[22] These contradictions lie at the heart of the problem with many of the European contingents in Afghanistan; soldiers are equipped to fight but cannot do so robustly due to domestic political considerations. They ultimately run the risk of being (grudgingly) replaced by the United States on both counts.

in 2006, member states agreed in principle to the concept of a NATO comprehensive approach but took 2 years to negotiate an Action Plan to put this into effect

At the NATO level, the Alliance does not have a clearly defined set of guiding principles to inform a more coherent civil-military relationship in Afghanistan. In 2006, member states agreed in principle to the concept of a NATO comprehensive approach but subsequently took 2 years to negotiate an Action Plan to put this into effect. A highly variable approach to CIMIC and civil-military cooperation among NATO member states means that the implementation of a unified framework is still some way off. This delay has serious repercussions for the ISAF campaign in Afghanistan, where there is a chaotic divergence of approaches to stability operations. Nominally, the ISAF Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) is responsible for building a civil-military strategy for Afghanistan; in practice, however, he struggles to be effective due to his ill-defined role and powers.[23] Tellingly, it is the ISAF commander and not the SCR who, together with the Afghan Minister for the Interior, co-chairs the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Executive Steering Committee.

It is difficult to refer to the PRT as a structured model; these can vary enormously in size, preponderance of military or civilian personnel, and command structures.[24] There is a grave need for NATO member states to coordinate doctrine and best practice: scant guidance exists on when and how a PRT should transition from being more or less military or when it should cease to exist. Where humanitarian workers are able to operate, it is important that they be permitted to do so without unnecessary intrusion or duplication of effort by the military and that civil-military models such as PRTs transition to more civilian entities, such as Field Advance Civilian Teams.

Attempts to improve coordination among ISAF contributors have seen mixed results at best. In 2006, ISAF introduced training initiatives and developed a Handbook of Best Practices for incoming PRT staff. The mechanisms of the PRT Executive Steering Committee and PRT Working Group have also been updated to reflect lessons learned. However, the impact of new guidelines in the field appears negligible, as underresourced soldiers and civilians deal with competing demands, not least from their respective home capitals. Rather than carrying out a clearly

delineated, centralized plan for Afghanistan, operations are generally left to the discretion of the individual PRT's lead nation, an approach that has been labeled as the "Balkanization" of the aid effort due to the lack of any coherent centralized planning to manage PRT collective activities.[25] This in turn impacts local conflict dynamics and the consolidation of the Afghan state, whose officials are overwhelmed by the divergence of perspectives and practices among such a large coalition.

"Where Are the Civilians?"

Although Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF–I) and ISAF officers frequently complain about the shortage of civilian experts in areas worst affected by insurgency, it is debatable whether a significant increase of civilians would deliver the results expected of them unless highly restrictive limitations on movement are reassessed.[26] Diplomat and civilian expert movements are greatly hindered by regulations imposed by their respective ministries—what former British diplomat Hilary Synott has called "the dead hand of senior managers." Excessive "duty of care" restrictions prevent diplomats and civilian experts from delivering accurate analysis of the political situation, developing contacts among the local population, and implementing and overseeing reconstruction projects.[27] However, the response to this challenge is not uniform within ISAF. For example, the United Kingdom has increasingly come to see the greater mobility of its civilian personnel in Helmand as necessary, despite obvious security concerns. Consequently, civilian personnel attached to the PRT Lashkar Gah and stabilization advisors have a much wider presence in the province than in 2007 and early 2008. A senior UK official has concluded that "we overstated the role of the military and understated what civilians could do even in a hostile environment."[28] This contrasts with other ISAF PRT-lead countries that continue to take a more cautious approach.

In some provinces of Iraq, senior United Nations (UN) officials, who have spent the bulk of the European Union's (EU) almost €1 billion in aid, have never actually seen the projects they commissioned. Agencies such as the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) have even resorted to monitoring projects through aerial photography.[29] In Afghanistan, a 2009 report by the Humanitarian Policy Group observed that an escalation of attacks by insurgents on aid workers has resulted in a "general retrenchment [of aid workers] to provincial capitals and a shrinking of the overall field presence."[30] Despite increased restrictions on civilian movements, many ISAF contributors are reluctant to allow the military to monitor contracts.[31] This is understandable but overlooks the clear warning from the Taliban-Quetta shura leadership that any organization providing aid without their direct permission will be targeted.[32] The Humanitarian Policy Group has concluded that, regardless of whether projects are implemented by international or local staff, "aid organisations are being attacked not just because they are perceived to be *cooperating* with Western political actors, but because they are perceived as wholly part of the Western agenda."[33]

the "politics of aid" is at its most apparent during an insurgency where the incumbent regime and the shadow insurgent state compete to secure the support of the local population

The "politics of aid" is at its most apparent during an insurgency where two rival systems, the incumbent regime and the shadow insurgent state, compete to secure the support of the local population. The ISAF commander, General Stanley McChrystal, has consistently stressed the importance of a profound political knowledge to inform the delivery of aid even at the most basic levels: "If you build a well in the wrong place in a village, you may have shifted the basis of power in that village. . . . Therefore, with a completely altruistic aim of building a well, you can create divisiveness or give the impression that you, from the outside, do not understand what is going on or that you have sided with one element or another, yet all you tried to do is provide water."[34]

Logically, sustainable reconstruction and provision of essential services mean that such efforts must be integrated within a locally owned plan so that in the mid to long term, such activities can be undertaken by the government. However, this directly leads to the extension of the government's writ, namely its capacity to provide for its citizens, thereby challenging the rival structures of the shadow state established by the insurgency. Because most intergovernmental aid organizations and international NGOs are unable and unwilling to work with the Taliban, the "humanitarian space" becomes loaded in the government's favor. The targeting of NGOs and their "recipient partners," including hospitals and schools, that do not operate with the insurgency's consent is therefore a tactic born out of cold and brutal reasoning, aimed at increasing the dependence of the local population on the insurgents' rival political, economic, and social infrastructure, and not simply an innate zeal or cruelty. Consequently, in areas worst affected by the insurgency in Afghanistan and Iraq, there is no humanitarian space to speak of. Instead, the military must move to fill the vacuum until the insurgency can be contained.

Prior to the Iraq War, the conventional thinking in the U.S. Government was "to get diplomats out of war zones on the understanding that diplomats had to be protected and preserved for when the fighting was over."[35] In the aftermath of the political chaos that gripped Iraq in late 2003–2004, the U.S. State Department conceded that it had insufficient resources to "plan, implement or manage stabilization and reconstruction operations."[36] Exacerbating the weakness of interagency coordination in Afghanistan and Iraq is the lack of specialist skills and local knowledge of U.S. diplomats deployed there. Few have experience or sufficient training in working with the military in hostile environments. The reality that diplomacy in conflict situations requires highly specialized skills that cannot be simply learned on the job by a Foreign Service Officer (FSO) more accustomed to conventional diplomacy is an important lesson that the State Department has yet to show definitive signs of learning. The culture of the State Department is partly to blame: U.S. diplomats are generally discouraged from cross-agency assignments, as these postings are often perceived as detrimental to career prospects.[37] This is the opposite experience to that of the U.S. military, where an ambitious officer is now expected to work in multiple disciplines.

As of January 2009, the Political-Military Bureau at the State Department had 26 foreign policy or political advisor (POLAD) positions attached to the military. Another 17 FSOs were assigned to military education and training institutes. In the past, however, FSOs have considered such positions career dead-ends, and the military has frequently complained that the Department of State "doesn't exactly send its A Team."[38] POLADs also do not receive the

extensive training necessary to adapt to an advisory role in a military environment, and the State Department has no mechanism in place to track officers who previously held political-military positions at home so that a pool of experienced officers could be maintained for future deployments and consultations.[39]

In Iraq, U.S. diplomats rarely venture out of large military bases unless accompanied by a heavy security escort, often provided by private security companies deeply resented by the local populace. In particularly dangerous areas, civilian officials will frequently not leave military compounds for weeks or even months. During this time, their only contact with Iraqis will be with local employees who work within the military zone. Many diplomats are therefore almost completely ignorant of their surroundings and rely heavily on the military or the intelligence agencies for information on local events.

The lack of training provided to U.S. diplomats and restrictions on movement have had severe consequences with regard to political dynamics in Afghanistan and Iraq. Vastly inflated contracts stir up resentment by making a few individuals extremely wealthy. In the case of Iraq, the monopoly on U.S. reconstruction contracts was compounded by the reality that many "bids" were in fact all subcontracted to just a few local construction companies, which in turn imported significant quantities of materials from individuals with close contacts with the Iranian government.[40] In Afghanistan, local businessmen contracted by the United States and other ISAF contributors to undertake reconstruction projects often pay bribes to the Taliban to secure the safe passage of building supplies.[41] The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has also recently begun subcontracting monitoring to international civilian contractors, adding another layer of bureaucracy to an already convoluted landscape of agencies engaged in stability operations.[42] More pragmatically, USAID has occasionally requested that the military take over monitoring duties of contracts where the perceived threat level to U.S. civilian officials has significantly escalated.[43]

In the campaign to "win hearts and minds" in Afghanistan and Iraq, the military has come to expect too much from its civilian counterparts. The culture of the military predisposes it to expect that, where civilian agencies "have the lead," they have the resources and know-how to deploy self-sufficiently. However, it is obvious that, in addition to bureaucratic shortcomings, the State Department and USAID do not have sufficient funding with which to recruit and train personnel. It is estimated that only 1 cent of every dollar that the U.S. Government spends on national security and foreign affairs is allocated to diplomacy and aid.[44] There is clearly a chronic shortage of U.S. FSOs—key diplomatic posts in the Middle East remain unfilled—with severe consequences for U.S. diplomacy abroad and civilian control of foreign policy.[45] In 1990, USAID's direct hire personnel numbered 3,500, down from 15,000 during the Vietnam War. This figure has declined by another third since the first Gulf War even as USAID's annual budget has increased from $5 billion to $13.2 billion today.[46]

the culture of the military predisposes it to expect that, where civilian agencies "have the lead," they have the resources and know-how to deploy self-sufficiently

The United States has finally grasped that the State Department and USAID need to prepare for conflict and not just postconflict engagement. It is envisaged that in 2010, 150 additional POLAD diplomats will be embedded

U.S. Marine Corps (Jeremy Harris)

U.S. and British civilian members of Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand Province talk with school headmaster

within military commands, although it remains unclear how POLADs fit into the command structure of U.S. operations.[47] In 2005, USAID established an Office of Military Affairs (OMA) to facilitate coordination with the military, and is now comparatively far ahead of other NATO government development agencies in acknowledging that they have a significant role in contributing to U.S. national security.[48] This follows the creation of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in 2004 as part of the U.S. Government's Civilian Stabilization Initiative. Remarkably, however, the U.S. Congress refused to pass a State Department authorization bill to fund S/CRS.[49] Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, intervened to plead the S/CRS case, which eventually was awarded $200 million from the DOD budget for 2006 and 2007.[50]

The funding of a large share of humanitarian and reconstruction projects from the U.S. defense budget is exactly the opposite experience of other NATO countries where the budget has been controlled by a ministry of foreign affairs or a respective development agency. The Commander's Emergency Response Program stabilization fund for 2008 amounted to approximately half a billion dollars, more than the combined education and health budgets of the Afghan government for that year.[51] U.S. diplomats and aid officials are increasingly reliant on the goodwill of DOD to fund their projects in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In 2005, the newly constituted S/CRS developed a draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation, which it disseminated for interagency comments. Disputes over the wording continued until 2008 when the S/CRS was

forced to abandon the document and published a less detailed version, laying out a framework that was finally approved in May 2008.[52] S/CRS does not have the authority or personnel to lead a comprehensive approach; rather, it facilitates agreement among the various parties and manages a reserve of civilian experts. Its influence in Afghanistan and Iraq has been extremely limited.[53] The complexity of the S/CRS task has been exacerbated by a highly confused and burdensome congressional committee system, with over eight committees assuming responsibility for stabilization and reconstruction activities.

In August 2009, Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal agreed to implement an Integrated Civil-Military Campaign Plan for Afghanistan. This initiative is an innovative attempt by the U.S. civilian and military leadership in Kabul to develop a model for civil-military relations during counterinsurgency and stability operations, and to some extent illustrates the dearth of appropriate structures and guidance emanating from Washington. From late 2009, civilian representatives were appointed to each U.S. regional command and at the provincial/district level "to execute U.S. policy and guidance, serve as the civilian counterpart to the military commander, and integrate and coordinate [civil-military] efforts."[54] Crucially, the new structure provides for a joint decisionmaking mechanism at every level of operations on issues affecting stability operations and, if properly implemented, will go a long way toward improving civilian oversight of the military and U.S. unity of effort in Afghanistan.[55]

In the United Kingdom, DFID officials have previously demonstrated a profound dislike of working toward UK security interests, especially if it involved close cooperation with the MoD. Such an attitude was evident during 2002 and 2003 when the Secretary for International Development, Clare Short, refused to take any measures to prepare DFID adequately for the contingency of war in Iraq.[56] Senior DFID officials pointed to the wording of the 2002 International Development Act as precluding the use of aid to further the United Kingdom's immediate political and security interests, objecting to any inclusion of DFID in UK Afghanistan counterinsurgency strategy, which they claimed was a military concept that DFID could not support.[57] Since 2006, however, there has been a significant shift in such thinking, as DFID came under pressure to contribute to UK national security interests. In 2008, the DFID contribution was an integral part of the UK projected Afghanistan Strategy—essentially a blueprint for the civil-military effort to counter the Taliban-led insurgency. DFID has also made moves to prioritize spending in other developing countries in which the United Kingdom has an important national security interest, including Pakistan and Yemen.

the incoherent selection and training of diplomats sent to Iraq were to be a consistent feature of UK deployment through to 2009

The UK civilian response to filling the governance vacuum that emerged in Iraq's southeast region was chaotic, reflecting a lack of knowledge, resources, and a grave incoherence, if not outright hostility, between key government departments. The Foreign Office initially proposed appointing the Governor of Bermuda, Sir John Vereker, as the Civilian Coordinator for the Coalition Provisional Authority in the south of Iraq, despite the fact that he had

never worked in a country in or emerging from conflict.[58] The person eventually selected for the post, Hilary Synnott, was given a mission statement just under half a page in length and was told "to play it by ear."[59] The incoherent selection and training of diplomats sent to Iraq were to be a consistent feature of UK deployment through to 2009. The slow and inadequate deployment of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and DFID personnel, delays in the release of funds, and the unwillingness of the army to fill the civilian gap meant that the United Kingdom ultimately lost the crucial postinvasion "window" in which to decisively engage in the south of Iraq.

As the insurgency increased in intensity, during 2006 and 2007 the UK-led PRT failed to transition from a primarily civilian entity into one that took a more military approach to stability operations. During this period, the Basra palace was being hit daily by up to 40 rocket and mortar attacks, often bringing the PRT's work to a virtual standstill. Reconstruction efforts were also hampered by internal conflicts between senior personnel within the PRT, arising principally from "a lack of clear guidelines" as to its role and objectives.[60] The fact that British and Danish civil-military structures in Basra "ran along parallel tracks and were not integrated" only added to the confusion.[61] Following a major MNF–I/Iraqi operation against insurgents in Basra during March and April 2008, the scope and performance of the PRT's activities increased considerably, with one UK official observing that "the key objective was to salvage our reputation."[62]

the establishment of a Stabilisation Unit led to various UK departments agreeing on a roadmap that has brought about significant improvements in Helmand Province

The lack of capacity to deliver in conflict countries also contributed to a growing crisis in morale within the FCO.[63] A shortage of personnel and cultural/language training means that the FCO and DFID continue to rely heavily on local staff in key strategic countries. Only five FCO personnel have a basic level of Pashtu, particularly surprising given the UK commitment to Afghanistan since 2001 and the large number of UK citizens of Pakistani and Afghan descent.[64] DFID has also suffered from a shortage in political and cultural expertise, attributed to insufficient training and short deployments: postings to Afghanistan and Iraq often only last 12 months. The UK National Audit Office (NAO) has noted that there has been little guidance and no "lessons learned" approach to DFID's work in insecure environments, observing that there is "limited research and experience on delivering effective aid in insecure environments, so the information on which DFID is able to base its decisions is weak." Worryingly, in a survey undertaken by the NAO, 40 percent of DFID personnel found the induction period prior to deployment poor or very poor. In addition to a lack of institutional memory, training, and a high personnel turnover, DFID frequently dispatches personnel with no previous overseas development experience: over 50 percent of DFID representatives in Afghanistan during 2008 had never been posted abroad before.[65]

The inability to monitor projects due to a shortage of personnel and a highly adverse security situation had grave consequences for UK stability operations in Afghanistan during 2006 and 2007. A suicide attack on civilian personnel

in Helmand Province in November 2007 led to a review of DFID operations, with the effect that by early 2008, "practical reconstruction and development efforts had stalled, as had efforts to improve governance."[66] The Danish civilian contribution in Helmand was also struggling: "Due to a lack of priority and personnel," 75 percent of the planned activities of the stabilization advisor in Lashkar Gah were cancelled during 1 month in 2008.[67] However, unlike postinvasion Iraq, this breakdown in the civilian effort led to a review of operations and a redoubling of the civil-military effort with a coherent structure put in place to improve cooperation.

Despite improved civil-military coherence, UK civilian officials in Afghanistan are severely hampered by a lack of air transport, being completely dependent upon the goodwill of the military as their request for a suitable aircraft in Helmand "had to be cancelled, and the deposit forgone, because [Her Majesty's] Treasury had not approved the funds."[68] Due to restrictions on mobility, DFID was subsequently able to disburse only half of its allocated funding for the province. DFID has also been forced to spend large amounts of its budget on private security company contracts: one contract with Control Risks in Afghanistan in 2003–2004 cost £6.8 million, including the provision of 68 security guards, and in 2009, the same company received the majority of the £2.9 million funding allocated to a local governance project in Basra Province.[69] The NAO has calculated that placing a UK civilian for a year in Afghanistan has cost up to $250,000. Subcontracting to NGOs has also proven unfeasible in much of Afghanistan and Iraq due to security concerns.[70] In the case of the Southern Iraq Employment Programme, lack of oversight of the local authorities who received a grant of £4 million meant that fraudulent reporting went unnoticed for over a year, until it was eventually concluded that only £1 million could be accounted for.[71]

The United Kingdom, like the United States, has recognized the shortcomings of its civilian engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq and has moved to correct an obvious lack of interagency coordination of efforts. The establishment of a Stabilisation Unit led to various UK departments agreeing on a roadmap that has brought about significant improvements in Helmand Province. The original plan for the province, produced when the United Kingdom took the lead there in 2006, did not effectively deal with the integration of the civilian and military efforts.[72] The roadmap shifted the activities of the PRT in Lashkar Gah away from a postconflict approach toward that of dealing with a mounting insurgency. In June 2008, London announced the creation of the Civil-Military Mission Helmand (CMMH), which has significantly improved the integration of military and civilian efforts into one coherent strategy.

CMMH has emerged as an important model for civilian supervision of stability operations that, because of extremely adverse security conditions, are monitored by the military. It is administered by the lead personnel from the military, FCO, and DFID and integrates equivalent representatives from the U.S., Danish, and Estonian contingents. Tasks such as intelligence, political analysis, planning, district level stabilization, media, and communications, which previously were carried out in parallel, are now conducted jointly. The civil-military collaborative effort at headquarters in Lashkar Gah is replicated in other districts of Helmand, each with a joint civil-military stabilization team of approximately 10 staff located within the relevant battlegroup. Importantly, CMMH clearly places a UK civilian official at the center of all decisionmaking in Helmand.[73]

The pragmatic approach offered by CMMH, where stabilization officers at the district level provide direction to military personnel, means that civilian expertise and military capabilities are pooled toward realizing the common objectives of the UK strategy in Afghanistan. The civilian component—approximately 50 experts drawn from various government agencies—leads reporting on overall progress in the province, and a regular joint civil-military report is dispatched to Whitehall by the ambassador in Kabul, who is responsible for oversight of the UK's Afghanistan strategy.[74]

UK military officers have reported positively on the effectiveness of stabilization advisors in coordinating a comprehensive approach at the operational/tactical level. In addition, the deployment of FCO and Stabilisation Unit personnel throughout the province rather than just in Lashkar Gah contrasts favorably with the experience in Basra Province, where a handful of UK civilian officials were eventually restricted to operating from one location, the Contingency Operating Base at Basra international airport.[75] CMMH also offers a means of structuring civilian and military political contacts with a close liaison established between the civilians and the "planning" units of the military's Task Force Helmand. Building on this experience, the UK government has the opportunity to put in place a more coherent doctrine on civil-military relations during counterinsurgency operations.[76]

The UK government has introduced a number of important measures to improve civilian oversight and training of the military. The Stabilisation Unit has recently taken practical steps to improve the level of guidance given to the military, and has amended a DFID guidebook aimed at improving best practices for Quick Impact Projects implemented by CIMIC teams. The posting of a military liaison officer in DFID has also improved coherence in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The Stabilisation Unit has played an important role in facilitating the harmonization of different agencies' views into a more coherent UK government strategy, and has accelerated the deployment of civilian personnel to conflict areas, recently placing civilian personnel on the ground in Helmand district centers "cleared" by the military within 24 to 48 hours. The unit is responsible for updating the Stabilisation Task Matrix, which describes a range of tasks germane to stability operations and models of civil-military cooperation. The matrix is currently being updated to recognize that "civilians can do more," a testament to the improved performance of the UK civilian engagement in Helmand. The Stabilisation Unit currently operates a number of cross-departmental training courses and is participating, together with the FCO and MoD, in a DFID-led audit of "conflict skills" in order to gauge the future predeployment needs of UK personnel.[77] In 2007, the UK government announced the creation of a separate Stabilisation Aid Fund as an extension of the preexisting Global Conflict Prevention Pool. The fund has a budget of £243 million for 2008–2010 that is overseen jointly by the MoD, FCO, and DFID according to a "triple key" system.[78]

The Stabilisation Unit is an important step toward harmonizing UK government activities in working toward national objectives when at war. However, for all its innovative steps in moving closer to the holy grail of the comprehensive approach, the unit lacks a champion in the Cabinet. It is frequently seen as too closely aligned with DFID, yet it answers to three government ministries (DFID, FCO, and MoD). This is not only a consequence of the unit's offices operating out of DFID, but also because

almost all of its operational costs have until now been channelled from the DFID budget, rather than being split three ways.[79]

The Stabilisation Unit's role is limited to mediating among the three departments and operating according to their consent. The task of imposing a solution upon interdepartmental disputes falls to the Cabinet Office responsible for the day-to-day coordination of all UK government business, which is perceived as lacking sufficient personnel and expertise.[80] One means of addressing this authority deficit could be for the Stabilisation Unit to be placed solely under the remit of a properly resourced Cabinet Office. The Conservative Party has proposed creating a new National Security Council where the Stabilisation Unit will have a "strong voice." However, it is not clear how such a body will operate vis-à-vis the Cabinet Office and how it will differ substantially from existing committee structures. The Conservatives have also vaguely proposed that Stabilisation Advisors would "report to the military chain of command," although again what exactly this means in practice remains to be seen. Alarmingly, it seems to imply military seniority over UK civilian officials in Helmand.[81]

Need for Civilian Doctrine

While many critics are horrified at the idea of the military undertaking humanitarian and reconstruction tasks normally carried out by civilians, it is difficult to consider an alternative in certain circumstances. By refusing to acknowledge that civilians are frequently incapable of performing the wide range of stability tasks expected of them, and simultaneously are not training the military to fill that void where required, we are destined to fail repeatedly. Although the prospect of close cooperation with the military has the effect of blurring the distinction between the civilian and military efforts, it is far less desirable for governments to continue to invest heavily in a country such as Afghanistan only to find that due to the level of insecurity, civilians cannot engage, and, due to lack of guidance, the military cannot deliver, or worse, that tensions may be exacerbated by a haphazard delivery of aid. Misspent aid entrenches corruption and is a useful propaganda tool as well as an occasional source of funding for the insurgency. This is particularly important given the U.S. "civilian surge" in Afghanistan during 2009 and 2010. Unless the Obama administration chooses to ease security restrictions on U.S. civilian officials in Iraq, the costs of the deployment will be exorbitantly high and results are likely to be unsatisfactory.

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In Helmand Province, the United Kingdom is currently testing a thoughtful and pragmatic merging of the civilian and military efforts that is worthy of further study. In agreeing on mechanisms to integrate military and civilian efforts, Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal have offered a coherent U.S. vision for improving security in Afghanistan. Both countries are substantially ahead of the curve in trying to make unity of effort a working reality, and such initiatives give grounds for optimism that the civilian performance can improve. However, these initiatives can only succeed if both governments continue to reform

their civilian bureaucracies toward empowering decisionmaking by officials on the ground so that they can respond more quickly to the needs of a rapidly evolving counterinsurgency strategy.

In advocating greater political awareness among the officer corps, military strategist Michael Howard observed that "military commanders will need exceptional political wisdom as well as military skill; but they should refrain from attempting to shape the political world to their image."[82] This is still true today. Although General David Petraeus has observed that the U.S. Department of State "is never going to put an Ambassador under a general, and [DOD] is never going to put a general under an Ambassador," on political matters, soldiers must yield to civilian guidance at all levels.[83] This means granting civilians unequivocal authority at every stage of the design and implementation of stability operations, even if such activities are carried out by the military. It does not matter whether the military makes the "right" political decisions; these decisions are simply not for the military to make.

Whereas the military now plans for operations according to "ink-spots" or "clear, hold, and build" through a means of combat and stability operations, civilian officials are frequently unsure how they should deploy alongside the military and lack guidance on their role within an overall counterinsurgency strategy. There are exceptions, such as the performance of UK Stabilisation Advisors in Afghanistan, who are able to deploy at a local level alongside the UK military, often within hours of a military offensive to clear an area. Comparative to the United States, the United Kingdom appears to be easing its restrictions on civilian movement.

Continued deficiencies in models for civil-military cooperation remain extremely costly. Stuart Bowen has noted that his counterpart in Afghanistan, whose office was created in 2008, is encountering the same problems as in Iraq due to "very little oversight" of the $32 billion that has been appropriated.[84] There is an obvious need for a comprehensive approach to reconstruction contracting procedures, including the possible creation of a single civil-military agency with a pooled budget to take a clear lead on humanitarian aid and reconstruction in the areas worst affected by insurgency.

The political leaders of NATO still cannot agree on what the comprehensive approach really means: some member states view it as a method of collaboration in security sector reform, while others argue that it should constitute a closely integrated counterinsurgency strategy.[85] This is exacerbated by continued confusion as to the structure of PRTs, and where and how they should operate. Such political weakness severely undermines the coherence of ISAF operations in Afghanistan, where the lack of a clear strategy and guidance on civil-military division of labor is exacerbated by the proliferation of actors cluttering the same space.

Ultimately, it will take a greatly strengthened political will and commitment by NATO governments to unite different agencies to operate under a single strategy with a less ambiguous command structure. Such reform needs to begin at home before it can be implemented abroad or consolidated on a NATO-wide basis. The United States and United Kingdom have come a long way from the thinking that restricted the military contribution to stability operations during the initial period following the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Such innovation and fresh thinking should not be thwarted, but rather matched by the emergence of a new type of diplomat with the requisite authority and skills to direct civil-military resources toward realistic objectives. If respective heads of government are

serious about a whole-of-government approach to conflict management, it is incumbent upon them to assume personal responsibility for its implementation, working directly with interagency organizations such as S/CRS and the Stabilisation Unit and not subsuming them beneath other government departments. Consensus is a luxury rarely achieved in war; therefore, leadership and attention to detail at the highest level of government are required to prosecute it effectively. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] The U.S. military defines *stability operations* or *stabilization* as "missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the U.S. in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or re-establish a safe and secure environment, provide essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief." See U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3–0, *Operations*, available at <www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf>.

[2] Stephen Cornish and Marit Glad, "Civil-military Relations: No Room for Humanitarianism in Comprehensive Approaches" (Oslo: Norwegian Atlantic Committee, May 2008), 18.

[3] Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, statement of Stuart Bowen, Jr., Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (Washington, DC: U.S. Congress, February 2, 2009), 5.

[4] U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3–07, *Stability Operations*, University of Michigan Press edition (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 2–6.

[5] Richard Teuten, "NMCG Conference: Stabilisation and Civil-military Relations in Humanitarian Response: Mission Integration" (London: Stabilisation Unit, 2009).

[6] Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Marines Seek Foothold in Helmand," *The Financial Times*, July 3, 2009.

[7] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2006), 61.

[8] Ibid., 63.

[9] FM 3–07, 1–3.

[10] Robert Gates, "A Balanced Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 1 (January-February 2009).

[11] Eric Edelman, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, testimony to the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

[12] Janine Davidson, "Next Generation Doctrine," in FM 3–07, xvii.

[13] Ibid., 2–4.

[14] Interview with MNF–I official, Iraq, March 2009.

[15] See, for example, "Building Language Skills and Cultural Competencies in the Military: DoD's Challenge in Today's Educational Environment," House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Armed Services, November 2008.

[16] Thomas Ricks, *The Gamble: General Petraeus and the Untold Story of the American Surge in Iraq, 2006–2008* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009), 69.

[17] Patrick Little, "Lessons Unlearned: A Former Officer's Perspective on the British Army at War," *RUSI Journal* 154, no. 3 (June 2009), 10–16.

[18] James Blitz, "Testing Waters Ahead," *The Financial Times*, May 20, 2009.

[19] Ministry of Defence, "Afghanistan Casualties," statement of Chief of Defence Staff Sir Jock Stirrup, London, July 10, 2009.

[20] General Sir Richard Dannatt, "A Perspective on the Nature of Future Conflict," transcript of meeting at Chatham House, London, May 15, 2009, 2.

[21] Miguel Gonazález, "Zapatero iniste en que la misión en Afganistán es de reconstrucción," *El País*, October 10, 2009, and EFE, "270 paracaidistas españoles vuelan a Afganistan para relevar a los legionarios," *El País*, July 4, 2008.

[22] Proceedings and interviews at Spanish Ministry of Defence Conference, "La Estrategia de Afganización," Barcelona, June 16, 2009; and Colonel Rafael Roel Fernández, "La contribución del Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) español de Qala e Naw a la reconstrucción de Afganistán" (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, February 5, 2008).

[23] Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations," Danish Institute for International Studies, 2008, 21.

[24] Finn Stepputat, "Synthesis Report: Civil-military Relations in International Operations—a Danish Perspective," Danish Institute for International Studies, April 2009, 8.

[25] Barbara Stapleton, "A Means to What End? Why PRTs Are Peripheral to the Bigger Political Challenges in Afghanistan," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 10, no. 1 (Autumn 2007), 40.

[26] Stepputat, 28.

[27] Hilary Synnott, *Bad Days in Basra: My Turbulent Time as Britain's Man in Southern Iraq* (London: Tauris, 2008), 261.

[28] Interview with UK official, September 2009.

[29] National Audit Office, Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, "Department for International Development: Operating in Insecure Environments," October 16, 2008, 25.

[30] Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG), "Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: 2009 Update" (New York: HPG, 2009), 6.

[31] Interview with Spanish official, Barcelona, June 16, 2009.

[32] *A Book of Rules* (Quetta: The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, September 10, 2009).

[33] HPG, 6.

[34] General Stanley McChrystal, transcript of meeting at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, October 1, 2009, 1.

[35] J. Anthony Holmes, "Where Are the Civilians?" *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 1 (January-February 2009).

[36] Government Accountability Office (GAO), "Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps" (Washington, DC: GAO, November 2007), 1.

[37] Gordon Adams, testimony to Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, July 31, 2008.

[38] Rusty Barber and Sam Parker, "Evaluating Iraq's Provincial Reconstruction Teams while Drawdown Looms," United States Institute of Peace trip report, December 2008, 1.

[39] John Finney and Alphonse La Porta, "Integrating National Security at the Operational Level: The Role of State Department Political Advisers," in *Affairs of State: The Interagency and National Security*, ed. Gabriel Marcella (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), 304–305.

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[41] Patrick Cockburn, "Return to Afghanistan," *London Review of Books*, June 11, 2009.

[42] National Audit Office, 25.

[43] Stuart Bowen, Jr., statement to U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC, March 11, 2008, 9.

[44] Holmes.

[45] Hillary Clinton, testimony before U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, DC, May 20, 2009.

[46] Ibid.

[47] John Finney and Alphonse La Porta, "FS Know-How: Maximizing the Value of the Political Adviser Function," *Foreign Service Journal* (October 2008).

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[49] Robert Perito, statement to U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "Defining the Military's Role toward Foreign Policy," Washington, DC, July 31, 2008.

[50] Eric Edelman, testimony before U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

[51] Matt Waldman, *Caught in the Conflict: Civilians and the International Security Strategy in Afghanistan* (London: Oxfam International, 2009), 14.

[52] RAND National Defense Research Institute, 40.

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[54] McChrystal, C–I.

[55] "United States Government Integrated Civilian Military Campaign Plan for Support to Afghanistan," Embassy of the United States, Kabul, Afghanistan, August 2009, 28–35.

[56] Interview with a former advisor to former UK Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, Madrid, May 2009.

[57] House of Commons International Development Committee, *Reconstructing Afghanistan* (London: House of Commons, Fourth Report of Session 2007–2008, February 5, 2008).

[58] Synnott, 4.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Kasper Hoffmann, "Civil-Military Relations in Iraq 2003–7," Danish Institute for International Studies, September 2009, 58.

[61] Hoffmann, 56.

[62] Interview with UK official, Basra, March 2009.

[63] Eddie Barnes, "Foreign Office has 'Culture of Clones,'" *Scotland on Sunday*, March 22, 2009.

[64] Alex Barker, "Afghan Mission Lacks Language Skills," *The Financial Times*, August 20, 2009.

[65] National Audit Office, 29.

[66] Lieutenant Colonel Phil Sherwood, "Reconstruction and Development in Afghanistan: A Royal Engineer Regiment's Experiences," *RUSI Defence Systems* (October 2007).

[67] Stepputat, 41.

[68] House of Commons International Development Committee.

[69] Interview with UK official, September 14, 2009, and National Audit Office, 32.

[70] House of Commons International Development Committee.

[71] National Audit Office, 22.

[72] Peter Dahl Thruelsen, "Counterinsurgency and a Comprehensive Approach: Helmand Province, Afghanistan," *Small Wars Journal* (2008).

[73] Memorandum submitted by the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development (London: House of Commons Defence Committee, May 15, 2009).

[74] Teuten, NMCG Conference, 2009.

[75] Interdepartmental acrimony over Iraq was never fully diffused from 2003 until the UK military withdrawal in 2009, although the Stabilisation Unit did play an important role in improving the performance of PRT Basra during 2008 and 2009. One UK official observed that "the unit came into existence too late in Basra to play the role that it is now playing in Helmand." Interviews with UK officials in Iraq, March 2009, and London, September 2009. See also Sherwood.

[76] Interim Joint Warfare Publication 3–90, *Civil-Military Cooperation* (London: Ministry of Defence, November 2003).

[77] Richard Teuten, "Stabilisation and Post-conflict Reconstruction" (London: Stabilisation Unit, 2008).

[78] In 2009, the Stabilisation Aid Fund was joined to the United Kingdom's peacekeeping budget, requiring another name change.

[79] According to a UK government official, this is due to be remedied in 2010 when the FCO, DFID, and the MoD will assume responsibility for an equal share of the operational costs of the Stabilisation Unit. Interview, London, September 14, 2009.

[80] Interviews with UK officials, London, September 2009.

[81] See "One World Conservatism: A Conservative Agenda for International Development," Policy Green Paper No. 11, available at <http://www.conservatives.com>.

[82] Michael Howard, "Military Power and International Order," *International Affairs* 40, no. 3 (July 1964), 404.

[83] Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, 10.

[84] Stuart Bowen, Jr., statement to U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services, Washington, DC, March 25, 2009.

[85] Stepputat, 28.

Organized Crime in Iraq

Strategic Surprise and Lessons for Future Contingencies

BY PHIL WILLIAMS

After the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, the United States encountered a series of strategic surprises, including the hostility to the occupation, the fragility of Iraq's infrastructure, and the fractious nature of Iraqi politics. One of the least spectacular but most significant of these surprises was the rise of organized crime and its emergence as a postconflict spoiler. This development was simply not anticipated. Organized crime in Iraq in the months and years after March 2003 emerged as a major destabilizing influence, increasing the sense of lawlessness and public insecurity, undermining the efforts to regenerate the economy, and financing the violent opposition to the occupation forces. In 2003, the theft of copper from downed electric pylons made the restoration of power to the national grid much more difficult. In 2008, the capacity to generate funds through criminal activities enabled al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) to continue resisting both the U.S. military and the Iraqi government. Moreover, with the planned U.S. withdrawal from Iraq, organized crime in the country will continue to flourish by maintaining well established crime-corruption networks. It might also expand by exploiting the continued weakness of the Iraqi state.

Although the ability of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps to adapt to conditions on the ground contributed enormously to a transformation in the security environment from 2005–2006 to 2007–2008, attempts to combat organized crime remained fragmented and sporadic. For the most part, organized crime remains peripheral to the core roles and missions for the U.S. military. The Department of Justice has several important programs in Iraq, as part of what is intended as a whole-of-government approach. Nevertheless, combating organized crime remains a low priority for the United States. Even though organized crime made the establishment of stability and security both more complicated and more costly, it is not clear that the lessons from this experience have been integrated into U.S. strategic thinking about Iraq, let alone strategic planning for similar contingencies elsewhere.

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Against this background, this article delineates the key dimensions of organized crime in Iraq, identifies a number of factors that contributed to strategic surprise, and identifies several ways of reducing the prospects for similar surprises in future contingencies.

Dimensions of Organized Crime

In many respects, the intervention into Iraq was a rude awakening for the United States. It was not simply that Washington was ill prepared for the kind of resistance that developed, although that was clearly the case. The U.S. military, after several false starts, did a remarkable job of competitive adaptation to the environment and to its adversaries—a process that contributed enormously to the turnaround in 2007 and 2008. Yet the lessons from Iraq are not simply about the importance of counterinsurgency doctrine and strategy; they are about the need to go beyond a partial understanding of phenomena becoming stronger and more pervasive in a globalized world.

organized crime in Iraq is neither an outlier nor an aberration; rather, it is a central feature of much of the global periphery

Organized crime in Iraq is neither an outlier nor an aberration; rather, it is a central feature of much of the global periphery. Indeed, insofar as there is integration of the periphery into the global economy, it has a lot of negatives. These became evident during the 1990s when the Cali drug trafficking organization, led by the Rodriguez Orejuela brothers and Santacruz Londono, became—at least for a few years—the developing world's most successful transnational corporation. Today, Afghanistan is hardly integrated into the licit global economy at all, yet it is a major supplier of one of the most lucrative products in the illicit global economy, where the problem is not a lack of integration but the embedding of local opium and heroin production in global trafficking and supply networks. In Iraq, the main moneymaker for organized crime, corrupt politicians, and officials (as well as insurgents, militias, and jihadis) was not drugs but oil. In spite of the important distinction between a product subject to prohibition and one under the monopoly control of a particular government, oil in Iraq was as important to organized crime and to the insurgency as opium is to warlords, criminal organizations, and the Taliban in Afghanistan. The theft, diversion, and smuggling of oil became a national pastime in Iraq, feeding into the coffers of insurgent and jihadi organizations, the militias, tribal groups, and criminal organizations alike. In fact, criminality related to the oil business had several different dimensions: the theft and smuggling of crude oil from the Al Basra oil terminal; the diversion, black market sale, or illicit reexport of imported petroleum products; and the theft and smuggling of refined products from the Baiji refinery.

If oil was the focus of most criminal activity in Iraq, however, equally striking was the range of criminal activities perpetrated by traditional criminal enterprises interested only in profit and also political groups using crime to fund their cause. Extortion (and its less malevolent concomitant, protection) became pervasive. And the reconstruction efforts multiplied the opportunities. Large amounts of money for reconstruction were poured into Iraq with inadequate oversight and no comprehensive plan for its effective disbursement. Iraqis were awarded contracts with protection money

U.S. Army (Chuck Joseph)

Oil pipeline fire smolders near Baiji

almost invariably built in, some of which went to organized crime and some to the insurgency. Inadvertently, the United States was funding the very groups attacking its forces. As well as the natural focus on extortion and protection (particularly important where there was no effective Leviathan to provide security), criminals and combatants alike engaged in the illicit trafficking of antiquities, the theft and smuggling of cars, trafficking in human beings, drug smuggling (especially of synthetics), and the illicit weapons trade.

After oil crimes, however, the most important activity was kidnapping. The kidnapping of Iraqis became an enduring problem, reaching a peak in 2006 with an estimated 40 abductions a day, which provided major revenue for criminals, militias, and insurgents. The kidnapping of foreigners, in contrast, was relatively short-lived but often had dramatic impact as videos of the decapitation of hostages were posted on the Internet. Kidnapping sometimes involved tacit or explicit cooperation between kidnapping gangs concerned with profit and jihadi groups concerned with both fundraising and strategic impact. On occasion, the jihadis simply let it be known that they wanted a particular kind of hostage: at other times, kidnapping gangs took the initiative in the hope that they could sell their hostages directly to the jihadis or obtain a share of the proceeds after the jihadis obtained ransom payments. The willingness of governments—most notably those of France, Italy, and Germany—to make large ransom payments for the freedom of their citizens made

kidnapping of foreigners particularly attractive. It also led to some strange situations, with the Italian government, for example, finding itself in a bidding war with AQI for the kidnapped journalist Giuliana Sgrena.

Yet if kidnapping was an important revenue source, it was also a strategic weapon used by the insurgents and jihadi groups in efforts to undermine coalition unity, coerce governments with military contingents or support workers into withdrawing, sow insecurity both in the general population and in the nongovernmental organization community, and undermine the effectiveness of the occupation forces and the Iraqi government. The ability to amplify kidnapping through executions posted on the Internet made it an even more powerful weapon that will almost certainly be used in other contingencies.

recognizing that organized crime can act as a safety net is simply to recognize that it has benefits as well as costs

Another element of organized crime in Iraq was the linkage to corruption in government ministries. This simply reflects the dual nature of corruption as both a pervasive condition and an instrument of organized crime. Corruption in Iraq was also integrally related to violence. Indeed, violence played a key role in protecting crime-corruption networks, maintaining the political-criminal nexus, and limiting efforts to reform the system. Although it is difficult to separate violence used to intimidate members of anticorruption bodies and agencies from the more pervasive violence, a close examination reveals clearly that those fighting corruption—whether staff members of the Commission on Public Integrity or investigative journalists digging too deep—were particularly vulnerable to precisely targeted violence designed to inhibit their investigation, restrict or dilute their findings and proposals, and suppress anticorruption activities. A few Iraqi politicians and officials recognized this and referred specifically to the violent mafia in the oil ministry that prevented reform. It is likely that similar if less blatant efforts at intimidation were made in other ministries in order to maintain the lucrative revenue streams linked to corruption.

Officials at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad performed an extremely perceptive assessment of corruption in the ministries (which was leaked and published on the Internet), but even this exposure did not sufficiently emphasize the role of violence and coercion in perpetuating corrupt activities and protecting the connections among organized crime, insurgents, and militias on the one side and between politicians and officials on the other. Unfortunately, while corruption-related violence was only a small part of the overall violence, it had a powerful and pervasive impact that made good governance more elusive and undermined faith in the new government. The post-Ba'athist Iraqi state was inevitably somewhat weak at the outset, and organized crime sought to perpetuate that weakness.

It is clear from all this that organized crime in Iraq was highly predatory. Yet it is also important to recognize what, in a very different context, Andre Standing shrewdly described as the "social contradictions of organized crime."[1] Writing specifically about the Cape Flats in South Africa, Standing shows how organized crime and criminal economy can play *positive* roles. In an analysis that has wide applicability, Standing argues that the criminal economy is "a core dimension of the community" rather than "a fringe activity perpetrated by outsiders

who can be easily separated from a normal legal society containing good citizens."[2] This certainly applies to Iraq, where organized crime and illicit economic activity are pervasive. Moreover, in Standing's view, organized crime "delivers employment and goods to thousands of individuals" otherwise socially and economically excluded.[3] This notion of organized crime as a safety net is not far-fetched even in Iraq, although expressions of criminal "philanthropy" or criminal paternalism of the kind displayed elsewhere—most flamboyantly in Colombia by Pablo Escobar in his program "Medellin without slums"—seem lacking.

Recognizing that organized crime can act as a safety net is simply to recognize that it has benefits as well as costs. Organized crime is certainly not victimless—especially when violence or the threat of violence are integral to the crime, as it is with kidnapping and trafficking in persons—but it is a social and economic coping strategy, providing employment when unemployment is high and opportunities when opportunities in licit economies are severely constricted. Indeed, the economy in Iraq had been so devastated by successive wars, sanctions, and economic mismanagement that organized crime was one of the few sources of employment after March 2003. This is not to deny the pernicious nature and devastating consequences of organized crime; it is simply to suggest that complex phenomena often have paradoxical characteristics.

The other critical component of organized crime in Iraq was the appropriation of criminal methods by political and military actors. Insurgents, jihadis, militias, and certain Sunni tribes were all involved in organized criminal activities. In many respects this was a familiar pattern. Groups as diverse as the Irish Republican Army, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia had long used criminal activities as a funding mechanism. For jihadi groups, especially AQI, criminal activities became a critical source of revenue. The willingness of European governments to make substantial payments for the release of their citizens made kidnapping of foreigners highly lucrative. Reports claim that France paid $15 million for the release of three hostages, Italy paid $11 million, and Germany paid $8 million to $10 million.[4] This revenue stream was surpassed only by the profits from the theft, diversion, smuggling, and black market sales of oil. Car theft was another source of funding for AQI and became particularly important in Mosul when AQI and its affiliates concentrated there after setbacks in Al Anbar and Baghdad. Extortion and various kinds of fraud were also core funding activities. Shiite militias, especially Jaish al-Mahdi (JAM), also became heavily involved in organized crime in Iraq, although how much was carried out under the direct control of the organization and how much by "rogue" factions is uncertain. Four criminal activities provided Mahdi army members with important revenue streams: extortion and protection, black market sales of petroleum, seizures of cars and houses under the guise of sectarian cleansing, and involvement in oil smuggling in Basra. The offensives in Basra and Sadr City in the first half of 2008 had some impact in reducing JAM criminal activities.

the U.S. military, as the "strongest tribe," became adjudicator and enforcer in criminal disputes dressed up as political differences

All this challenged the dominant paradigm of terrorist financing that emerged after September 11, 2001, and involved funneling funds through charities, the global financial system, and informal money transfer mechanisms to terrorists carrying out attacks. Following the money becomes difficult without a trail, or when funds are raised and spent locally or there is no distinction between fundraisers and those who commit acts of terrorism. Although the money brought into Iraq by foreign fighters was not negligible, the amounts seem to have been modest when compared with the funds raised through criminal activities. This was recognized by a 2006 intelligence report leaked to the *New York Times* that concluded insurgents and terrorists in Iraq were financially self-sufficient and not dependent on funds from outside the country, let alone from al Qaeda central.

Closely linked to this self-sufficiency, the informal, criminal, and conflict economies in Iraq overlapped and intersected in complex ways.[5] The insurgency, like organized crime, became an important source of employment. If the appropriation of organized crime methods helped insurgents and jihadis, however, it also provided opportunities for wedge-driving by the United States. In Anbar Province, in particular, tensions over the control of illicit activities between the Sunni tribes and AQI helped to create a major schism.[6] The U.S. military, as the "strongest tribe," became adjudicator and enforcer in criminal disputes dressed up as political differences, siding with one set of violent armed groups engaged in criminal activities against other groups judged more dangerous.[7] The tribes were losing the turf wars to AQI until the U.S. military came to the rescue. Moreover, the Anbar Awakening was in part an alternative employment program that encouraged the defection of major Sunni tribes from the insurgency. If the United States was able to lever what was effectively criminal competition, however, the tactical benefits were greatly outweighed by the strategic costs of failing to anticipate the rise of organized crime in Iraq and the far-reaching consequences it would have for reestablishing stability and governance after the toppling of Saddam Hussein. Although there were precedents, analogues, and commentaries that could have provided early warning, the obstacles to anticipating the rise of organized crime were systemic and powerful.

Strategic Surprise

Ironically, Iraq is not the first case in which U.S. aspirations and expectations have been confounded by organized crime. The hope that Russia in the 1990s would undergo a smooth transition to liberal democracy and the free market was disappointed by widespread corruption, connivance, and violence associated with the rise of organized crime.[8] In part, this reflected a loss of social control by the state, a loss inherent amid transformation and upheaval. In retrospect, however, the rise of organized crime reflected the adoption of a new strategy by the political elite. Accepting the end of the Soviet Union, many members of the elite, working in collusion with criminals, positioned themselves to exploit the transition to capitalism. And with the absence of a regulatory framework for business, organized crime became protector, arbitrator of disputes, and debt collector of last resort. At times, organized crime appeared out of control, with contract killings being used to eliminate threats—whether in the form of reformist politicians, investigative journalists, or policemen resistant to the blandishments of corruption. Yet as Joseph Serio has argued, what was happening was in fact a fusion

of crime, business, and politics.[9] The achievement of Vladimir Putin was primarily to reestablish the dominant role of the political elites in what has remained a symbiotic relationship with organized crime. At various points during the 1990s, it appeared that organized crime was taking over the state. In fact, the state was a willing partner. Under Putin, however, the state simply became a much more assertive partner, with the security services and law enforcement once again controlling, regulating, and facilitating (rather than neutralizing) organized crime.

The key point is that the role of organized crime in derailing the transition of Russia to a free market and liberal democracy was not anticipated. Fritz Ermarth has noted that although the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research in 1992 produced an astute analysis of the likely impact of crime and corruption in Russia, "subsequently, neither American intelligence analysis nor American policymakers adequately appreciated the crime and corruption problem."[10] At the policymaking level there was a great deal of "customer sales resistance" driven in part by wishful thinking about the transition, which created skepticism about reports emphasizing the extent of Russian political corruption.[11] At the analytic level, it appears there was a desire to please policymakers by both emphasizing that the market would tame organized crime and downgrading the challenge that it posed by inappropriate analogies between Russian criminals and the "robber barons" in the United States.[12] As Ermarth noted, the robber barons operated in an environment constrained by laws.[13] They also built infrastructure rather than looting the state. The result was not a dramatic strategic surprise but a subtle and an insidious one. As a result, it was not one from which appropriate and valuable lessons were learned.

The evolution of organized crime in Russia was not the only experience that could have increased sensitivities to the potential role of organized crime in Iraq. The conflicts in the Balkans during the 1990s were inextricably linked to organized crime, which obtained an enormous boost from the imposition of international sanctions, acted as a major funding mechanism for ethnic factions, and helped to maintain the Slobodan Milosevic regime in Serbia. Competing factions and state structures appropriated criminal activities as a means of funding political agendas. The struggle over Kosovo, for example, was in part a clash between cigarette smugglers and heroin traffickers. Yet political animosities did not inhibit criminal cooperation when it was mutually convenient and beneficial. Serb and Albanian criminal networks, for example, were not averse to doing business with one another, in spite of political tensions. In a political economy dominated by illicit activities, this was hardly surprising. The illicit economy and organized crime were not on the periphery of economic and political activities in the Balkans; they were *central* to those activities. Moreover, this was not some kind of regional aberration but the emergence of a pattern that is becoming increasingly common and that was certainly manifest in Iraq.

the UNODC report identified key criminal activities, some of which had already reached "industrial scale" proportions

Although there is inevitably an element of what David Snowden termed "retrospective coherence" in this analysis of Iraq, it is worth emphasizing that several warning voices were raised about organized crime in the early months of the occupation.[14] One of these was

Mark Edmond Clark of the Strategy Group, who noted in July 2003 that "the Balkans could possibly serve as a model for understanding what is now taking place in Iraq."[15] He also noted that "combating organized crime in Iraq will . . . demand further consideration as the humanitarian and reconstruction efforts get under way."[16] Perhaps even more important, in August 2003 a delegation from the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provided a comprehensive assessment, noting that organized crime was already contributing to instability and complicating reconstruction.[17] The UNODC report identified oil smuggling, trafficking in firearms, human trafficking, theft and trafficking of artifacts, kidnapping and extortion, car-jacking, and the large-scale theft of copper from pylons and power lines as key criminal activities, some of which had already reached "industrial scale" proportions.[18] The report also noted that "the conditions for the expansion of organized crime include the absence of the rule of law, the disintegration of state institutions and the promotion of various forms of smuggling under the previous regime."[19] Both Clark and the UNODC mission provided strategic warning about the rise of organized crime in post-Ba'athist Iraq. Their warnings, however, had little impact on high-level decisionmaking. Neither civilian leaders in the Coalition Provisional Authority nor members of the military leadership took the warnings as seriously as they should have—and the UN mission met a mixture of resistance and indifference.[20]

The indifference to the possible rise of organized crime and its profoundly debilitating consequences was reflected in two early decisions in Iraq, both of which had far-reaching consequences: the decision to stand by passively in the face of widespread looting, and the decision to disband the army. The decision to do nothing in the face of the looting seems to reflect both a lack of planning for the occupation and a belief that looting reflected a deep-seated anger at the regime and, therefore, was likely to have a highly cathartic effect. In fact, the looting both reflected and accentuated a condition of anomie: the degeneration of moral standards and permissible behavior. In an environment characterized by enormous uncertainty, a lack of clear rules and norms, and the absence of constraints imposed by a strong central government, allowing the looting gave the wrong signal. Not only did it embolden criminals and undermine faith in the occupation, but it also created a pervasive sense of personal insecurity. This proved difficult to dispel and ultimately fed into the emergent role of the militias as sectarian protectors. The looting also morphed into more focused and organized forms of crime. Perhaps most important, however, was the psychological impact of a lawless environment with high levels of impunity. The conclusion was that criminal activities had high payoffs and carried few risks.

The decision to dismantle the army, although more ideological than the decision to allow the looting, was another major boost to the rise of predatory forms of organized crime in Iraq. If more thought had been given to the consequences of creating a surplus of unemployed experts in violence in an environment characterized by weak governance mechanisms with low levels of legitimacy, multiple sectarian, tribal, and regional divisions, and very constricted employment opportunities, then the imprudent nature of the decision would have been obvious. Once again, experiences in the former Soviet Union and Balkans could have provided a vital insight: when experts in violence are removed from their traditional occupation in the armed forces or security services,

they become what one Russian scholar termed "entrepreneurs of violence."[21] Although measures to limit the power of the Ba'athists were essential, the extent of de-Ba'athification was done with too little analysis of likely consequences. The result was the unleashing of groups that had always had a predatory approach to the society who also had managerial skills and expertise in violence and intimidation. Indeed, former regime elements from the military and the intelligence services became major players in the criminal world. Some of these people were able to use their detailed knowledge of the population to identify particularly lucrative targets for kidnapping for ransom. The families of many hostages discovered that the kidnappers had specific details of their finances, which both accentuated their sense of helplessness and limited their bargaining ability.

If the Coalition Provisional Authority failed to recognize how its own decisions and actions fed into the rise of organized crime in the country, some U.S. operational units appreciated the organized crime component of the challenges confronted. As early as July 2004, Marine commanders were acknowledging that it was difficult to:

> *overemphasize the importance of organized crime in the insurgency. . . . The perpetrators are motivated by self-interest and greed. They not only plan and carry out violence but pay others to do the same. One commander compared the intransigence of Iraqi organized crime networks to that of the mafia in Sicily before World War II. It has the same stranglehold on whole local economies and populations, and is protected by family and tribal loyalties.*[22]

Such an assessment, however, was not widely accepted, with the result that neither the extensive nature of criminal activities nor their pernicious consequences was anticipated and contained. As a result, the rise of organized crime in Iraq proved a strategic surprise for the United States. The reasons for this must now be examined.

Grooved Thinking and Labeling. Military planning appropriately focuses on overt military problems and challenges. One of the problems inhibiting both planning and analysis, however, is the simple labeling and categorizing of problems. Labels become important in defining problems and determining the locus of responsibility for responding to them.[23] In this connection, it bears emphasis that although military planning now includes an integral rule of law component, this was not initially the case in Iraq. Moreover, organized crime was seen as a law and order problem rather than a military challenge, even though it fed directly into the disorder, political violence, and pervasive insecurity. Consequently, criminal activities and criminal organizations were dealt with sporadically rather than systematically and at the tactical and operational levels rather than as a matter of strategy. This remained largely true even when the emphasis on counterinsurgency became more pronounced.

in Iraq, organized crime was seen as a law and order problem rather than a military challenge, even though it fed directly into the disorder, political violence, and pervasive insecurity

Poor Use of Analogies and Precedents. It is often noted that historical analogies and history itself are used badly in both intelligence and national security decisionmaking. Part of the reason is the dominance of national

U.S. Air Force (Shawn Weismiller)

experience, a failure to see broader patterns, and a reluctance to acknowledge the relevance of experience elsewhere. In this connection, the United States has an ethnocentric view of organized crime, which is traditionally seen as a law and order challenge rather than a fundamental threat to security. Indeed, the very concept of security in the United States has always referred primarily to national and sometimes to international security.

In Latin America, in contrast, security is seen much more in terms of public or citizen security. One reason for the difference is that traditional organized crime in the United States played by certain rules; policemen were regarded as touchable (in some places and on some occasions) by the bribe but untouchable by the bullet. In Latin America and other parts of the world, the inhibitions on attacking those who work for the state are much weaker. And while the United States was relatively successful—at least in the long term—in containing the Italian Mafia, in other countries organized crime was more pervasive and damaging.

Yet U.S. civilian and military leaders exhibited considerable reluctance to acknowledge not only that organized crime could exercise much more influence in some societies than it did in

Iraqi police allow vehicle to pass through security checkpoint after searching it for weapons, drugs, and other illicit materials

the United States but also that it might behave with less prudence and greater ruthlessness. Both the Balkans and many states of the former Soviet Union provided dramatic examples of how pervasive and corrosive organized crime could become in periods of state weakness, collapse, or even political transitions characterized by rapid social and economic dislocation. Although the United States during the 1990s developed considerable interest in political stability, state weakness, and the dangers of state failure, it rarely linked those issues to the role and rise of organized crime, even though the former Soviet Union and Balkans experienced bumpy transitions in which organized crime emerged as a major spoiler. Expectations about the free market economy and the aspirations for liberal democracy soon became mired in large-scale economic dislocation, unemployment, and the failure to develop the legal and regulatory structures for the governance of a capitalist economy.

As a result, organized crime became a proxy for the state, providing protection and enforcement unavailable through legal channels. In Iraq, the United States made the state fail—through a very successful decapitation strategy. The rapidity of state collapse and the dislocation created in a society

rendered highly fragile by brutal dictatorship, successive wars, and the imposition of international sanctions provided multiple opportunities for the rise of organized crime. This was as inevitable as it was unexpected.

Dominance of Strategic Perspectives. The dominant assessment of Iraq prior to the U.S. invasion was of a rogue state with a regime intent on regional domination and likely involved in the development of weapons of mass destruction. Iraq was a strategic challenge, so little attention was given to its internal social and economic problems. Consequently, the debate over sanctions revolved around their effectiveness in inhibiting the behavior of Saddam Hussein. No consideration was given to the criminalization consequences of international sanctions.[24] Peter Andreas argues very persuasively, however, that "sanctions almost invariably have a criminalizing impact on the targeted country as well as its neighbors."[25] In his view, the criminalizing consequences of sanctions occur at several distinct but overlapping levels. First, while sanctions are in effect, the target state typically goes "into the business of organized crime to generate revenue, supplies, and strengthen its hold on power, fostering an alliance with clandestine transnational economic actors for mutual gain. This alliance may, in turn, persist beyond the sanctions period."[26] Iraq certainly exemplifies this, with its exploitation of the oil-for-food program for kickback schemes, as well as the oil protocols with its neighbors. Second, efforts to circumvent sanctions lead to the creation of regional smuggling linkages. In Iraq, such linkages survived the collapse of the Ba'athist regime and became an important factor in helping to fund opposition to U.S. presence. Third, sanctions and their circumvention result in the criminalization of the economy and society, enabling organized crime groups to move from the periphery to the core of economic life.

U.S. policymakers were oblivious to the degradation of norms and standards that had taken place in a country ruled by personal dictatorship and not law

After the collapse of the regime, illicit activities in Iraq continued while, in effect, becoming more democratic and more diffuse. U.S. planners seem to have given this prospect scant attention, exhibiting little if any sensitivity to the acceptance of criminal behavior and criminal activities as the norm in Iraq. Although it is possible that intelligence assessments reflected a far deeper understanding, U.S. policymakers were oblivious to the degradation of norms and standards that had taken place in a country ruled by personal dictatorship and not law, a population wracked by a succession of internal and external wars, an economy in which sanctions had destroyed the middle class, and a society in which insecurity, desperation, opportunism, and greed had created a combustible combination only contained by repression.

When the tyranny of fear was removed and the "fierce state" was destroyed, there was nothing to replace it as a source of order.[27] Mechanisms for managing disputes or resolving conflicts were absent, as were national institutions in which people could place their trust. The Ba'athist regime had done a good job of containing and even hiding these faultlines in society, and consequently it was hard for the United States, looking from the outside, to understand the deterioration. Nevertheless, the inability or unwillingness to recognize that "reestablishing societal acceptance of legal

norms can be one of the most challenging tasks after the sanctions are lifted" was to have profound implications.[28] The failure to categorize Iraq as a high-risk country for organized crime meant that U.S. forces were ill prepared for the challenges they would face.

This is not to claim that domestic factors in Iraq were completely ignored. Insofar as there was an internal focus, however, it was on the Sunni-Shia divide and the likely impact of the U.S. intervention on reversing the balance of advantage in Iraq. The financial dimension of sectarian cleansing—through kidnappings, killings, and the associated theft of cars and houses—has received remarkably little attention, at least in the public debate.[29] Another surprise was the intensity of the political competition among Shia factions and parties. This competition came to the fore in Basra, where there was a violent struggle for the control of both licit and illicit trade in oil. Indeed, intra-Shia sectarianism and organized crime became bound up with one another, as elements in Moqtada al-Sadr's militia, Jaish al-Mahdi, became involved, at the very least, in providing protection for oil smugglers, and found itself competing with both the Fadhila party militia and the Badr Corps (which gradually became integrated into the army) for the "rents" on this trade.

Wishful Thinking: Regime Change without Pain. In many postmortems of intelligence and decisionmaking failures, it is clear that all too often those involved saw only what they expected to see. In some cases, that was compounded by a tendency to see what they wanted to see. In effect, preconceptions were reinforced by wishful thinking. Such a tendency seems to have been at work in Washington prior to the invasion of Iraq, particularly in decisions made at the political level. Strong elements of wishful thinking encouraged a tendency to minimize the extent of the disruption and dislocation that would occur with the U.S. military intervention. Underlying this is an important cultural factor rooted in the ideals of American society, which creates an appealing but often unwarranted optimism about the capacity of the United States to bring about desired changes. This pattern of expectation was woven through a long series of U.S. military interventions and was crystallized in the resurgent Wilsonianism of a conservative Republican administration. An economic variant of Wilsonianism was evident in Thomas Barnett's *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-first Century*, which encapsulated and extolled the virtues of global neoliberalism at a time when this had already been rejected in many parts of the world. For Barnett, the opportunity to integrate Iraq (and Afghanistan) into the core global economy was one of the major benefits of intervention. The underlying assumption is that the Western and especially the American conception of globalization, if not enthusiastically shared throughout the developing world, remains attractive.

"corruption" is deeply embedded in many traditional societies where it is linked to familial, tribal, and clan obligations that take precedence over the rule of law

The concomitant is that developing countries will accept liberal democratic norms and welcome U.S. power and presence that embodies these norms. The resulting expectation is that the West in general and the United States in particular will be able to expand the order, peace, and stability of the developed

world to the zone of disorder in the periphery. Such thinking ignores three things: the rejection not only of liberal-democratic values but also modernity itself in large segments of the developing world; antipathy toward the United States, which is seen as seeking to impose its values and principles on unwilling populations even where this means supporting corrupt and autocratic governments in the meantime; and the capacity of others not to confront the United States directly but to act as spoilers in conflict and postconflict situations.

in most situations a team approach to the assessment that combines country specialists, political and economic analysts, and those with expertise on organized crime is appropriate

The diffusion and democratization of weapons systems, along with the ingenuity of substate and transnational networks in devising asymmetrical weapons, might not defeat great-power occupation but can make occupation very costly. Perhaps more fundamentally, it is not clear that the momentum is with the West. A close examination of events over the last two decades suggests not that order is flowing from the core to the periphery but that disorder is extending from the periphery to the core. One of the best encapsulations of the rise of organized crime and other violent nonstate actors as well as the development of alternative forms of governance is the term *the revenge of the periphery*.[30]

Ethnocentrism and Corruption. Hand-in-hand with the Wilsonian conception of the desirability of liberal democracies is the notion of well-regulated polities with clear distinctions between public and private activities, rules on conflicts of interest, institutional safeguards against abuse of position and authority for private gain, a high degree of transparency and accountability, and a deep and abiding sense of public service. In fact, Western democracies are the anomaly; "corruption" is not only endemic but is also deeply embedded in many traditional societies where it is linked to familial, tribal, and clan obligations that take precedence over the rule of law. From this perspective, governing the state is not a burden that requires an unselfish tradition of public service but an opportunity to obtain and distribute resources. Access to the resources of the state is a prize to be won, and the spoils are distributed in ways that reflect traditional affiliations, obligations, and loyalties. This gives politics in many countries in the developing world a zero-sum quality that accentuates rather than bridges divisions within these societies.

All this was reflected in high levels of official corruption in Iraq and the development of a symbiotic relationship between crime and politics. The relationships that had developed under Saddam between political elites, officials, and bureaucrats on the one side and criminal organizations on the other deepened as the new government was formed. The symbiosis was particularly pronounced in the Ministry of Oil where administrative corruption and political collusion greatly facilitated the theft, diversion, and smuggling of oil and petroleum products. The development of a "political-criminal nexus" mirrored that in many other parts of the world.[31] Yet the nexus undermined U.S. interests and complicated efforts to establish good governance. In other words, historical, cultural, and political factors in Iraq ensured the collective interest remained subordinate to individual and factional interests. These factors were reinforced and perpetuated by the links between organized crime and political and administrative

elites. Moreover, the injection of large amounts of money for economic reconstruction without adequate control or oversight and no plan for effective disbursement exacerbated both crime and corruption. Reconstruction moneys tempted not only various factions in Iraq but also U.S. corporations and contractors—many of which performed abysmally in terms of task completion. Reconstruction was vital but its implementation, in spite of all the efforts of the Special Inspector General on Iraq Reconstruction, facilitated and encouraged the growth of corruption and organized crime.

The critical question, therefore, is how similar strategic surprises can be avoided in future conflict and postconflict contingencies.

Intelligence, Military Contingencies, and Organized Crime

In thinking about intelligence to combat organized crime, two main requirements stand out. First, intelligence assessments of organized crime must be incorporated into the decision-making process preceding the deployment of military forces. These assessments should anticipate the levels, forms, and scope of organized crime that might arise during the contingency itself and consider the impact on prospects for success. Second, during the deployment, intelligence about organized crime should enhance the effectiveness of the military forces in meeting their mission requirements.

In terms of intelligence and planning, one simple way to anticipate the possible rise of organized crime as a spoiler in military contingencies is to include an organized crime threat assessment prior to military deployment. A useful analogy is arms control impact statements, which were congressionally mandated requirements accompanying certain military budget requests between 1976 and 1993. An organized crime impact statement need not be formalized in the same way. Nevertheless, it should become a key component of military planning, a part of intelligence preparation of the battlefield at the strategic level and something that is given full consideration prior to deploying forces. Systematically thinking about how the military intervention—whether large-scale or more modest—is likely to change the opportunity space and incentive structures for organized crime in the target country and the surrounding region is critical. In this connection, it has become axiomatic that the deployment of peacekeepers expands the market for commercial sex and creates new incentives for trafficking in women to the deployment country.

While much will depend on the specific circumstances, it is likely that in most situations a team approach to the assessment that combines country specialists, political and economic analysts, and those with expertise on organized crime is appropriate. The assessment itself could be based on a checklist of key questions, broad enough to be asked in all cases but focused enough to elicit aspects of the problem unique to the particular target country and contingency under consideration. The assessment should consider organizations and markets, incentives and inhibitions, and ways in which a U.S. military deployment might have the inadvertent consequence of strengthening organized crime.

If the assessment concludes that organized crime is likely to become a major problem, it must identify points of leverage that the United States can exploit to preempt or limit the problem. What follows is a preliminary checklist for such an assessment. It is not definitive and there is some overlap, but this is based on the notion that an organized crime threat assessment needs to be broad rather than narrow and that elements of overlap are preferable to gaps.

1. The Current State of Organized Crime in the Country:

- What is the current state of organized crime? Is it specialized or diverse? Is it widespread or restricted to a few sectors of the economy? Are there particular sectors where organized crime has or could develop a dominant position?
- How is crime organized? Is it through traditional hierarchies and pyramidal structures or through more horizontal networks? Are there many small groups and "mom and pop" operations, or are there a few large syndicates?
- What is the cultural basis for organized crime? Are trust and loyalty in the criminal world rooted in family, tribe, or clan relationships and affinities, or are they based simply on the threat of harsh reprisals for defection or disloyalty? Or is it a mix of affinity and fear?
- What traditions (for example, traditions of cross-border smuggling, patrimonial relationships, or lack of allegiance to the state structure) in the society encourage or feed into criminal activity? Conversely, what traditions might act as constraints on various forms of criminality?
- What level of legitimacy does the state have? Does the state provide adequate levels of protection and service to its citizens? If it does not, what alternative sources of protection, service, and even governance are available?
- Are political factions and violent groups that oppose the government using criminal activities for funding? If so, what kinds of activities are they engaged in, and what kinds of revenue streams are they obtaining?
- What kind of connections and cooperation exists, if any, between violent political actors and traditional criminal enterprises? If there is cooperation, is it based merely on mutual expediency or certain kinds of affinity among the different types of groups?
- Does the regime in power systematically engage in criminal activities? If so, what kinds of collaborative networks are involved? Are these networks likely to be self-sustaining and self-perpetuating in the absence of the regime and the accompanying linkages?
- What is the level of economic development of the state? What is its degree of control over key resources? What resources exist in the state, and how are their management and the distribution of profits organized? If control of key resources is a state monopoly, in what ways is this monopoly being challenged (for example, siphoning resources and moving them to illicit markets whether in the state or outside, or violent conflict for control of licit and/or illicit markets)? If control is contested, who are the challengers to the state?
- If there are major political divisions in the state, to what extent are rival factions exploiting criminal activities to fund political competition?
- What kind of state/regime is the target of possible intervention? Is it strong or weak, authoritarian or democratic? Are there capacity gaps and functional holes that could be

exploited and/or filled by organized crime? What kinds of rents do the political elites obtain? Are these rents concentrated or distributed? Is there a political-criminal nexus in the country? If so, how is power distributed in relationships between the political elites and the criminal organizations?

- What is the level of civil society in the country? Are civil society institutions fully or poorly developed? Do elements of civil society in any way act as counterweights to organized crime and/or government corruption?
- Has the state been subjected to international sanctions? If so, how did it respond? Were attempts made to circumvent sanctions, and if so, how successful were they? Did sanctions and sanctions-busting result in the development of national and regional criminal networks? If so, are these networks likely to survive the removal of sanctions and develop other illicit business opportunities?

2. The Future Potential of Organized Crime:

- What are the propensity and capacity for criminal organizations to act as spoilers in the event of either regime change or postconflict peace-building?
- To what extent are there violent groups opposing the military presence and acting as spoilers to the reestablishment of good governance? Will these violent groups be able to appropriate organized crime methods, thereby becoming more powerful and effective spoilers?
- In the event of political and economic upheaval, what kinds of black markets are likely to emerge? Are these likely to be informal coping mechanisms, or will they provide opportunities for criminal enrichment? If new criminal markets do emerge, what kinds of incentives and opportunities exist for new entrants into these markets? What kinds of products are likely to be most important? What is the likely balance among wholly illicit prohibited products and services, regulated products or services, and licit products susceptible to theft, diversion, and smuggling? What kinds of criminal activities are likely to be most lucrative?
- How much does the successful pursuit of illicit opportunities require the perpetuation of a weak state as opposed to allowing the reemergence of a strong legitimate state?
- Is the state, the peacekeeping contingent, or intervening force able to provide security, or will key portions of the citizenry look for alternative forms of protection? Is the state, the peacekeepers, or an intervening force able to provide services, or will key portions of the citizenry look for alternative service providers? If there is a demand for services and protection, which groups are best positioned to meet that demand? How powerful and attractive are these alternative forms of governance? What is the balance between predation and protection in their activities?

3. Potential Points of Leverage:

- Is there invariably a zero-sum relationship between alternative forms of governance and the state, or can these rival power and authority centers be coopted by the state? If cooption is

not feasible, in what ways might alternative governance structures be simply encouraged to become less predatory?

- Are some forms of organized crime activities and certain kinds of criminal organization more pernicious than others? If such a distinction can be made, what opportunities might there be to exploit it?
- What is the relationship among the informal, illegal, and conflict economies? Are there sufficiently attractive incentives and opportunities in the legal economy to entice people away from the informal and illicit economies? Are there sufficiently attractive incentives and opportunities in the informal economy to encourage people to move away from the illicit and conflict/insurgent economies? How can these incentives and opportunities be strengthened?
- If legitimacy is low, what can be done in the short/medium and long terms to enhance it? Similarly, if the rule of law is weak, what can be done in the short/medium and long terms to enhance it?
- If reconstruction is a key part of either peacekeeping or military intervention, how can it best be managed so violent and criminal groups are not able to exploit the resources injected into the economy? In what ways can aid and reconstruction efforts be protected so they do not become targets for extortion, fraud, or exploitation?
- To what extent do intervention or peacekeeping disrupt or threaten traditional stakeholders and/or the dominance of certain political actors? Are there ways that a more inclusive and integrating strategy can be developed?
- What measures could preempt or inhibit alliances between criminal enterprises solely focused on profit and violent groups with political agendas, to whom criminal activities are simply a financial means to achieve political goals?
- Are there regional asymmetries, such as markedly different prices for commodities produced in the target country and/or its neighbors, that can encourage smuggling? If so, can these asymmetries be reduced?
- What kinds of actions by peacekeeping or intervention forces encourage the creation of alliances among criminal groups, among violent political groups, or between criminal and violent political groups? Do differential law enforcement and targeting priorities offer opportunities to break alliances between various groups or factions?
- What kind of precautions can be taken to avoid the emergence of kidnapping as a strategic weapon against the occupation or peacekeeping forces rather than simply as criminal activity?

As acknowledged above, this is not an exhaustive list. It does, however, provide essential questions that need to be framed prior to any military or peacekeeping contingency, even where it is not readily obvious that organized crime plays a major role or has the capacity to become a

spoiler. Once the intervention or peacekeeping deployment is under way, however, a new set of collection and analytic requirements comes to the fore. One possible approach to meeting these operational demands is through systematic efforts to fuse national security and law enforcement intelligence.

An effective fusion of law enforcement intelligence on the one side and military and strategic intelligence on the other is difficult. Moreover, the Iraq experience is not particularly promising, as there was little if any integration of law enforcement and military intelligence. Even though military intelligence developed enormous insight into Iraqi culture, tribal traditions and relationships, and social and political networks, this process does not seem to have been extended in any systematic way to organized crime in Iraq. This is not surprising. One of the most important obstacles was the military's lack of interest in the law enforcement mission, especially complex investigations that are themselves a source of intelligence and understanding as well as crucial to prosecution and conviction. To overcome this, strategic and military intelligence has to acknowledge that the organized crime is not a peripheral issue but something that can contribute significantly to the funding of those who are hostile to U.S. forces and willing to use violence to eject them. The growing acknowledgment of the salience of the rule of law mission in the Department of Defense is an important sign of progress and suggests that the military's clear dichotomy between intelligence and military operations on the one side and reconstruction and rule of law operations on the other is breaking down. It is not that soldiers are expected to become policemen; it is simply that there has to be a more explicit recognition that some law enforcement intelligence skills are highly relevant to the military environment of the 21st century.[32]

Even with such an acknowledgment, however, difficulties remain. The rule of law mission is broad and does not focus adequately on organized crime. Military intelligence collectors and analysts are not trained for the specific requirements of criminal intelligence. They are even less suited for criminal investigations, which remain crucial in learning the nature and extent of criminal networks involved in the larger organized crime challenge. On the other side of the equation, civilian law enforcement agencies are reluctant to embed their own analysts and agents with military units for lengthy periods. Moreover, much law enforcement remains deeply rooted in the tactical and the operational, with emphasis on specific cases and indictment and conviction rather than knowledge acquisition and what might be termed the strategic dismantling of criminal organizations.

even though military intelligence developed enormous insight into Iraqi culture, this process does not seem to have been extended to organized crime

These difficulties are both systemic and serious. Even with highly adaptive organizations in the theater of operations, they cannot be overcome once military forces are deployed. Traditional divides and bureaucratic silos must be overcome before deployment. It is argued here that this could be done with a set of initiatives explicitly designed to integrate law enforcement intelligence with strategic and military intelligence.

First, and most important, is the creation of a multiagency intelligence task force specifically designed to focus on organized crime in conflict and postconflict situations. This should include representatives from the Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of the Treasury, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Drug Enforcement Administration, with individuals designated as support personnel in other agencies who could be called on for additional assistance with both data and analysis. The task force could be organized as a network, but it would be preferable to have the members working together in the same location as this is essential to the creation of trust, the cross-fertilization of both methods and substantive insights, and the development of a distinctive sense of mission.

Second, there has to be a mutual learning process that will not be easy and therefore requires careful selection of personnel who are synthetic and eclectic in their approach, open to new methods, and dedicated to the mission irrespective of institutional affiliation. The key for law enforcement intelligence analysts is to think beyond the specific case and to combine the results of specific investigations (in which the priority is primarily knowledge acquisition and only secondarily arrest and indictment) with an overall strategic perspective. More traditional intelligence analysts should recognize that law enforcement has a great deal to offer to the intelligence process, particularly in complex environments. David Snowden has argued that the only way to understand a complex environment is by probing both the environment and adversaries and eliciting reactions that lead to enhanced understanding and awareness as well as knowledge acquisition.[33] Law enforcement is extremely good at probing behavior. For example, by temporarily detaining a critical figure in a criminal network while continuing to carry out surveillance on the network, it is possible to obtain insights into how criminal networks operate under stress. Such insights can facilitate the destruction of these networks.

A third essential pillar is a long-term program of increased personnel exchange between law enforcement and intelligence agencies with the notion that this would provide both a candidate pool for the task force and an analytic surge capability for specific contingencies. The integration of law enforcement intelligence into the training for strategic and military intelligence, and strategic and military analytic methods into law enforcement training, would augment this.

The final component would be the broadening of the intelligence mission in conflict and postconflict situations to go beyond those who are using violence against U.S. forces and to develop strategic and targeting intelligence about both criminal enterprises and the criminal fundraising activities of political and military actors. In a sense, the shift of focus in Iraq from improvised explosive devices to the networks behind them was the kind of process being described, but it would need to be even broader and more explicit to be effective.

None of this is a panacea. Nevertheless, an organized crime threat assessment prior to military deployment and the creation of a multiagency intelligence task force focused on organized crime in conflict and postconflict situations would at least offer some prospect of avoiding the kind of strategic surprise that occurred in Iraq. **PRISM**

This article includes work done by the author for the National Intelligence Council as an Intelligence Community associate.

Notes

[1] André Standing, *The Social Contradictions of Organized Crime on the Cape Flats*, Institute for Security Studies (ISS) Paper 74 (Pretoria, South Africa: ISS, June 2003), available at <www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Papers/74/Paper74.html>.

[2] Ibid., 1.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Daniel McGrory, "How $45m Secretly Bought Freedom of Foreign Hostages," *The Times* (London), May 22, 2006, 8.

[5] Jonathan Goodhand uses the terms *coping*, *shadow*, and *combat economies*. See "Frontiers and Wars: The Opium Economy in Afghanistan," *Journal of Agrarian Economy* 5, no. 2 (April 2005), 191–216. See also David S. Ramirez, "Gaining Control of Iraq's Shadow Economy" (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, September 2007), 20, 61–69; and Robert E. Looney, "The Business of Insurgency: The Expansion of Iraq's Shadow Economy," *The National Interest* (Fall 2005).

[6] Austin Long, "The Anbar Awakening," *Survival* 50, no. 2 (April 2008), 67–94.

[7] For the allusion, see Bing West, *The Strongest Tribe* (New York: Random House, 2008).

[8] See Fritz W. Ermarth, "Seeing Russia Plain: The Russian Crisis and American Intelligence," *The National Interest* (Spring 1999), 5–14.

[9] See Joseph D. Serio, *Investigating the Russian Mafia* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2008), especially 233–235.

[10] Ermarth.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] David Snowden, "Complex Acts of Knowing: Paradox and Descriptive Self-Awareness," *Journal of Knowledge Management* 6, no. 2 (May 2002).

[15] Mark Edmond Clark, "Understanding Balkan Organized Crime: A Key to Success in Iraq?" interview by Sean Costigan, Columbia International Affairs Online, July 2003, available at <www.ciaonet.org/special_section/iraq/papers/clm10/clm10.html>.

[16] Ibid.

[17] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Addressing Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking in Iraq: Report of the UNODC Fact Finding Mission 5–18 August 2003* (Vienna: UNODC, August 25, 2003).

[18] Ibid., 7.

[19] Ibid., iii.

[20] This point was made to the author in a conversation with one of the UNODC officials who authored the Iraq report.

[21] Vadim Volkov, *Entrepreneurs of Violence: The Use of Force in the Making of Russian Capitalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[22] Pamela Hess, "Analysis: Zen and the Art of Counterinsurgency," *The Washington Times*, July 29, 2004.

[23] The author is grateful to James Cockayne of the International Peace Institute for this observation about the importance of labels.

[24] Peter Andreas, "Criminalizing Consequences of Sanctions: Embargo Busting and Its Legacy," *International Studies Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (June 2005), 335–360.

[25] Ibid., 335.

[26] Ibid.

[27] The notion of the "fierce" state is discussed in Nazih N. Ayubi, *Overstating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996), especially chapter 12. For an excellent analysis of Iraq under Saddam Hussein that fits the notion of the fierce state, see Kanan Makiya, *Republic of Fear* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[28] Andreas, 337.

[29] A notable exception to this was *Iraqslogger*, a journalistic blog that has provided highly perceptive reporting and valuable insights on developments in Iraq.

[30] This phrase was used by Lilian Bobea at a Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Meeting on Organized Crime in Latin America, Mexico City, June 2008.

[31] See Roy Godson, ed., *Menace to Society: Political-Criminal Collaboration Around the World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2003).

[32] The author is grateful for many of the insights in this and the following paragraph to Marc Hess and Dr. Lawrence Cline.

[33] Snowden.

U.S. Army (David Bedard)

Inauguration of President Obama raised expectations of earlier and smarter intervention to protect civilians from dangers of fragile and failing states

Forging a U.S. Policy Toward Fragile States

BY PAULINE H. BAKER

Responding to 21st-century Security Challenges

Except in high profile crisis situations, Washington rarely attempts to develop an integrated, government-wide strategy to prevent conflict and state failure, in which the National Security Council sets overall objectives and figures out how to bring relevant tools of influence to bear in the service of unified country strategies. More commonly, the United States engages individual fragile and failing states in a haphazard and "stove-piped" manner, pursuing separate bilateral diplomatic, aid, defense, trade, and financial relationships, each reflecting the institutional mandates and bureaucratic priorities of the relevant agencies. The United States needs to rationalize and upgrade its fragmented approach to monitor precarious states and develop new mechanisms to improve the chance that early warning actually triggers early action.

—Stewart Patrick, "The U.S. Response to Precarious States: Tentative Progress and Remaining Obstacles to Coherence"[1]

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Of the many foreign policy challenges of the 21st century, one of the most complex and unpredictable is the problem of fragile and failing states, which often leads to civil war, mass atrocities, economic decline, and destabilization of other countries. The political era stemming from such challenges not only threatens civilians who are in harm's way, but also endangers international peace. Since the 1990s, such crises have become more prominent on the agendas of the major powers, intergovernmental institutions, humanitarian organizations, and vulnerable states themselves. Indeed, while the number of violent conflicts, particularly interstate wars, declined after the end of the Cold War, the duration and lethality of internal conflicts are rising. Casualty figures are considerably higher when "war deaths" beyond the battlefield and deaths resulting from infrastructure destruction are included.[2] While Iraq and Afghanistan have dominated the public discourse on fragile states, the problem is not confined to these countries or their neighbors. Indeed, it is likely that global trends in civil conflicts will present more, not fewer, challenges to international peace and security, particularly in states where there is a history of instability, demographic pressures, rich mineral resources, questionable political legitimacy, a youth bulge, economic inequality, factionalized elites, and deep-seated group grievances.

the National Security Council tucks issues related to weak states under other categories, such as development, humanitarian affairs, stabilization, or democratization

Yet for all the talk of the critical importance of such challenges, the U.S. Government lacks a comprehensive strategy and overall set of objectives to prevent state failure and to strengthen weak states. While many U.S. agencies are engaged in activities related to state fragility, their efforts are typically fragmented into different priorities, goals, and frameworks.[3] In sum, the terminology of conflict risk varies; the metrics of successful interventions are not uniform; and operational functions are usually divided into pre- and postconflict phases, with analysts rarely looking at the full life cycle of a conflict. Despite the fact that weak and failing states were identified in the 2002 U.S. National Security Strategy as a high priority threat, the National Security Council (NSC) does not have a directorate dedicated to coordinating and supervising an integrated approach to fragile states; rather, it tucks issues related to weak states under other categories, such as development, humanitarian affairs, stabilization, or democratization. This means the focus is diluted, agencies are left to decide how to approach the challenges in their own ways, and no strategy or unified approach has been developed. In essence, we make it up as we go along, country by country and crisis by crisis.

Government specialists dealing with such crises are scattered across different agencies and departments. Early warning analysts reside primarily in the Intelligence Community, although conflict analysis was supposed to have been a function of the Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). Instead, its primary function has shifted toward recruiting civilian government workers for deployment in conflict zones. As a result, with no "institutional home" for developing a U.S. strategy for fragile states, there is no shared methodology, conceptual framework, or analytical approach that integrates lessons

learned for interagency unity of effort. Most government efforts are instead directed toward operational functions, linking agencies once they are up and running in the field.

State-building experts tend to be area specialists who reside in the Department of State and in some U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) units (for example, Conflict Mitigation and Management) as well as the Department of Defense (DOD). They focus on postconflict[4] events, such as the Pentagon's focus on military stabilization, or USAID's emphasis on economic reconstruction. Their efforts are valuable, and useful products have resulted, such as the 2005 Essential Tasks Matrix for postconflict reconstruction developed by S/CRS in collaboration with six other agencies. This is an operational tool that categorizes a range of tasks for practitioners on the ground once the decision to intervene is made, but it is no substitute for a comprehensive strategy designed to prevent or mitigate conflict in fragile states.

Counterinsurgency (COIN) and counterterrorism efforts present even more complex challenges to U.S. policy in fragile states. Military exigencies in Iraq and Afghanistan have skewed perceptions on fragile states, as operational imperatives have superseded strategic understanding of what must be done for long-term state-building. Sometimes these goals are compatible, sometimes not. For example, to subdue insurgencies, the United States has decided to train, equip, arm, and use local proxy forces or sectarian militias to address COIN needs. While their use is understandable as a short-term military tactic, these militias could present a conflict risk of destabilizing the host government in the long term, becoming spoilers if they are not demobilized or integrated into the state's security structures. Iraq is an example of this phenomenon, with the Sunni Awakening forces feeling marginalized by the Shiite government, which has failed to absorb some 100,000 fighters as promised.

Given the shortage of civilian personnel knowledgeable and available to do state-building, the military has ended up shaping both early warning and state-building policies as well as conducting security and reconstruction operations on the ground. In many ways, the military has stepped up to the plate and boldly taken on the most advanced work: investigating the drivers of violence, deploying to contain the violence, and implementing state-building tasks to avoid a recurrence of violence. The Armed Forces have vastly more resources and are better organized than other agencies, and also have the institutionalized planning and evaluation mechanisms those agencies lack.

However, the results focus on warfighting goals. The emphasis in COIN doctrine on protecting civilians has narrowed the gap between military and civilian needs on the ground, but it remains a gap nonetheless. This merging of functions makes it difficult to measure the results of state-building, establish benchmarks of progress, or institutionalize interagency coordination. The lack of consensus on the metrics of success, in turn, undermines public confidence in the state-building exercise.[5] Except in rare cases of enlightened commanders and policymakers ordering integrated efforts in their particular areas of responsibility, the U.S. response to preventing conflict and building functional states remains incoherent, stovepiped, and uncoordinated.[6]

The current emphasis to remedy this situation is to encourage interagency coordination. But the U.S. policy deficit on

fragile states is due to more than the lack of coordination, or a paucity or imbalance of resources. These are the symptoms, not the cause. Rather, the deficit originates from *a failure to conceptualize the challenge correctly* and to develop a holistic strategy for dealing with the phenomenon of state failure *as a new class of conflict*. Such an approach must be not only whole of government, but also whole of society, or comprehensive, taking into account the entire range of actors who populate the landscape of shattered societies: local authorities, nonstate actors, spoilers, criminal networks, international nongovernmental organizations, illicit economies, the private sector, and communal, religious-, and ethnic-based groupings. Also needed is a unified decision-making structure involving relevant U.S. departments that can not only *act rapidly in a crisis*, but also, even more importantly, *act before a crisis*, using early warning and state-building skills that can be adapted to individual cases. Previous attempts to develop such an approach have either been ignored when new administrations came into office, or they failed to generate sufficient financial and political support to stay afloat.[7]

during the early 1990s, the problems of fragile states were seen in the United States mainly as humanitarian tragedies

The United States needs to make fragile states a higher priority in the hierarchy of national security concerns, comparable to such issues as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), climate change, and energy self-sufficiency. To achieve this, the following steps need to be taken:

- Create a Directorate for Conflict Prevention and Sustainable Security in the NSC with the appropriate staffing, budget, and authority to develop and implement a comprehensive U.S. strategy for fragile states.
- In consultation with Congress, establish criteria for U.S. engagement, or nonengagement, in fragile states, including diplomatic, informational, military, and economic options that can be utilized throughout the full life cycle of a conflict for both prevention and response.
- Form an international coalition of partner organizations and countries that could join the United States in developing strategies, coordinating interventions (nonmilitary and military), and providing resources, including rapid response mechanisms, to ensure that early warning means early action, and to build local institutional capacities for good governance in high-risk states.
- Create a unified U.S. political/military plan embracing all relevant agencies of government that need to be activated when policymakers decide a fragile state should be engaged in an emergency situation in which conflict has broken out, or until a strategy for preventing such an emergency is adopted.
- Conduct regular evaluations in each country in which the United States is engaged in a state-building strategy to measure progress, draw lessons learned, and determine when the country is

confidently on a trajectory toward sustainable security, laying the basis for a gradual exit strategy.

- Formulate a public diplomacy campaign that explains the policy and its rationale to the general public, international community, and the locally affected populations.

How We Got Here

During the early 1990s, the problems of fragile states were seen in the United States mainly as humanitarian tragedies. Indeed, when the U.S. military began to deploy forces in response to outbreaks of violence in internal wars, either to evacuate civilians or to stabilize the situation, they were described as short-term deployments similar to natural disaster responses and called *military operations other than war* (MOOTW). This term conveyed both the low strategic significance attributed to such missions, and a fundamental misunderstanding of what is involved in mitigating the consequences of internal wars and building functioning states.

Attitudes shifted dramatically after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Launched by al Qaeda, which was then based in Afghanistan, the attacks were planned and executed by a terrorist group that, in essence, had taken control of a failed state. It was from the Afghan base that al Qaeda was able to consolidate organizationally, train fighters, and propagate an ideology of religious fundamentalism that rationalizes mass murder.

The main long-term threat comes not merely from the organization but also from the environment that allows it to operate. Of course, extremist groups operate in strong states as well as weak ones, but in the former, there are institutional capacities to limit their movements and activities. Weak and failing states permit extremist groups and predatory elites to thrive largely with impunity.[8] The people who typically suffer most are not the enemies of such elites, but the populations trapped under their control.

Approximately 1 to 2 billion people in roughly one-third of the world's nations (about 60) are estimated to be living in fragile or failing states.[9] They display a variety of dysfunctions, including:

- lack of physical control of their territories
- loss of a monopoly on the use of force
- inability or unwillingness of the governments to protect their own citizens and provide basic social services
- insufficient political legitimacy for leaders to make authoritative decisions for the society as a whole
- inability to function fully and responsibly in the international system.[10]

Power vacuums in such states may be filled by militias, traffickers, criminal groups, drug cartels, and other illicit networks that erode state sovereignty from within.[11] Alternatively, predatory political elites who capture power can drive countries into institutional decay, eroding sovereignty from the top. Though they may have the trappings of "strong states," such states are merely "strongman states" that often collapse when the leadership is removed. In weak or strongman states, stability is a function of the life of the regime, not of the integrity of state institutions.

The international community tends to neglect such threats until they emerge as major crises or become what are usually described as

complex humanitarian emergencies. By that time, they may be too big or too complicated to resolve without military intervention.[12] Such neglect led to Afghanistan being taken over by the Taliban and, by extension, al Qaeda. Likewise, a short-term intervention such as Somalia in 1992–1993 to break a famine turned into combat operations that killed 18 Americans and 1,000 Somalis. It led to a rapid withdrawal of United Nations (UN) and U.S. troops and subsequent neglect of the country. Today, after 14 failed attempts at creating a new government, Somalia remains the quintessential failed state—"the most dangerous place in the world."[13] Among other things, its lawlessness has given rise to an invasion by a neighboring state, U.S. attacks on alleged al Qaeda–linked militants, and booming piracy in the Gulf of Aden, endangering one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world.

Pakistan's possible disintegration represents a scenario that risks nuclear weapons ending up in the hands of al Qaeda or the Taliban

Even more frightening is the prospect of a nuclear-armed state that fails. Pakistan's possible disintegration represents a scenario that risks nuclear weapons ending up in the hands of al Qaeda or the Taliban. North Korea's breakdown could likewise result in nuclear weapons being passed to yet-to-be-determined criminal or predatory warlords. Mexico has become the subject of a new debate over whether it, too, is becoming a failed state as a result of vicious attacks by drug cartels, including a record number of beheadings, kidnappings, and murders against state authorities. The label of "failed state" is probably inappropriate, as Mexico has stronger institutions than is usually recognized. But despite which states are, or are not, included in the category of weak and failing states, the United States is not adequately prepared to deal with these 21st-century threats, wherever they arise.

The frequency and complexity of such crises have gradually transformed MOOTW into a more realistic conception now generally termed *stability operations* or, more recently, *hybrid operations*.[14] The change of nomenclature signifies a dramatic shift in thinking, at least by the military, from an exclusively humanitarian to a more complicated humanitarian/security perspective.

Much has been learned in the interim. Building on the 2002 National Security Strategy, which asserted that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones,"[15] the 2008 U.S. Army Field Manual 3–07, *Stability Operations*, states that the "greatest threats to our national security will not come from emerging ambitious states but from nations unable or unwilling to meet the basic needs and aspirations of their people."[16] The idea that state-building rests on the security and well-being of civilian populations rather than the elimination of insurgents or terrorists is a milestone in military thinking, even though there were antecedents in earlier COIN doctrine. This has led to three other major assumptions:

- U.S. stability operations will last longer and claim more of the military's resources than conventional combat operations.
- Such crises will require a military role before, during, and after combat

operations across the full life cycle of the conflict.

- Success (defined as *sustainable security*, not military victory) will depend not only upon military prowess, but also upon "the capacity of the other elements of national power, leveraging the full potential of our interagency partners."[17]

Thus, what has evolved from the challenges of fragile states is a new hybrid form of combat that goes beyond traditional concepts of guerrilla warfare and COIN operations. Now civilian protection is not merely a tactic but a core military objective, and a "civilian surge" for state-building does not merely follow military operations in a postconflict stage, but constitutes a key part of hybrid operations that defines success.[18] Indeed, state-building might be an effective conflict prevention strategy with the potential to avert the need for military intervention in many states if it is begun early enough.

Dramatic changes in nonmilitary thinking are occurring as well. A booming industry has emerged in early warning, with new methodologies, technologies, watch lists, civilian-based alerts, and case studies. An equally intense flood of interest has emerged in postconflict state-building strategies, focusing on the ingredients of reconstruction, such as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of militias, humanitarian relief, elections, refugee and internally displaced person resettlement, economic growth, transitional justice, police and military training, civil service support, rule of law, and good governance. Private foundations have allocated funds to spur innovations in these areas, and governments worldwide are exploring how to foster interagency coordination, manage sequencing, measure progress, stimulate economic growth, develop civil society, and "win hearts and minds."

As laudable as this shift is, there remains a lag in government thinking. Because government responses to early warning (which often becomes late warning) are slow, they invariably tilt toward coercive measures based on hard power interventions or threatened sanctions, while state-building relies more heavily on civilian functions, based on soft power assets and incentives. Chester Crocker, a Georgetown University professor and former Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, commented:

> *This isn't about "hard power" versus "soft power." It's about "smart power" that connects the dots between our brains, muscles, and dollars to craft integrated responses to strategy. Without smart power we'll continue to be good at blowing things up, and to struggle with the more complicated mission of winning the peace.*[19]

A Surge or a Slump in Attention?

Some observers have questioned whether systematic early warning is really needed, maintaining that the problem is not a lack of awareness of looming disasters, but a lack of the political will to act. Others have questioned whether a state-building approach is the best path to peace, noting that other political remedies, perhaps at the local level, might be

much has been learned since Vietnam, but the global economic crisis has led some to question whether the degree of progress can be sustained

Moroccan soldier distributes water to Somalis during famine relief intervention, 1993

Department of Defense (LeVern J. McQueen)

preferable, and that state-building is sometimes harmful for peace, as it can cause a revival of violence. For instance, as the debate on Afghanistan illustrated, some argued that our goals should focus only on the terrorist dimension, because truly dedicated state-building would risk drawing us into a prolonged military and political engagement reminiscent of Vietnam. In fact, much has been learned since Vietnam, but the global economic crisis has led some to question whether the degree of progress can be sustained. Niall Ferguson, a history professor at Harvard, argues that the upheavals occurring in weak and failing states are likely to receive reduced resources and attention, despite mounting threats:

> *Most countries are looking inward, grappling with the domestic consequences of the economic crisis and paying little attention to the wider world crises. This is true even of the United States, which is now so preoccupied with its own economic problems that countering global upheaval looks like an expensive luxury.*[20]

On the other hand, while the economic downturn will undoubtedly present constraints, it can also be argued that leaders cannot afford to stand back from a world collapsing around them, especially when their interests are affected by hostile forces that arise in such environments. Moreover, while it may be true that war fatigue is eroding support for long military engagements, other forces are converging for a more active agenda on several issues.

The 2009 inauguration of Barack Obama as President has *raised expectations of American leadership* in this sphere. Obama's administration includes advocates of the agenda, such as Susan

Rice, now U.S. Ambassador to the UN, and Samantha Powers, now on the NSC, both of whom are known to support more robust responses to prevent genocide and mass atrocities and to ensure recovery in war-torn societies.[21] U.S. allies, the nongovernmental organization community, and foreign policy analysts are likewise lobbying for stronger actions to protect civilians in danger. Thus, while there remain substantial limitations (including restricted resources in an economic downturn, war fatigue within the U.S. public, and international distrust of U.S. intervention), expectations of earlier and smarter responses by the United States, especially to protect civilians at risk, are rising. Those expectations were reinforced by the U.S. support for the International Criminal Court indictment of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity, the continuation of sanctions against the regime of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, and engagement in Afghanistan, despite continuing controversies over the right tactics in each case.

There is *increased advocacy from civil society* for action, particularly to prevent genocide and mass atrocities.[22] Many advocacy groups are coalescing and cooperating, suggesting that civil society may be transitioning from country-specific advocacy toward a general antigenocide movement. Their efforts are mirrored in increased attention by leading think tanks, foundations, religious organizations, universities, and celebrities to antigenocide projects.[23] Thus, the constituency seems to be growing for more assertive U.S. action to prevent and mitigate crisis situations, separate from COIN or counterterrorism policies.

Operational military doctrine is changing. Guidelines for COIN operations have likewise changed, placing the protection of civilians, not body counts, as the core measure of progress. Projects funded by DOD to measure the effects of stability operations include metrics on social well-being, economic development, rule of law and governance, and security.[24] Military thinking in many other countries parallels this trend, with state-building becoming a core function of stability operations and development programs.

The *demand for peacekeeping troops* is growing. There were twice as many peacekeeping missions (with more than 5,000 troops) in 2008 than in 2002.[25] The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission in Afghanistan is requiring more combat troops and economic reconstruction teams. African Union missions in Somalia and Sudan are undermanned and underresourced. Humanitarian aid workers are being attacked and forced to pull out of conflict zones. When aid workers are withdrawn, the need for peacekeeping troops rises.

The UN has *created more mechanisms* to deal with peacekeeping, human rights, genocide, and norms of humanitarian intervention, including the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). Mechanisms include a Peacebuilding Commission, a revamped Human Rights Council to replace the Human Rights Commission, an Office of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General for the Prevention of Genocide, and the appointment of the Secretary-General's Special Advisor on these matters.[26] The R2P principle is based on the notion that the international community has a responsibility to protect civilians when a state is "manifestly failing" to shield its population from war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity.

The record has not been impressive in *averting mass casualties*. Ever since the

Rwanda genocide in 1994, frustration has mounted in civil society and governments around the world over the tepid responses to mass atrocities, violent conflict, and state decay in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zimbabwe, Burma, and Somalia, among others.[27] Nor has there been much progress in diminishing the risk of conflict in a range of other weak states, such as North Korea, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (until President Obama's speech in December 2009), where the dangers include state failure, regional stability, and, in the case of North Korea and Pakistan, nuclear nonproliferation.

Thus, the United States and the international community are confronting a unique paradox: a rising demand for more effective responses to instability precisely at a time when resources to accomplish this goal and domestic support are diminishing. Besides severe economic and political pressures, U.S. policymakers face the internal test of how to overcome haphazard, stovepiped, and fragmented responses that we have in current operations.

the United States and the international community are confronting a rising demand for more effective responses to instability precisely when resources and domestic support are diminishing

It is possible that both sets of problems may be addressed simultaneously, as policymakers struggle over how to do more with less. Economic constraints could drive the kind of efficiencies that have been needed all along. They could have the unintended consequence of concentrating our minds on how best to create integrated strategies that can more effectively link early warning and state-building into a strategic approach that reduces costs and makes sense to the American public.

Four Fundamental Imperatives

To create a new strategic approach, we must address four imperatives. These are not meant to comprise an exhaustive list of issues, or a prescription to solve all the complex problems we confront. Rather, they represent a tentative agenda of items that might be addressed successfully after we make structural changes in U.S. Government organizations, policies, and strategic security concepts, which could include, for example, the creation of a Directorate for Conflict Prevention and Sustainable Security in the NSC. The ultimate goal of any new structural changes would be the formation and implementation of an innovative and comprehensive government strategy for preventing and managing conflict in fragile states.

First, the conceptual understanding of the nature of conflict must be improved, particularly by identifying the precursors of violence. This will help to overcome the "Chicken Little fallacy"—that is, warning that the sky is falling but not offering any way to avert it. Most early warnings lack the ability to guide policymakers on specific steps to take to avert mass violence. The usual calls for "increased diplomatic pressure" or for humanitarian interventions by the UN or the United States fail to get to the heart of the matter (the actual drivers of violence). Even diplomatic interventions regarded as successful, such as former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's mission in Kenya following the outbreak of violence after the 2007 presidential elections, did not resolve the original grievances that sparked the fighting. Kenya remains tense and could backslide once more if the power-sharing agreement he negotiated unravels or the underlying governance issues are not addressed.

Second, stovepiping must be overcome. Each administration tends to reinvent the wheel. Since the end of the Cold War, various administrations have created new plans, mechanisms, and bureaucratic agencies to deal with the problems of complex emergencies and failing states. Within departments, bureaucratic reshuffling has led to a lack of coordination and redundancy. We need to pull all the relevant bureaus together in a way that is predictable, repeatable, and efficient so each agency or policymaker knows what to do when evidence of impending violence appears. What we want to avoid are ad hoc responses stitched together when killings break out, followed by cookie-cutter state-building responses once killings subside. On the other hand, we must be wary of proceeding on "one-size-fits-all" planning, as efforts must be tailored to the societies in question.

Third, the "discredited democracy mantra" of the Iraq War era, which eroded credibility in U.S. democracy promotion efforts, must be reframed. Democracy needs to be nurtured, but in different ways in different environments. And it is not the same thing as state-building, though the two are linked. In Iraq, democracy was pushed through military means over the objections of the UN. It was hastily advanced in the Palestinian territories through elections that resulted in a Hamas victory in Gaza. Elections—particularly if they are discredited by rigging—have also inspired conflict in Kenya, Afghanistan, Honduras, and Iran. One disgruntled Iraqi underscored this point after the January 2009 provincial elections, saying that he would rather live in an honest dictatorship than in a democracy based on fraud. In divided societies, other imperatives often are given precedence by the population, including justice, reconciliation, the rule of law, economic revival, education, anticorruption, and social well-being—in short, the functions of a working state. A better approach might be one that stresses the creation of the rule of law.

Finally, a structured decisionmaking process for rapid action when early warning alarms are sounded must be created. We must overcome unnecessary delays and diversions in responding to serious crises, working with all our national assets, relevant allies, and international organizations. Extensive work has been done to provide operational guidance in a peace or stability mission.[28] However, this guidance aims at postconflict phases of engagement, does not link up with early warning analyses, and fails to provide guidance on when to act. Decisionmakers need tools that show how serious the threat of violence is, whether mass atrocities are imminent, what kinds of actions might prevent escalation, what other nations and multinational organizations are doing, and what political/military plan would be put into effect if the decision to intervene is made.

major intellectual, operational, bureaucratic, and budgeting challenges must be addressed to forge an integrated U.S. strategy toward fragile states

Conclusion

Major intellectual, operational, bureaucratic, and budgeting challenges must be addressed to forge an integrated U.S. strategy toward fragile states. It will not be easy. In real dollar terms, there has been roughly a 30 percent cut in personnel and resources in U.S.

aid and diplomacy for international affairs since the fall of the Berlin Wall, while there has been a dramatic rise in military spending. For every dollar invested in diplomacy, the United States spends $16 on military programs, excluding the expenditures for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.[29] Even Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has called on Congress to increase funding for the State Department to correct this stark imbalance.

However, this is not just a problem of funding. *A conceptual foundation* is needed for a holistic approach to sustainable security, to develop the operational principles and procedures for a whole-of-society approach, and to create the institutional infrastructure for smart power applications. When that is done, the justification for requesting or allocating more resources is likely to have more success and be more understandable to the American public.

This broad-based, holistic initiative could come from the NSC. Three recent reports have come to this conclusion. *On the Brink: Weak States and U.S. National Security*, a 2004 report of the Commission on Weak States and U.S. National Security, recommended that the President "create an NSC directorate to reflect the high priority assigned to weak and failing states."[30] More recently, the National Defense University study, *Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations*, argued that the burden of interagency coordination and strategic level crisis action planning should be the responsibility of the NSC.[31] Similarly, a report by Refugees International maintained that "the current fledgling Interagency Management System is untested and, we believe, unlikely to prove successful in its current form. . . . Getting this right will require executive oversight above the [C]abinet level—at the National Security Council or, perhaps, within the Office of the Vice President."[32] As these authors point out, there has been enough drift on this vital issue. Leadership needs to come from the White House, and it needs to come soon. **PRISM**

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Notes

[1] The essay from which this passage is taken appears as a chapter in *International Responses to Precarious States: A Comparative Analysis of International Strategies with Recommendations for Action by European Institutions and European Member States*, ed. Stefani Weiss (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2007).

[2] Kristine Eck, Bethany Lacina, and Magnus Oberg, "Civil Conflict in the Contemporary World," in *Resources, Governance, and Civil Conflict*, ed. Magnus Oberg and Kaare Strom (New York: Routledge, 2008). The most recent findings on these issues can be found in J. Joseph Hewitt, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, and Ted Robert Gurr, *Peace and Conflict 2010: Executive Summary* (College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, September 25, 2009), available at <www.paradigmpublishers.com>. This study found that "over the past two years, the risks of instability and conflict have increased significantly in the regions of the world where those dangers were already high; [that] the number of conflict recurrences . . . has surged to unprecedented levels; [and that] even after excluding post-2003 Iraqi cases . . . total worldwide terrorist attacks have nearly tripled between 2000 and 2006." In

addition, the authors noted that "more than one billion people live in some 50 failed and failing states whose direct and spillover economic costs of $270 billion are more than three times annual global development aid of $80 billion."

[3] To take the notion of *state-building*, for example, this author identified at least 34 definitions and/or approaches used by scholars and practitioners. The term is often used interchangeably with *nationbuilding*, *institution-building*, *capacity-building*, *postconflict reconstruction*, *stabilization*, and *peace-building*. Some regard the process as being driven primarily by the host country, others by international or foreign actors. Some regard state-building as a subset of achieving wider security and development goals, while others feel that providing security and developmental assistance is a prerequisite for the higher goal of state-building. Some regard state-building as applying only to countries coming out of conflict (postconflict reconstruction), while others see it as helping countries avoid conflict (conflict prevention). Finally, some see it as a framework concept for the many different processes needed to reach long-term security (peace-building), while others see it as focused on constructing the formal institutions needed for minimal governing functions (institution-building).

[4] The term *postconflict* is often used incorrectly. Technically, it refers to the period after violent conflict has broken out, not the period when conflict has already died down. In fact, many postconflict operations take place in conflict zones. In those circumstances, state-building often becomes secondary to counterinsurgency or counterterrorism goals.

[5] The author is using the term *state-building* advisedly here to distinguish it from *nationbuilding*. The first term refers largely to building institutional capacities for good governance while the second refers to building identity with the nation as a whole among the people, which outsiders cannot do.

[6] One recent exception is the approach that Special Envoy Ambassador Richard Holbrooke has taken to Afghanistan. He has assembled a first-rate team containing representatives from all the major departments: State, Defense, Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Justice, Agriculture, Treasury, and USAID, as well as scholars and nongovernmental area experts. However, when Ambassador Holbrooke formally introduced the team at a Washington press conference on August 12, 2009, two aspects of his strategy remained vague: how his team would coordinate with the military effort on the ground, and how he would measure progress. When asked how he would know when the United States is successful in Afghanistan, he responded, "We will know it when we see it," seemingly ignoring President Barack Obama's commitment to identify clear benchmarks and milestones.

[7] For example, Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56, from the Clinton administration, attempted to lay out a political/military plan when a decision to intervene was made. Numerous other PDDs have been issued, usually without much regard to what was done in the past, and often irrespective of what other agencies are doing. U.S. Army Field Manuals have become some of the most authoritative and practical guidance for operational and tactical matters, but there is no single document that addresses the strategy of dealing with fragile states.

[8] Some analysts have written that states that are too anarchic, such as Somalia, are not good environments for terrorists, who need a certain measure of order to function. While that is true when fighting is occurring that the terrorists may not have control of, they may have a strong foothold once a friendly regime comes to power. This is what happened in Afghanistan and could happen in Somalia.

[9] See USAID, "US Foreign Aid: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century," white paper, Washington, DC, January 2004. USAID noted that one-third of the world's population, or 2 billion people, live

in unstable or fragile areas. The Failed States Index likewise identifies populations living in at-risk countries at roughly 2 billion. Paul Collier, focusing on poverty rather than weak or failing states, has called attention to the "one billion stuck at the bottom . . . living and dying in fourteenth-century conditions." Such poverty is a hallmark of a weak state that may be failing. See Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). According to the Institute for State Effectiveness, "Today between 40 and 60 states, home to close to two billion people, suffer from a 'sovereignty gap': they are not able to perform the functions expected of a state in the 21st century." See <www.effectivestates.org>.

[10] The literature reveals different estimates depending on various definitions used. This estimate is based on The Failed States Index, an annual assessment of the top 60 at-risk states published in *Foreign Policy*, available at <www.foreignpolicy.com>. For the analysis of all 177 states in the index, go to <www.fundforpeace.org>.

[11] Obviously, not all weak and failing states become safe havens or transit points for terrorists and other criminal networks. The task of the analyst and policymaker is to identify which ones are candidates for such exploitation. Nonetheless, the generic point remains valid: the lack of a well-established legitimate government authority and institutionalized good governance offers attractive opportunities for illicit or criminal behavior by governing elites or nonstate groups.

[12] The United States neglected Afghanistan after the Soviets were driven out, allowing the Taliban and al Qaeda to move in. Neglect has also been seen in other countries once immediate security threats are addressed, with state-building given too short a period to take root. This then creates a cycle of recurring conflict, with repeated outside interventions that never seem to create sustainable security.

[13] Jeffrey Gettleman, "The Most Dangerous Place in the World," *Foreign Policy* (March-April 2009), 62.

[14] Various terms are used to describe military operations in fragile states: *stability, security, transition, reconstruction, complex, irregular war,* and *hybrid war*. The United States uses these terms to refer to military operations that require collaboration among U.S. Departments of Defense and State, USAID, and other agencies as well as with nongovernmental organizations/international organizations and host national governments, and that present full-spectrum conflict challenges on the ground. The United Nations and other organizations refer to such operations as *peace operations* or *peace enforcement* under Chapter VII authority, in which U.S. troops may or may not be involved.

[15] *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), 1.

[16] Field Manual (FM) 3–07, *Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, October 2008), vi.

[17] FM 3–07, foreword. China, which is beginning to take on some modest peacekeeping responsibilities, describes such missions in its 2008 Defense White Paper as *military operations other than war*, using the same term that has now become dated in Western usage. See Cynthia A. Watson, "The Chinese Armed Forces and Non-Traditional Missions: A Growing Tool of Statecraft," *China Brief* 9, no. 4 (February 20, 2009).

[18] See Hans Binnendijk and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2009).

[19] James Kitfield, "Clinton Needs Diplomats and Nation Builders," *National Journal,* January 9, 2009, available at <http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090109_7025.php>.

[20] Niall Ferguson, "The Axis of Upheaval," *Foreign Policy* (March-April 2009), 58.

[21] The core group includes Susan Rice, Samantha Powers, Gayle Smith, Michèle Flournoy, Rick Barton, Carlos Pascual, and others, all of whom have written about the need for quicker and more effective responses or who are serving in the current administration or have served in previous administrations in capacities where they took such positions.

[22] There are numerous examples of think tanks and human rights organizations pressing for action. A Genocide Prevention Task Force headed by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and sponsored by the United States Institute for Peace (USIP), the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the American Academy of Diplomacy called for the United States to put the prevention of genocide high on the foreign policy agenda and for the Nation to take preventive action, along with international partners, in its first report. See "Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers," December 2008. A January 2009 USIP project on "Passing the Baton: Foreign Policy Challenges and Opportunities Facing the New Administration" convened four panel presentations focusing on early warning and state-building. Activist groups such as Enough, Save Darfur, and others have consistently called for strong actions against genocide in the Sudan, as have celebrities such as George Clooney and Mia Farrow. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's first trip abroad was criticized by human rights organizations for downplaying human rights issues during her visit to China, where she pursued a strategy of cooperation on issues such as climate change, rather than Tibet or political protestors within China.

[23] The Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Humanity United, the Ploughshares Fund, and the Compton Foundation are among the main donor organizations that have led the way in their peace and security and conflict prevention programs. A number of scholars have worked on these issues, and individual donors, such as Milton Leitenberg and Peter Ackerman, have likewise supported efforts to reduce mass atrocities and promote nonviolent means of settling disputes. The United States Holocaust Museum likewise has several programs that aim at averting genocide and mass atrocities, as does the USIP, a government funded organization.

[24] See, for example, Michael J. Dziedzic, "Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments," paper presented at the International Studies Association's 50th annual convention, New York, NY, February 15, 2009, available at <www.allacademic.com/meta/p312164_index.html>.

[25] Statistics from the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2008* (New York: Lynne Rienner, 2008). For an excellent review of peacekeeping trends, see Donald C.F. Daniel, Patricia Taft, and Sharon Wiharta, eds., *Peace Operations: Trends, Progress, and Prospects* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008).

[26] See "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: Report of the Secretary-General," A/63/677, January 12, 2009.

[27] An exception was NATO intervention into Kosovo, which was judged by the Goldstone Commission to have been an illegal (not supported by the United Nations) but nonetheless legitimate intervention.

[28] See, for example, the State Department's detailed list of stability-focused postconflict reconstruction Essential Tasks List developed by the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

[29] Kitfield.

[30] Jeremy M. Weinstein, John Edward Porter, and Stuart E. Eizenstat, *On the Brink: Weak States and U.S. National Security* (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2004), 32.

[31] James A. Schear and Leslie B. Curtin, "Complex Operations: Calibrating the State Department's Role," in Binnendijk and Cronin, 110.

[32] Ron Capps, *Drawing on the Full Strength of America: Seeking Greater Civilian Capacity in U.S. Foreign Affairs* (Washington, DC: Refugees International, 2009), ii, available at <www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/09_FullStrength.pdf>.

State Fragility as a Wicked Problem

BY KENNETH J. MENKHAUS

How we conceive of the condition of state fragility is critical to our ability to fashion effective strategies in response. To date, our efforts to define, categorize, measure, interpret, and predict state fragility have been at best partial successes. As with many important political concepts, state fragility is maddeningly difficult to pin down, all the more so because on the surface it appears to be so self-evident (and solvable) a syndrome. In reality, the notion of state fragility constitutes a complex cocktail of causes and effects, a syndrome that has proven largely impervious to quick, template-driven external solutions.

This article seeks to contribute to understanding the policy implications of state fragility by advancing three arguments. First, it argues for the utility of viewing state fragility through the lens of "wicked" and "tame" problems, a notion first developed by systems analysts. Second, it proposes that we categorize and rank-order fragile states not only by degree of fragility—though that remains an important task—but also by types of state fragility and degrees of threat they pose in order to help guide policymakers to appropriate responses. Third, it proposes closer integration of two analytic enterprises—the state-building literature and the study of political dynamics of weak states—that have generally constituted separate conversations. It argues that the most important analytic task is to determine the level of political capacity and will on the part of leaders in fragile states to address their government's fragility. Governments that are willing but not able to address their fragility constitute a tame problem amenable to conventional state-building assistance—though still a potential problem if that new-found capacity is devoted to abusive behavior against its own citizens. But governments that are unwilling to strengthen their own capacity—a seemingly counterintuitive claim but one substantiated by a growing body of research on "shadow states" and "warlord states"—are best understood as wicked problems, which will be impervious to conventional state-building assistance.

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Wicked Problems

Systems analyst Horst Rittel introduced the notion of wicked problems to describe complex planning and systems design challenges that, unlike tame problems, are not solvable.[1] The concept has subsequently been applied to other issue areas and may be an appropriate point of departure for our consideration of how to define state fragility and determine the sources of its "wickedness."

Wicked problems are said to possess the following traits:[2]

- There is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem—that is, we do not understand the problem until we have developed a solution.

every solution to a wicked problem is a "one-shot operation"—there is no opportunity to learn by trial and error

- Wicked problems have no stopping rule; since there is no definitive problem, there is no definitive "solution." Problemsolving stops when resources are exhausted and when a "good enough" outcome is reached.
- Solutions to wicked problems are not true or false, but better or worse, and difficult to measure objectively because they are judged in a social context in which different stakeholders have different values and goals.
- There is no immediate and no ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem, as every wicked problem is essentially unique.
- Every solution to a wicked problem is a "one-shot operation"—that is, there is no opportunity to learn by trial and error (as Rittel observes, "You cannot build a highway to see how it works").
- Every attempt to solve a wicked problem counts significantly. "You cannot learn about the problem without trying solutions," notes Jeff Conklin, "but every attempted solution is expensive and has lasting unintended consequences which spin off new wicked problems."[3] Put another way, the policymaker "has no right to be wrong" because of the high costs of failure.
- Every wicked problem is a symptom of another problem.

Contrast this inventory with a portrait of a tame problem, which possesses a well-defined and stable problem statement; has a well-defined stopping point, where the solution has been reached; has a solution that can be objectively evaluated as right or wrong; belongs to a class of similar problems that are all solved in a similar way; offers solutions that are easily tried and abandoned; and comes with a limited set of alternative solutions.[4]

Practitioners with experience in international state-building assistance programs recognize that our organizations tend to approach state fragility as a tame problem. And yet those of us who conduct research on fragile states know that they can be, in fact, wicked. How, then, can we inject a greater appreciation for wickedness into the state fragility debate without making our analyses completely indigestible for policymaking processes and programming related to state-building?

In the case of state fragility, the problem is not only wickedness, but also ubiquitousness.

The Fund for Peace Failed States Index 2009 lists 131 of 177 states as either critical, in danger, or borderline for state failure.[5] Only a handful of states in the global south—such as Argentina, Chile, Mauritius, Oman, and Uruguay—rank as "stable." Even when more restrictive definitions are employed, leading monitoring projects typically identify from 40 to 60 failed states.[6] This reminds us that state fragility is not some exceptional circumstance. It is also not new. Over 40 years ago, Samuel Huntington opened his classic *Political Order in Changing Societies* with this thesis:

> *The most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government. The differences between democracy and dictatorship are less than the differences between those countries whose politics embodies consensus, community, legitimacy, organization, effectiveness, stability, and those countries whose politics is deficient in these qualities.*[7]

State weakness has been a problem for as long as the state itself has been evolving into a universal form of political organization. It increased with the dramatic expansion of newly independent states during the wave of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s.[8] Indeed, a compelling case can be made that it is the modern Weberian state that is the exception.[9] Conditions of state fragility have worsened in the past two decades. Yet what is new is not fragility but rather international concern over the security threat posed by failed and fragile states, especially since 9/11.

Organizing Thinking: Typologies of Fragile States

There are a number of typologies and indices to help us conceptualize and in some instances rank-order state fragility. Each has its strengths and weaknesses.

Typology by Degree of Failure

The most common approach to conceiving state fragility has been to categorize states according to their degree of fragility or failure. When state fragility was first recognized as a problem of global consequence in the early 1980s, both categorization and measurement were rudimentary. Observers eventually referred to *weak states*, *juridical sovereignty*, *failed states*, *shadow states*, and *collapsed states* to distinguish between these and more effective governments, but there were no systematic means of measuring the syndrome.

state weakness has been a problem for as long as the state itself has been evolving into a universal form of political organization

Efforts to understand state failure more systematically—in the hope of predicting and possibly preventing it—increased with the number and cost of international peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Offices in the United Nations (UN), defense and diplomatic ministries of member states, humanitarian aid agencies, and dozens of think tanks featured world maps populated with color-coded thumbtacks to track at-risk countries requiring close monitoring and perhaps contingency planning. Prevention of state collapse and armed conflict assumed an important role in international priorities, both as a matter of principle (the "never again" promise in the aftermath of the Rwanda genocide) and a matter of good financial stewardship, given the huge costs of state revival and peacekeeping. This heightened concern

about fragile and failed states and the threats they posed led to more rigorous empirical studies to identify the structural and precipitating causes of state failure, as well as more ambitious efforts to establish "early warning systems" (such as International Crisis Group's Crisis Watch) to monitor and report on specific countries of concern.[10]

The result is an abundance of much richer information and analysis on fragile states. One early example was the State Failure Task Force (since 2001 known as the Political Instability Task Force, or PITF) established in 1994 to assess and explain the vulnerability of states to instability and failure.[11] It has been followed by a number of other projects to measure, compare, and rank aspects of state failure, vulnerability, and performance, including the World Bank Governance Matters Project,[12] the aforementioned Fund for Peace Failed States Index, the Brookings Institution's Index of State Weakness,[13] and the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance.[14] Many other projects are attempting to define and measure specific aspects of governance, such as Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.[15] One recent survey describes the number of these types of governance performance indices as "in the hundreds."[16]

This is not the place to engage in a comparative assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of these projects, or to consider the methodological and epistemological challenges of measuring aspects of governance and state stability; there is a small industry already devoted to this. For our purposes, it is enough to make the following observations:

- Current research defining and measuring aspects of state performance and state failure constitutes an enormous improvement over the past and, whatever its imperfections, is a valuable tool for policymakers.
- The search for the most parsimonious set of governance indicators that matter most in measuring fragility remains a work in progress, though recent research has honed in on a few particularly salient factors. For the moment, most monitoring projects err on the side of comprehensiveness of indicators, producing lengthy lists of variables that can make it difficult for policymakers to identify priority issue areas.
- There is broad consensus on the general traits of state fragility and failure—the *syndrome*—if not on the specifics of how to measure them and weigh them for relative importance. These include weak capacity to provide public security, rule of law, and basic social services; low levels of democracy and civil liberties; delegitimization and criminalization of the state; rising factionalism; poor, socially uneven, and declining economic performance; inability to manage political conflict; extensive interference by external actors; and, in some but not all cases, outbreaks of armed insurgencies.
- There is also significant similarity of findings for countries earning "warning" ratings across measurement projects focusing on state fragility, quality of governance, and conflict vulnerability. Put another way, the same set of countries tends to appear at the bottom of every ranking related to fragility, poor governance, and conflict

vulnerability despite different methodologies and measurements.

- State fragility is heavily concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa; 22 of the 28 weakest governments on the Brookings Institution's Index of State Weakness are African.
- Though the same countries tend to be flagged as fragile or failed states in every monitoring system, they vary considerably across specific indicators. Some fragile states, such as Zimbabwe, possess devastatingly poor scores across most indicators yet manage to avoid armed conflict; others, such as Chad and Iraq, enjoy a stronger overall economic performance profile yet score poorly in almost every other indicator.

Despite the advances these projects represent, a number of concerns and criticisms remain. One concern is that deterioration of fragile states—either into state failure or armed conflict or both—has remained difficult to predict. Many states are vulnerable, the data show, but only some actually slip into serious levels of instability. Recent research suggests that "highly factionalized partial democracies" are most susceptible,[17] but precipitating causes are highly situational and context specific. A second concern is that the main findings of this body of research—that many to most states are at risk—may well be true but provide no means of ordering priorities for policymakers and diplomats. The findings are to some extent overwhelming given the enormity of the problem and the limited resources available to respond. In sum, these tools need to be supplemented with a means of ordering fragile states by the degree of strategic, political, or humanitarian impact they would have were they to fail—an alternative ordering discussed below.

Typology by Type of State Failure

"All stable nations resemble one another; each unstable nation is unstable in its own way," note Jack Goldstone and others in their seminal PITF study of 2005.[18] Variations in the type of state fragility and failure are important, as they pose different threats both to their own people and to the international community. In the inventory below, these proposed types of state failure are not mutually exclusive—states can exhibit several of these features in a variety of combinations. This list is by no means exhaustive but is meant only as a point of departure for discussion. Importantly, a number of categories draw on political research that points to a broader observation often overlooked in state-building initiatives—that the government can sometimes be an active part of the crisis and that state fragility may be seen by key local leaders as an acceptable or even optimal solution, not a problem to be solved.

Complete or Near-complete State Collapse. Cases of complete state collapse are rare and to date have usually been temporary. Somalia stands as the most dramatic and prolonged example, having gone without a functioning central government since 1991; Lebanon, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan are examples of shorter term state collapse. Near-complete cases of state collapse—"paper governments" that enjoy a legal existence as a

state fragility may be seen by key local leaders as an acceptable or even optimal solution, not a problem to be solved

sovereign authority but that control only a portion of the capital city and are entirely dysfunctional as an administration—are a variation on this theme.[19] Haiti has at times met this definition; the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia today does as well.

Hinterland Failure. Some weak governments exercise adequate control over their capital and other valuable or strategic areas of the country but lack either the will or the capacity to project their authority into peripheral parts of the country. This can often mean a third or more of the countryside is beyond the de facto control of the government, which is present in the lives of those citizens only as a "garrison state" occasionally patrolling remote districts. Responsibility for day-to-day governance typically falls on the local communities, often relying on customary law or other hybrid governance arrangements. In some cases, peripheral zones come under the control of criminal or insurgency elements; the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, which has at times controlled a fifth of the territory of that country, is a case in point. Because peripheries are often in border areas, this increases problems of cross-border smuggling and spillover violence. In some cases, states are simply too weak to project authority into their remote peripheries, but this is often due to lack of political will. As Jeff Herbst has persuasively argued, it is economically rational for state authorities, who enjoy juridical sovereignty over territory within their borders whether or not they "earn it" through governing, to avoid the high cost of projecting the state into thinly populated, expansive, uneconomic regions in their peripheries.[20] Only when those burning peripheries create security problems or cause political embarrassment to the government—or when economic assets such as oil are discovered—does this calculation change and the government begin to exercise authority in its peripheries. Kenya's recent efforts to improve its governance and security presence in its remote northern and northeastern border areas have been driven in part by the embarrassment caused by deadly communal violence there and rising security threats posed by spillover from Somalia.

literature on "new wars" suggests that state complicity in the perpetuation of war in pursuit of parochial economic interests is not rare

Nocturnal Anarchy. Some fragile states manage to impose a modicum of law and order during the day but are beset by serious criminal violence at night, at which point citizens must rely on their own systems of protection. The police either are unable to stop better armed criminals or are part of the criminality. The expansive slums of third world cities are, in this setting, beyond the reach of the state. Robert Kaplan's article "The Coming Anarchy" in 1994 vividly depicted this type of state failure, pointing to the slums of West Africa's cities as examples.[21]

Deinstitutionalized State. Governments intentionally gutted of institutional capacity to govern by the top leadership constitute another form of failed or fragile state. As William Reno has argued, leaders whose principal preoccupation is regime survival can come to view a well-functioning ministry as a potential power base for a rival, and hence go to considerable lengths to undermine and weaken governmental departments and branches.[22] The judiciary is often singled out in this regard, and as a result is often far from autonomous and competent in fragile states.

State within a State. In many instances, states fail because autonomous political and security forces operate within the state structure and become a law unto themselves. This is most common with security forces, which can become deeply involved in lucrative criminal activities and predatory activities against parts or all of the civilian population.

Warlord or Criminal State. When a major criminal operation or armed conflict is waged for economic gain and is sanctioned at the highest levels of the government, the state itself can be said to be a criminal or warlord state.[23] Literature on "new wars" suggests that state complicity in the perpetuation of war in pursuit of parochial economic interests feeding off of plunder and resource diversion is not rare.[24] One of the most egregious examples of such a warlord state was Liberia under Charles Taylor, who was eventually arrested for war crimes committed in Sierra Leone.

Delegitimized State. Some governments earn the status of fragile state by losing or failing to earn legitimacy among most or all of the population. This most commonly results from failure to provide basic security and core social services expected by the people (that is, "performance legitimacy"), but can also be due to patently fixed elections, failure to hold elections, gross corruption, and high levels of repression and human rights abuse. Once legitimacy is lost, the social contract that ties people to the state is eroded, and the state risks losing the allegiance of its citizens to other political actors.[25] Loss of legitimacy does not automatically produce armed insurgencies (as Zimbabwe demonstrates) or even protests. Faced with the choice of "loyalty, exit, or voice," some may choose "exit" and simply recede from the grip of the indifferent state, creating alternative local systems of governance and security.[26]

Financially Collapsed State. The root of some instances of state fragility is financial weakness. There are many variations on this theme:

- states that suffer catastrophic external economic shocks depriving them of much of their tax revenue base (including the current economic recession)
- states that are systematically looted by kleptocratic leaders
- states that have been progressively weakened over time by onerous debt servicing
- states that are weakened in their ability to provide basic services by structural adjustment conditionality
- states that were dependent on foreign aid that then was reduced or suspended.

Some of these conditions have involved deeply impoverished states that have never been viable without extensive external support. Even a modest state structure in such instances involves levels of funding that local economies cannot shoulder. These are not so much fragile states as castles built on sand, vulnerable to rapid collapse if their foreign aid is interrupted. The question of economic viability of some of the poorest fragile states is a sensitive but increasingly unavoidable topic.

Besieged State. Fragile and failed states are often confronted by one or more armed insurgencies, which can either be the result of other aspects of state fragility or the main cause of that condition. Some observers presume that armed insurgency is a defining feature of a failed state while others do not.[27] What is uncontested is that state failure correlates closely with the occurrence of armed conflict. An important but sometimes overlooked aspect of armed violence in fragile states is the condition of chronic

insecurity in which armed conflict blurs with armed criminality, and uncontrolled militias become indistinguishable from criminal gangs. This condition of "not war not peace" can be invisible to outsiders, who focus on warfare between insurgencies and the state; but for civilian populations—the main victims of these new wars—the condition is very real.

Mediated State. Fragile states "willing but not able" to govern sometimes reach negotiated understandings with existing nonstate authorities at the local level in what has been called a hybrid or mediated state arrangement.[28] These arrangements can be formal—as with South Sudan's constitutional delegation of local level authority to *Bomas*, or local chieftain councils—but are more often informal partnerships, as in northern Kenya between the government and local peace and development committees composed of civic and traditional figures.[29] This "outsourcing" of key sovereign functions of the state to nonstate actors can be problematic, raising questions of constitutional authority, due process, accountability, and basic human rights. But it can also be an effective means of tapping into existing, legitimate, local authority, at least as a temporary measure while a fragile state is being strengthened. This practice is not to be confused with colonial policies of "indirect rule" in that the fragile state is *negotiating*, not imposing, an arrangement with local authorities. This type of fragile state is far more common than is often appreciated and has even been considered an option by U.S. Government officials in Afghanistan as a means of tapping into customary law to indirectly extend the state's weak judicial system into the countryside.[30]

transitional governments are arguably an entirely new category of state that the field of comparative politics is only slowly coming to treat as such

Transitional States. Fragile states can be vulnerable to armed conflict or afflicted by active armed conflict or postconflict. In the latter case, most contemporary civil wars have been ended via negotiated settlement, typically framed by a powersharing agreement and the establishment of a transitional government. This new phenomenon has produced several dozen transitional governments in the past 20 years. Transitional governments are a particular type of political system, arguably an entirely new category of state that the field of comparative politics is only slowly coming to treat as such.[31] Transitional states are by definition fragile, both in capacity and ability to maintain a unity coalition. They are also burdened with executing some of the most politically charged decisions imaginable—"key transitional tasks" in the literature. The crafting of a constitution, establishment of regional or district borders, resolution of outstanding conflicts, and holding of elections are monumental tasks that can act as dry kindling for renewed outbreak of violence and renewed state failure. Paul Collier's finding that "the single greatest predictor of a civil war is a previous civil war" is especially relevant for transitional governments.[32]

Typology by Threat Potential

The generic threats posed by weak and failed states are well known and have been repeated in innumerable think tank reports and government strategy documents. But the famous observation in the 2002 U.S. National Security Strategy that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones" does not help us order the

magnitude of different threats posed by 50 or more fragile states.[33]

Each of these types of state fragility poses a different kind of threat to its own population, regional neighbors, and the world. Breaking fragile states into categories helps us rank them not by their degree of fragility but by the impact their fragility has on U.S. interests and the impact their deterioration would have. This exercise is done on the assumption that U.S. resources are limited and that, given the large number of fragile states, some degree of "triage" is unavoidable. But it is also done in the knowledge that while the strategic impact of a state's failure can be measured with some degree of confidence, the political impact of a failed state cannot. We need only look back 20 years to see that imploding states that at the time appeared to have little strategic consequence for the United States and the world—Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, East Timor, and Darfur, Sudan, to name a few—took on political lives of their own, consuming far more time and treasure than anyone would have predicted. The United States has to consider the domestic political costs of state failure as well as strategic costs. Unfortunately, recent history has demonstrated that when the stakes are political, not strategic, the policy response is likely driven by political rather than strategic calculations. In that instance, policies appearing to be "doing something" about a crisis are often privileged over actually solving it.

The inventory below summarizes the most commonly cited threats or costs emanating from failed states, beginning with terrorist threats they may pose and concluding with the wide range of other threats. Their actual prioritization is highly context-specific.

Takeover by a Radical Movement of a Failed State with Nuclear Weapons or Critical Economic Assets. A small number of fragile states are simultaneously nuclear powers or play a sensitive role in the global economy. If such a state were to fall to a radical movement that has a nihilistic or other ideological conviction that could justify use of nuclear weapons or suspension of the country's economic role, the results could be catastrophic. This worst-case scenario has been a matter of concern with regard to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, among others.

Terrorist Base. Fear that failed states will provide al Qaeda and other terrorist groups with "ungoverned space" to exploit as a base has been a bedrock concern since 9/11. To date, al Qaeda has used parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan as its base. Both are failed but not entirely collapsed states. The group's only other base was Sudan from 1991 to 1996, where it was the guest of the government. Al Qaeda cells operate in a wide range of countries, from Kenya to Yemen to the Philippines to Indonesia. Available evidence suggests that terrorist groups prefer to locate not in completely collapsed states such as Somalia, which are nonpermissive environments for all outside actors, but rather in weak states with governments that have corrupt and/or easily penetrated security sector forces and leaders who lack the capacity or will to launch a crackdown. In some instances weak, rogue regimes actively collude with the terrorist group (such as Sudan in 1991–1996).

Terrorist Safe Haven. A related concern is use of failed states as safe havens, where al Qaeda and other terrorists can hide undetected. They are not looking to exploit a failed state as a base of operations in this instance but only to stay off the radar screen. Any state with weak police capacity and low levels of community policing—typically where governments have low legitimacy—can be used for this purpose. Large multiethnic cities with high numbers of foreign travelers and residents and expansive

slums are attractive sites. Zones of complete state collapse are only viable as safe havens if a strong and reliable local ally is able to offer protection, as is currently the case with the radical insurgency Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

Terrorist Target. Fragile states with weak policing capacity but a rich collection of soft targets—international hotels, embassies, shopping malls, and so forth—constitute a particularly worrisome subcategory. Also at risk are states with critical economic assets such as oil refineries, pipelines, or seaports that if damaged or destroyed would have a major impact on the world economy.

Terrorist Financing. Weak states featuring high levels of corruption, weak policing, low capacity for monitoring business activities and trade, and valuable commercial opportunities (ranging from drug trafficking to diamond smuggling to more mundane businesses) are ideal for terrorist profit-generating, particularly if informal money transfer systems and money laundering opportunities exist.

Terrorist Recruiting. The record of recruitment into al Qaeda demonstrates that fragile states' poverty and unemployment are not a catalyst for terrorist recruitment per se. The movement generally does better attracting disaffected and radicalized middle class students and professionals. Instead, it is predatory or repressive police states that have deeply alienated groups that are prime targets. Pakistan, Egypt, and Morocco are fragile states that have been rich recruiting grounds. Fragile states with weak security forces, in which ethnic or religious communities feel shut out from political life and treated as second-class citizens, have also been solid recruiting grounds.

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Transitional Criminal Base. The conditions that are conducive for terrorist financing are attractive for transnational criminal elements, which thrive where they can pay off or infiltrate weak, corrupt governments and exploit poorly patrolled coastlines. Guinea-Bissau is a frequently cited example of a "narco-state" in which profits from drug smuggling from Latin America to Europe dwarf government tax revenues and in which top government officials are implicated.

Spillover Threats. Spillover of a plethora of crises from failed states into vulnerable neighbors became a concern as early as 1991 when Liberia's collapse and warlordism led directly to the catastrophic failure of the state in Sierra Leone. The spillover of political violence from the genocide in Rwanda into the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1998 is unquestionably the most costly example if measured in human lives; and spillover of armed conflict and instability from Darfur into Central African Republic and Chad is the most recent example. All of these cases involve clusters of adjacent weak states and poorly controlled border areas. They reinforce fears that individual cases of state failure can quickly become regional crises and highlight the fact that fragile states have much less resilience to cope with troubles coming across their borders.

Humanitarian Crisis. The humanitarian costs of state failure, especially when accompanied by armed conflict and displacement, are well known. These costs are borne mainly by the local population and in locations such as the Congo, Sudan, and Rwanda have reached horrific levels. In terms of impact on U.S. interests, every administration since George H.W.

Bush has found itself under profound political pressure to take action that is politically risky and time-consuming to respond to humanitarian crises, from Operation *Provide Comfort* in northern Iraq in 1991 to the ongoing crisis in Darfur. When public pressure to do something is strong and the subsequent humanitarian interventions go wrong—the most dramatic example being the Somalia intervention in 1993—the political costs can be astronomical.

Refugee Flows. Fragile states that fall into protracted armed conflict almost always produce large refugee flows that pose considerable burdens on neighboring states and that can become onerous political problems for third countries (mainly in the West) where refugees subsequently resettle in large numbers, legally or illegally. The political backlash against the influx of refugee/immigrant communities in some European countries has become a significant driver of European policy toward failed states.

Health Threats. Fragile states that have little or no capacity to operate public health systems and that possess large numbers of displaced persons crowded into unsanitary camps are petri dishes for the spread of virulent new strains of diseases that can go undetected until they spread to uncontrollable levels. The Ebola virus scares emanating out of northern Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were a case in point.

Environmental Threats. Fragile states with high levels of corruption and/or a weak capacity to police their territories and coasts are vulnerable to toxic dumping, as recent stories from the Ivory Coast have demonstrated. Weak states also lack the ability to regulate harvesting of valuable rainforests and poaching of endangered species.

Piracy Threats. Piracy thrives off the coast of weak and/or corrupt states that lack the capacity or will to stop pirates. The epidemic of piracy off the lawless coast of Somalia since 2005 is the most dramatic example; it has imposed costs on shipping companies and their crews and has required the deployment of international naval patrols from two dozen countries.

Costs of Peacekeeping Operations. Failed states requiring international peacekeeping forces are financially costly. The total annual UN peacekeeping budget for 2008–2009 reached $7.1 billion. This is only a tiny fraction of total military expenditures worldwide, but is sometimes cited by UN member states as a concern.

the most permissive environment for external state-building occurs when a government is willing but not able to address problems associated with its own fragility

Typology by State Willingness and Capacity

Identifying at-risk fragile states is a critical first step, classifying them by type of fragile state situation is a second, and assessing the type of threat they pose is a third. The next step is shaping strategies tailored to specific contexts. Here the critical distinction must be made between the willingness and capacity of fragile states to address their own weakness and the threats emanating from that weakness. This task draws on the findings of a growing body of academic research on war economies and the political economy of weak, deinstitutionalized states.

Willing but Not Able. The most permissive environment for external state-building occurs when a government is willing but not able to address problems associated with its own fragility. Seen through the prism of the wicked

United Nations Stabilization Mission members work in Haiti, which has periodically met definition of state in near-complete collapse

UN (Logan Abassi)

problem literature, a fragile state that has leaders willing but not able to fix the state's weakness comes close to being a tame, solvable problem. In this case, capacity-building measures—especially those designed to strengthen the military, police, civil service, judicial system, and executive branch leadership—are both appropriate and likely to bear fruit.

But it is critical in that instance to understand accurately the source of the government's fragility. Capacity-building aid to a "willing but not able" government that possesses an extremely weak economy risks reinforcing rather than resolving its fragility, if in the process a state structure is built that cannot be sustained except through greater dependence on foreign assistance. It is also imperative to have a clear answer to the question, "Willing *to do what*?" If the answer is to provide more effective public security, rule of law, and basic services to its citizens, then straightforward capacity-building programs are appropriate. If the government is willing to use improved capacity to monitor and prevent criminal and terrorist activities within its borders, but also intends to put that greater security capacity to use against its domestic rivals, then capacity-building must be tempered with strengthening checks and balances and democratic constraints on the government.

Calls to strengthen the capacity of fragile states must always be attuned to the dual use of security sector power. A state with a more robust security sector that uses it against its internal rivals has not been strengthened; it has simply been changed from one type of fragile state to another. This is at the heart of the tension between democratization programs and capacity-building programs in fragile states. The two need not be at odds and ideally are complementary, but in practice balancing them is not easy.

Able but Unwilling. Leaders of fragile states who are able but not willing to address their fragility are more of a wicked problem. There are many variations on this theme. Some governments possess impressive levels of income (typically new oil revenues, as in Equatorial Guinea) that could be used to extend government services and improve public security, but political elites are focused solely on pocketing those revenues.

In other cases, governments possess impressive levels of administrative and security sector capacity despite extreme poverty but use that capacity to repress the population, in the process rendering the country more, not less, susceptible to political instability. Eritrea is one of many examples. These cases require greater levels of aid designed to promote accountability and democracy but are the very sites where governments are least likely to welcome such assistance. Simply providing aid to improve capacity in this type of state is likely only to exacerbate the source of its fragility, and risks making donors complicit in human rights abuses in the process.

A third variation of this type of government is the predatory or warlord state, which is not only repressive but actively complicit in fomenting armed conflict among and exploitation of its citizens. Sudan's indicted leadership is an example.

Unable and Unwilling. Governments that are both very weak and venal are a third category. These are governments that focus almost exclusively on regime survival and that, though poor, are content to feed off of the still-impressive financial benefits accruing to those who claim juridical control of a state, however failed it may be. The costs of state-building are too high, and the risks too great. By contrast, state failure is a condition that the leadership can live with and knows best. Indeed, to the extent that state failure is a bigger concern to outsiders than to the government, it can use its condition of failure as a lure for state-building assistance, which it then pockets for private gain. The recent acquisition by the Somali Transitional Federal Government of tens of millions of dollars in weapons and ammunition from the United States, much of which was subsequently sold on the open market (presumably making its way to Al-Shabaab), is illustrative and reminds us that for some governments, state failure is not a problem to be solved but a condition to be exploited.

Both types of "unwilling" fragile government pose wicked problems for external actors, and can easily lead to interventions that violate the "do no harm" precept. For instance, strategies seeking to build on "clusters of competence" within a fragile state may actually result in the political targeting of the targeted group if the regime in question pursues its own goals of political survivalism via a policy of deinstitutionalization as William Reno describes in *Warlord Politics and African States*. What the outside world sees as a potential building block for state-building—a cluster of competence—the regime sees as a potential rival and threat, and quickly moves to excise it from the state.

what the outside world sees as a potential building block for state-building the regime sees as a potential rival

Conceiving of fragile states as either tame or wicked problems, based on close political analysis of the interests of the elites in control of the state, has several virtues. First, it reminds us to approach the willingness and capacity of the leadership of weak states as an

empirical question to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, not as an assumption on which to base template-driven state-building policy. This observation forms part of a broader plea, articulated most recently by Mats Berdal, that context is critical and must be better understood by external actors seeking to promote state-building or postconflict assistance.[34] Second, by highlighting the distinction between tame and wicked state-building challenges, more appropriate policies can be crafted that stand a better chance of success. Put more directly, state-building policies designed for tame cases of state failure but applied in wicked cases are destined to fail and possibly to make things worse. Basing policies on early assessment of the wickedness of a state failure may help prevent this.

Analytically, the notion of state-building as a wicked problem is a stark reminder that our presumption that state failure is a crisis to be solved may not be shared by key local actors. Just as we have come to learn that semi-democratization and protracted conflict are conditions that local elites may actively seek to promote and perpetuate, so too can the problem of state failure constitute a desired—or at least a "good enough"—outcome for some leaders of failed states. This may be an increasingly commonplace observation among political analysts, but it is not often incorporated into state-building templates, which almost always operate on the assumption that the leaders of failed states are committed to building the capacity of their governments.

If this line of reasoning about state fragility has merit, it opens the door to a range of questions requiring further research. The first is analytic. How does one measure and assess levels of political willingness to address state failure? Must lack of political will to address state failure be viewed as an either-or condition (mirrored in the dichotomy of tame versus wicked problems), or is it in fact a much more complex syndrome of mixed motives on the part of internally divided actors within the government?

The second is prescriptive. It is easy to recommend not applying standard state-building programs in instances where state failure is a wicked problem. But what *can* be done in cases where state failure is wicked rather than tame? What can the international community do when a state's condition of failure poses serious threats to its own population and to the wider world, but its leadership is indifferent or complicit? The international community has made significant advances on a related question—the rights and responsibilities of external actors when governments are unwilling to protect their own citizens from genocide, ethnic cleansing, or gross violations of human rights. The extensive debate and discussions that surrounded the formulation of the "responsibility to protect" doctrine may be required to generate useful policy recommendations for managing instances of "willful state failure." For the moment, our toolbox for responding to wicked state failure is limited. We can cajole, encourage, and shame the leaders in question; attempt to reshape the interests of political elites through the usual array of carrots and sticks; work around them by searching for "clusters of competence" on which to build within the weak government; or, as has occurred in several places, work to replace incorrigible leaders in the hope that the replacement leadership will exhibit a greater commitment to state-building. These tools have to date had limited success, from Congo to Somalia to Afghanistan. New tools and new doctrine to deal with the specific problem of willful state failure is an important, politically sensitive, and essential task if the toughest, most wicked cases of state failure are to be addressed. **PRISM**

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Notes

[1] Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4 (1973), 155–159.

[2] A number of publications have sought to define and summarize wicked problems, building on Rittel's original idea. This is an amalgam of several sources.

[3] Jeff Conklin, *Dialogue Mapping: Building Shared Understanding of Wicked Problems* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2005), 7.

[4] Ibid., 9.

[5] See Fund for Peace at <www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=391&Itemid=549>; for an interactive map of these data, see *Foreign Policy* at <www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/06/22/2009_failed_states_index_interactive_map_and_rankings>.

[6] Stewart Patrick, "U.S. Policy Towards Fragile States: An Integrated Approach to Security and Development," in *The White House and the World*, ed. Nancy Birdsall (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2008), 329, available at <www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/16560>.

[7] Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 1.

[8] It is worth noting, however, that the "newness" of states correlates only partially with state fragility. Many of the original 51 member states of the United Nations in 1945 rank among the most fragile states in the world; some have broken up. The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia no longer exist; Ethiopia, Czechoslovakia, and India were among those that lost a portion of territory to secessionists; and Haiti, Lebanon, Colombia, El Salvador, Iraq, Honduras, and Guatemala are among the many original member states that at some point have suffered prolonged crises of internal war and state failure.

[9] Alex de Waal, "Protecting Civilians in Fragile States," presentation to Oxfam-Novib, The Hague, September 21, 2009.

[10] Crisis Group's Crisis Watch is available at <www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm>.

[11] Political Instability Task Force, George Mason University, available at <http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/index.htm>.

[12] World Bank, "Governance Matters, Worldwide Governance Indicators," available at <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>.

[13] Brookings Institution, "Index of State Weakness," available at <www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/02_weak_states_index.aspx>.

[14] Mo Ibrahim Foundation, "Index of African Governance," available at <www.moibrahimfoundation.org/en/section/the-ibrahim-index>.

[15] Transparency International, "Corruption Perceptions Index," available at <www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi>.

[16] Christiane Arndt and Charles Oman, "Uses and Abuses of Governance Indicators," Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Center, 2006. Another useful review of different

indices of state fragility is the German Development Institute (DIE) and UN Development Programme, "Users' Guide on Measuring Fragility" (Bonn: DIE, 2009).

[17] Jack A. Goldstone et al., "A Global Forecasting Model of Political Instability," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, September 1–4, 2005.

[18] Ibid., 11.

[19] Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators," in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 9–10.

[20] Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[21] Robert D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *The Atlantic* (February 1994).

[22] William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

[23] Jean-Francois Bayart, Stephen Ellis, and Beatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey Press, 1997).

[24] Mats Berdal and David Malone, eds., *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

[25] Rotberg, 9.

[26] Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Loyalty, and Voice: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[27] Rotberg, for instance, argues that "failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions. . . . It is not the absolute intensity of violence that identifies a failed state. Rather it is the enduring character of that violence." See "The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States," in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 5. But most of the systems monitoring state fragility and weakness rank Zimbabwe at or near the top of the list of failed states (for 2009) despite the fact that it suffers from no armed insurgency.

[28] Louise Andersen, Bjørn Møller, and Finn Stepputat, eds., *Fragile States and Insecure People? Violence, Security, and Statehood in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave, 2007).

[29] Kenneth J. Menkhaus, "The Rise of a Mediated State in Northern Kenya: The Wajir Story and Its Implications for Statebuilding," *Afrika Focus* [Ghent] 21, no. 2 (2008), 23–38.

[30] Thomas Barfield, Neamat Nojumi, and J. Alexander Thier, "The Clash of Two Goods: State and Non-State Dispute Resolution in Afghanistan," U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington, DC, 2006.

[31] Karen Guttieri and Jessica Piombo, eds., *Transitional Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2007).

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

[33] *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), part I, "Overview of America's International Strategy," available at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/nss1.html>.

[34] Mats Berdal, *Building Peace after War*, Adelphi Paper no. 407 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009), 41.

UN (Christopher Herwig)

Rebel armies attempted to gain control of capital city of Monrovia during civil war

Lessons from Liberia's Success

Thoughts on Leadership, the Process of Peace, Security, and Justice

BY JOHN W. BLANEY

The ending in 2003 of the 14-year civil war in Liberia and the subsequent progress made there is a 21st-century success story not only for Liberians, but also for Africa, the United Nations (UN), the United States, and many others. Over 250,000 people lost their lives during this struggle, with great suffering endured elsewhere in West Africa as well. Economically and socially, the country of Liberia, historically long renowned as sub-Saharan Africa's shining example, was decimated by this conflict and by rampant mismanagement and corruption. Today, Liberia still has serious problems, but under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf,

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impressive progress continues. There is stability, basic living standards are up, children go to school, development assistance projects blossom from many quarters, new Liberian security institutions are matriculating, and even private sector investment is responding with additional badly needed jobs. How was Liberia afforded the priceless opportunity of becoming one of the greatest turnaround stories of the 21st century?

This article will not attempt to tell the entire fascinating story of ending the war and winning the peace in Liberia; that would take a book. Rather, the purpose is to glean lessons learned from this success—that is, insights that may prove useful elsewhere, albeit each conflict is unique.

The Situation

By 2003, Liberia had been ruled autocratically by warlord President Charles G. Taylor since his questionable election in 1997. Since Taylor is presently on trial for war crimes at The Hague, it is inappropriate to dwell upon him or his role. Suffice it to say that by early 2003, two different rebel movements and their armies—Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and the smaller Movement for Democracy in Liberia—controlled most of the country. Taylor's forces made forays into the interior and held the capital, Monrovia, as well as the second biggest city, Buchanan.

By July 2003, the civil war was quickly escalating. The international ceasefire agreement was again in tatters, and negotiation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was bogged down in Ghana. Moreover, both rebel combatant parties, especially their military commanders in the field, opposed and threatened any outside peacekeeper interventions. After all, they held the port of Monrovia, leaving the rest of the capital increasingly under siege. With almost 1 million people starving inside the city, and Taylor's forces weakening, they could see military victory within reach. The rebels' intent was not just to see Taylor relinquish power, but also to take Monrovia, seize power, and sack the city in the best 12th-century meaning of the word. Taylor had been pressed militarily and diplomatically to leave Liberia, which he eventually agreed to do as long as an international peacekeeping force was brought into the country.

Taylor's departure, however, would not by itself stop the war or cancel the other objectives of the rebels. A bloodbath of retribution could ensue, with hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons caught in the middle of the fighting. Of course, Taylor's forces would have to fight on, and there was a distinct possibility that the two rebel armies might begin fighting one another for power. Finally, West African peacekeepers who had arrived recently (Economic Community of West African States Mission in Liberia [ECOMIL]) were likely to become combatants, as had happened when West African peacekeepers intervened several years earlier (as the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group).

Analysis

Liberia offers valuable insights into conflict management and moving chaotic situations toward stability as well as building the institutions of security and justice. In 2003, Liberia was not, as is often stated, a classic peacekeeping operation (if there is such a thing). Peace did not initiate sequentially with an internationally negotiated ceasefire and peace agreement followed by a complex

peacekeeping mission. Rather, by mid-2003, the baseline situation was increasingly chaotic and violent, and not just a complex situation with peacekeepers permissively deployed. In fact, the actions of a very few outsiders still left on the ground were designed to try to move the situation away from an abyss and back into some sort of complex mess that would permit peacekeepers.

Those of us there were successful in that undertaking, but the reason this part of the actual story of Liberia is important is that it relates directly to the first analytic point. We must understand what kind of situation we are facing, and then adapt our strategy, sequencing, and leadership style appropriately. This is hardly a new thought, but it is a critical one that is missed constantly. As Sun Tzu wrote, "Do not repeat the tactics which have gained you one victory, but let your methods be regulated by the infinite variety of circumstances."[1] Although these thoughts from about 500 BCE are obviously about war, they also apply to the pursuit of peace, including how to prioritize and balance making progress with security and justice even when there are simultaneous pressing needs in other sectors.

For example, in Liberia the alleged peacekeeping maxim that security must precede all else did not really hold. It was a blend of diplomacy, peacemaking, and some deception that ended that war on the battlefield, long before any ground was secured by friendly forces, and before the CPA was concluded on August 18, 2003.

Breaking with the political leadership of LURD, General Mohamed Sheriff negotiated on the battlefield the terms of LURD's ceasefire, its pullback, and the permissive entry and interpositional placement of the ECOMIL peacekeepers. A few U.S. and West African negotiators repeatedly passed through "no-man's land"—that is, between Taylor's forces and those of LURD—in order to conclude a deal with General Sheriff. In this fashion, diplomacy not only stopped the fighting, but also enabled the permissive entry of ECOMIL as peacekeepers, not as combatants.

The point here is not that what was done in Liberia was better or worse than in other cases, but that there is no iron-clad template that fits all circumstances; there is no certain sequence, no perfect universal blend of defense, development, and diplomacy, and no stable formula to pursue security and justice.

peace did not initiate sequentially with an internationally negotiated ceasefire and peace agreement followed by a complex peacekeeping mission

This commonsensical observation is often resisted. After leaving Liberia in mid-2005, I was drawn to study other difficult situations, such as Iraq and Afghanistan. During my long absence from the United States, a plethora of studies, manuals, and guides had been written on how to conduct antiterrorist, counterinsurgency, and complex stability operations, and how to create "fusion" among all U.S. agencies and partners for maximum impact, and so forth. Most of these works were produced in response to continuing violence and other problems in Iraq and Afghanistan. Most all of these and others that followed are quite thoughtful and well done. Of course, many of them struggle mightily with security and justice issues, and with the inclusion of indigenous peoples.

But there is a problem: while these works and case studies are excellent stimuli, they will

never substitute for creative but disciplined thinking and leadership, as some of them imply. A personal anecdote may illustrate this assertion.

I was recently at the CIA—that would be the Culinary Institute of America. I had an epiphany when watching a master chef work. While seemingly all chefs love cookbooks, great chefs do not use them when creating new masterpieces. It must be similar for competent leaders who face crises, especially those actually on the ground. In other words, there are not now, and will never be, strategic cookbooks adequate for handling each new crisis, though historical knowledge and analytic stimulus from them will certainly help. Insofar as security and justice go, there will never be one sequential relationship or recipe that will serve universally.

the objective in mid-2003 Liberia was to move the situation out of chaos and into something still complex but more manageable

What is less relative and absolutely critical, however, is the ability to recognize accurately how complex the situation at hand is, and how to adjust one's leadership approach. Not understanding the complexity of a situation, and not appropriately adjusting to it, usually results in failure in establishing reasonable security and justice regimes and relationships, among other things.

If Sun Tzu seems too archaic, more contemporary treatments of the relationships between complexity and leadership can be found. See, for example, the works of David Snowden and Mary Boone and the Welsh *Cynefin* school of thought. Again, I am extrapolating from their theory to help explain our success in Liberia, an application that Snowden and Boone did not address and may not condone. To oversimplify, the characteristics of a chaotic situation (without clear cause and effect relationships) call for stronger, more immediate action. Less chaotic but still complex or complicated situations are best managed by group methodologies and wider communication or by expertise. Although they wrote "A Leader's Framework for Decision Making" after the events of 2003, the model they presented screamed *Liberia* in many respects.[2]

To reiterate, the objective in mid-2003 Liberia was to move the situation out of chaos and into something still complex but more manageable. To that end, before the CPA, diplomacy moved first and decisively on the ground to disengage the LURD from Taylor's forces by getting them to cease fire, pull back several miles, free up the port and food for the starving multitudes, and permissively allow non-Liberian African (ECOMIL) peacekeepers to be placed between Taylor's forces and the main rebel army to the north of Monrovia, and between Taylor's forces and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia, the other rebel army, to the south.

Toward Networking

The months until UN peacekeepers began to arrive in October 2003 proved difficult on the ground. There were many serious ceasefire violations, which both ECOMIL and the U.S. Embassy had to stamp out. But even then, as the situation changed, the Embassy began to alter its style of leadership as it sought to reengage as many foreign and indigenous groups as it could to help keep the war stopped. For example, as other evacuated foreign embassy

staff and nongovernmental organizations trickled back into Liberia, we quickly helped them integrate back into postconflict stabilization efforts and restarted informal contact groups. There were Liberians who helped as well. Most famously, there were a number of Liberian women's peace groups, none of which were key players perhaps, but all of which helped promote peace in different ways and at different times.

ECOMIL was commanded by a brave Nigerian general, Fetus Okonkwo. It successfully spearheaded peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts in Liberia. The U.S. Marine Expeditionary Unit not only did a great job supporting the West Africans and the U.S. Embassy, but also briefly deployed a few hundred Marines on the ground.

As mediator of the Liberia Peace Process, Nigerian General Abdulsalami Abubakar's leadership was remarkable throughout and fundamental to success, and he came back repeatedly to Monrovia during the postconflict period to keep the lid on violence. Then, too, there was the indefatigable role of the International Contact Group, led ably by the European Commission and Ghana.

African heads of state not only opened a path for the departure of Taylor from Liberia, but also pushed strongly for the peace process at many points. And, of course, the dialogue with all the former combatant parties was intense in the postconflict period, as were exchanges with the successor governments to Taylor's (that is, the brief government of President Moses Blah, followed by the Interim Government led by Gyude Bryant). The media were also engaged constantly.

The message is clear. Once each tipping point is achieved, and the situation and its characteristics begin to change, the leadership and programmatic approach should change with it. In the immediate postwar period, U.S. Embassy Liberia, in order to help keep the transition moving further from chaos and war to complexity and peacekeeping, sought to repopulate the universe of parties who would push for peace in a variety of ways. In other words, we began to move toward a web-building/web-based approach to advance the peace process and counter constant attempts by "opponent webs" composed of those dedicated to returning Liberia to war and chaos. And there was no shortage of them.

Of course, while we helped stop the war and hung on for a while, steady progress only came after another and soon dominant member of the "web of peace" arrived—the much larger follow-on force of UN peacekeepers and others, brilliantly led by General Jacques Klein.

In sum, in the postconflict period, we helped build up or rebuild multilateral, nongovernmental, and Liberian webs, and encouraged these groups to probe and push carefully into the grey of a complex and still simmering situation, gradually achieving greater stability. The group approach was also able to absorb failures and shocks better, usually without risking the situation moving back to war.

In fact, there is another fine theoretical work on this area of thought, *Governing by Network*, by William Eggers and Stephen Goldsmith, which has valuable insights on better handling complex situations via networks.[3] Again, this work is extrapolated ex post facto to apply to the different situation of Liberia in order to better explain and map the successful route taken there.

Maintaining Momentum

Just as Liberia's evolving chaotic baseline situation required changing our leadership

approach, it also largely dictated how security and justice had to be approached as just part of the conundrum of a postwar collapsed state. What we faced on the ground was grim. An article appeared in *The Economist* in late 2002 about Liberia, forecasting it as the world's worst country for 2003.[4] It was, indeed, a horrible year in Liberia.

It would be hard to convey the devastation of Liberia after a 14-year civil war and the corrupt patrimonial systems of governance practiced during and before that time. Where, then, to start?

Although there is no certain sequence, perhaps in many terrible situations like this one, the place to start is with the people themselves, and giving them hope. Even while being hit by mortars and small arms fire, we plotted out what should be done sequentially and simultaneously once the fighting stopped. There were so many things to do: things that had to be launched alongside humanitarian assistance and essential services—simply to start to revive a dead state.

Security and justice reform were huge in this kind of postconflict calculus. In Liberia, the UN led the way in developing and tailoring a disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and rehabilitation (DDRR) program. It would take far too long to explain all the UN, bilateral, and multilateral programs involved, but in general, a successful DDRR program was absolutely central for security, reconstruction, and overall progress.

the group approach was also able to absorb failures and shocks better, usually without risking the situation moving back to war

The DDRR program in Liberia disarmed and demobilized over 109,000 combatants, who surrendered tens of thousands of AK–47s, over 7 million rounds of ammunition, and thousands of rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machineguns, and crew-served weapons. The UN also moved to remove and dispose of loose ordnance and at least address the sealing of Liberia's difficult borders. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of internally displaced Liberians and refugees were returned home.

Detractors argue that the UN started the DDRR program in Liberia too quickly on December 7, 2003, before enough UN peacekeepers were present. Indeed, there were serious riots at Camp Schefflin for the next 10 days, and this initial effort was shut down. But these events illustrate prior points about pushing out of chaos and into something more manageable. On the ground, the dynamic was simple: either start to disarm the warring factions very soon, or risk a quick return to war. The riots, by the way, were planned attempts to overwhelm the UN, either to create instability or to get more money, or both, and would have happened whenever the DDRR program kicked off.

What critics miss, but General Klein and I did not, is that starting the DDRR program quickly kept the combatants, who still had intact chains of command, focused on material gain rather than on coup attempts or on restarting general conflicts. In other words, while a tactical setback, starting disarmament and demobilization was, strategically, the correct thing to do. By doing so, the forces of peace retained critical momentum and the capacity to shape the future. Furthermore, many thousands of weapons were collected during that initial disarmament outing.

I encouraged General Klein to take this course of action and believe it was the correct

one. The lesson here is especially important. When actually shutting down conflicts and reducing chaos, we must keep the tempo of events in our favor, sometimes by acting boldly even when unsure of what is going to happen in response to what we do. Rarely can we afford to simply sit tight and wait to see what happens next. Success is gained by keeping tempo on our side. Failure is often guaranteed by robotically following some inflexible, linear list of things to do in nonlinear, chaotic situations.

Another Sun Tzu quotation about the importance of momentum would be appropriate, because controlling momentum and the importance of assessing and adapting to situational complexity are themes lost in today's discourse. It is dismaying to see in contemporary times only more and more strategic cookbooks with simplistic linear graphs moving from conflict to peace.

Security Institutions

Given the chaotic starting place of Liberia in 2003, it is easier to see the importance of building the country a new police force and new armed forces, and getting a new start on rebuilding its devastated judicial system and the rule of law. The collapse and chaos of the war, combined with the long-term rot of corruption, had deeply compromised Liberia's security and justice institutions.

A rather balanced multilateral approach to donor funding was maintained throughout this period; however, this was not the case for rebuilding Liberia's police force or its army. The United States financed most of the rebuilding of the police force that was implemented through the UN.

In general, financing support for foreign security forces is unpopular among the parliaments of the world, sometimes including the U.S. Congress, but thankfully bipartisan support emerged among powerful Members of Congress. Senators John Warner, Hillary Clinton, John McCain, and others championed Liberia's cause in this area and supported other types of badly needed assistance.

The corrupted police force that operated during the Taylor years was largely left intact after the war. Had it remained, it would have posed a threat to peace and to the entire reconstruction and recovery effort. So initially, the United States placed even greater priority on creating a good police force than on building Liberia's army. However, Washington also

initially, the United States placed even greater priority on creating a good police force than on building Liberia's army

became heavily involved in the construction of a new small but capable army for Liberia, utilizing a private sector contractor.

In the case of the army, the UN was careful to slowly wind down the existing force structure, which was part of the CPA. But the longer term objective was always to create a new smaller, apolitical, and professional force that would respect the rule of law and human rights. This effort is still under way.

In sum, there was ample justification for rebuilding the police and military from the ground up, with much change of personnel based on competitive entry and background checks. It has been and will be critical for stability and justice in Liberia, especially after the UN mission leaves, as it must some day.

Justice and Legitimacy

The postwar starting point on justice was also dismal due to chaos and long-term rot.

Ghanaian soldier patrols as part of United Nations Mission in Liberia

UN (Christopher Herwig)

Justice was for sale during the Taylor years and basically dispensed under a patrimonial system. There had been no genuine systemic rule of law for years. There was a desperate need for a spring cleaning, but there was also the necessity to maintain a clear line of political legitimacy throughout the postwar transitional reform process. Much of the answer for both issues, building justice anew and maintaining legitimacy, resided in ensuring that the CPA-mandated election was held as stipulated in 2005, but many opposed that for various reasons.

From the outset, I was questioned in some quarters about supporting Vice President Blah as the successor to Taylor. However, his appointment to that office, and then his brief time as President, took place in accordance with the constitution of Liberia, and provided a linkage of legitimacy and an orderly transition until an interim head of government could be appointed in accordance with the CPA.

Serious objections and challenges to holding the presidential election on time in 2005 came from several quarters. Some senior statesmen and respected figures in Liberia suggested national conventions and a rewriting of Liberia's constitution before any election. Such a process would likely have taken many years.

Meanwhile, some interim government officials moved strongly to stop or at least to postpone the 2005 elections. Of course, that would have prolonged their time in office as unelected officials. There were also other sinister reasons why some sought postponement. My position remained clear in 2003, 2004, and 2005: nothing should be allowed to stop or postpone the 2005 elections from occurring on

time, or the freedom and rights of the Liberian people would be seriously jeopardized. Before leaving Liberia, all these threats were overcome, and a free and fair election was held on time. Today, there is absolutely no doubt who is the legitimate head of state in Liberia.

The general lesson here is to be sensitive to the issue of legitimacy in postconflict states undergoing transitions of power, elected or otherwise. In truth, there were indeed some reasons why election postponement seemed somewhat logical in Liberia, as there may seem to be in other cases. But for whatever reason, there is a terrible risk incurred once a country leaps into a political void where no one has clear title as head of state and is acknowledged as in charge. Political legitimacy and justice must be thought through as a whole, as a simultaneous equation, or serious stability and other problems could arise.

The sequencing of all the elements of a successful peace process will differ by case, with a key variable being the complexity of the situation at hand and the corresponding leadership and policy approach that must be tailored to fit. Control of momentum during the peace process must also be carefully considered and usually retained. In the case of Liberia, ending the war in 2003, and keeping it stopped, initially required some flamboyant, nondemocratic, and unusual actions (that is, to end chaos). Keeping the election on track also called for repeated strong and sometimes unilateral methods, as did the related issue of ensuring that political legitimacy remained intact.

Whenever the situation calmed down and moved from chaos to mere complexity, however, a unilateral leadership role was shunned in favor of networking and inclusiveness. These groups, mostly in turn led by the UN and the International Contact Group, slowly achieved greater stability, institutional rebirth, economic stabilization, and much more.

All of this prompted both cheers and jeers, including charges that I was at times a bully or acting as a proconsul. Frankly, that is not important. The U.S. Embassy's leadership approach and actions were not determined centrally by my personality, but rather varied with the perception of what was required to best deal with a changing situation, which moved back and forth from chaotic and desperate to more stable at times. It must be added that then–Secretary of State Colin Powell "kept my back" and was our staunchest ally throughout, artfully parrying distant critics at home who sought to interfere with our work and foil triumph.

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The donor approach to security and justice could not be one of gentle surgery because the baseline situation was so grave. As the situation gradually improves, however, security and justice are becoming more and more the responsibility of Liberians.

Did we do it all correctly in Liberia? Nonsense. Is there much left for all parties to do in order to shore up success in Liberia? Absolutely. But consider, if for only a moment, where things stood in Liberia in 2003, and where things stand today—and smile. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Lionel Giles (London: Luzac and Co., 1910), 28.

[2] David J. Snowden and Mary E. Boone, "A Leader's Framework for Decision Making," *Harvard Business Review* (November 2007).

[3] Stephen Goldsmith and William D. Eggers, *Governing by Network* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

[4] "The World's Worst: Liberia," *The World in 2003*, report published by *The Economist*, November 2002.

Complex Operations in Weak and Failing States

The Sudan Rebel Perspective

BY WILLIAM RENO

The U.S. Government provides a comprehensive plan for civilian-military efforts in failing states aimed at showing citizens that their own governments can protect them. The object is to weaken any appeal that rebels might develop among these populations. In Sudan, which ranks third in a prominent index of failed states,[1] this effort entails U.S. coordination of humanitarian aid, the provision of basic social services, and help to improve governmental function. This latest effort, part of the implementation of a 2005 peace agreement between a rebel army and Sudan's government, is part of an intensive 20-year official engagement with this country and its conflicts.

Sudan thus serves as a good illustration of complex operations that can inform effort of "synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of military operations with the activities of governmental and non-governmental entities to achieve unity of effort."[2] Even though the military component played a minimal role in the Sudan case until recently, this experience with coordinating the other two components of this trinity highlights some important lessons for complex operations in the future.

Too little attention has been paid to how armed groups in targeted countries synchronize the activities of foreign operations to create their own "unity of effort." This article focuses on how one group, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and its political wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), have incorporated complex operations of foreigners into their strategies for fighting wars and gaining political power. Even as the SPLA has fought an insurgency campaign against Sudan's government, some rebel groups have significant experience in conducting their own versions of complex operations that involve nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international agencies, and foreign governments over several decades. From the rebels' perspective, complex operations strengthen capacity to use foreign actors to their own advantage. Foreign-run operations can help rebels to recruit and discipline fighters, suppress factional divisions, and, most critically, convince local people that they, and not the government, protect noncombatants and

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Former SPLA soldiers retrained as police officers participate in graduation ceremony

UN (Tim McKulka)

that the international community accepts the rebels' claims to be "authentic representatives" of the people.

This article first considers the advent of complex operations in southern Sudan from the point of view of the international community, and especially the major U.S. goals there since the late 1980s. This experience has been at the forefront of coordination of U.S. agencies for overseas operations in a conflict zone and has been a significant example of this kind of approach. It was one of the first major efforts of its scale and complexity to provide relief and build local government administrative capacity in a conflict zone, and thus sets a pattern for later complex operations. The article then turns to the SPLA perspective and focuses on how rebels in Sudan interpreted and manipulated the institutional interests of a complex operation. The final section highlights some of the lessons from this experience and points to some broad considerations for complex operations in other settings.

The View from Outside

The first large-scale experience with complex coordination in Sudan's conflict began with Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) worked to coordinate Department of State activities with other government agencies and outsiders in a role similar to that envisioned more recently for the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. OFDA worked with NGOs that had extensive knowledge of wartime conditions in Sudan, under the coordination of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) director James Grant, to launch a coordinated response

to the plight of noncombatants in what by then was a 6-year civil war. This collaboration led to the conference in Khartoum in 1989 that created OLS. This conference brought together USAID offices in Sudan and Kenya, members of Sudan's government, and United Nations (UN) officials to coordinate famine relief. Sudan was also a proving ground for improved UN coordination efforts, which led to the 1991 creation of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.[3]

One of the aims of the 1989 conference was to secure an agreement from Khartoum to provide "corridors of tranquility" through which aid to noncombatants could be delivered. This effort also required an agreement from the SPLA, which by 1989 had captured large areas of southern Sudan from its bases in Ethiopia. NGOs eager for access to rebel-held areas within the framework of the U.S.- and UN-sponsored agreement helped to organize formal talks with Lam Akol, the head of the SPLA's Office of Coordination and External Relations. These NGOs and UN officials provided the buffer that U.S. officials needed to avoid direct working relationships with the SPLA and its relief wing, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA). This arrangement opened the way for other NGOs to work in SPLA-held territory without directly involving U.S. officials—but at the same time serving U.S. goals of addressing famine conditions under the rubric of OLS.

A military coup in Khartoum on June 30, 1989, and the uncooperative stance of the new regime complicated relief efforts, but OLS was renewed in March 1990. Later, the regime in Khartoum proved willing to accept the OLS presence in the south as part of its bid for international goodwill after having backed Saddam Hussein in the 1990 Gulf War. The 1992 international intervention in Somalia also may have alerted Khartoum that total refusal to permit the delivery of aid in a humanitarian crisis might bring even more unwelcome intervention. Thus, the OLS arrangement became institutionalized during the course of the 1990s, and assumed even more complex forms up to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005.

OLS played a major role in providing direct humanitarian aid to all war-affected parts of southern Sudan, even though Sudan's government made serious efforts to manage the provision of aid for its own benefit. In enabling more NGOs to operate in Sudan, OLS functioned as a sort of indirect provider of public services to noncombatants. It also had a stabilizing effect on southern Sudanese society during the conflict. In the words of an important observer of politics in Sudan, the "real effect [of OLS] was to keep the household labour force intact, reduce the amount of time spent on gathering alternative sources of food, and reinforce networks of kinship exchange and exchange between neighbouring communities."[4]

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Even though OLS and its partner organizations started out as an ad hoc response to a humanitarian emergency, it evolved into a quasigovernment for rebel-held areas. This was true even though these organizations had to carefully adhere to the Sudan government's insistence that OLS seek permission for each

relief flight. This was a severe restriction, resulting in an estimated OLS delivery rate of between 20 and 30 percent of predicted needs in the south in the early 1990s.[5] Nonetheless, OLS gave the UN a vehicle to provide a regulatory framework for relief operations. NGOs were then able to participate in operations in rebel-held territories, regardless of whether they addressed all humanitarian aid needs in particular areas or not.

UN and NGO promotion of longer term development in these areas, or what they defined as capacity-building operations, led to more intensive consultations with rebels. These contacts were organized through the SRRA. After a factional split in 1991, the rival Southern Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM) set up the Relief Association of South Sudan (RASS). UNICEF then seconded and paid consultants to these organizations' Nairobi offices to provide technical advice, and gave grants to SRRA and RASS to pay staff and rent offices. This support amounted to about $220,000 in direct financial aid in 1996.[6]

foreign actors found that they could promote an indigenous state-building project and a democratic transition in the midst of a conflict even while relieving a humanitarian crisis

OLS officials also encouraged other international organizations and NGOs to develop formal relationships with indigenous southern Sudanese community groups. Their foreign partners could then help these Sudanese groups find and apply for foreign funding and would supervise their activities. In 1993, only two of these "civil society" groups had formal relationships with OLS-affiliated partners; by 1995, more than 30 of these groups had appeared. These activities required a constant schedule of workshops and seminars as the Sudan-based organizations selected individuals to receive foreign-sponsored training. Nairobi became a base for these meetings, as well as for at least 50 Sudanese-run NGOs by 1997.[7]

This dense interaction between outsiders and the SPLA and SSIM led in 1994 to the establishment of formal OLS ground rules governing the conduct of the rebel organizations in exchange for humanitarian assistance. One document stressed that the "guiding principle of OLS and SRRA is that of humanitarian neutrality—an independent status for humanitarian work beyond political or military considerations."[8] This cleared the way for other agencies to contribute to this process, for example, with the start of the predecessor to the USAID Sudan Transitional Assistance for Rehabilitation program.

These relationships seemed to put OLS and its partners into a position from which to influence the development of rebel organizations toward a greater interest in governance. These foreign actors found that they could promote an indigenous state-building project and a democratic transition in the midst of a conflict even while relieving a humanitarian crisis. Sudan's crisis in the 1990s therefore mirrored contemporary concerns over supporting improvements in local governance while providing aid to meet basic needs as components of an overall strategy to resolve a conflict.

The SPLA responded positively in 1994 when it announced its adoption of a framework for administration that included clear distinctions between civil and military institutions, a provision for the separation of powers in administration, and recognition of basic human rights.[9] This announcement occurred

in the context of broader negotiations involving rebels and Sudan's government under the aegis of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (an African regional association) and the Friends of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (a group of Western countries including Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States). The resulting Declaration of Principles set up a framework for peace negotiations that by 1996 involved Sudan's president. Now injecting a (faintly) military component, the Western countries would finance security patrols, supply technical equipment, and underwrite a secretariat in Nairobi for peace talks. A new round of negotiations began in 2002 and in 2005 produced the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that is the current framework for the postwar integration of rebel and government forces.

This evolving ad hoc complex operation produced more dividends in terms of the post-conflict construction of southern Sudan. By 2002, the SPLA had sponsored numerous conferences throughout southern Sudan, including meetings that led to commitments to improve the status of women, protect wildlife, and set up programs for the disadvantaged.[10] This socialization of a rebel movement into the acceptance of basic global norms of governance appeared as one of the triumphs of the tedious but careful coordination of international assistance and international political engagement. Moreover, the framework for negotiation and the regulatory framework for the distribution of humanitarian aid contributed to the healing of the factional split within the SPLA. By the time the final peace agreement was signed in 2005, the SPLA and its more democratically inclined SPLM political wing were able to act as an authoritative representative of rebel forces and enjoy the support of a vigorous civil society in southern Sudan, which was expected to give the peace agreement a solid political base.

The Rebel Perspective

The rebel perspective of these events was quite different. The SPLA began its fight for self-determination with the 1983 collapse of a decade-old peace agreement with the government of Sudan. Like many rebel movements of its time, the SPLA adopted a Marxist-Leninist framework, probably because it found the centralizing tendencies and association with liberation struggles elsewhere in Africa useful for maintaining internal unity and ideological focus. Its leadership also benefited from the patronage of Ethiopia's President Mengistu Haile Mariam, then in the midst of a "socialist revolution" with Soviet help in his own country. Mengistu was willing to provide the SPLA with a rear base in Ethiopian territory and used his security services to identify and eliminate rivals to the SPLA's leadership under John Garang. In return, the SPLA harassed Sudan's government, which was supporting Ethiopian separatists at the time. The SPLA even fought inside Ethiopia in support of Mengistu's army as it battled separatist rebels from its northern provinces. By the late 1980s, Ethiopian support was critical to the SPLA ability to control wide swaths of territory inside southern Sudan, and it was from this position of strength that it dealt with the newly formed OLS.

John Garang toured the United States and Europe in mid-1989 as the head of an "authentic representative" of southern Sudan's people

The collapse of Mengistu's government in mid-1991 in the face of advancing rebels (whom Khartoum had supported) came as a great disaster for the SPLA, as it was forced to leave Ethiopian territory. Suddenly denied their secure rear base, SPLA leaders faced splits in their own ranks. The OLS appearance on the scene was fortuitous for the SPLA core leadership. John Garang, the SPLA chairman, made his diplomatic debut in the context of his key role in ensuring SPLA cooperation with OLS. He toured the United States and Europe in mid-1989 as the head of an "authentic representative" of southern Sudan's people, and as one who had to be recognized as a negotiating partner on par with the government of Sudan if humanitarian relief supplies were to reach people in need. A graduate of Iowa State University (with a Ph.D. in agricultural economics) and of the infantry school at Fort Benning, Georgia (as a member of the prewar Sudan military), Garang's new status enabled him to renew contacts and to visit with members of the U.S. Congress and the Brookings Institution.[11] Even if the U.S. State Department refused to extend formal recognition to the SPLA, OLS equipped it to conduct its international relations at a new level.

OLS and its partners shifted the balance of resources toward the rebel forces with which they negotiated and that they thought would be the most reliable. The factional split in 1991, for example, raised concern among some foreign officials that the willingness to supply humanitarian relief to groups outside of the main SPLA framework would promote the formation of more factions, which would raise the financial expenses and complicate the political negotiations necessary to maintain relief operations.[12]

Although Sudan's government could manipulate relief deliveries for its own advantage, the politically favored mainstream SPLA also was able to divert relief supplies for military purposes and to devise ways to tax relief aid that arrived via OLS. In the words of a member of the SPLA Executive Council, "Since humanitarian assistance is only provided for the needy civil population, the task of distribution of this assistance fell on specially selected SPLA officers and men who saw to it that the bulk of the supplies went to the army. Even in cases where the expatriate relief monitors were strict and only distributed relief supplies to the civilians by day, the SPLA would retrieve that food by night."[13] This collaboration between rebels and relief agencies, regardless of the intentions of specific actors, was a significant shift from past practice among relief agencies to refrain from engaging with nonsovereign authorities that were fighting recognized governments.[14] It also enabled the SPLA to adapt to the new situation its existing system of political commissars that it had developed under the tutelage of the regime in Ethiopia. Moreover, some SPLA cadres had received technical and political education in Cuba up to about 1990, and they could also be used to ensure that foreign-provided aid was employed in ways that benefited the rebel group.[15] As an SPLA commander noted, commissars typically accompanied battlefield commanders in the 1980s to enforce political discipline and manage rebel contacts with local authorities, and this system of "political education" was easy to adapt to the challenges of managing relationships with new actors in the 1990s while the SPLA continued to fight its enemies.[16]

Even if Sudan's government asserted its sovereignty to interfere with and veto OLS relief flights, longer term aspects of the OLS engagement with the SPLA conveyed additional advantages to rebels. The external

support for the development of "civil society" groups gave the SPLA and its SRRA the capacity to screen participants in workshops and seminars and to influence which local NGOs would get contracts to implement foreign-supported development projects. Many of these Sudanese NGOs were headed by former SPLA members and other associates of the rebel group, including those that sprang up in Nairobi around the opportunities that the organizational base of the coordinated relief operation provided.[17] What appeared to the international community to be part of the normalization in support of a peace process was to rebels the opportunity to assert political control over wider swaths of southern Sudanese society and dominate the distribution of resources from foreign sources while they continued to fight.

This boost in the political position of the SPLA appeared in its decision in 2000 to impose its own memoranda of understanding on NGOs in territory that the SPLA controlled. These included provisions that NGOs had to abide by SPLA and SRRA regulations and seek their permission before interacting with local communities. The foreign guests also had to pay various fees and taxes to the SPLA, including for permission to enter, work, and live in this territory, much as a sovereign government would demand.[18] These regulations also allowed the rebels to control people in its territory and assert its political dominance as a gatekeeper to external resources. Traveling to rebel-held parts of Sudan at that time was like traveling to a new country, with SPLA travel permits, registries, and other administrative paraphernalia typical of a sovereign state. A senior SPLA commander who had served with the rebel group since 1983 described the NGO presence as supporting the SPLA's objective of convincing local people in areas under their control that the SPLA was better able than the government to protect and support them.[19] In short, the Leninist organization that the SPLA developed in the 1980s under Ethiopian tutelage was well suited to manage the agendas of a new set of foreigners in ways that contributed to core goals of the rebels.

A few NGOs operating under the OLS rubric actively collaborated with the rebels. An investigation of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA, known colloquially among some NGO workers as "Norwegian People's Army") "had for several years organised an air-bridge for the supply of weapons to battle zones within Sudan under the supervision of its Nairobi office. One of the NPA pilots involved in the gun running . . . stated that his plane had landed at SPLA bases with some 2.5 tonnes of weapons."[20] A senior SPLA member who was responsible for managing its foreign affairs in the late 1980s and into the 1990s described the NPA as "outstanding" for the SPLA, and noted that "Norway has always been there." He also noted that the SPLA's relations with other NGOs were "strategic" as they assisted the rebel group in significant ways that enabled the rebels to concentrate more on fighting.[21] NGOs that did not wish to provide direct military assistance had a hard time avoiding contributions to the military effort in some other form. Relief flights into SPLA-held territory, for example, routinely carried SPLA members.[22]

NGOs that did not wish to provide direct military assistance had a hard time avoiding contributions to the military effort in some other form

The additional effect of this complex operation was to release the SPLA from the need to actually administer local communities while

Man displaced by attacks on his tribe waits to receive food ration

UN (Tim McKulka)

still being able to claim that they were protecting and providing for people by virtue of their gatekeeper status vis-à-vis foreigners. An early critic of OLS noted the weakness of administrative institutions in rebel-held areas in which aid was focused.[23] This is not to say that the SPLA did not provide local people with some level of order and security from attack, if not much in the way of social services.[24] This postwar complex operations arrangement continues to maintain this division of labor between the international community and rebel administration in the provision of services to people under its control. As of 2009, for example, the UN and other organizations provide "more than 80 percent of Southern Sudan's safety net including primary health care and clean water."[25]

The development of complex and coordinated operations in southern Sudan since the signing of the 2005 peace agreement (and its provision for a referendum on secession scheduled for 2011) continues to serve SPLA political interests. Approximately 40 percent of the southern administration's budget receipts, supported through an agreement with the government in Khartoum to share oil revenues, go to military spending.[26]

Overall, the SPLA has ably manipulated the interests and agendas of outsiders, despite its position as a nonsovereign authority. It has been efficient at extracting resources and pursuing its political goals, even when these have been at odds with those of its foreign interlocutors. This disjuncture in perspectives is pervasive in discussions with members of the international community in southern Sudan and with SPLA members after the signing of the 2005 peace treaty. Many SPLA members assert that their willingness to fight is in the service of the independence of a sovereign state

in southern Sudan. They say that Khartoum would never consent to their secession even though a referendum on the issue is scheduled for 2011. They are convinced another war is likely. Meanwhile, many NGO workers and other foreigners condemn such talk as harmful to the peace agreement and remain focused on its implementation.[27] In sum, the SPLA has managed to use the intensive engagement in two decades of complex operations to leverage the power of much better endowed and capable actors to fight its enemies, discipline its own ranks, politically dominate local communities, and create a broader context in which its core goals are more likely to be achieved, regardless of whether its patrons want this outcome or not.

Sudan's Lessons for Complex Operations

The obvious difference between international engagement in Sudan and contemporary complex operations planning is the near absence of military engagement on the part of the intervening force in the former case. Even so, OLS and other actors have had military significance. The OLS apparatus allowed U.S. agencies and others to provide aid to rebels through intermediaries such as the SRRA that they could claim did not represent recognition or direct provisioning of rebels. The actual situation was that "SRRA officials were all named from among the soldiers anyway and retained their military rank. . . . If aid did materialize, the first human needs to be served would naturally tend to be those close to the [SPLA] army."[28]

This brand of complex operation did have an effect on the organization of the rebel group and its interests in providing governance to communities under its control. Rather than socializing the SPLA in the direction of a liberal political organization intent on implementing the 2005 peace agreement, it has helped it to develop its institutions of control and to assert its political domination as the "authentic representative" of southern Sudanese society. Outside aid helped the struggling rebel group to further develop a separate administrative framework alongside the expanding range of contacts with foreigners and Sudanese society. This engagement has made it much more likely that the SPLA will eventually lead southern Sudan to independence with broad popular support.

This disjuncture between outsiders' aims and local recipients' interests appears in more recent U.S. military training efforts. One trainer was confident that SPLA fighters would accept American training in ways that would help to reshape the SPLA into a force more like the American military. Cultural differences could be overcome through personal contact, and this would lead tactically proficient SPLA fighters to use American expertise to develop into a disciplined military able to take its proper place within the framework of the 2005 peace agreement. While this is not an unreasonable proposition, at least some SPLA commanders saw the situation quite differently. They pointed out that the visibility of one trainer—a white contractor who drove a black Hummer in Juba traffic—emphasized American power but also the equally jarring mismatch of foreign advice and the local situation. As an SPLA commander with 25 years of guerrilla warfare experience remarked, "Why aren't they asking us for advice in Iraq and

complex operations, with or without military components, have tended to favor the weaker, nonsovereign military force

Afghanistan?" The United States, he stated, usually has a very good military strategy and a poor political strategy.[29] This condition, which is enhanced with the participation of large numbers of actors with diverse interests, offers valuable opportunities for manipulation and exploitation to groups such as the SPLA.

The SPLA story highlights the more general point that complex operations, with or without military components, have tended to favor the weaker, nonsovereign military force because humanitarian emergencies often take place in conditions where central state authority has grown weak or has broken down altogether. In these situations, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, or Liberia, humanitarian aid agencies and UN or regional peacekeepers need to negotiate with whatever armed force controls a particular area as a precondition for gaining access to people in need.

Responses to humanitarian emergencies have had explicit military components for some time. UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace*, for example, set out a plan for preventative diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping that described well the ideals of the international intervention in Somalia in 1992.[30] But like more purely civilian complex operations, military engagement usually ends up with foreign actors seeking out collaborations with local armed groups on an informal basis, if not officially. Even places without a central government, such as Somalia, prove too difficult to pacify and administer without significant cooperation with groups who already have guns.

Counterinsurgency operations in some states can create humanitarian emergencies that bring combined civil-military responses that can be deemed complex operations, as in Kurdistan-Iraq in 1991, Bosnia in 1992–1995, and Kosovo-Serbia in 1999. These interventions also tend to favor rebels, especially when rebels are keen to collaborate with the enemies of *their* enemies. The outcome of intervention in many of these conflicts has been the consolidation of the authority of secessionist rebels as they use their control of humanitarian aid to convince local people that they are the real government authority in that area. Moreover, these rebels are all the more convincing to noncombatants when they receive obvious support from important foreign partners.

Complex operations in the service of existing states are a relatively new development. The Sudan story shows, however, that getting local politics right is often even more complex than the challenges of administrative coordination. Actors that appear weak or disadvantaged often turn out to be those that are most motivated and most adept at manipulating outsiders and in playing their interests off one another. They suspect that outsiders are motivated by career goals that define success fairly narrowly, and that they will soon depart for the next disaster zone. Administrative coordination is an important component of a strategy to address these unintended outcomes. Even so, the local actors know they probably will spend the rest of their lives in that place, so they place a much greater urgency on achieving their goals than the foreign visitors, who believe they are training these local actors in their own image.

This is not an argument against the concept of complex operations. Instead, it is simply a warning to take the capabilities and interests of local actors seriously and to recognize how the interests and resources of foreigners can provide opportunities to local actors and can produce unintended consequences. **PRISM**

Notes

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[16] Discussion with SPLA major general, Juba, Sudan, August 22, 2009.

[17] Riehl, 14.

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[21] Interview with senior SPLA member, Juba, Sudan, August 24, 2009.

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U.S. Air Force (Christine Jones)

Village elders hold shura to discuss issues of local concern

Not in Our Image

The Challenges of Effective Peace-building

BY JAMES STEPHENSON, RICHARD McCALL, AND ALEXANDRA SIMONIANS

The international community was thoroughly unprepared to respond effectively to new post–Cold War challenges, which included the appearance of complex emergencies, many of which revealed ethnic, religious, cultural, or nationalistic faultlines. These lines have been manipulated in many cases by state and/or nonstate actors and have led to the unraveling of many states, a large number of which were former superpower clients. What remained were hollow entities—states with few attributes of nationhood, especially the institutional underpinnings of legitimate governance, the foundation upon which viable nation-states are based.

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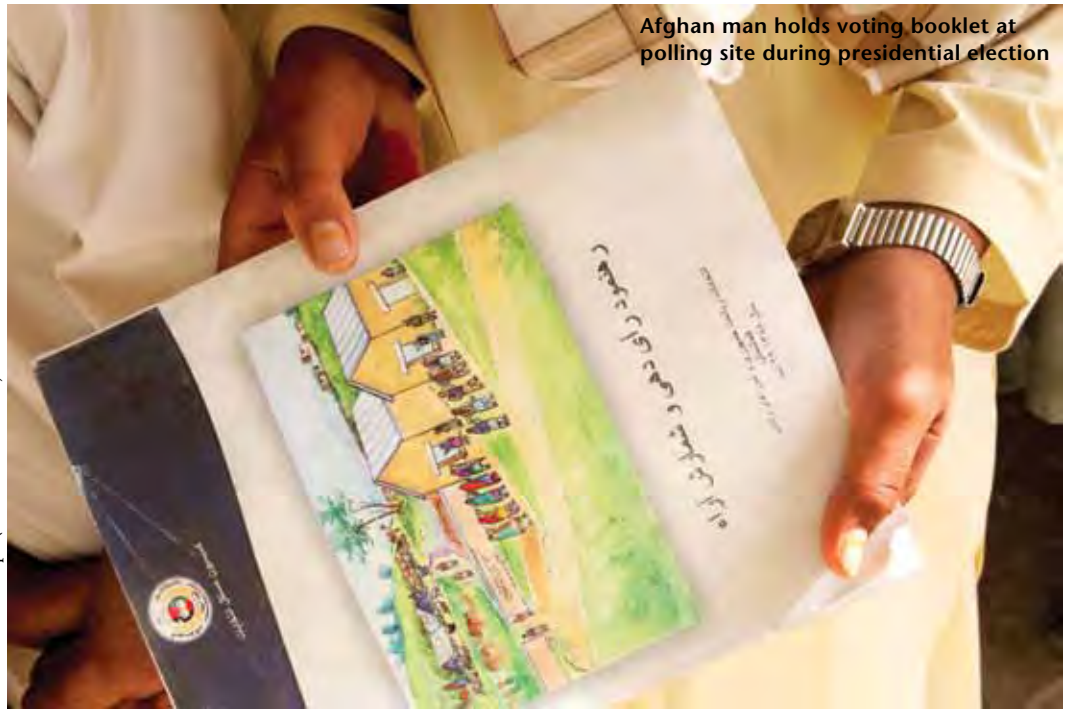
Within this context, U.S. policymakers need to reevaluate many of their assumptions and develop different analytical tools and frameworks that are essential components of a new national security strategy. The logic of democratization and free market economies has driven the notion that societies are in transition—that there is a linear progression from centrally controlled political and economic systems to centrally controlled democratic and market-driven systems. Yet in these so-called transitions, it is apparent that a difficult and patient societal transformation is the more appropriate description of the processes required for peace, stability, political pluralism, and tolerance to be established and sustained over the long term. What evolves may not reflect Western notions of the modern, democratic nation-state.

In too many areas of the world, countries have not undergone the processes fundamental to the creation of modern nation-states. All too often, the international community has made the mistake of assuming that a reconstitution of the state apparatus alone, along with democratization and market liberalization, will form the basis for long-term stability. What we have failed to understand is that once an authoritarian state collapses or is overthrown, there is no societal institutional underpinning or coherence left. In the absence of functioning institutions that reflect a working consensus within society, particularly those diverse in their ethnic and/or sectarian makeup, the potential for reemergence of violent conflict should be anticipated.

citizens have not had the opportunity to participate in what is termed *constituting processes*—the creation of institutions at all levels of society

Violent conflict generally breaks out in a society when the fundamental ideas and agreements that constitute order break down. It is these ideas and agreements, when given the force of law and enforced by the state, that regulate behavior. Conflict is first and foremost a political failure where states cannot, or will not, build productive political communities or enable them to operate.

The international community has a preoccupation with top-down approaches to nation-building, with a major focus on reconstituting central government institutions. While most modern nation-states have gone through the creation of institutions at all levels of society, many countries have not. Citizens have not had the opportunity to participate in what is termed *constituting processes*—the creation of institutions at all levels of society. It is a highly participatory process whereby common values and rules are identified and agreed upon and institutions are created that reflect fundamental societal consensus. This process allows members of a group to include their cultural and traditional values in a governing framework. In virtually every conflict or postconflict country, one can find a strong identity at the community level, ethnic or sectarian, but no sense of national identity. The processes of institution-building at all levels of society can transcend the divisive nature of localism or communalism, such as ethnic or sectarian divides. This institution-building, which must be sensitive to tradition and cultural values within societies, can take many forms, such as local and regional government entities, community development organizations, local education and health committees, agricultural and marketing cooperatives, or water user associations. Institutions reflect the accepted rules of the game, clearly defining individual rights and responsibilities within the broader community of interests.



Afghan man holds voting booklet at polling site during presidential election

U.S. Marine Corps (William Greeson)

The processes that lead to the creation of a viable, sustainable nation-state cannot be short circuited. It is a long-term process that must demonstrate sensitivity to, and understanding of, basic fundamentals including but not limited to:

- the creation and maintenance of institutions that reflect broad societal ownership
- the building of multi-institutional states that have multiple points of political access to address and solve problems
- effective long-term problemsolving at multiple levels that focuses on building political solutions from solid social and economic foundations
- strong and active citizenry to design local institutions and coproduce public goods and services
- commitment to dialogue, participation, competition, and compromise from the local to national level.

Within this context, the role of external actors should be one of partnership, encouraging an enabling environment so rich systems of governance can be developed. The choices are not between small and large systems, but between systems of governance that are locally rooted, which, in time and turn, are tied to regional and national systems. This is the principle of self-rule through shared rule. Establishment of basic and effective security is critical to the peace-building process. However, what is often overlooked is a commensurate focus on the need for dispersing power throughout society to ensure against the abuse of political and economic power from the center. Establishment

of the rule is law is also important. However, to ensure that law and justice are equitably and fairly applied, institutional accountability is critical. Institution-building at all levels of society that clearly spells out rules, rights, and responsibilities around which there is a broad societal consensus is a critical component of establishing a rule of law regime.

despite lip service paid to local ownership, there is a disconnect between external priorities and (internal) national processes and priorities

Why has the international community been so ineffective in peace-building efforts? The answers are many. In November 2004, the International Peace Academy and the Center on International Cooperation held a symposium on the "Political, Institutional, and Economic Challenges of State-Building." There were poignant observations that are particularly relevant.

Past attempts at state-building have been seriously undermined by a lack of strategic planning prior to intervention, particularly the failure to understand the local context in which it would be undertaken. In most cases, an overemphasis on short-term goals—largely dictated by external domestic politics—has resulted in no real foundations being laid for the transition. Little attempt has been made to reach out to the local community and manage its expectations for international interventions, let alone good faith efforts to properly consult with and involve locals in important decisions about the future of the state. The international community withdraws too early, leaving weak institutions not sustainable over the long term.[1]

It was noted further that "international actors have demonstrated a tendency to treat state-building as a purely technical exercise of transferring skills and running elections."[2] A joint War Torn Societies/International Peace Academy paper on postconflict peace-building, published in October 2004, raised similar concerns:

> *One of the most persistent obstacles to more effective peace building outcomes is the chronic inability of international actors to adapt their assistance to the political dynamics of the war torn societies they seek to support. . . . economic and political liberalization are particularly ill suited and counterproductive in post conflict peace building since they promote economic and political competition at a difficult and fragile stage.*[3]

Mistaken assumptions on the part of the international community have also contributed to ineffective peace-building. For instance, Roland Paris's *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* argues for "a gradual and controlled peace building strategy," emphasizing "institutionalization before liberalization." In other words, it is critical to establish domestic institutions "capable of managing the transition from war, while avoiding the destabilizing effects of democratization and marketization."[4] The War Torn Societies/International Peace Academy paper noted that there was strong agreement among conflict practitioners that, ultimately, local processes and institutions should play an important role in shaping the design, implementation, and outcomes of policy choices. Finally, the paper laid out key persistent problems in implementation of peace-building policies and programs, including the following:

- Donors channel support in the form of time-bound projects without a strategic framework and long-term commitment to peace-building.

- Despite lip service paid to local ownership, there is a disconnect between external priorities and (internal) national processes and priorities.
- External actors consistently neglect institution- and capacity-building, which are recognized as central to peace-building.
- In the absence of a strategic peace-building framework, external interventions are uncoordinated, fragmented, and incoherent.[5]

The bottom line of these two papers is a reminder that we should engage with the simple understanding that "[p]eace, security and stability cannot be imposed from the outside, but need to be nurtured internally through patient, flexible, responsive strategies that are in tune with local realities."[6]

Within this context, how do peacekeeping forces foster social capital and reconciliation essential to sustained stability and government legitimacy? The key is to understand that social capital exists within any society and that peace-building is a long-term process—a reality historically ignored by U.S. policymakers. Iraq was no exception. What strategy existed was predicated on the notion that we needed to get in fast, spend large amounts of resources in the shortest period of time, and exit as quickly as possible. Almost every criterion for effective peace-building was ignored. Predictably, we dug a deep hole for both ourselves and the Iraqis. Six years later, it is impossible to identify institutions that are inclusive and clearly spell out the rules of the game for all Iraqis. Nearly 8 years later in Afghanistan, U.S. emphasis on large infrastructure projects and attempts to create Western-style national government institutions have only further alienated rural populations, weakening the state and creating safe havens for insurgent groups.

Afghanistan is a conundrum of diverse geography, a plethora of ethnicities, strong local tribal governance and allegiances, and warlordism. This reality requires a different strategic paradigm that incorporates an understanding of the history, traditions, and culture of Afghanistan. We continue to focus on creating a strong central government rather than facilitating local processes that lead to an evolving consensus on the nature of institutions of governance that best reflects Afghan culture and needs. The outcome of this process would not be a Western model of governance, but one that reflects the Afghan reality and needs that, at minimum, would indicate some consensus on the basic rules of the game. This requires an Afghanization with a small international footprint, *particularly* on the civilian side. In other words, there should be an omnipresent Afghan face on civilian reconstruction and stabilization efforts.

the U.S. Government tends to look at global problems as a discrete and differentiated set of issues, leading to segmented policy and programmatic responses based on short-term parochial interests

Most conflict/postconflict practitioners have anecdotes that reflect what works and does not work in real world environments. However, if we want to effectively respond to the real world, we have to address the structural problems within our own foreign policy/national security institutions.

Since the end of the Cold War, succeeding U.S. administrations have struggled with the

challenges posed by what can be described as the new world disorder. We have confronted the need to reconcile the mandates of traditional national security institutions for managing government political, economic, and security relations that are often driven by short-term political considerations, with the necessity to deal with, and ameliorate, the fault lines within many societies. The goal of the latter is long-term stability through capable and legitimate governance. Yet despite recognition of the threats facing the United States, the bureaucratic responses have been ad hoc and carried out by institutions whose current structures are inadequate to deal with these challenges. While we have defined the threats facing us and the global community writ large, the U.S. Government still tends to look at global problems as a discrete and differentiated set of security, economic, and political issues, leading to segmented policy and programmatic responses based on narrow, short-term parochial interests.

Post-9/11: No Margin for Error

The end of the Cold War did not herald the hoped-for *Pax Americana*. To the contrary, the United States and its international partners have struggled to deal with a set of foreign policy challenges made exponentially more complex by global terrorism and failed or weak states that harbor and nurture asymmetric global threats (for example, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and al Qaeda). Washington's ability to more effectively manage these challenges will require institutional restructuring of our national security apparatus, particularly the Department of Defense, Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Intelligence Community, as well as significant changes in bureaucratic cultures and an entirely new strategy of engagement.

An excellent starting point for serious reform would be the recommendations contained in Jeffrey McCausland's *Developing Strategic Leaders for the 21st Century*. Dr. McCausland, former Dean of the U.S. Army War College, writes:

> *It is crucial that we develop a system that places the* right *people in the* right *places in government at the* right *moment. The nation critically needs civilian policymakers who can manage change and deal with the here and now. This monograph examines the development of career civilian leaders for strategic decisionmaking in the national security policy process. Such development must include the recruitment of quality personnel, experiential learning through a series of positions of increasing responsibility, training for specific tasks or missions, and continuous education that considers both policy and process. Consequently, it requires people who are not only substantively qualified and knowledgeable regarding policy issues but also possess the leadership abilities to direct large complex organizations.*[7]

The U.S. Government does not have sufficient knowledge-based skills or quantity and quality of leadership to manage change. Nor do we have bureaucratic agility and flexibility in our current national security system to adjust to realities on the ground or to changing dynamics. Just as multilateral institutions were created after World War II to manage the global community and economy and prevent a repeat of the 1920s and 1930s—just as political and military institutions were created and restructured to manage the Cold War—we are now compelled to reevaluate our assumptions, develop new analytic tools and mechanisms, and recognize that these are essential components to

a new national security strategy to engage the world as it is today.

The sad truth is that there is still a multiplicity of departments, agencies, and offices involved in articulating and implementing U.S. policy abroad, often sowing confusion and even contradictory policy priorities. Just as the problems of failing states cannot be effectively solved by a set of discrete, isolated activities, the United States cannot project a coherent policy abroad through a series of discrete and differentiated tools with differing priorities. We need a strategic vision that recognizes how each of these sets of problems relates to the others. Unfortunately, we continue to be bogged down by a process preoccupied with individual boxes and the competition for resources among these boxes.

Above all, any international engagement dealing with a failed state has to focus first on peace- and consensus-building, and not nation-building. Peace-building is a bottom-up process that engages all segments of society in defining not only a common set of values around which there can be a working consensus, but also fundamental agreement on the systems and nature of the institutions to serve that consensus. Nationbuilding, as we have approached it, has focused too much on a top-down approach, writing constitutions that have little if no meaning for most societies, holding elections quickly, and focusing almost exclusively on constituting a central government. The end result all too often exacerbates existing tensions and conflict in society, leading to more violence. Such an approach denies a broad-based ownership of the processes and does not give the vast majority of the population a stake in the outcome. Certainly this was the case in Iraq, and may still be the case in Afghanistan.

As the United States struggles in developing a whole-of-government approach by bringing all its tools (or boxes) into an integrated strategic framework, that effort will be undermined from the beginning if the Nation continues to attempt to remake Afghanistan in its own image. Unfortunately, we have been slow to learn from our past mistakes. While policymakers appear to be embracing more culturally sensitive strategies that endeavor to engage all levels of society in stabilization efforts, the means of implementing these strategies may not prove realistic.

The Wrong Fix by the Wrong People

The Obama administration deserves much credit for scaling back U.S. objectives in Afghanistan from inventing a country with a secure, democratic, centrally managed government, a free-market economy, and secure borders to a viable state that does not harbor terrorists.

this "clear, hold, build" strategy is a welcome departure from 7 years of trying to create a strong central government where none has existed for millennia; but the tactical means to achieve this strategy are fatally flawed

To achieve this, more emphasis is to be put into bottom-up approaches, such as protecting local populations, empowering transparent local government, developing communities, and supporting agriculture. This "clear, hold, build" strategy is a welcome departure from 7 years of trying to create a strong central government where none has existed for millennia; but the tactical means to achieve this strategy are fatally flawed.

It is often quoted that the State Department and USAID—combined—have fewer diplomats than the military has soldiers in marching

bands. The Obama administration has laudably embraced increases in both agencies. However, even with proposed increases in personnel that will take several years, USAID's Foreign Service component will still be smaller than a single light U.S. Army brigade. The State Department will have about the strength of two brigades. To augment these, State and USAID are hiring temporary personnel through a variety of mechanisms to serve in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan—many with no relevant experience. This proceeds from a misperception that failures in Iraq and Afghanistan could have been avoided with less reliance on contractors and nonprofit private sector implementing partners. To remedy this perceived problem, it is proposed that a reliance on such implementing partners will be phased out to be replaced with a "surge" of U.S. direct-hire civilians to implement the soft side of counterinsurgency and win victory in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and future conflicts. These civilians—most with little experience or even knowledge of local language—will surge into Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan's most conflicted and deadly southern and eastern provinces. There, they will be housed on military forward operating bases (FOBs) from whence they will venture out—albeit in heavily armed military convoys—to meet with local government and tribal leaders to plan and implement local projects—the "build" part of the clear, hold, build strategy. It is a pipe dream—in Afghanistan and in future conflicts.

The PRT Myth

There have been analogies drawn between the use of PRTs in Afghanistan and the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program that operated in South Vietnam from 1967 to 1972. Like the PRTs in Afghanistan, CORDS provincial and district teams were interagency and under overall military command. However, they lived and spent most of their time not on military bases, but in their respective districts, among the population they were trying to win over and protect. Both State and USAID personnel had extensive cultural training and spoke Vietnamese. Their effort at winning hearts and minds was also supported by the more clandestine but closely coordinated Phoenix Program, which targeted some 80,000 Viet Cong political cadres for assassination, arrest, or repatriation. USAID had 5,000 personnel in Vietnam, mostly serving in the field. Though there were casualties on the teams, they were not generally targets of the Viet Cong or North Vietnamese army. This is emphatically *not* the case in Afghanistan.

Today, USAID has barely 1,000 Foreign Service Officers to serve programs in 90 countries. PRTs in Afghanistan live and work in heavily defended FOBs and are generally staffed by a few State Department junior officers, a few USAID temporary hires, and a smattering of personnel from other agencies, all with little experience or knowledge of how foreign assistance works. Few know the local language. They are led by a PRT commander, usually a Navy commander or Air Force lieutenant colonel. The rest of the 60 to 100 PRT personnel are soldiers. While PRTs can provide a valuable platform for interagency coordination and incorporating "the ground truth" into policymaking, more often than not they are mismatched and sometimes bloated organizations that lack the capacity and resources to effectively carry out stabilization activities.

The PRT task is to increase the outreach of the Afghan government, enhance provincial security, and engage in reconstruction. Engagements at the community level are rare, given the need for armed convoys and heavy security at the sites visited and the en route threat of improvised

explosive devices and ambush. Sometimes, PRTs are unable to venture from their FOB for months. When they do, they arrive at a village in a convoy of armored vehicles and attempt to interact with local leaders for a few hours, surrounded by armed, vigilant U.S. soldiers. The "engagement" is observed and may even be attended by the Taliban, who are in the village every day, prepared to intimidate anyone who works with the coalition or accepts its aid. Furthermore, what the PRT sees as a friendly engagement, the average Pashtun sees as a deeply offensive invasion of his home by *feringhees* with the arrogance and temerity to point guns at him in his home and abuse *pashtunwali*—the way of the Pashtun.

Armed development does not work—particularly in the broad sickle of "Pashtunistan" that extends from Kashmir to Helmand. To paraphrase Lord Frederick Roberts about the Second Afghan War, the less they see of us, the less they will hate us. Moreover, fielding a PRT is enormously expensive for very little return. We do not need to surge more U.S. civilians to work alongside the military; we need a surge of the lighter footprint of trained *Afghans* to engage communities and build the security and trust that will enable the space for political and economic reconstruction. We can provide financial resources and technical assistance, but ultimately, Afghans will or will not rebuild their country in a manner consistent with their values. We cannot do it for them and cannot want it more than they do. In Afghanistan, we are repeating the early mistakes made in Iraq and ignoring hard lessons that we have not only known for 70 years, but many of which we inherited from the British Empire.

Effective counterinsurgency requires continuous security for, and engagement with, local communities. Ideally, the face of security and assistance should be of national and local government, but these have never been strong in Afghanistan. Most Afghans have traditionally relied on village shura councils to deal with local problems, and still do. But the shuras have few resources and are often themselves the victims of the Taliban and corrupt local officials.

we can provide financial resources and technical assistance, but ultimately, Afghans will or will not rebuild their country in a manner consistent with their values

The challenge is to empower the shuras in the absence of strong, honest local government, while giving local government time and assistance to gain effectiveness and transparency.

Community development and empowerment have been used as a tool of stabilization and reconstruction in failed or failing states since the mid-1990s. USAID and its Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) used it to great effect in the Balkans, Iraq, and Colombia. Those programs were dominated by local nationals, worked at the community level with nongovernmental councils, and eventually increased the reach of local and national government. Security began with community empowerment—from the bottom up—as communities began to grasp that their lot was improving and they had something to lose. National security forces and national government followed once communities had begun to enhance their own security, on their own.

All of these programs were run by private sector implementing partners employing a cadre of professionals experienced in conflict and postconflict environments with oversight from USAID, pursuing policies adopted by the extant administration through the interagency process. These private sector partners have been integral

to the success of the OTI mission as they have the capacity to rapidly mobilize teams of technical experts in response to a variety of political crises. In addition, contractors have not been subject to the same stringent security restrictions that U.S. Government direct hires are under. This advantage gives them more freedom to carry out their work with a lower security profile, making it easier for them to build trust at the community level. Working through implementing partners is often more cost efficient. For example, the cost of temporarily contracting services from a private sector organization that draws funding from a variety of donors is significantly lower than permanently housing the same capacity within a government agency funded only by the taxpayer. It is also a fact that in today's global threat environment, where diplomats work and often live in "imam compliant," fortressed Embassies, ride in convoys of armored SUVs protected by personal security details, and require significant logistical life support, private implementing partners are, per capita, cheaper.

In spite of general protestations against the use of contractors, many of the successes in post-conflict stabilization over the last 20 years could not have been realized without them. They are still responsible for most of the work being done by the United States in Afghanistan in spite of all the rhetoric about a civilian surge. Finally, at a time of soaring budget deficits, it is fantastical to believe that the clock can be turned back 40 years to when USAID had a staff of 17,500. It would be wise for the administration to recognize that there is far more technical expertise in the private sector to implement foreign assistance programs and that the best use of State and USAID is making policy and overseeing its implementation. Even that will require increases in trained, experienced personnel, but it is a sustainable model. PRTs are an expensive, largely ineffective use of both military and civilian resources. Overstaffing them with more civilians will not make them effective. It would serve U.S. interests far better if the administration would heed what has served best—and worst—in recent similar environments and apply the best tactics with the best resources. Failing this, all the blood and lucre will serve for nothing.

Finally, we would hope that our ambitions in Afghanistan would be lowered to the goal of establishing stability—defined as enough security, governance, and economy to begin the process of Afghans reconstructing Afghanistan—and no more. Our strategy, tactics, and resourcing should reflect that goal. On the other hand, remaking Afghanistan in our own image is a prescription for failure. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] "State-Building Policy Meeting: The Political, Institutional, and Economic Challenges of State-Building," Manhasset, NY, November 5–7, 2004.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Necla Tshigiri, "Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Revisited: Achievements, Limitations, Challenges," International Peace Academy Policy Report, October 2004, i, 15.

[4] Ibid., 15.

[5] Ibid., 16.

[6] Ibid., 17.

[7] Jeffrey D. McCausland, *Developing Strategic Leaders for the 21st Century* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, February 2008).

Building a Civilian Lessons Learned System

BY MELANNE CIVIC AND BERNARD CARREAU

In addition to the problems of building and maintaining an effective civilian presence in Afghanistan and Iraq is the matter of developing institutional knowledge in the civilian agencies—what works and what does not work in the field. The task is all the more daunting because civilian agencies do not have a core mission to maintain expertise in stabilizing war-torn countries, particularly those experiencing major counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations. Yet the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, Departments of Agriculture, Justice, Commerce, Treasury, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Energy, and other agencies have been sending personnel to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other fragile states for several years now. The agencies have relied on a combination of direct hires, temporary hires, and contractors, but nearly all of them have been plagued by relatively short tours and rapid turnarounds, making it difficult to establish enduring relationships on the ground and institutional knowledge in the agencies. The constant coming and going of personnel has led to the refrain heard more and more frequently that the United States has not been fighting the war in Afghanistan for 8 years, but rather for just 1 year, eight times in a row.

The Center for Complex Operations (CCO) is establishing a civilian lessons learned program in an effort to address some of these issues. The object is to collect civilian lessons and best practices from the field and disseminate them to the agencies with personnel deployed and to senior civilian and military decisionmakers. The military has been collecting and analyzing lessons from the field for many years, but this is a new endeavor for civilian agencies.

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History of Interagency Lessons Learned

The creation of a U.S. Government lessons learned strategy for stability operations developed over more than a decade, fueled by the new national security challenges that emerged after the Cold War. The role of lessons learned to inform the response to, and planning for, these irregular warfare and nationbuilding challenges was defined by policy imperatives in successive Presidential directives, Department of Defense (DOD) directives, and congressional legislation, and it has been the subject of years of policy and process discussions among the civilian agencies and their military partners.

PDD 56 called for U.S. Government agencies to institutionalize lessons and develop and conduct interagency training programs

In 1997, in recognition of the complexity and multidimensional nature of postconflict and other stability operations, and to avoid repeating the mistakes made in engagements in Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti, President Bill Clinton issued Presidential Decision Directive 56 (PDD 56), which called for establishing a unified strategy and training for the whole of government, collecting lessons learned from operations, and integrating these lessons into improved training and planning for the next engagement.[1] PDD 56 used the term *complex contingency operations* and called for U.S. Government agencies to institutionalize lessons and develop and conduct interagency training programs.[2]

On December 7, 2005, in response to the lack of preparedness and the absence of coordination among U.S. agencies working with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, and to the complexity of the national security challenges of Afghanistan, Sudan, Haiti, and elsewhere, President George W. Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD 44). Although not explicitly building upon PDD 56, NSPD 44 took a similar approach a step further, calling for a permanent structure for stability operations—under civilian leadership, and in coordination with the military. The Secretary of State was called upon to "coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts" among the civilian agencies in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense. NSPD 44 established as a policy imperative "improved coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for foreign states and regions at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife." Toward this end, several tasks and processes are outlined in the directive, including the development of improved and coordinated strategies, programming, and foreign assistance funding within and among the agencies; establishing a civilian surge response capability; and identifying lessons learned to inform improvements in operations. NSPD 44 also established a mechanism for the National Security Council to oversee agency collaboration to seek to resolve policy issues and decide on actions to be taken.

DOD Directive 3000.05 of November 28, 2005, raised stability operations to the level of a core military capability that "shall be given priority comparable to combat operations." It was developed concurrently with NSPD 44, mirrors the civilian-military coordinating provisions, and mandates that DOD and the military Services coordinate with the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for

Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), the civilian agencies, international institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. Under the directive, primary responsibility to gather and disseminate lessons learned for stability operations was assigned to the combatant commands through U.S. Joint Forces Command. This function was not to replace, but rather to complement and supplement the lessons learned centers of the individual military Services. The revised and updated DOD Instruction 3000.05 of September 2009, which supersedes the 2005 directive, makes explicit that the mandate for lessons learned is to serve not only the military, but also civilian agencies.

Under NSPD 44, S/CRS was given the responsibility to coordinate interagency stabilization and reconstruction activities. NSPD 44 also established a mechanism co-chaired by S/CRS and the National Security Council—the Reconstruction and Stabilization Policy Coordinating Committee (later renamed the Interagency Policy Committee under the Obama administration)—to oversee agency collaboration and to approve or seek to resolve policy issues. Between 2005 and 2007, the S/CRS structure included an Office of Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Sectoral Coordination (BPSC), which was designed to collect lessons learned and best practices and to disseminate them to civilian agencies and the military. The sectors that it focused on included transitional security, transitional justice and rule of law, infrastructure, humanitarian assistance, transitional economics, and governance. The BPSC engaged in regular discussions with U.S. partners to distill lessons learned into the "top 10" best practices for each of the sectors and produced lessons learned guides for the U.S. Government and practitioners on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and elections in postconflict environments. S/CRS also produced tools for stability operations that incorporated best practices, such as the Essential Tasks Matrix and the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework.

In 2007, the internal structure of S/CRS evolved, and the responsibility for lessons learned was moved to a standing interagency group—the Best Practices and Lessons Learned Working Group (BPWG)—as part of the existing interagency coordinating structure. The purpose of this move was to coordinate within a whole-of-government process all interested U.S. agencies and military partners in the collection, analysis, and integration of lessons learned and best practices. During the first 2 years, the group met periodically to study the challenges and to forge a path to develop a more systematic process for collecting and applying lessons learned to present and future operations for a more coordinated civilian and military response to overseas contingencies.

In March 2008, the BPWG, in partnership with the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute and the Consortium (later renamed Center) for Complex Operations, brought together policymakers and experts in lessons learned and training and education in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to identify ways to create a U.S. Government lessons learned system for reconstruction and stabilization. The symposium focused on Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it included many veterans of the PRTs from both countries.

Learning from the Military

For many years now, the military has recognized the value of collecting and analyzing

lessons learned. The Center for Army Lessons Learned was established in 1985, and the Navy, Marines, and Air Force followed suit shortly afterward. U.S. Joint Forces Command established the Joint Center for Operational Analysis (JCOA) in 2003. In addition, many DOD components, such as the Defense Logistics Agency and Defense Intelligence Agency, have established their own lessons learned units.

In developing the civilian lessons learned program, CCO drew heavily from the experiences and techniques of the military, especially the Army, but also the Navy, Marines, Air Force, and JCOA. It examined the processes in place to collect, analyze, and disseminate lessons and best practices, and it reviewed the databases that house lessons identified and the products and publications that the Services issue. In addition, CCO has been working with all of the Services to mine lessons identified in their databases and publications that deal with "civilian" issues, such as governance, economic development, and rule of law.

There are significant differences between military lessons learned programs and the new civilian program. The military collects lessons largely at the tactical level, addressing issues such as a weapon malfunction, the problem of opening the door of a burning humvee, or the need for a variable power scope or desert steel-toed boots in certain types of operations. Civilian lessons tend to be more at the operational and strategic levels, dealing with such issues as chain of command, funding sources, the effectiveness of a particular program, relations with local nationals, and even the wisdom of the mission or certain aspects of the mission. Observations from civilian actors in the field often deal with interagency relations, or civil-military relations, or U.S.–host nation relations. Whereas the military performs under a single chain of command, civilian actors in the field report through multiple chains of command, and it is often the case that no single agency can address the problems identified in the field.

in developing the civilian lessons learned program, CCO drew heavily from the experiences and techniques of the military

Many military observations collected in the field fall within familiar tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) established for a particular operation. Military planners are taught to develop operational plans in terms of impact on doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF). Often observations collected in the field "fit" into established TTPs or familiar DOTMLPF bins. Field observations may call into question certain techniques and procedures, or they may signal the need for a change in some DOTMLPF function, but they usually fit into some preestablished process, and there is usually a logical "recipient" of the observation in terms of an appropriate command, such as the G7 or J7 (for doctrine and training) or the G3 or J3 (operations).

This internal structure makes the military better situated to absorb observations from the field and to find appropriate commands to take ownership of particular issues. Yet for all this internal structure, and despite a culture steeped in military history, after action reviews, and operational lessons learned, even the military struggles with actually "learning" lessons identified in the field. The Army does not consider a lesson identified to be "learned" until it is

actually implemented, until the problem is actually solved. Many observers lament that lessons identified in the field end up in some database and are quickly forgotten. The bane of every lessons learned specialist is seeing important lessons collected from the field never actually get implemented in policy and practice.

If these problems haunt the military, they could potentially plague civilian agencies in spades. Civilian agencies do not have an internal structure to absorb lessons learned, there are no established processes and procedures or doctrine in place to guide stabilization or counterinsurgency activities in the field, often there is no obvious "owner" of lessons identified in the field, and there is rarely a single chain of command for issue resolution.

CCO Mission

With these challenges in mind, Congress mandated in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009[3] the establishment of a whole-of-government reconstruction and stabilization strategy, to include lessons learned. It called for the development of a database on previous reconstruction and stabilization operations[4] and the establishment of a Center for Complex Operations, part of whose mandate is "to conduct research, collect, analyze, and distribute lessons learned; and compile best practices."[5] Other CCO responsibilities include promoting effective coordination in preparing DOD and other U.S. Government personnel for complex operations; fostering unity of effort among the international community, including international organizations and the private sector; and identifying gaps in the education and training of DOD and other government personnel with respect to complex operations. These other responsibilities provide some outlet for sharing and disseminating the lessons and best practices collected in the field and a platform for issue resolution and policy recommendations designed to promote interagency and international unity of effort. CCO has begun working with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN) to identify international lessons and best practices and to provide a venue for sharing lessons and best practices across countries and international organizations. In addition, CCO is planning to prepare materials to enhance the training and education of government personnel in preparation for deployment.

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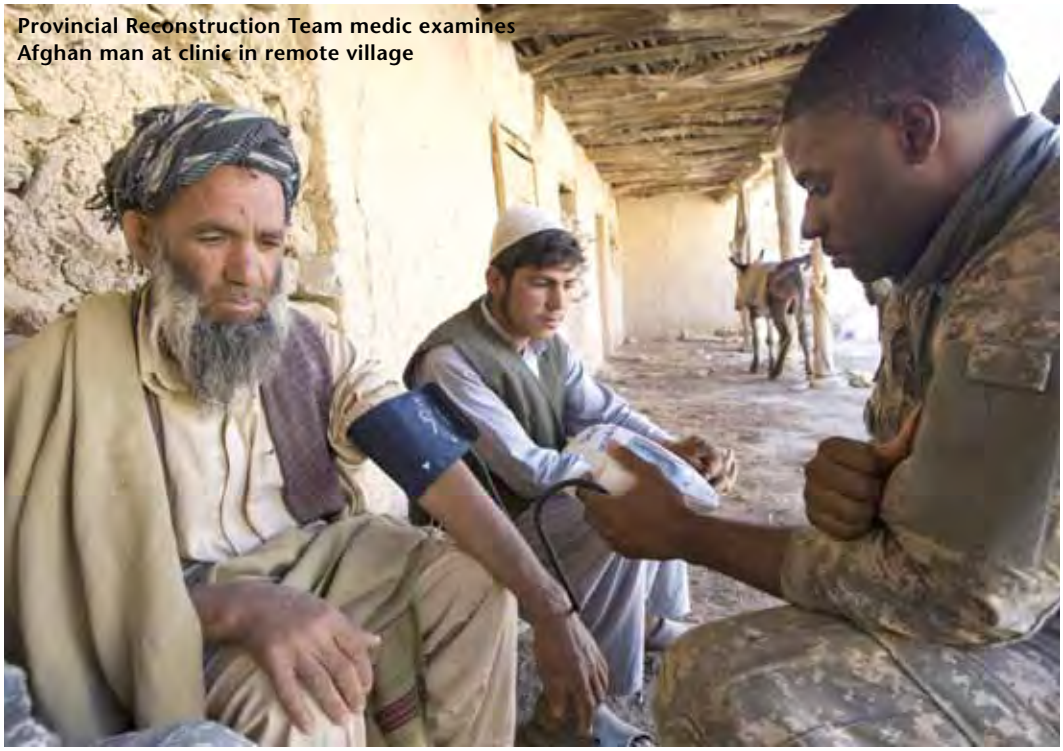
As an initial endeavor, CCO is spearheading an interagency project sponsored by the BPWG to collect, analyze, and distribute lessons learned with respect to civilian members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan PRTs. At the same time, the Services are collecting lessons from military personnel returning from PRTs. In addition to working with the military, CCO has reviewed other lessons learned models, such as those established by the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, in conjunction with state and local firefighting authorities, to develop an internal business process for conducting interviews and analyzing observations. Civilian agencies worked with the Services to develop a common set of questions for military and civilian personnel. For instance, how do civilian participants in the field understand their role and how does that role connect to the larger mission? What kind of relationships



Provincial Reconstruction Team medic examines Afghan man at clinic in remote village

U.S. Air Force (Keith Brown)

did they develop with local nationals and was there local buy-in to their activities? Were planning and training adequate, and how did they handle security and funding issues? What kind of working relationship did they have with the military? Finally, how effective were their initiatives? Because the challenges in complex operations have already been well documented, the current program is designed to elicit from the interviewees personal recommendations for both overcoming impediments and improving operations as well as creative or innovative ways for overcoming some of the longstanding and previously identified impediments.

Birthing Pains

Even with the policy and legislated mandates, the development of a civilian lessons learned program has encountered bumps in the road. Different agencies had to sort through legal requirements for sharing personal data, protecting the identity of the personnel who provide information, competing claims on the ownership of the information itself, and appropriately using and disseminating interview data. With their mature lessons learned programs, the Services had long ago resolved most of these issues. Distinct agency cultures meant differences in policy approaches. A not insignificant hurdle was the natural tendency of those engaged in the process not to want their agency to "look bad" under the spotlight of lessons learned scrutiny. Yet just as the Services have done, CCO has stressed that the lessons learned program is not an inspector general investigation and in no way attempts to evaluate the performance of any individual. In fact, participation in lessons learned interviews and

surveys, while strongly encouraged, is entirely voluntary. Together, policymakers and lawyers worked through informed consent and nondisclosure forms, such that the interview will have no negative employment-related consequences resulting from the employee agreeing or refusing to participate or from the information provided.

Agencies collaborated to come up with questions for the oral interviews and for written surveys. This was a lengthy process, and it was here that individual agency sensitivities as to how they would look under the scrutiny of lessons learned analysis came to the fore. Agencies argued for a mix of strategic and tactical questions, with the oral interview questions focusing on the strategic and operational level, and the written survey questions focusing on the tactical level. Additionally, agencies had different comfort levels regarding the public sharing of lessons learned. All agencies agreed in principle that analysis should proceed without preconditions or restrictions; but in actual practice, agency sensitivities may come to the surface again. This is where the role of CCO will become more relevant—it does not participate directly in overseas contingency operations and therefore is the only disinterested party in the civilian lessons learned program.

The Road Ahead

History has shown that merely collecting lessons, without integrating those lessons into current and future planning, procedures, and training, defeats learning and destines the U.S. Government to repeat mistakes of the past. The terms of the Iraq and Afghanistan PRT Lessons Learned project provide for a feedback loop into planning and training, and for the feedback to be disseminated as quickly as possible to inform current operations, as well as to plan for future ones. Still the program is a work in progress, and it will evolve over time with some trial and error as CCO and all participating agencies gain more experience. To be a success, the lessons learned program must be useful to both practitioners in the field and to decisionmakers in Washington.

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There are several challenges that CCO and its interagency partners have not yet tackled. An important feature of the lessons learned program will be to establish an effective reachback capability at all the agencies, as well as a network of subject matter experts, so that practitioners in the field can receive timely information and advice on matters of immediate relevance. Another challenge will be to establish effective lines of communication with nonaugmented maneuver units that have few or no civilians at all present. The PRTs are a relatively small part of all U.S. personnel stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the longer term, it will be critical to establish effective channels to transmit civilian expertise to nonaugmented military units, and vice versa—to transmit information from the maneuver units regarding their "civilian" activities to civilian actors in the field and in Washington. Finally, CCO has just begun to establish contacts with international allies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); in the coming months, it will seek to develop a mechanism for disseminating lessons and best practices to international partners, especially NATO and the UN, as well as to receive

lessons and best practices from them. Similarly, CCO will seek to develop a mechanism for sharing lessons with NGOs as well.

Current national security challenges, especially the counterterrorist and counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, require distinct yet coordinated roles for the U.S. military and civilians and unprecedented cooperation between the two. U.S. policy must respond to changing times through the examination of lessons from actual engagements to inform current and future planning, training, and operations. Successive administrations, from Clinton to Bush to Obama, have defined and redefined this problem in their own words, with incremental differences in policy toward civil-military collaboration, interagency coordination, and unity of effort. So far, despite Presidential and other policy directives and legislation in support of lessons learned, the process has for the most part been stalled at the point of the identification of lessons, without taking the next step of transforming lessons identified into lessons learned.

CCO, working through the BPWG and interested agencies, has developed a process for turning lessons identified into lessons learned and best practices, as well as for disseminating lessons to the field. An interagency analysis group will work with CCO, S/CRS, and BPWG to develop issue papers and to make policy recommendations before the Reconstruction and Stabilization Interagency Policy Committee. At the same time, there is better interagency cooperation and better civil-military cooperation now than at any time in the past two decades. The central coordinating role of S/CRS, active participation of State's regional bureaus, renewed attention to lessons learned, and new policies aimed at increasing cooperation with the military at the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as the dedicated involvement of several other agencies, all point to a renewed emphasis on lessons learned with increased vigor and intensity. The CCO statutory mandate for the first time provides a permanent home for interagency lessons learned and best practices. These factors all work in favor of developing relevant institutional knowledge at the civilian agencies for complex operations. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] White Paper, "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations: Presidential Decision Directive 56, May 1997."

[2] Ibid.

[3] *Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009* (P.L. 110–417), enacted October 14, 2008.

[4] Ibid., sec. 1607.

[5] Ibid., sec. 1031.

An Interview with Raymond T. Odierno

(DOD)

How would you characterize the threat to Iraq today? Does the potential for renewed violence or political divisions pose the greatest threat to Iraq succeeding as a viable state?

RO: With our Iraqi and coalition partners, we have made good progress in stabilizing Iraq's security situation, specifically over the last 3 years. Today, security incidents are down to levels last seen in 2003—and we continue to see slow progress toward normalcy across Iraq. From a purely security perspective, there are three primary threats from groups still seeking to destabilize Iraq, the most dangerous being al Qaeda in Iraq [AQI]. While AQI started as a broad-based insurgency capable of sustaining significant operations across Iraq, our consistent pressure has degraded AQI, and they have had to morph into a covert terrorist organization capable of conducting isolated high-profile attacks. The Iraqi people have rejected al Qaeda, and the organization is no longer able to control territory. However, AQI remains focused on delegitimizing the government of Iraq, disrupting the national election process and subsequent government formation, and ultimately causing the Iraqi state to collapse. AQI remains a strategic threat. In addition to AQI, there remain Sunni Ba'athist insurgents whose ultimate goal is regime change and a reinstitution of a Ba'athist regime. Shia extremists and Iranian surrogates also continue their lethal and nonlethal efforts to influence the development of the Iraqi state.

However, today, the greatest threats to a stable, sovereign, and self-reliant Iraq are political—underlying, unresolved sources of potential conflict that I call "drivers of instability." Iraqis have yet to gain consensus on the nature of the Iraqi state—an Islamist-based or secular-democratic government, the balance of power between the central and provincial governments, the distribution of wealth, and the resolution of disputed internal boundaries are some of the key

General Raymond T. Odierno, USA, is Commander, Multi-National Force–Iraq.

issues they face. They are still dealing with lingering ethnosectarian histories and Arab-Kurd tensions. These are issues that will take time to resolve, and we are seeing incremental progress as the Iraqis learn how to solve these issues through dialogue and the political process. Groups such as al Qaeda in Iraq and other external actors seek to exploit these political fissures and impede Iraq's continuing progress.

In December 2009, the Iraqis passed an election law stipulating that, for the first time, Iraqis will have the opportunity to vote for individual candidates as well as political parties. The law itself took some time to ratify, but the important aspect was that throughout the political process, all parties worked to build consensus and draft an acceptable law. These are positive indicators of their continued commitment to the democratic process and their ability to independently conduct credible and legitimate elections in March 2010 and the subsequent seating of a new, representative government.

our presence provides the psychological and physical support to allow the Iraqis the space required to continue dialogue and discussions, and ultimately reach political solutions to key issues

U.S. Forces–Iraq remains focused on assisting Iraq in building strategic political, economic, and security depth in order to provide a stable and secure environment. Our presence provides the psychological and physical support to allow the Iraqis the space required to continue dialogue and discussions, and ultimately reach political solutions to key issues. Overall, assisting Iraq in developing into a viable state will require strategic patience and continuous engagement well beyond 2011.

How will violence levels affect the withdrawal timeline for the remainder of 2010? Will all troops leave before the 2011 deadline?

RO: In accordance with our bilateral Security Agreement, implemented at the beginning of last year, we will withdraw U.S. forces by December 31, 2011. We are abiding by the Security Agreement, and will continue to do so. Additionally, per the President's guidance outlined in February 2009, we will end combat operations as of August 31, 2010, and transition to a training and advisory role supporting civil and military capacity-building, while continuing to conduct targeted counterterrorism missions within the Iraqi rule of law through the end of 2011.

We are currently executing this guidance, and I have confidence in our way ahead. Every indicator is going in the right direction. Security incidents are at all-time lows in Iraq: attacks, military and Iraqi civilian deaths, as well as ethnosectarian incidents, have all decreased. I want to point out that these positive trends have continued since we implemented the Security Agreement in January 2009 and began operating by, with, and through the Iraqi Security Forces [ISF] within the Iraqi rule of law—and again, after U.S. combat forces departed Iraqi cities on June 30, placing full responsibility for security with the Iraqis.

What many people do not realize is that over the past 1½ years—since the end of the surge—we have been drawing down. During the height of the surge in September 2007, we had approximately 175,000 U.S. and coalition troops on the ground in Iraq. Today, we have just less than 100,000. We have withdrawn over 75,000 troops and their equipment while continuing to accomplish our mission. Basically, we

have systematically thinned the lines in Iraq, deliberately and carefully turning over responsibilities to the Iraqi Security Forces with U.S. forces still assisting, training, and advising. Over time, as local security conditions improved, we have adjusted our footprint. Where we once had a brigade, we now have a battalion; where we once had a battalion, we now have a company. In fact, the Iraqis have responsibility for security throughout the country now, with our support to ensure success. We have been able to do this because of our solid partnerships, which continue to enhance the operational readiness and capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces.

Another important factor in reducing the violence has been the efforts of our civilian partners. Across Iraq, I have asked all commanders—working with Department of State Provincial Reconstruction Team [PRT] leaders—to understand the root causes of instability in their areas of responsibility and work with local Iraqi leaders to mitigate them. In many areas, our primary efforts are focused on assisting PRTs to help provincial governments provide essential services and economic opportunities for their citizens. We understand that a comprehensive approach is necessary to improve and sustain improved security over the long term.

U.S. forces have evolved from leading security efforts to partnering with and enabling Iraqi forces to overwatching independent Iraqi operations. We remain focused on sustaining the current security environment and enabling an increasingly capable Iraqi Security Forces to provide stability and security for their own people.

With the drawdown of U.S. forces, can civilian capabilities such as PRTs operate safely? Are more civilian capabilities needed as U.S. forces leave? What will be the impact of reducing the number of PRTs from 23 to 5?

RO: Over the next 2 years, the number of PRTs will reduce slowly as our military reduces its presence. By August 2010, we will have approximately 50,000 U.S. troops essentially supporting 16 PRTs. By the end of 2011, the Department of State will reduce PRTs to five located in areas strategically important to the future stability of Iraq. This is another step in our evolving presence in Iraq—and an example of how we have continuously adapted to the strategic and operational requirements of this complex environment. Our hard-fought security gains have set the stage to transition from a focus on establishing security to a focus on developing Iraqi institutional capacities that will sustain the long-term stability of Iraq. Our efforts in Iraq fully embody a whole-of-government approach with a comprehensive interagency strategy focused on accomplishing our overarching goal as defined by President Obama in February 2009: a long-term and enduring strategic partnership between the United States and a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant Iraq that contributes to the peace and security of the region.

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At the end of last year, we—U.S. Forces–Iraq and U.S. Embassy Baghdad—published

our Joint Campaign Plan [JCP] that outlines strategic priorities, integrated goals along four lines of operation (political, economic/energy, rule of law, and security), and risks. The JCP synchronizes our civilian and military elements of the U.S. Government. It also importantly details the transition of enduring functions, once military-led, to civilian entities including the U.S. Embassy, other international and nongovernmental organizations, as well as the government of Iraq. As Iraq continues to build its governmental foundations, economic development and foreign investment become increasingly important, broadening the range and types of required civilian assistance—formal and informal—to the nation of Iraq.

Today, our military forces support the 23 Department of State–led PRTs. Staffed by over 500 personnel from agencies and departments including the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID], State, Defense, Justice, and Agriculture, PRTs are focused on supporting Iraqi civil development. While providing security, the U.S. military also supports PRTs with military personnel including Civil Affairs and, as required, additional uniformed personnel with required expertise in fields such as engineering and rule of law.

Across Iraq, provincial capacity has matured, although this maturation varies depending on local conditions. Many areas do not require the same level of support as in the past. As a result, we are able to adjust our operational footprint and reduce the number of PRTs over time. However, the U.S. Embassy, in conjunction with U.S. Forces–Iraq, continuously reevaluates and prioritizes efforts and application of resources according to the ever-changing strategic and operational environment.

As we draw down and establish our transition force by September 1, 2010, we will ensure our ability to continue to support civil capacity and ISF capacity-building. An important element of this transition is the establishment of Advisory and Assistance Brigades [AABs], which are structurally designed to coordinate and achieve unity of effort across the civil and security spheres to nurture the growth and capacities of Iraqi civil and military institutions while simultaneously providing force protection. By August, we will have AABs strategically located across Iraq whose *primary mission* will be to support PRTs, the United Nations, and other nongovernmental organizations, as well as to train and advise Iraqi Security Forces.

From what you have seen in Iraq, are military and civilian advising efforts meeting U.S. objectives, politically and operationally?

RO: Yes, given the courage, compassion, and commitment of our Servicemembers and civilians who have served—and continue to serve—in Iraq, I believe we are on a path to achieve our national goals. As I mentioned, the President clearly outlined our goals of a stable, sovereign, and self-reliant Iraq with just, representative, and accountable government—and an enduring partnership with an Iraq that contributes to the peace and security of the region. At the end of 2008, the United States and Iraq signed two historic bilateral agreements that reflect our maturing relationship and enhanced cooperation between our two nations.

Fully recognizing Iraqi sovereignty, the Security Agreement and Strategic Framework Agreement [SFA] guide our current operations and our future strategic partnership. As we implemented these agreements, we changed our mindset as well as how we operated and interacted with our Iraqi partners who increasingly

began leading their own civil and security efforts. Last year, Iraq marked a number of additional significant milestones including the successful provincial elections in January and the ISF assumption of security responsibility in urban areas in June.

For nearly 15 months now, we have conducted all military operations in Iraq with complete transparency, full coordination, and open communication with the Iraqis—all within the Iraqi rule of law. We have evolved from leading security efforts to partnering and advising. We also continue to mentor Iraqis at the national and ministerial level, with uniformed and civilian personnel embedded in Iraqi ministries, particularly key ministries such as oil, finance, electricity, in addition to the security ministries. As Iraqi civil capacity has increased, our civilian partners have also evolved to advising and mentoring. We have a ways to go, but the Iraqis continue to make progress.

The next step will be the transition from now through 2011 as we reduce our military presence. How we transition and draw down will be critical to enhancing the government of Iraq's political, diplomatic, economic, and security depth. The SFA, which defines our long-term government-to-government partnership, will be the foundation for our strategic partnership and the continued growth of Iraqi civil capacity.

What cultural changes are needed among military and civilian agencies to be more effective in joint operations (that is, State does not "do" irregular warfare, Defense does not "do" nationbuilding, and so forth)?

RO: In the future, none of our operations can or will be conducted without full interagency partnership. The complexity of the environment requires a combined governmental approach. From a military perspective, we must understand the total environment and not simply focus on available military capabilities. It's about understanding how to best leverage our interagency capabilities. After assessing the operational environment, we must then thoroughly assess which interagency partner is best suited to address and solve particular problems. It's about learning how to achieve unity of effort without always having unity of command over all of the elements operating within an area. The overall level of security and stability will be a key factor in determining the amount of military involvement in nationbuilding and civil capacity-building. In Iraq, we have learned this through our embedded PRTs at the brigade level and the development of our Joint Campaign Plan at the U.S. Embassy and Force level.

it's about learning how to achieve unity of effort without always having unity of command over all of the elements operating within an area

Today's complexity requires much more of our leaders. We must be able to assess, understand, and adapt. We must have the ability to think through complex, multidimensional problems, taking into account the diplomatic, economic, military, political, and cultural implications of every action. As we've learned, battlefield victories alone do not equal strategic success, and effective solutions require both a thorough understanding of the underlying cultural, political, tribal, and socioeconomic situation and a unity of effort. These, plus mindset and cultural changes, are well under way today.

What institutional changes (in Washington and in the field) are needed to enable an improved whole-of-government response to complex operations in the future?

RO: Future success in Iraq relies on our whole-of-government involvement in building Iraq's capacity. It is important to understand that U.S. engagement after 2011 is as important as our continued engagements, including military presence, prior to 2011. The Strategic Framework Agreement is about establishing long-term, nonmilitary partnerships across the spectrum of our government beyond 2011. Through the SFA, we will help Iraq continue to build strategic depth in all their institutions—with an emphasis on economic, diplomatic, and security institutions—to develop into a stable state.

as we move forward, it is imperative that other U.S. agencies have the appropriate funding and training to allow them to support expeditionary operations and achieve unity of effort in complex environments

We have adapted and continue to adapt to ever-changing circumstances in Iraq. A perfect example is the Army's AABs, designed and structured to achieve a unity of effort as we transition to a primary focus on civil capacity-building. Given today's complexity, our collective challenge is to take what we have developed here and codify it in our educational institutions, doctrine, and leader development across our different institutions. I believe developing adaptive, creative, and fundamentally sound leaders is our cornerstone. Our institutions continue to adjust, incorporating current lessons learned. For example, we continue to emphasize and encourage interagency interaction at our senior Service colleges—at a greater degree than in the past. The real question is not whether our educational institutions have adjusted, but whether they will continue to adjust. I have complete confidence that they will, but it is up to us as senior leaders to ensure this happens.

Institutionally, the Department of Defense has funding and training programs in place with resources dedicated to support an expeditionary military, run the organization, and continue the professional development of Servicemembers and Defense Department civilians. It is critical to fund all of these, including programs designed to prepare our leaders for future complex operations. In the military, we have built the capacity—scope, depth, and breadth—into our system to accomplish this, even during wartime.

As we move forward, it is imperative that other U.S. agencies have the appropriate funding and training to allow them to support expeditionary operations and achieve unity of effort in complex environments. This will require congressional recognition. We are placing additional burdens on the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Treasury, for example, in addition to other agencies because they have the expertise needed to address issues in complex operations such as Operation *Iraqi Freedom*. However, other departments are not funded to be expeditionary. We are asking them to send people to Iraq and Afghanistan, yet we have not increased their budget allowing them to hire more people so that they can continue with their institutional missions and these new requirements. One specific example is police training. Our Joint Campaign Plan outlines how the military will turn this over to the State Department—which runs foreign police training programs all over the world.

However, they require funding and the capacity to continue this program beyond 2011—when U.S. forces depart—to develop a fully professionalized Iraqi police force.

It has been argued that the Anbar Awakening and the Sons of Iraq* [SOI] *helped turn the tide in Iraq. Was U.S. support for the Sons of Iraq critical? How will a reduced U.S. presence in Iraq impact these groups?

RO: In 2006, the Awakening movement began to take hold in Anbar Province as tribally focused Sunnis began to reject AQI and became willing to stand up against extremists. However, they could not do this alone. With the surge, we increased our military presence allowing us to secure—and enhance the confidence of—the Sunni population and therefore set the conditions for the movement to solidify. Building on the success in Anbar, and because of our increased troop numbers across Iraq, we were then able to expand the awakening to other Sunni areas. From a tactical level reconciliation with Sunni insurgents operating in a predominantly Sunni area, we carefully shepherded this into a national, Iraqi-led reconciliation program. Today, the Iraqi government administers the SOI program—with our oversight—building overall confidence toward achieving future reconciliation of all groups as Iraq moves forward.

Last summer, the Iraqis began transitioning SOI into the Iraqi Security Forces and other nonsecurity ministries. However, as they began preparing for national elections, national and provincial leaders decided—with the concurrence of all parties—to slow down transitions in key areas, realizing that the SOI were instrumental to their overall security architecture. As the Iraq government developed its 2010 federal budget, it struggled with the effects of fluctuating oil prices, but the first program it fully funded was the SOI program. This was an Iraqi-led prioritization, which says a lot about the commitment to moving forward. There are still some lingering tensions in various areas, but U.S. forces will remain engaged for nearly 2 more years, and we will continue to play the role of honest brokers and facilitate continued confidence-building measures leading to long-term national unity.

What are two of your key lessons learned from Iraq?

RO: First, we have learned that we must do a better job of fully understanding the environment in which we jointly operate. In 2003, nearly all of our military leaders had just a superficial understanding of the tribal, political, cultural, and ethnosectarian dynamics within Iraq itself and Islam as a whole. Today, military leaders at all levels work to understand the intricacies of the operational and strategic environment. With their civilian counterparts, they look for root causes of violence—the drivers of instability—and think through the second- and third-order effects. Taking into account the political, economic, cultural, historical, social, and security factors shaping the environment enables us to identify mitigating actions. Having seen the changing dynamics

it goes back to understanding what everyone brings to the table and figuring out how we can employ all of these talents to achieving our goals of providing stability in Iraq

over the past 6 years reinforces that the U.S. military is an incredible learning organization capable of boundless ingenuity and adaptation.

Second, having spent a significant amount of time as the Corps and Force commander, I have realized it is not about unity of command, but unity of effort of all capabilities and capacities on the ground. In Iraq today, we have the United Nations, nongovernmental organizations, U.S. agencies and departments, U.S. military, and the government of Iraq. We must organize, plan, and synchronize all organizational efforts and assets to achieve our common goals and objectives. Today, we have junior leaders—battalion commanders and even captains on a smaller scale—who understand this imperative. It goes back to understanding what everyone brings to the table and figuring out how we can employ all of these talents to achieving our goals of providing stability in Iraq. As the military continues to draw down, unity of effort will be a tenet guiding our efforts.

Has Iraq become the "forgotten war"?

RO: In the short term, clearly national attention was diverted from Iraq as the administration focused on developing our strategy for Afghanistan. And, as we increase our military and governmental investment in Afghanistan, it will continue to garner significant attention. However, I do not believe Iraq has become the "forgotten war." It has seen less attention for good reasons: our civil and military successes have allowed us to reduce our military presence as Iraq develops the capacities and competencies required as a stable, sovereign, and self-reliant state. Ultimately, the U.S. chain of command understands the long-term, strategic importance of Iraq, a country that remains vital to stability in the Middle East having always played a significant role in regional security dynamics. While our combat mission will end in about 5 months, the U.S. Government remains committed to our Iraqi partner and our long-term partnership. Focusing primarily on stability operations, U.S. forces will continue to provide support to civil capacity-building missions with our interagency partners and the United Nations while conducting targeted counterterrorism operations by, with, and through the Iraqi Security Forces.

Iraq is a country rich in history with a culture steeped in tradition, yet it is also a state and a society under construction, struggling to define its identity and its place in the world after decades of oppression and violence. Our military presence through 2011 provides psychological and physical support to the Iraqi people, the government of Iraq, and the Iraqi Security Forces. The level and nature of U.S. engagement with the Iraqis will continue to change as we draw down our military forces and as the Iraqis build their own competencies. Through the Strategic Framework Agreement, the United States has a mechanism for supporting Iraq in developing its institutional and human capacity, essentially its strategic depth. Iraq has made steady progress but has a long way to go. Success will be defined by our ability to support Iraq's developing institutional capacity—from governance to economics—that will sustain its long-term stability. We must have strategic patience.

We must also resource those agencies that will continue to have a presence and effect positive change in Iraq. Having demonstrated tremendous resiliency, I believe the Iraqis are determined to make their country different from what it once was. And the United States is committed to its enduring relationship with Iraq long after military forces have departed. **PRISM**

An Interview with Thomas S. Szayna

Diane Baldwin (RAND)

Editor's Note: *Integrating Civilian Agencies in Stability Operations*, coauthored by Thomas S. Szayna, Derek Eaton, James E. Barnett, Brooke Stearns Lawson, Terrence K. Kelly, and Zachary Haldeman, is a recently published RAND study funded by the U.S. Army. It is intended to inform the Army how it can contribute to civilian efforts within complex operations involving stability, security, transition, and reconstruction (SSTR) and how collaborations in strategic planning and field operations between the Army and civilians can be more productive. The study begins by describing the distinct strengths of military and civilian institutions and then delves deeply into questions of relative capacity, priority skill sets, and the civilian agencies most needed for such operations. The study critically examines current and planned civilian approaches to SSTR, including the interagency Civilian Response Corps (CRC), and entrenched structural challenges of civilian agencies and the Army, and recommends a collaborative civilian-military approach that integrates Army Civil Affairs liaison officers assigned to the civilian agencies and SSTR operations.

What do you see as the pros and cons—from a U.S. perspective—of the U.S. military taking an active operational and expert role in SSTR, even in a permissive environment? And what do you see as the pros and cons from the host-nation perspective?

TS: For successful SSTR engagements, it is essential to have effective cooperation of civilians and military. The extent to which the military will play a supportive versus leading role will be determined by the conditions on the ground. If the CRC will be involved in an operation where security is an issue, it will need

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a military escort. In larger operations, it will need military augmentation in terms of expertise because even if the most optimistic numbers of CRC are funded, there still will be a need for a lot of additional people and skill sets. And assuming that PRT [Provincial Reconstruction Team]–like Advance Civilian Teams and Field Advance Civilian Teams were formed, even in a place where the need for military personnel is fairly limited, there is still likely to be a need for substantial logistical resources and augmentation in numbers of experts in governance, rule of law, and reconstruction. Both in terms of readily deployable expertise augmentation and logistical and security elements, the military does and will continue to have a role to play in SSTR operations. Ideally, civilian personnel would play the dominant role, but, realistically, the military is likely to be involved in some form or fashion. In most of the potential SSTR operations, the issue is not whether the military will be involved but to what extent.

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As to the host-nation perspective, much depends on the specifics of the operation. If the operation is part of a multilateral effort and the military is in a supportive role and U.S. soldiers are only one of the military components, then any negative perceptions (because of distrust of foreign military presence) are likely to be muted. In a situation where security still needs to be established, military presence may be essential and, at least initially, is likely to have a reassuring aspect.

Does your research show that the military is willing to develop the myriad skills necessary in a reconstruction and stabilization engagement? Are they willing to divert resources from all their other obligations for state-building? Based on your research, how active would the Army and/or the Department of Defense* [DOD] *want to continue to be in SSTR operations?

TS: If one envisions a true whole-of-government approach, then one should not draw too stark of a distinction between Servicemembers and U.S. agency civilians. The U.S. military has a great deal of capacity for these operations; however, the depth of capability for the military is not as great as on the civilian side. Often, the greatest need is the ability to think on one's feet and interact with the locals, which the military can do very well. Currently, the military cannot match the depth of expertise that civilians have, nor should they. The military should provide complementary capability with overlaps to civilian expertise, as well as supplementary capacity. Given the military's focus on stability operations over the past 8 years, there is a clear understanding within DOD that readiness for stability operations is not a choice but a necessity that it has to prepare for.

If the Civilian Response Corps reserve component* [CRC–R] *were funded and made a reality, how would that change your assessment of the need for U.S. military supplementary capacity in SSTR operations?

TS: The more the merrier; certainly the CRC–R would offset some of the capability and numbers needed. But it would be difficult to imagine an SSTR operation in a failed state,

or any operation where security is an issue, not needing complementary and supplementary U.S. military expertise and assets.

What did your research reveal, or what opinion did you formulate, regarding the relationship between the subject matter experts of the U.S. Agency for International Development* [USAID] *and those of the domestic agencies that correspond to roles that USAID normally would play? Or would the agency affiliations blur under a true whole-of-government approach?

TS: Capability for engagement in an SSTR operation involves three critical criteria: (1) technical expertise within that agency, (2) a developmental perspective, and (3) an external perspective outside of the United States. For example, the Foreign Agricultural Service [FAS] possesses all three of these criteria. Taken a step further, involving the FAS in the strategic planning process from the start would give us not only the premier agency in Agriculture, but also its knowledge of other centers of expertise in its areas. In SSTR operations involving agriculture, therefore, Agriculture's FAS should have a role, alongside USAID and the Department of State regional and functional experts. In such a scenario, S/CRS [the Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization] would be an enabler in its coordinating role. But the overall goal is to diminish agency and departmental lines and bring in expertise wherever it resides in the U.S. Government.

In your study, there is an intriguing analogy of civilian agencies contrasted with DOD to police contrasted with fire departments in their respective approaches, roles, and capabilities, whereby the police mostly preserve the steady-state and preserve the peace, with limited capacity to react to sudden major outbreaks of crime by diverting essential resources, and the fire department exists to deal with occasional but potentially serious threats to public safety, such as fires and natural disasters, while fire department personnel otherwise spend their days training for putting out a fire and are on call to respond to a disaster. Would you expand on this analogy and what it implies for future success? Now that the Department of State and USAID have received funding to establish the CRC active and standby components, what do you think will be the remaining institutional impediments?

the CRC augments the number of on-call, highly skilled resources for a surge response

TS: Like any analogy, the fire department versus police department distinction has its limitations, though the overall differences are helpful in understanding the constraints that each faces. The analogy does illustrate the contrasting modes of operation and resulting different approaches to planning and time-horizon orientations. The CRC squares the circle in a way. It augments the number of on-call, highly skilled resources for a surge response. However, these operations are complex and, in operations focused on medium- and larger-sized countries, need a lot of expertise and a lot of people on the ground. The CRC still is constrained by resources. I hope I'm wrong, but I suspect that it will be difficult for Congress to justify a civilian body that would have an on-hold function.

For the time being at least, the CRC seems to provide one part of the solution.

Given the current resource constraints and ongoing budget cuts, what does your research lead you to recommend as to what could and should be changed now for civilian planning and DOD planning for SSTR engagements?

TS: I see the surge capacity as a sort of "insurance policy" for future SSTR needs. It is up to Congress and the President to decide, of course, what type and how comprehensive an insurance policy would allow the United States to be ready to intervene in future fragile and failing state situations. Having worked on the issue of peace and stability operations since the early 1990s, the remarkable constant over time is that we have experienced the same civil-military problems repeatedly and seemingly have been unable to institutionalize much from the experiences. The formation of S/CRS and CRC offers potential pathways to break that cycle. However, to be effective, we would have to establish a standing corps with great diversity and depth of skills. It is a political question how big that corps should be. Furthermore, if we have a certain capability, we will be more likely to use it than if we didn't have it. Therefore, I suspect that the CRC likely would always be deployed somewhere. That's the thing that's toughest to justify—the on-call capability. Given such likely deployments, it would be wise for the civilians to take a serious look at aspects of DOD's planning processes—not necessarily the detailed planning techniques that DOD uses, but the overall principles by which it prepares for contingencies. No plan survives its implementation, but planning does allow for better preparation and anticipation of potential problems.

On the military side, the military has enormous resources in this area, which it could utilize more effectively. Army Civil Affairs is probably the greatest asset for enabling civil-military planning. The specific area where Civil Affairs can make an impact is with its planning teams, which are designed to support strategic civil-military operations planning. They need better training, but the mechanism is in place.

The report notes that current Army Civil Affairs planning focuses primarily at the tactical level, with a shortage of strategic and operational planning for Active and Reserve Civil Affairs officers. Does your research lead you to recommend that the specialized training be integrated with civilian training?

TS: Absolutely. There should be coordination between the military and civilian training in SSTR—an overlap at least. Army Civil Affairs strategic and operational level planners need to have the same understanding of and approach toward SSTR ops as their civilian counterparts.

The report recommends the passage of a national Goldwater-Nichols–type act. Would you like to expand on this?

TS: The time for such an act has come. The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Project on National Security Reform, and others have recommended the same. Given the situation that we have been facing over the last 8 years, this is something that needs to be addressed, realizing that it will take years to work out and implement. It has been too long already that we have been operating under a less than whole-of-government approach. The aim is to build a corps of highly

trained, upper-level civilian U.S. Government employees who see eye to eye on these issues and thereby break the vertical stovepipe way of doing things. As we note in our report, exhortations for altruistic behavior on the part of personnel in the Federal administration are not enough; a change in the incentive system is needed. It is critical to start a national debate on this issue so as to break the cycle of repeatedly experiencing the same problems in peace and stability operations.

In the absence or interim, what did your research indicate are the most pressing and essential elements for the coordination of civilian agencies whether civ-mil or mil-civ?

TS: Even without a Goldwater-Nichols–type act, at least there has to be a wider and greater understanding of the structural problems and the gaps and that the problems can be addressed adequately only at the national level by Congress or the President. The shortcomings we've experienced repeatedly do not stem from ill-intentioned or incompetent civilian employees. They're a reflection of the constraints and the incentive systems they face. Other steps include the need to have more specific benchmarks and metrics to assess progress in moving forward in the whole-of-government approach. Such assessment tools could help justify the greater expenditures for the CRC and increased funding generally for USAID. On that note, much greater attention needs to be paid to providing USAID with the resources to meet its mission. Structurally, there are things that DOD can do in SSTR operations, but still, that will be similar to one hand clapping, so to speak. USAID and State are the key agencies with SSTR capabilities. DOD has tried to reach out and bring in civilians but has not always been successful, sometimes because of a lack of understanding of the way the civilian agencies operate. However, bringing together civilian and military planners in regular tabletop exercises will be another essential step. What needs to be done is developing mil-civ and civ-mil familiarization, to get them talking and making it as easy as possible to contact each other when a contingency occurs. The Army is the main provider of the SSTR capabilities on the military side for stability operations, and to improve the situation, the Army could focus on the resourcing, training, and organization of Army Civil Affairs.

the aim is to build a corps of highly trained, upper-level civilian U.S. Government employees who see eye to eye and thereby break the vertical stovepipe way of doing things

Given several recent developments—the authorization of the Civilian Response Corps under the National Defense Authorization Act for 2009, substantial funding of the active and standby components, and the revision of DOD Directive 3000.5—what are your thoughts on how much progress has been accomplished and how much more is still ahead? If you could write an addendum, what would it be?

TS: If I could write an addendum to the report, I would note how little seems to have changed substantively. There have been many incremental steps, but most of our recommendations remain relevant. Those who deal with

the issues of increasing civ-mil cooperation in stability operations can point to numerous steps over the past couple of years that have made a difference. There has been progress and it's undeniable. However, from the larger perspective of asking the question of how much more effective would the United States be if we were faced with an SSTR operation similar to that in Iraq in 2003, I'm not all that confident that the improvement would be one of kind rather than one of degree. The problems are structural, incremental change can only go so far, and there is a need for national level leadership on this issue. **PRISM**

Book Reviews

The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and for All

By Gareth Evans
Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008
349 pp. $24.95
ISBN-13: 978-0-815-72504-6

REVIEWED BY MELANNE CIVIC

"It has taken a desperately long time for the idea to take hold that mass atrocities are the world's business: that they cannot be universally ignored and that sovereignty is not a license to kill" (p. 11). Gareth Evans opens his book with this condemnation of the international community's decades of practical indifference to gross and systematic human rights abuses in its wide range of manifestations. Evans, a former Australian state minister, had more than 20 years in government service behind him and was just starting nearly a decade of public interest service as president and chief executive officer of the International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based nongovernmental organization, when he was appointed to co-chair the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The commission produced a report that outlines the *responsibility to protect* (R2P) concept.

Despite the universal vow of "never again" at the conclusion of World War II, the United Nations (UN) and member states have floundered or even looked the other way when faced with the mass atrocities committed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo, and elsewhere, citing traditional notions of state sovereignty and agreements drawing upon the UN Charter as a prohibition for interference. Evans does not accuse the international community of seeking to avoid action but rather describes it as being faced with a dilemma that previously seemed irreconcilable.

This dilemma is reflected in the text of the UN Charter. Article 2.1 states the guiding principle of the equal sovereignty of all members. Article 2.7 expands on this concept and maintains that "nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state." While sovereignty often is cited as a bar to intervention of any form, article 2.7 does not frame this right as absolute and qualifies sovereignty rights. Chapter 7, article 39 allows for intervention in the cases of a "threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression." Yet even under the provisions of chapter 7 of the charter, the dilemma remained: when do otherwise domestic issues of rights abuses occurring within borders, or state indifference to the plight of its people, rise to the level of international concern, justifying and even requiring intervention?

Clearly, the path of creative legal interpretations of the international community's right to breach state sovereignty was not a productive way to get at the problem of internal

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threats to a nation's population and an external right to intervene. Evans describes how the debate shifted in the 1990s from state security to *human security*. While human security as a basis for outside intervention was not widely embraced, this shift in perspective nevertheless opened the door for a debate centered on individuals and the state's role in providing for and protecting their rights. Evans relates how Francis Deng, a former Sudanese diplomat and Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons from 1992 to 2004, articulated the concept of sovereignty as a duty in 1996: "I am wholly respectful of your country's sovereignty, but the essence of being a sovereign country these days is not just protection from outside interference—rather, it's a matter of states having positive responsibilities of their own citizens' welfare, and to assist each other" (p. 36).

At the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, this debate crystallized with Secretary-General Kofi Annan calling for a reconciliation of state sovereignty principles and the reality of *gross and systematic violations of human rights*. The ICISS was formed by Canadian foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy on September 14, 2000, as an independent international body with a mandate to "promote a comprehensive debate on the relationship between intervention and sovereignty, with a view to fostering global political consensus on how to move from polemics towards action within the international system." Axworthy appointed Gareth Evans as co-chair of the commission.

The concept of R2P marks a shift in the traditional formulation of sovereignty and states rights, as it seizes upon the human rights paradigm. The concept of human rights begins from the position that rights intrinsically include associated duties and that states have certain duties to their citizens, including recognizing the "inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family." Drawing upon this well-established principle of the international human rights–duties continuum, R2P finds that states' sovereignty rights have corresponding duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, in the event of mass and gross breaches of such duties, the international community has a responsibility to intervene to protect against mass human rights abuses. Thus, R2P refers to the duties of a state—and to the duties of the international community when the state cannot or will not fulfill these duties—to prevent mass atrocity, to react when such atrocities occur, and to rebuild after atrocities and/or interventions (p. 43).

R2P encompasses these three dimensions: prevention, reconstruction/rebuilding, and, in the most extreme cases, military action. While many emphasize R2P's interventionist element, Evans is firm in his description of its multifaceted quality and the implications for the international community. Herein is the link of R2P to new concepts of national security and complex operations prevalent in the United States and elsewhere in the international community, which, arguably, are consistent with R2P, although not explicitly so. As the 2002 U.S. National Security Strategy concluded, "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones." National Security Presidential Directive 44 of 2005 expands on this position through the policy determination that the United States "has a significant stake" in assisting countries "at risk from conflict or civil strife . . . to anticipate state failure, avoid it whenever possible, and respond quickly and effectively when necessary and appropriate to promote peace, security, development, democratic practices, market economies,

and the rule of law." Likewise, Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 3000.05, first issued in 2004 under the Bush administration and revised and reissued in 2009 by the Obama administration, identifies stability operations as a core mission, on a par with combat operations, and directs DOD to have the "capability and capacity to . . . establish civil security and civil control, restore or provide essential service, repair critical infrastructure, and provide humanitarian assistance." Similarly, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Australia, and other members of the international community have come to view stability and reconstruction operations for failed and failing states as security imperatives and national duties.

Evans admonishes those who invoke R2P inappropriately and points out the negative results to which this leads: too narrowly, as an exclusively interventionist doctrine justifying military force, or too broadly, in contexts in matters of human security such as the ravages of HIV/AIDS, weapons proliferation, and the destabilizing effects of climate change (p. 64). According to Evans, the overly narrow interpretation not only ignores the preventative facets of the responsibility, but also confuses the *necessary* with the *sufficient*: "It is necessary for a case to be really extreme for coercive military force to be an option, but the fact that it is extreme is not itself sufficient that force *should* be applied" (p. 59). Evans warns that using R2P too broadly risks diluting its capacity to mobilize international consensus in the cases where it is really needed (p. 69).

Prevention, in fact, is described by Evans as the most important dimension of the responsibility to protect: prevention of conflict, of human rights abuses, and of suffering resulting from state actions or failure to act where action is needed. Prevention encompasses a full range of actions—political, diplomatic, legal, and economic—and rests primarily with the sovereign state itself. Only when the state fails or refuses to prevent widespread human rights breaches is the international community's responsibility triggered, and even then, "a very big part of its preventative response should be to help countries to help themselves." This element of prevention in R2P is consistent with and builds upon UN Charter chapters 6 and 8, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Evans outlines that the UN World Summit's acceptance of the ICISS report takes this concept a step further, extrapolating a responsibility of "helping states to *build capacity* to protect their populations . . . and to assisting those which are under stress *before crises and conflicts break out*" (p. 80).

What sets Evans' treatment of R2P apart are not only his insider perspective on the development of the concept, his comprehensive research, and his refined writing style, but also his extension of analysis to the operational level. This renders his treatment particularly useful for practitioner and policymaker alike. Evans examines what it means, in practical terms, to seek to prevent conflict, to stabilize, reconcile the harms committed, and rebuild; who should participate in such activities; the importance of developing a standing capacity to respond; what tools are available short of military intervention; and what criteria determine when it is legal and legitimate to intervene.

As Evans reminds the reader throughout, and as the ICISS report maintains, the responsibility to prevent conflict is the single most important dimension of the responsibility to protect.

Evans outlines the four sector-based dimensions for stabilization and reconstruction, which are the foundations of conflict prevention and

post-conflict stabilization in R2P: security, good governance, justice and reconciliation, and economic and social development. He argues that best practices indicate that these objectives must be pursued "more or less simultaneously and in an integrated manner" (p. 149). Sustainable security cannot be achieved in the absence of justice, reconciliation, and economic development unless the wrongs of the past are addressed, systems for justice and rule of law are instituted, and a sound economic base is established. Likewise, justice, rule of law, and security will be tenuous in the absence of economic development, if much of the population lives in dire poverty and without hope.

An essential cross-sector dimension of the stabilization process is disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), which cuts across security, justice and reconciliation, and economic development elements. DDR means that former combatants relinquish their weapons, stand down from belligerent activities, ideally engage in a reconciliation processing addressing the harms that were committed, and reintegrate into the economic and social base of society. Evans notes the complexity of DDR and the importance of identifying and engaging all stakeholders, including women (p. 156) who may not have carried arms, but could have been forced into dependency roles or subjected to gender-based crimes such as rape as a weapon of war.

As to who should participate in peacebuilding, Evans argues that, short of military intervention, the responsibilities of conflict prevention, stabilization, and reconciliation rest squarely with civilians rather than military actors—with the local government being the first line of defense. In the absence of capacity or will, R2P means that the responsibilities fall to the international community to fulfill. He describes the advances in civilian preparedness in prevention, stabilization, and reconstruction in the European Union (civilian rapid reaction capabilities) and United States (Civilian Response Corps). The UN has a number of standby arrangements, mostly to address surges in its peacekeeping force needs. Additionally, the UN has been developing a capacity to respond to conflict prevention and stabilization needs with "quick impact projects," and, after the writing of this book, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations announced a shift in strategy to "develop a small standing capacity of civilian police, other rule of law elements, and human rights experts for complex peace operations in post-conflict environments."

Evans also emphasizes the critical importance of what is often referred to as "local buy-in" to the peace, stabilization, and reconciliation processes, to "win . . . a deeper understanding among the major parties . . . that they have shared interests, a common vision, and must learn to live and work in collaboration with each other" (p. 150). Evans notes that history has demonstrated that imposing a peace settlement and reconciliation programs on the population, for example, inevitably will end in failure, and that local engagement and local buy-in must be part of the mindset of the international community from the outset and throughout the whole process (pp. 150–151).

Where prevention and stabilization efforts fail, a range of tools are available to the international community, short of military humanitarian intervention. Evans echoes the recommendations of the ICISS Report and the 2005 UN World Summit document: that R2P encompasses a responsibility to react, and that the reactions by the international community should proceed "from the less to more intrusive and from less to more coercive" (p. 105). Evans

discusses the place and time for diplomacy, political sanctions and incentives, economic sanctions, and other nonmilitary means of influence. He also examines the transitional justice strategies that seek to prevent the return to conflict. Evans is realistic in his analysis of the effectiveness of each option and offers practical examples of what has worked—or failed to work—and what seemed to be the driving forces of success or failure.

As a last resort, when all other efforts have failed, R2P allows for military intervention. As Evans observes, "Hard as it may be for many to instinctively accept, if there is one thing as bad as using military force when we should not, it is *not* using military force when we *should*" (p. 128). Evans conducts a legal analysis of the factors that justify the use of military force under R2P, examining the UN Charter and arguments of customary international law obligations. He scrutinizes criticisms levied against the UN Security Council as being outdated or crippled by inaction through the veto power.

Evans discusses the several criteria of *legitimacy* defined in the ICISS report. Legitimacy is a matter of process and perception—that decisions have been made on solid evidentiary grounds and are perceived to be just and right—whereas *legality* refers to abiding by the law. Legitimacy criteria for the use of force under R2P include analysis of the seriousness of the harm if intervention were not to occur; assuring that intervention is for the proper purpose of averting a threat of mass atrocity; determining whether all other available options have been exhausted, that force is proportional to the harm to be prevented, and that the minimum force necessary to prevent the harm is utilized; and balancing the consequences—whether the ultimate results will be worse in the event of military action or inaction (p. 141). Taken as a whole, these factors inform legitimacy determinations. These criteria were reiterated by the Secretary-General but were left unaddressed by the UN World Summit of 2005 and have not been taken up by the UN Security Council.

The responsibility to protect is an important and compelling concept, one that is far more complex than common usage would imply. Gareth Evans takes the reader beyond a casual understanding, debunking the myths surrounding R2P that undermine acceptance and dilute its potential effectiveness. He also correlates the abstract with the practical to create a useful guide for the practitioner. Finally, Evans outlines the gaps that remain in capacity to respond in potential cases of R2P and presents recommendations for mobilizing political will. PRISM

Book Reviews

Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority

By James Dobbins et al.
Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2009
275 pp. $40.00
ISBN-13: 978-0-83304-715-1

Integrating Civilian Agencies in Stability Operations

By Thomas Szayna et al.
Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2009
200 pp. $32.00
ISBN-13: 978-0-83304-715-1

REVIEWED BY STUART W. BOWEN, JR.

A cursory glance at the foreign policy section in your local bookstore would reveal many volumes of output and analyses generated over the past few years by the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and its aftermath. Selections vary from wide-ranging strategic reviews to gripping accounts of the house-to-house fighting that occurred in places like Fallujah and Sadr City. However, until 2009, no one had produced a comprehensive analytical study of the Coalition Provisional Authority's (CPA's) occupation of Iraq, when it operated as the country's de jure and de facto government from early May 2003 to the end of June 2004. Ambassador James Dobbins, the leading authority on overseas contingencies, and his coauthors have filled this reportorial gap with this landmark work, which will stand as an authoritative history of the CPA for years to come.

Occupying Iraq paints a diverse picture of the early postwar administration in Iraq, identifying some successes (based largely on CPA documentation) and concluding that the CPA, which was led by Dobbins's long-time State Department colleague Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, did the best it could, given poor resourcing, insufficient staffing, and the lack of an established interagency structure for support. Among successes, the authors credit the CPA for promoting the development of the most liberal constitution in the Middle East, initiating reforms of Iraq's civil service and judiciary, and restoring some of Iraq's essential services to near-prewar levels (at least for a short while). In explanation of shortfalls, they point to inadequate direction and insufficient support from the Federal interagency community in Washington as the chief cause.

When it formed in Iraq in May 2003, the CPA had no integrated plan or system from which to develop operations. It thus was expediently and expeditiously cobbled together as the management successor to the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), the ad hoc Pentagon-led entity created in late January 2003 to manage postwar Iraq. The CPA's very distinct mission was to *occupy and govern* Iraq. This notably diverged from and expanded greatly upon the postwar plan President George W. Bush approved only 2 months earlier, in March 2003. The President's first plan anticipated the expenditure of about $2 billion in relief and reconstruction money, a

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limited continuing military footprint, a quick transition to Iraqi governance, and a rapid U.S. withdrawal. This original conception essentially sought to replicate what had happened in Afghanistan a year earlier.

But hopes for an alacritous shift to Iraqi control vanished quickly with CPA's inception, as it quickly superseded ORHA's modest reconstruction effort with visions for a program 10 times as large. Because the authors do not explore why this fundamentally transformative expansion happened, others will have to unpack the political twists and improvisational turns that occurred in the late spring and early summer of 2003, which led to what is now a 7-year stay in Iraq, at great cost in blood and treasure.

The study begins by tracing the brief, troubled life of ORHA, which was led by retired Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner. ORHA was stood up a scant 61 days before the invasion, was undermanned from the start, and failed to garner sufficient interagency buy-in. It thus arrived and operated in Iraq lacking the civilian expertise necessary for effective nationbuilding. ORHA existed long enough to expose the serious interagency coordination problems that would plague the entire Iraq endeavor. As one example, Ambassador Dobbins recounts how Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld vetoed many of Garner's staff selections for ORHA simply because they came from the State Department.

ORHA's days as the lead reconstruction agency came to an abrupt end with Bremer's arrival on May 12, 2003. (Interestingly, the Bush administration never formally dissolved ORHA, but Garner left Iraq shortly after Bremer's arrival.) The nature of Bremer's authority presented inherent problems. On the one hand, he was President Bush's special envoy to Iraq; but he was also the CPA administrator, reporting to the Secretary of Defense. The dual chains of command and the consequent multiple lines of communication created discontinuities for Bremer at both the Pentagon and the White House. Deeper disconnects stemmed from interagency short-circuits in staffing and support. There was no coherent system or structure from which to draw. This structural and resource problem was not Ambassador Bremer's fault; it long preceded 9/11, and it still exists today.

Occupying Iraq devotes substantial attention to the very real constraints under which the CPA operated. The organization was hampered in executing its relief and reconstruction mission by the coalition's failure to deploy a sufficient military force to secure the country after the conclusion of major combat operations. The security situation deteriorated through the end of 2003, dropping to its first nadir during the spring of 2004, with the explosive Sunni uprisings in Anbar Province and spike in Shia militia attacks in the south and around Baghdad.

Even if the security situation had been better, the CPA still lacked the necessary resources to accomplish the ambitious relief and reconstruction mission it undertook. In large part, this stemmed from the lack of a developed U.S. interagency system that could efficiently staff, resource, and manage the mammoth program under way in Iraq. *Occupying Iraq* reports that the CPA was never more than 65 percent staffed, suffering particularly from a lack of mid-level supervisors—the very people who should have populated the primary liaison positions between Bremer and the Iraqi ministries. Dobbins is also critical of the short tours served by many CPA staffers, noting that only seven people stayed for the entirety of the CPA's existence. In short, the staffing problems confronted by Ambassador Bremer exemplified the ad hoc impulses that would burden the ever-evolving U.S. effort to stabilize postwar Iraq.

Occupying Iraq ultimately is useful, not as a paean to the CPA, but as a case study of what can and will go wrong when nationbuilding ambitions outstrip U.S. Governmental structural, management, and resource capacities. This important and well-founded insight should inform subsequent studies and drive further reform. However, the book occasionally is handicapped by its unwillingness to measure the CPA in light of what we now know was the failure that followed quickly upon the heels of Bremer's departure in June 2004. The security disaster that ensued led to the loss of most CPA gains. For example, to promote rule of law, the CPA had created two new national anticorruption institutions. But these offices were underresourced, and they proved to be a poor fit in Iraq's legal and bureaucratic cultures. Their lack of capacity to enforce the rule of law contributed to the security breakdown. Six years on—notwithstanding the well-intended efforts of many brave Iraqis and their well-meaning U.S. advisors—public corruption remains a severe existential threat to the legitimacy of the Iraqi state.

The heart of *Occupying Iraq* is its analysis of the CPA's decisionmaking process. The authors trace how and why Ambassador Bremer decided on a number of controversial courses of action, including, most notably, CPA Order Number 2, which, among other things, dissolved the Iraqi army. On March 10, 2003, the President approved a plan that would keep the army intact after the fall of Iraq. Shortly after the successful March 20 invasion, U.S. military commanders began to work with Iraqi army commanders to reconstitute scattered forces. These efforts came to a sudden stop with the CPA's mid-May order dissolving the army. Although Bremer acted quickly to amend the order and restore certain payment and pension provisions for disbanded soldiers, its ill effects were nevertheless harshly felt in the form of riots, which U.S. troops had to counter. General David Petraeus said that the dissolution order certainly helped foment the insurgency that followed.

The decision to disband the Iraqi army stands as a stark example of poor interagency planning. The order was not reviewed on an interagency basis until Ambassador Bremer informed the President and his advisors the day before he published it. Dobbins criticizes Bremer for not involving ORHA's Garner and other subject matter experts from the Department of State in the decisionmaking process, and he suggests that more considered deliberations involving all relevant stakeholders would have yielded a better solution.

In May 2003, Ambassador Bremer also ordered a "de-Ba'athification program," which prohibited certain party members from the Saddam era to hold public office. This program, which some have described as more severe than the President's plan anticipated, was handed over to Iraqi control too quickly, as Bremer has acknowledged. Although ostensibly approved by the Pentagon, the program's implications failed to receive sufficient scrutiny from the interagency community. Nevertheless, Dobbins defends the CPA's decision, arguing that strong de-Ba'athification was necessary to ensure Shia support for the coalition.

Occupying Iraq favorably reviews the CPA's transformative economic agenda, which aimed not just to bring Iraq out of its post-invasion freeze but also to institute ambitious free market reforms. The authors highlight the high economic growth rate achieved during the CPA's tenure as evidence of the program's success. But because the war had driven the Iraqi economy to a virtual standstill, growth from this stasis point inevitably would appear substantial in

percentage terms. The fact is Iraq's economic progress—then and now—is driven by the sale of oil and gas; no other sector produces positive revenue flow.

As a central part of its free market economic agenda, the CPA discontinued support for Iraq's state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and pursued an ambitious privatization effort. The SOEs operated at a loss in Iraq's authoritarian economy and produced shoddy merchandise. But they also provided employment for hundreds of thousands of Iraqi citizens; moreover, the SOEs in the hydrocarbons sector played significant production roles. The SOE shutdown program nevertheless quickly came to fruition, despite some dissenting voices within the CPA. The juxtaposition of the military's dissolution and the SOEs' closure pushed well over half a million Iraqis into unemployment in less than 6 weeks. The Department of Defense later acknowledged the importance of SOEs to Iraq's economy by creating the Task Force on Business Stabilization Operations and charging it with restarting many of the SOEs that the CPA had closed. Interestingly, RAND's *The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building* points out that processes such as reforming SOEs "need to be managed in ways that draw the society's major contending factions into a process of peaceful competition and away from violent conflict."

A helpful complement to the many important issues raised in *Occupying Iraq* is *Integrating Civilian Agencies in Stability Operations*. This book explores the existing weak structure for interagency coordination of overseas contingencies. While Dobbins and company illustrate the structural and systemic symptoms of what went wrong during the early U.S. experience in Iraq, *Integrating Civilian Agencies* proposes pathways toward redressing their causes by analyzing current planning systems for civilian-military integration and cooperation in complex contingency operations. *Integrating Civilian Agencies* identifies several major shortcomings in the current U.S. approach: a lack of financial resources, a shortage of deployable personnel, and weak interagency planning and management structures.

As *Occupying Iraq* shows, the CPA encountered each of these problems. When U.S. leadership called for interagency collaboration on Iraq in 2003, the existing system provided no incentive for agencies to work together. Moreover, the lack of capacity at most civilian agencies to move beyond their domestic missions inhibited them from responding effectively. This critical structural problem must be remedied.

Integrating Civilian Agencies suggests a series of national level reforms to improve civilian-military coordination:

- Establish an interagency Goldwater-Nichols Act that would increase unity of effort and decrease compartmentalization.
- Set up a standing, integrated contingency planning capability.
- Increase the capacity of the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development through a long-term, joint congressional and Presidential plan.
- Hold U.S. Government agencies accountable for overseas contingency efforts with specific benchmarks and metrics to measure progress. The Defense Department and the combatant commanders need to be willing to share military contingency plans with their interagency partners, and both

civilian agencies and the military need to be held accountable for the planning and execution of stabilization and reconstruction operations.

- Fund and train a civilian reserve corps.

Over the past few years, the U.S. Government has pursued a variety of contingency reform initiatives, but none yet has solved the problem. The Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization possesses new civilian expertise and resources to conduct reconstruction and stability operations, but it has lacked institutional and financial support to truly tackle the interagency mission. The Department of Defense, driven by Directive 3000.05, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations," has fostered a robust and well-funded stability operations capability; but housing reconstruction and stabilization operations at the Pentagon runs the risk of a perceived militarizing of U.S. foreign policy. Finally, the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2008 placed the paramount burden for planning and managing the civilian response to overseas contingency operations on the State Department—but the resources to sustain this burden have not been provided.

Discussions continue in Washington on how to implement necessary reforms of the U.S. Government structure and system for managing overseas contingency relief and reconstruction operations. Although a variety of options remain on the table, there is widespread agreement that further reform is needed. Whither—rather than whether—reform is the question; and getting to the right question is progress. But enduring answers remain to be found.

One innovative suggestion on the table proposes developing an agency or office specifically tasked with overseeing, integrating, and managing interagency contingency relief and reconstruction efforts. This entity would coordinate and integrate work already accomplished by extant agencies, thereby institutionalizing many of the solutions suggested in *Integrating Civilian Agencies*, which would obviate the possibility that the United States could again face the kind of painful impasses described in *Occupying Iraq*. PRISM

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CCO, located within the Center for Technology and National Security Policy (CTNSP) at National Defense University, links U.S. Government education and training institutions, including related centers of excellence, lessons learned programs, and academia, to foster unity of effort in reconstruction and stability operations, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare—collectively called "complex operations." The Department of Defense, with support from the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development, established CCO as an innovative interagency partnership.

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