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FEATURES

3 **Diplomacy Before and After Conflict**
by Marc Grossman

15 **Afghanistan: Opportunities and Risks**
by Ashraf Ghani

25 **A "Net Shift" for Afghanistan?**
by John Arquilla

41 **Analytics and Action in Afghanistan**
by Thomas Blau and Daryl Liskey

57 **Afghanistan: Long-term Solutions and Perilous Shortcuts**
by Ali Ahmad Jalali

67 **Recalibrating the Afghan Reconciliation Program**
by Amin Tarzi

79 **Countering Taliban Information Operations in Afghanistan**
by Tim Foxley

95 **Afghanistan: The German Factor**
by James D. Bindenagel

113 **Stabilization Operations Beyond Government: Joint Venture Public-Private Partnerships in Iraq and Afghanistan**
by Matthew W. Parin

FROM THE FIELD

127 **Colombia: Learning Institutions Enable Integrated Response**
by Thomas A. Marks

LESSONS LEARNED

147 **Blind Ambition: Lessons Learned and Not Learned in an Embedded PRT**
by Blake Stone

INTERVIEWS

159 **An Interview with Said Tayeb Jawad**

169 **An Interview with Husain Haqqani**

ndupress.ndu.edu

PRISM

BOOK REVIEWS

175 **Complex Peace Operations and Civil-Military Relations: Winning the Peace**
Reviewed by Scott W. Lyons

177 **Civil-Military Relations: Theory and Practice**
Review Essay by Joseph J. Collins

U.S. Army (De'Yonte Mosley)

Strong postconflict relationships support ongoing work of diplomacy and defense

Diplomacy
Before and After Conflict

BY MARC GROSSMAN

Conflict is a universal condition,[1] older than diplomacy. While conflict is a constant in human history, the nature of armed conflict, and especially the nature of 21st-century warfare, has been transformed. General Rupert Smith identified these changes in his book *The Utility of Force*: "The ends for which we fight are changing; we fight amongst the people; our conflicts tend to be timeless; we fight so as not to lose the force; on each occasion new uses are found for old weapons; the sides are mostly non-state."[2]

The nature of 21st-century diplomacy is also changing. To be successful, diplomats must simultaneously shape, act upon, and react to global challenges. As Hans Binnendijk and Richard Kugler of the National Defense University argue, no single problem, danger, or threat holds the key to the world's future. What matters is their interaction and the simultaneity of our responses.[3]

The definition of victory, too, is different today. Twenty-first-century national security success will encompass a comprehensive definition of security, and will be achieved by the broadest

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simultaneous application of all elements of national power. This is the key to understanding Philip Bobbitt's concept of "preclusive victory," which he describes as "anticipatory, precautionary attention to possible futures,"[4] requiring an expansive and integrated approach to modern diplomacy, defense, and development. A diplomatic strategy designed to produce preclusive victory will include conflict prevention, successful negotiation, deterrence, the preparation for conflict should all else fail, and efforts to establish order, ensure stability, and promote political and economic pluralism after conflict.

Diplomats have always been participants in both the prevention and management of conflict and its aftermath. The conflict prevention side of diplomacy occupied much of my time at the State Department from 1993 to 1997 as the Department's Executive Secretary and U.S. Ambassador to Turkey. Postconflict diplomacy was a defining issue of the last third of my career at State as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs and as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from 2001 to 2005. I have tried to draw upon my experiences and observations to discuss here the scope and complexity of modern diplomacy, the methods and goals needed to prevent conflict, diplomacy's role when conflict is or seems to be unavoidable, and the contribution diplomacy can make to restoring stability following conflict.

Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention

Thanks to the efforts of scholars and practitioners, we can now make better use of the methods and theory of conflict prevention. The United States Institute of Peace and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars are two among many institutions that have taken a leadership role in these efforts. Michael Lund, a practitioner-scholar, notes that the present uncoordinated and patchy nature of preventive diplomacy reflects the absence of any accepted international conflict prevention regime or system of governance—that is, of agreed upon arrangements through which geographic jurisdictions are allocated, functional responsibilities are assigned, norms and procedures are formulated, and actors are held accountable for their responsibilities.[5] He asks the crucial question to all those who seek to "coordinate and rationalize" a system of preventive diplomacy: where should responsibility for the tasks of preventive action be located—early warning, the decision to act, the formulation of a response, or the provision of bureaucratic and political support? Should it be horizontal, across different organizations or actors, or should it be vertical, up or down their chains of command?[6]

An example of conflict prevention that meets Lund's tests was the effort undertaken by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in close collaboration with the European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and supported by the United States, to avoid civil war in Macedonia in 2001. It is difficult now to recall that, until September 11, 2001, the possibility of civil war in Macedonia was a leading international headline. This successful campaign of conflict prevention was defined by the remarkable personal and institutional cooperation between the NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson and the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (and a former NATO Secretary General) Javier Solana. I spoke often during this period to Lord Robertson, Solana, and Ambassador James Pardew, whom President George W. Bush and Secretary Colin Powell appointed as the U.S. representative to the effort and who, along with Francois Leotard, the EU Special Envoy, played a crucial role in negotiating and implementing the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

As a direct participant, senior NATO official Mark Laity stated that there are insights about modern diplomacy and conflict prevention to be drawn from this effort, including the need for personal and institutional teamwork, the importance of early engagement in trying to head off violence, the need to choose the right people for tasks of this kind (including 21st-century diplomats who can act "unconventionally"), and the necessity of being able to apply appropriate force quickly.[7]

Diplomacy When Conflict Is or Seems to Be Unavoidable

When diplomacy fails to prevent conflict, the role of the diplomat changes. The new requirement may be to justify the use of force when all efforts to avoid conflict fail or to seek to address the underlying source of conflict when force is or seems to be inevitable and imperative.

The February 1999 diplomatic negotiations in Rambouillet, France, were designed to show the world that NATO and the Contact Group were willing to make one last effort to avoid using military force to stop Slobodan Milosevic's attacks in Kosovo. I was in Rambouillet as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs to support Secretary Madeleine Albright. After the first day or so of the meeting, there was so much chaos that I urged Secretary Albright to depart Rambouillet and leave the "negotiating" to those of us more junior. My strategy was that by not being present, the Secretary of State—and the administration—could keep a distance from an outcome that might be unacceptable to the United States. The Secretary had a different vision. Albright hoped Rambouillet would end the brutality against the Kosovars, but she was also prepared for the meeting to fail, and thereby all options for avoiding military conflict would be exhausted. Her idea was that we had to be seen to be doing everything we could diplomatically, including her continued presence, so that if Rambouillet was a failure, there could be no further excuses against taking military action.

Secretary of State James Baker had pursued a similar strategy before the first Gulf War in 1991. Baker relates in his memoirs, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, that President George H.W. Bush had concluded the United States should offer a meeting in Washington for Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz followed by a Baker trip to Baghdad to show America's commitment to avoiding war if possible. Baker writes that he thought this proposal had three merits: it would give the administration one last diplomatic opening to avoid war; it would shore up domestic support for conflict; and it would show that, as the deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait neared, the administration was doing something other than just preparing for war. The President's offer turned into the famous meeting between Baker and Aziz on January 9, 1991. As Baker recounts, "I was under no illusions. I assumed the talks would be unsuccessful and that within a matter of days, we would be at war."[8]

when diplomacy fails to prevent conflict, the role of the diplomat changes

In 2001–2003, the State Department leadership generally saw Iraq as a diversion from Afghanistan and not central to the war on terror. Saddam Hussein was a dictator and a menace—but "in a box," posing no immediate, direct threat to the United States; focus should be kept on defeating al Qaeda in Afghanistan and supporting the new Afghan government.[9] Iraq had been a source of tension and disagreement inside the State Department since the beginning of the administration, and there were some who sought to move the policy from support for

"smart" United Nations (UN) sanctions toward an aggressive posture against Saddam.

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger wrote in *Years of Upheaval* about the second term of the Nixon administration that State Department culture emphasizes negotiability, which is a consciousness of what the other side will accept.[10] Kissinger did not consider this trait a particular positive at the time, and the department's culture of negotiability did not serve as a good guide to institutional behavior for most of the senior State officials who participated in the interagency debate leading to the invasion of Iraq. If that was so during the period surrounding 1970s détente with Russia, diplomatic efforts with the Shah of Iran, and the crisis in the Middle East and the resulting 1973 war, this culture of negotiability no longer served as a good guide to institutional behavior for most of the senior State officials who participated in the interagency debate leading to the invasion of Iraq. We took part in planning for the conflict and its aftermath assuming—or hoping—that events either at home or abroad would turn preparations for conflict into successful coercive diplomacy rather than the military action that was ordered in the spring of 2003.

The State Department's Director of Policy Planning, Richard Haass, observed that while he was "60:40 against going to war . . . no organization could function if people left every time they lost out on a 60:40 decision."[11] Haass was operating under the belief that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction; if he had known they did not, he says he would have been 90:10 against the war.

the diplomatic effort to prepare for conflict in Kosovo also involved the whole of the U.S. Government and the governments of the NATO Allies

And no senior Department of State officer resigned in protest. The department sought instead to try to recreate the successful Gulf War coalition of President George H.W. Bush and argued that the United States and its allies might compel Saddam to submit through a deployment of force in the region in early 2003. If this failed, there should be a sustained diplomatic effort to create a broad coalition to move militarily later in 2003. This possibility of a broad international coalition lost all relevance on January 20, 2003, when the French government announced that it would never support a second UN Security Council resolution to authorize the use of force in Iraq.

Diplomacy in Preparation for Conflict

Once conflict is inevitable or is initiated, one job of diplomats is to support military commanders in getting what they need to make conflict as short as possible, with the fewest casualties for Americans, allies, and civilians. This was the objective that the United States pursued in Turkey before the first Gulf War, which resulted in President Turgut Özal's support of American efforts. The diplomatic effort to prepare for conflict in Kosovo also involved the whole of the U.S. Government and the governments of the NATO Allies. To pursue a successful bombing campaign, diplomats in many NATO countries arranged for overflight and support for Allied forces. A similar effort by U.S. diplomats took place before the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. American and allied diplomats worked closely with nations surrounding Afghanistan, including forging contacts with Central Asian states on security issues for the first time in order to achieve transit, overflight, and bed-down rights for American and coalition forces before the October 7, 2001, beginning of action in Afghanistan.

Before the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, and especially after January 20, 2003, a similar effort began in earnest. Diplomats supported U.S. Central Command commander General Tommy Franks in order to make the war as short and successful as possible and to limit American, allied, and Iraqi civilian casualties. American diplomats worked with military commanders to seek access to facilities for U.S. forces and to participate in the public diplomacy effort to gain as much support as possible for the armed liberation of Iraq. American diplomats and Pentagon officials again paid particular attention to Turkey in an effort to convince the Turks to allow the 4th Infantry Division to transit that country to create a northern front in the battle against Saddam's forces. Although the State Department worried about the size of the Department of Defense (DOD) request to Ankara, it worked closely with both civilian and military authorities at the Pentagon to try to meet the need that had been identified by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint DOD–State diplomacy, however, could not overcome a negative vote in the Turkish parliament, which reflected strong public opposition to the war.

The way the debate about using force is carried out inside the government influences attitudes and actions during and after conflict as well as future decisions on whether or not to use force. Military force may restore security, but it cannot resolve political or cultural sources of conflict. As Rupert Smith writes, "We are engaging in conflict for objectives that do not lead to a resolution of the matter directly by force of arms, since at all but the most basic tactical level our objectives tend to concern the intentions of the people and their leaders rather than their territory or forces."[12] Smith argues that the civil-military structure designed to make political-military decisions is "deeply problematic" and distorts decisionmaking in many ways.[13] In his book, Smith imagines a debate between British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defense (MOD) officials about how to address the genocide taking place over a number of weeks in Rwanda during the summer of 1994.

while readiness to volunteer U.S. forces to solve problems around the world was a direct result of the lack of civilian capacity, it leads to understandable consternation among those in uniform

FCO: *What can we do in the face of events in Rwanda?*

MOD: *What do you want us to do?*

FCO: *We ought to act. Something must be done. We can't have people being massacred. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council we cannot be seen to be doing nothing.*

MOD: *So you want us to use military force?*

FCO: *Yes.*

MOD: *To do what? To stop the killing?*

FCO: *Yes. Exactly.*

MOD: *Who do you want us to fight? We are not clear who is doing the killing: is it tribe on tribe, or is it a force found from a tribe? And Rwanda is a big country. Where do we start? Kigali, presumably, it's the capital and we would want an airhead.*

FCO: *Well, there must be an international force, of course.*

MOD: *And what would be the British aim in joining the force?*

FCO: *To play our part as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.*

MOD: *Is Britain to lead the force?*

FCO: *No, it should be led by the UN—a proper UN mission.*

MOD: *That will take some time to assemble, so it will probably be too late to stop the killing.*

FCO: *Then the mission should be aimed at bringing postconflict order.*

MOD: *OK. But we need to be clear how many British troops are currently available. Given our deployments in Ireland, Bosnia and a few other places, not many.*

FCO: *What do you suggest?*

MOD: *What are our government's priorities? Is contributing to this force a higher priority than these other tasks we are already undertaking?*

FCO: *Probably not.*

MOD: *In that case, these UN forces always lack expeditionary logistic support. And if we want to speed up the deployment of this force, offering a logistic unit would probably be the most valuable contribution.*

FCO: *Will that put our soldiers at risk?*

MOD: *Hardly any.*[14]

Many American diplomats will recognize this imaginary conversation, having participated in something like it dozens of times since the fall of the Berlin Wall. In the American debate, the issue also quickly focuses on who pays the bills. It is worth stating, at least in the American case, that officials at the Pentagon and DOD often were legitimately frustrated by the State Department's inclination to promote military missions for the Pentagon and the Armed Forces in an increasing number of situations that were important, but not vital, to U.S. national interests. While this readiness to volunteer U.S. military forces to solve problems around the world was a direct result of the lack of civilian capacity to do the jobs required, it leads to understandable consternation among those in uniform.

U.S. Air Force (Dayton Mitchell)

U.S. medics care for farmer injured by enemy forces

Diplomacy and Restoring Stability Following Conflict

There are many issues—defeating extremism, promoting pluralism, bringing the benefits of globalization to those who have not yet benefited, living sustainably on the planet, nonproliferation—that will be part of any definition of successful 21st-century diplomacy. But getting postconflict diplomacy right—creating the conditions for a preclusive victory—may be the most crucial of all. This is not an easy assignment. The concept of success can be redefined after the fact, further complicating the assessment. Successful democratic governance and economic development cannot be delivered on a certain date, and therefore the need for time and patience is a necessity on the ground. However, patience is limited in home countries, and "fatigue" often sets in. Thus, the potential for failure is high. Industrial war produced winners and losers; today's lines are not so clearly drawn, and the timeline may be longer.

Rupert Smith again brings clarity to this assessment:

> *We intervene in or even decide to escalate to, a conflict in order to establish a condition in which the political objective can be achieved by other means and in other ways. We seek to create a conceptual space for diplomacy, economic incentives, political pressure and other measures to create a desired political outcome of stability, and if possible democracy. . . . if a decisive strategic victory was the hallmark of interstate industrial war, establishing a condition may be deemed a hallmark of the new paradigm of war amongst the people.*[15]

Smith's point can be pressed even further by recognizing the additional distinction between a military operation carried out following Smith's rules and the ambiguity inherent in trying to create the conditions Smith identifies as objectives. Christopher Schnaubelt has noted that a typical military operation will have unambiguous geographic boundaries (areas of responsibility) and will assign specific units to be responsible for every inch of ground or cubic foot of airspace. There is an obvious chain of responsibilities and expected actions between each individual Soldier or Marine on the ground and the commanding general. Nothing comparable exists for economic development in governance tasks, which tend to be assigned by function rather than local geography or rigid hierarchy of authority.[16]

the struggle over nationbuilding hampered American attempts to get sufficient amounts of U.S. or international assistance to Afghanistan

Postconflict diplomacy was among the defining diplomatic issues of the last third of my career at the State Department.

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War in 1991, almost 500,000 Kurds fled to the mountains between Iraq and Turkey. Stranded in harsh conditions, they began to starve by the thousands each day. I was then the Deputy Chief of Mission in Turkey. Inspired by the leadership of Ambassador Morton Abramowitz, American diplomats, followed by American military forces and then an international coalition of governments and nongovernmental organizations, initiated Operation *Provide Comfort* (which became Operation *Northern Watch*). This was not just a "whole-of-government" but a "whole-of-the-international-community" campaign to provide humanitarian assistance and then return the Kurds to their homes in Northern Iraq. Once home, they needed to be protected, and for 11 years, the United Sates and some of its allies, including Turkey, worked on the ground there to recreate a functioning society and then protected this area from Saddam by enforcing a no-fly zone.

These years were also punctuated by activity in the Balkans. As Richard Holbrooke recounts, some of the pre-Dayton negotiations with Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegovi took place in my residence while I was Ambassador to Turkey.[17] As one of Holbrooke's successors as Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, I watched the effort made by Ambassadors Robert Gelbard and James Dobbins to implement the Dayton Accords by applying whole-of-government efforts in postconflict post-Yugoslavia. I picked up the diplomatic thread again as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs promoting reconciliation, development, political progress, and nationbuilding in Kosovo.

Other postconflict diplomacy efforts in Haiti, East Timor, and Liberia called upon the resources of the United States and other governments to try to create the conceptual space for development and sustained peace. The U.S. effort in Colombia, too, highlighted the need to focus on an integrated and cross-sectoral approach, which included disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants and promoted justice in postconflict society. But the main events in modern diplomacy's postconflict paradigm are Afghanistan and Iraq.

The key to understanding U.S. diplomacy in postconflict Afghanistan and Iraq is to recall the profound disagreement inside the U.S. Government, especially between DOD and State, about whether the United States should engage in "nationbuilding," a policy President Bush had campaigned against in 2000. State Department professionals were generally proud

of the effort the United States had made in nationbuilding and in peacekeeping, supporting the deployment of U.S. military forces to participate, for example, in the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai and in peacekeeping and nationbuilding activities in East Timor, Haiti, and the Balkans. Most believed that nationbuilding, properly funded and executed, was an effective long-term tool of integrated modern diplomacy for the United States.

The effort to create a new Afghan government after the overthrow of the Taliban was a piece of classical diplomacy carried out in the 21st-century context.[18] Secretary Powell directed Ambassador Dobbins to support the regional negotiation hosted by the Germans in Bonn in 2001 to create a new Afghan government. To succeed, Dobbins worked with all the key players, including representatives from Iran, to support a major role for the United Nations and put Hamid Karzai in position to lead a new Afghanistan.[19] But, as Dobbins has written, the "Bush Administration, having overthrown the Taliban and installed a new government in Kabul, determined that American troops would do no peacekeeping and that peacekeepers from other countries would not be allowed to venture beyond the Kabul city limits. Public security throughout the rest of the country would be left entirely to Afghans, despite the fact that Afghanistan had no army and no police force."[20]

The struggle over nationbuilding also hampered American attempts to get sufficient amounts of U.S. or international assistance to Afghanistan. Washington accepted the diffusion of responsibility there, with the British taking charge of counternarcotics, the Italians reforming the justice sector, and the Germans training police. This satisfied the need for burden-sharing but did not lead to success. In addition, postconflict resources focused by the United States on Afghanistan were small compared to other recent postconflict situations, even including Kosovo.[21] American diplomats who followed Dobbins to the Embassy in Kabul over the years faced the legacy of this lack of attention and underinvestment.[22]

The State Department participated at many levels in the National Security Council–led planning for postconflict Iraq. Much of the planning was detailed, but focused on lessons learned from the first Gulf War. The department's Future of Iraq Project, while important, would not have solved Iraq's postwar problems. State did not have the capacity to take responsibility for the immediate postconflict administration of Iraq, and its leadership agreed to the Executive order creating a postconflict Iraq structure that reported to the Secretary of Defense.

There is no need here to recount the lost lives and lost opportunities so well chronicled by others in the immediate postconflict period in Iraq, although Dobbins's argument that, looking back, the Coalition Provisional Authority accomplished a great deal under trying circumstances is worth noting.[23] On July 1, 2004, the State Department did officially open (on time and on budget) an Embassy in Baghdad, which allowed an expansion of diplomacy and led to more comprehensive senior civilian-military cooperation.

There is another important lesson to draw from recent postconflict efforts: the need to have adequate civilian capacity to respond, including a role for a revitalized U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). As this journal chronicled in an article[24] by Ambassador John Herbst, the Secretary of State's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), his office was mandated to develop a whole-of-government civilian response to stability operations and to ensure civilian-military coordination.

The Civilian Response Corps (CRC) is in an early stage, and ultimately will be made up of a reserve component, in addition to the existing

active and standby components. The personnel are anticipated to represent the full range of sector experts: engineers, lawyers, judges, corrections officials, diplomats, development experts, public administrators, public health officials, city planners, border control officials, economists, and others. Currently, the active and standby components that are being stepped up are drawn from State, USAID, and a core group of domestic U.S. agencies.

Once congressionally funded, the reserves would be drawn from state and local governments and the private sector. Between January 2008 and May 2009, 56 CRC members deployed to 11 countries, including Afghanistan for planning purposes, and there are realistic plans to have 250 active members and 1,000 standby members ready to deploy by the end of 2010. There are now at least 14 other countries with whom the United States allies that have a civilian peacebuilding capacity—some including stability or civilian police, and employing whole-of-government or "comprehensive" approaches similar to that created by Washington. Several, in fact, have higher budgets proportionate to their gross national products than America's.[25]

One way for State to further support the S/CRS effort would be to consider creating a new personnel specialty: the "expeditionary diplomat." Washington's diplomatic personnel have, of course, always been in one sense expeditionary; the majority of the Foreign Service is deployed abroad the majority of the time. But the post-9/11 diplomatic experience, and especially the effort in Iraq and Afghanistan, means that State needs to be more explicit about the expeditionary nature of some of its future diplomatic work and should prepare a small but significant number of people to serve successfully in the hardest places at a moment's notice.

Experience with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, the lessons learned with S/CRS, and the example of diplomats who have pursued careers in the toughest posts should lead State leadership to conclude that this is a step worth taking. The first requirement would be advanced training, some of it provided by DOD and some by the Central Intelligence Agency, for those entering diplomats who believe they want to pursue this special career path. These entering officers would make an explicit choice and understand that an investment in their extra training would require their service in hard places, just as we now ask diplomats who take the hardest languages—Chinese or Arabic, for example—to serve more than one tour using their skills. Since these expeditionary diplomats will not need to meet the same age and physical requirements as special operations in the military, the State Department could allow people to opt in and out of this "special force" during their careers as long as they have the proper training. This would allow flexibility across the institution and encourage those who desire or whose family circumstances might change over time to participate as well. The department would also need to make sure those taking this career path are recognized for a career beyond the norm for Foreign Service and are promoted and rewarded.

The creation of S/CRS is a symbol of the comprehensive, simultaneous diplomacy needed for the future, and this expeditionary diplomat could form the backbone of the State and USAID commitment to the civilian response capacity. There are still key questions to be answered about civilian capacity. In the face of a real world situation, will DOD really support a State Department–led operation? Will Congress adequately fund S/CRS, including a reasonable contingency fund? How will S/CRS and a resurgent USAID work together? Where will the lines be drawn between immediate postconflict needs and nationbuilding? There seems to be no question that the path is the right one, consistent

with the administration's focus on diplomacy, development, and defense. Success will come with clear direction and active implementation.

If we combine the observations made by several authors,[26] we arrive at this question: What national policies, supported by adequate human and financial resources, will create the conditions during and after war to bring about a preclusive victory? Nationbuilding, postconflict reconstruction and stability operations, and counterinsurgency strategy (call it what we will) will be part of modern diplomacy for years to come. Accomplishing this task does not have to be an exclusively American responsibility, and, indeed, one of the goals of modern American diplomats will be to make these efforts more international. But for the foreseeable future, the United States will need to learn the lessons of its role in nationbuilding from Germany to Iraq.[27] These lessons include support for new institutions that bring all of the elements of power and influence together in the same theater, at the same time, and in close coordination so the United States and its allies and friends have a chance to succeed.[28] As Philip Bobbitt has written, "The problem is the picture of warfare to which we cling. This picture unfolds in this way: peace making by diplomats; war making by the Armed Forces; peace building by [US]AID and reconstruction personnel. The reality of 21st century warfare, however, is that all of these tasks must be performed simultaneously."[29]

While the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century can be observed and analyzed individually, none of them can be solved without reference to the others. Diplomacy is not the answer to every question, but it has utility both before and after conflict. As General Smith writes at the end of his volume:

> *For the general purpose of all interventions is clear: we seek to establish in the minds of the people and their leaders that the ever present option of conflict is not the preferable course of action when in confrontation over some matter or another. This applies as much to the state possessing nuclear weapons or seeking to obtain them, rogue or otherwise, as it does to the terrorist or the machete-wielding rebel; each is posing an armed threat to people to establish a condition in which to achieve its political goal. To do this, military force is a valid option, a lever of intervention and influence, as much as economic, political and diplomatic levers, but to be effective it must be applied as a part of a greater scheme focusing all measures on the one goal.*[30]

one of the goals of modern American diplomats will be to make these efforts more international

The connection to the utility of a modern diplomacy is clear. Twenty-first-century diplomacy, working to prevent conflict, trying to get ready for it if it is inevitable, or dealing with the consequences, can be an effective tool of national security if it is adequately funded, carried out by well-trained, dedicated people, focused on clear goals set by national leaders, and backed by effective military force. This is the diplomacy of the future. PRISM

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Notes

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[2] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 19.

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Afghanistan
Opportunities and Risks

BY ASHRAF GHANI

The conflict in and around Afghanistan is entering a decisive phase. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), armed with a new counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine and resources to conduct a forceful campaign, is engaging in a counteroffensive against the insurgency. Drawing on lessons learned from their own past insurgencies both regionally and globally, the insurgents are also constantly changing tactics. The inevitable clashes between the use of force and use of violence will exact a heavy cost in human lives this year.

Reduction of violence cannot be the measure of progress, as all counteroffensives historically have initially increased both the level of violence and number of casualties. The success of the counteroffensive will be judged by its role in the larger project of counterinsurgency—creating the enabling environment for a stable political and economic system that can turn both Afghan citizens and regional players into stakeholders in its success.

Catalyzing the emergence of such a system requires an appreciation of present opportunities and risks. Conceptually, the challenge lies in institutional design rather than planning. The distinction is important: while planning applies established procedures to solve a problem (presumed to be largely understood) within an accepted framework, design inquires into the nature of a problem (presumed to be largely outside of preexisting understanding) in order to conceive a framework for solving that problem. Planning is problemsolving; design is problem setting.[1] ISAF, as General Stanley McChrystal's report of last year shows, has been functioning as a learning organization. It has been setting the problem in terms of reframing the threats to Afghanistan, saying they arise from bad governance and a predatory political elite as well as the insurgency.[2] International civilian actors, by contrast, are still engaged in a planning mode of operation, bringing tried but not tested solutions to problems they have neither analyzed nor prioritized. Too often, established bureaucratic procedures combined with improvisation by officials lacking

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shared vision, common frameworks, and continuity create misalignments between civilian and military goals, strategies, and tactics.

The greatest opportunity and risk, therefore, lies in *framing* the issues. Whether Afghan, international, and particularly U.S. leadership can produce a new narrative that secures the buy-in of their publics will make the difference between creating a stable order and condemning the country to years of continuing conflict.

Scenario 1: Capitalizing on Opportunities

Four major opportunities to create positive momentum toward a stable economic and political order in Afghanistan present themselves at this juncture. Each opportunity, if capitalized on, could create a virtuous chain of consequences, outlined below.

Afghanistan has the potential to be not only the world's largest producer of copper and iron, but also a major player in rare earths

1. Natural Resources. Geology has emerged as the ultimate game-changer for Afghanistan. Aerial and seismic surveys undertaken by the U.S. Geological Survey reveal that the mineral resources of Afghanistan are worth at least $1 trillion. The country has the potential to be not only the world's largest producer of copper and iron, but also a major player in the production and processing of rare earths, which are used in products ranging from batteries to electrical cars and weapons systems. Moreover, these mineral resources are distributed equally between the northern third and southern two-thirds of the country, with significant deposits in the valleys of the mountain chains that divide north from south and whose populations currently suffer from extreme poverty. As the headwaters for a number of rivers flowing to neighboring countries, Afghanistan also generates 65 to 85 billion cubic meters of water per year but uses only 10 percent of it. The potential for hydropower, not only for use in Afghanistan but also for sale to power-starved India and Pakistan, is immense.

If Afghanistan can get natural resource governance right, these consequences would follow for the economic and political system:

- The country would have a domestic base of revenue generation, which would provide the fiscal basis for a modern state that can perform core functions for its citizens. This revenue base would ensure Afghanistan's gradual transformation from a ward of the international community to a partner, able to pay for its own security and development.
- The mineral and water resources of the country would justify investment in public infrastructure, such as railways, roads, dams, and power lines, which would knit the country into a cohesive economic space and integrate it with the regional and global economy. Afghanistan is located in the heart of Asia, within easy distance of 3 billion people and potentially easy reach of China, India, and Russia—the three most important emerging economies in the world. Economic incentives could therefore be more effective than political means in leveraging buy-in to a stable and peaceful Afghanistan from neighbors near and far.

U.S. Air Force (Laura K. Smith)

Mineral resources throughout Afghanistan are estimated at $1 trillion and within easy trading distance of China, India, and Russia

II. U.S.-Afghan Strategic Partnership. President Barack Obama's engagement with Afghanistan has made it a global foreign policy issue. The resulting commitment of forces and resources has given ISAF the means to launch its counteroffensive. President Obama is also ready to enter into a strategic framework agreement between Afghanistan and the United States that would result in the medium- to long-term provision of security and development assistance by Washington to Kabul. The potential consequences of establishing this state-to-state and people-to-people relationship are as follows:

- The United States would emerge as the guarantor of Afghan territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- U.S. long-term commitment to security and development assistance would provide the resources and time horizon necessary for meaningful transformation of Afghan institutions.
- Afghanistan's partnerships with Europe and Japan would be strengthened.
- The diplomatic power of these partners could be used to persuade Afghanistan's neighbors to become stakeholders in its stability, peace, and prosperity.

III. Good Governance. Afghanistan is full of stories of successful institutional change: in sports, the Afghan cricket team emerged from nowhere to global prominence; in communications, which went from 100 mobile phone subscriptions in 2002 to over 12 million in 2010; in the media, where Afghan entrepreneurs have launched multiple successful satellite television stations and created new opportunities for public debate; in public finance, where expenditure

systems have been declared among the most robust in the developing world by the World Bank; in health care, where the child mortality rate has been significantly reduced; and in rural development, where 23,000 villages have been reached by the National Solidarity Program, named one of the most innovative rural development programs by World Bank president Robert Zoellick. These successes accentuate the sharp contrast between Afghanistan's current status as the second most corrupt country on Transparency International's index and its underlying potential for good governance.

Most of the examples of successful institutional transformation described above are the products of a design approach called national programs. A national program is an instrument that enables a state to perform one of its core functions by mobilizing existing capabilities, building additional capabilities, marshaling partnerships, promulgating rules and procedures, and engaging stakeholders. When citizens are served by and invest in the continuity of national programs, they also become invested in the stability of the state. The national program approach, its proven successes, and their continuing benefits, indicate several potential consequences for the promotion of this approach to good governance:

- Programs could be designed to improve the delivery of services to citizens and generation of revenue, extending trust in the system.
- Cross-cutting themes of governance, such as civil service and legislative reform, financial accountability, and human capital development, could be addressed systematically.
- The issue of delegations, alignments, and accountabilities among province, district, village, municipality, and central governments could be addressed.
- The market, as recent global experience has shown, requires state regulation. Bad governance of the relations between the state and private sector, however, drives the economy into informality, illegality, and ultimately criminality. Good governance of these relations therefore has not only economic but also developmental, social, and political consequences.

Bad governance, as pointed out by ISAF and acknowledged by President Hamid Karzai in his speeches to the Peace Jirga, has been a driver of insurgency and conflict. These areas of governance reform would have a significant impact on the perception of the population, helping to convince the Afghan people that their government is worth siding with.

IV. A Law and Order Approach to Security. Commitment to good governance will create the impetus for a law and order approach to security. The key equation describing the outcome of a struggle between an insurgency and a counterinsurgency was framed by Robert Thompson long ago:

Legality + Construction + Results = Government

Illegality + Destruction + Promises = Insurgency

Even though the Afghan National Army has made substantial progress, the army, police, and intelligence services have a long way to go before they embody the instruments of legitimate

force, upholding an order bound by rule of law. The judicial system, which should uphold the law that legitimates the use of force, is even less capable of fulfilling its role. If Afghanistan is to take over responsibility for ensuring law and order within its borders, its judicial system must be able to meet the provisions laid out by the constitution, laws, and covenants, which include obligations to provide due process to its citizens and protect them from treatment that violates international conventions ratified by the Afghan state. The adoption of COIN presents the United States with an opportunity to extend its engagement by training Afghan forces to a deeper examination, strengthening, and reconciliation of the fundamental institutions of Afghan law and order. Commitment to such an approach by the Afghan government and ISAF would have the following consequences:

- A transparent and accountable judicial system would allow for the transition to the Afghan government of detention facilities, searches and seizures, and trials of suspected insurgents and terrorists, resolving issues of authority over and accountability for Afghan citizens in U.S. detention.
- The provision of expedient, fair, and credible justice at the subnational level would overcome a comparative advantage of the insurgency, as swift justice addresses a real need of the population.
- The creating of a credible framework for property rights, enforcement of contracts, and fair resolution of disputes would clear the way for billions in Afghan-held funds to be invested in-country, thereby creating jobs, in particular for the poor, women, and youth, who make up the three numerical majorities of the population.
- The subordination of the use of force to the rule of law would be the key to transforming national security institutions into trustworthy upholders of a legitimate, democratic political order.

Scenario 2: Succumbing to Constraints

The opportunities outlined above exist in precarious balance with a series of risks or constraints. If we fail to understand the constraints or to contain the risks, any one of the following factors could easily derail the opportunities, while their combined impact would be devastating.

the tactics of the insurgency, which can use any and all forms of violence, could drive ISAF into uses of force that undermine its core principles

1. ISAF Loses Its Status as Protector of the Population. Protection of the population, the core idea of the counterinsurgency doctrine, has either been abandoned or has failed to be translated from theory into practice. COIN has only been pursued in earnest in Afghanistan for 1 year. While General Petraeus and his key officers among U.S. forces are committed to this doctrine, COIN has yet to become North Atlantic Treaty Organization doctrine or be translated into a set of operational procedures that can provide sergeants and officers in the field with guidelines adapted to the context of Afghanistan. Engineering a paradigm shift is hard enough in the natural sciences; cultural change in hierarchical

International narcotics traffickers destabilize Afghanistan

U.S. Air Force (Laura K. Smith)

organizations is even more difficult and requires time to propagate through the ranks. Whether the U.S. political calendar can allow the time necessary to transform COIN into organizational culture in ISAF remains to be seen. Additionally, the tactics of the insurgency, which can use any and all forms of violence, could drive ISAF into uses of force that undermine its core principles. Reversion from a counterinsurgency to a counterterror approach would fundamentally change the relationship between the Afghan population and international forces, and could allow the insurgency to cast ISAF as oppressors rather than protectors of the population.

II. Neighboring Countries Choose to Support Destabilizing Afghanistan. Afghanistan's neighbors have provided sanctuary, arms, and resources to the insurgents, while various governments have long used Afghanistan as a site of proxy warfare among their secret services. These actors may judge that the United States and its partners, who have been deployed to Afghanistan according to United Nations Security Council resolutions, lack the staying power of regional players and will therefore adopt state policies that provide support to groups dedicated to the use of terror and violence. The decisions made by Pakistan, a country whose stability simultaneously depends on and bolsters Afghanistan's stability, will be particularly important. Pakistan can neither impose a unilateral settlement in Afghanistan nor deliver the insurgents to a negotiating table. Islamabad has a consistent history of misreading Kabul and has yet to define its national interests in a manner compatible with the interests of a sovereign and peaceful Afghanistan, from whose territory no hostile actions would be launched against the interests of a sovereign and peaceful Pakistan. If Pakistan chooses to pursue short-term interests, narrowly conceived and

backed by the use of violence, those interests could pose significant risks to Afghanistan, ISAF, the region, and Pakistan itself.

III. Natural Resources Become a Source of Further Conflict and Criminalization. Afghanistan's newly discovered natural wealth, if not governed properly, could exacerbate conflict, corruption, and agitation for proxy powers by neighbors near and far. Congo and other natural resource–rich African countries provide vivid reminders that endowment of natural capital, in the absence of human capital and institutions of governance, can prove a curse rather than a blessing. This pattern is already in evidence in some parts of the country, where struggles for dominance over precious stones, coal mines, timber, and other natural resources are driving instability, consolidating the power of strongmen, and contributing to bad governance.

The narcotics trade makes up the major part of Afghanistan's criminal economy and is fully integrated into the networks that are the dark shadow of globalization. The narcotics traffickers already entrenched in Afghanistan have the money, muscle, and other means to criminalize the governance of these natural resources. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that international traffickers have reaped $460 to $600 billion from the cultivation, processing, and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan, in contrast to $18 billion going to Afghan traffickers and $6.3 billion to the 1.67 million Afghan farmers engaged in cultivation. Ensuring that this scenario is not repeated in the capture of our natural wealth should be a major priority.

IV. The Afghan Government Is Unable to Meet the Tests of 2010–2011. President Karzai has emerged as a decisionmaker without significant policy debate or checks and balances. The president in particular and the Afghan government in general must understand the risks and opportunities of the present moment if they are to avoid these risks. Several tests must be met by the government within the next 2 years. If the September parliamentary elections are marred by corruption and intimidation, it will erode tenuous public support in Europe and weaken public support in the United States during the election year. Once past that test, the government must then prepare in earnest for both the December 2010 assessment of ISAF strategy and the July 2011 transition. Failure to establish an environment of trust with ISAF and the international community, or perception of lack of serious effort to solve the governance problems, could create a negative climate in December and lead to a major reassessment of COIN. President Karzai must be prepared to take ownership of the agenda of government reform, lead anticorruption efforts, and assume the duties of commander in chief. The final test will be whether the government can build a national consensus on peace and reconciliation. This consensus will be not only a test of statecraft in itself, but also a critical step in constructing a wider and deeper agenda of state-building. Measures that divide the nation, or lead important constituents to believe that the neighbors are contravening Afghan national interests, will have major adverse consequences.

Afghanistan's natural wealth could exacerbate conflict, corruption, and agitation for proxy powers by neighbors near and far

V. Governance Reform Does Not Reach Southern Afghanistan. The true test of COIN doctrine is in southern Afghanistan in general and in Kandahar in particular. Despite some progress in Helmand Province, bad governance has become the norm rather than the exception in the southern provinces. Their political and economic elites are either deeply divided or perceived as focused on short-term gains at the expense of medium- to long-term stability and prosperity. The bureaucracy in Kabul has been either disconnected from or an obstacle to reform in these provinces. If President Karzai, with his intimate knowledge and strong networks in the area, does not own and lead an agenda of reform in southern Afghanistan, the ISAF investment of forces and resources will be significantly constrained.

restoration of full sovereignty can not only win the contest for the will of the people, but also bring all the opportunities together into a focused strategy to contain the risks

A New Narrative

To capitalize on opportunities and avoid succumbing to constraints, leadership is required from both Afghanistan and our international partners. We must produce a new narrative that is compelling to the Afghan public and international publics and governments. Framing the conflict in terms of counterterrorism did not win the Afghan public because it was manifested on the ground as support for strongmen and tolerance of increasingly bad governance. The overwhelming support of the Afghan people for a democratic order embodied in rule of law was undermined by seemingly arbitrary conduct and lack of commitment to the use of force within a rule of law framework.

The adoption of COIN marks a welcome departure from the old framework. The fundamental insight of COIN doctrine is that insurgency and counterinsurgency are engaged in a political contest for the will of the people, and therefore the use of force is only part of a process toward clear political objectives in the medium term.[3] Restoration of Afghanistan's full sovereignty is a narrative that can not only win the contest for the will of the people, but also bring all the potential opportunities together into a focused strategy to contain the risks.

A sovereignty strategy, as defined in my earlier work with Clare Lockhart,[4] entails the alignment of both internal and external stakeholders to the goals of the sovereign state through the joint formulation and calibration of, and adherence to, rules of the game. Once rules, objectives, and decision rights have been agreed on by citizens, state, and partners, resources are mobilized, critical tasks are designated, and reflexive monitoring and adjustment of implementation are put in place. The strategic goal is a sovereign state that is more autonomous and less dependent than before, can generate revenue self-sufficiently, and is fully capable of performing its core functions. In the long term, a sovereignty strategy should create, strengthen, or reform state institutions to perform all 10 core functions. In the short and medium term, however, a sovereignty strategy can include delegation of some critical tasks that fall within state functions to implementing partners by aligning the priorities, programs, and projects of international and national partners to the priorities and decisions of the state.

The designation of July 2011 as the deadline for transition from U.S. to Afghan leadership of security institutions makes an overall sovereignty strategy a logical narrative to generate U.S. and Afghan public buy-in. This narrative would provide the Afghan public with a goal to strive for, while testing the leadership and commitment of the political elite and the capacity for sacrifice and compromise on the part of the population. The narrative would also allow the international community to shift its emphasis from abstract discussions of strategy and coordination to real agreement on actionable processes of coproduction of state functions ranging from public finance to rule of law and citizen rights and obligations. Such a framework of partnership would allow for joint delineation of timelines, benchmarks, and processes of transition to Afghan ownership, leadership, and management of institutions and functions, thereby providing the governments and publics of partner countries with concrete measures of progress and a real sense of momentum.

The July 2010 Kabul Conference was intended to be an arena for articulating clear objectives and reinforcing processes and mechanisms of implementation for a contract between citizens and their government, while renewing and strengthening Afghanistan's partnerships with the international community on a basis of mutual commitments and accountability. This would generate a strategy for sovereignty. Success depended on the political will of the Afghan government and willingness of the international community to change those aspects of their practices that have proven ineffective or counterproductive. To go beyond political theater, the conference requires followup in the form of a sequence of rolling 100-day action plans. It is the followup that is essential, both for generating momentum through perceptible successes and for achieving meaningful progress toward true Afghan sovereignty.

The scale of risks in Afghanistan is such that all challenges cannot be confronted simultaneously. Political capital must therefore be created and spent through a process of calibration, innovation, and learning. The desire of the absolute majority of Afghan men and women to live in peace and harmony, and their will to create better futures for their children, should not be underestimated. In that desire and will lies the promise that opportunities can be converted into real gains.

By owning the Afghan conflict, President Obama took a major risk and created a window of opportunity. It is up to Afghans and our international partners to demonstrate that the risk was worth taking by making the most of the opportunity presented. The future stability of Afghanistan, the region, and the world depends on our success. PRISM

Notes

[1] *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3–24* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 139.

[2] See also Ashraf Ghani, *A Ten Year Framework for Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, April 2009).

[3] Ibid., 25.

[4] For the following definition, see Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 174–197. For examples of

sovereignty strategies implemented in Afghanistan, see the National Solidarity Program, National Development Framework, and Securing Afghanistan's Future.

A "Net Shift" for Afghanistan?

BY JOHN ARQUILLA

Some three millennia ago, the Persian philosopher Zoroaster dubbed mountainous Afghanistan "the land of the high flags." But there is far more to its identity than the powerful shaping influence of terrain upon its culture; there is above all the paradox of the Afghan peoples themselves. Xenophobic from time immemorial, they are nonetheless a mix of Aryans, Greeks, Chinese, Indians, Mongols, and others. Quintessentially isolationist, their country has always been a crossroads of trade and conquest. Indeed, the great city of Kandahar—the true capital of the Taliban—is named after Alexander the Great, who tarried there. And so for all the cool distance conveyed by the notion of the "high flags," the deeper story of Afghanistan is one of a mass mixing of peoples and of a crucial hub in the infrastructure of East-West interconnection. In short, it is a land comprised of dense, ancient social and physical networks.

Thus, the modern riddle of Afghanistan—its stubborn and successful resistance to "progress" as defined by the British in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Russians in the 1970s–1980s, and the Americans and their allies today—can perhaps only be properly understood by viewing the land and people as a loosely aggregated, laterally connected network rather than a centralized, traditionally hierarchical nation. For even at first glance, it is clear that the age-old paradoxes have persisted right up to the present.

While most of the world was in upheaval between the rise of Hitler's Nazi regime in Germany in 1933 and the end of American involvement in Vietnam in 1975, Afghanistan was comparatively calm. The constitutional monarch, King Mohammed Zahir Shah, who ruled for almost exactly this period, had a reverence from his people that contrasted sharply with his lack of real power over them. Yet it was for the most part a profoundly peaceful time, when Afghan security was at its best despite there being virtually no national army.

Today, the paradox persists and even deepens, as efforts are made to form Afghanistan into a nation with strong, central, and legitimate levers of governance. The troubled American intervention has

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seen the Taliban fall and rise again in an insurgency that has reestablished much of its influence throughout the country—in spite of the fact that an overwhelming majority of Afghans despise the Talibs. Another aspect of the paradox can be seen in the fact that the soldiery of the American-supported Karzai regime, although drawn from some of the world's best natural fighters, has been formed into one of the world's most poorly organized militaries.

To date, the American response has been to "double down" on its big bet in Afghanistan, sending yet more troops and rebuilding more roads in pursuit of nationbuilding. In the name of shoring up central control, a shaky, shady regime has been publicly supported by President Barack Obama, at some political cost—even in the face of scandalous, overt acts of election fraud. The principal lens through which Washington perceives Afghanistan is nation-based; but given the problematic results to date, it may be high time to recognize more fully the networked nature of Afghan society, culture, and strategic geography. And since this is a time of war, it is also incumbent to think more specifically in terms of how to fight a network—and how to fight *like* a network. Accordingly, the paradigm shift called for is to move from nationbuilding to "netwar."

the guiding notion was that dispersed nodes would launch loosely coordinated, omnidirectional attacks on more centralized foes

The Concept of Netwar

Before considering what such a shift might look like, it is necessary to convey a clear, succinct description of netwar itself, and of the networks that conduct this type of conflict. The term *netwar* was introduced by David Ronfeldt and me in a 1992 essay to describe emerging forms of low-intensity conflict, crime, and social militancy, but it was explored in more detail in our 1996 RAND report *The Advent of Netwar*. That study aimed to raise the consciousness of the government, military, and mass public regarding both the rise of networks and the distinct doctrinal innovations they would likely bring to conflict. Most specifically, the guiding notion was that fighting networks composed of many small cells would tend to "swarm" their opponents—that is, their dispersed nodes would launch loosely coordinated, omnidirectional attacks on more centralized foes.

In the 5 years between the publication of *The Advent of Netwar* and the 9/11 attacks, perhaps the most distinct example of a network swarming its opponent was the first of the modern Russo-Chechen conflicts, which was waged from 1994 to 1996. This war featured, for the most part, small bands of Chechen fighters driving one of the world's largest and more competent militaries out of their country. Interestingly, the Russians returned 3 years later and did much better by networking their own forces with friendly local clans and counterswarming the rebel Chechens.[1]

Two other important aspects of netwar swarm tactics were on display during that period. The first could be seen in the success of the student-led Otpor resistance movement in Serbia, which played a key role in toppling the Slobodan Milosevic regime after the Kosovo war of 1999. The use of social networking tools to mobilize and empower mass demonstrations proved hard to quell and became something of a model for the democratic "color revolutions" that emerged in Ukraine and Georgia.

At the same time this sort of social swarming was on the rise, cyberspace was beginning to see a significant boost in capabilities for the

same kind of activity: the simultaneous convergence of widely distributed individuals and/or linked machines on selected targets. In this case, however, the swarm was virtual rather than physical, and was conducted largely with denial-of-service attacks. These actions would typically grow out of animosity toward particular corporate actors or certain government policies, with the latter sparking the rise of swarms of "hacktivist" demonstrators. Initially, these virtual swarms were far less effective than their physical counterparts.[2] But it seems that virtual swarms have now grown in potency, too.

In terms of the uniquely distinguishing features of networks, the 1996 RAND report keyed in on the organizational dimension instead of either technological linkages (the way networks are wired) or social interactions (the "old boy network" paradigm, defined on the basis of who talks with whom). Three basic network topologies were described: "chains," "hubs," and areas of "all-channel" connectivity. For purposes of thinking about netwar, we should focus on the notion that networks typically manifest some mix of these archetypal forms. The mixtures may vary, but the three forms will undoubtedly appear, whether the network is comprised of terrorists, insurgents, transnational criminals, or even social activists.

Al Qaeda, for example, began with a small core area of all-channel connection in Afghanistan, with chains running out to operating units in several dozen countries all over the world. At these remote locations far from the core, there were mixtures of hubs (for example, Mohammed Atta, the likely field commander of the 9/11 hit team, was a hub in America) and areas of all-channel connection, such as the Hamburg cell. Marc Sageman has neatly dubbed the latter "cliques."[3]

Even after being driven from Afghanistan in late 2001 (a result that al Qaeda and the Taliban are still contesting), the network's new sanctuary in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the "virtual haven" still enjoyed in the vast wilderness of cyberspace have allowed the terrorists to maintain a roughly similar organizational structure. Their network topology is somewhat looser than in 2001, with several affiliated groups around the world adopting the al Qaeda "brand" without necessarily subordinating themselves to direct orders from the core, but the basic network functions have remained for more than a decade, despite increasing Pakistani, American, and other allied military pressure.

the narrative dimension has to do with the story that network members tell each other about the origins and purpose of their coming together

Moreover, al Qaeda's topological template for networking appears to have utility for other groups as well, in that Hizballah's organizational structure during the 2006 Lebanon war was quite similar. In this case, there was once again a core of all-channel connection with chains running to hundreds of small field units operating in southern Lebanon. But with "decontrol" being a defining characteristic of netwar, there was little central control of these field units, whose fundamental duties were to unearth cached weapons, fire them off, and then return to hide-sites. It was a concept of operations described as "shoot and scoot," which even the Israeli government–ordered Winograd Report on the war noted worked quite well against their Defense Forces.

Beyond their communications technologies, topological structures, and swarming doctrines, fighting networks—whether operating in the physical or the virtual domain—must also

U.S. Air Force (Andy Dunaway)

U.S. Soldier provides security while on mission with Iraqi soldiers

be assessed in terms of the factors that unite their adherents. These factors fall into two basic categories: narrative and social. The narrative dimension has to do with the story that network members tell each other about the origins and purpose of their coming together. In al Qaeda's case, Marc Sageman has described this element as a "grand narrative,"[4] given some of its far-reaching aspects (for example, restoration of a broad caliphate and the call to join a holy war to reduce the shadow that American power casts upon the Muslim world). At a more operational level, the narrative serves as a rough guide to action, informing cadres whom they should attack and encouraging self-synchronized actions by the many who will come under no one's direct control. American white supremacists sometimes call this paradigm "leaderless resistance."[5] David Ronfeldt and I introduced and prefer the term *panarchy* to reflect the seeking of a common goal without direct control.

In addition to the power of story to mobilize and guide masses, spark recruitment, and shore up the morale of its weary, hunted cadres, the al Qaeda network offers an example of the use of social cross-connections to tighten its bonds. Whether tribal or religious-based, the importance of a strong social aspect to networks is that it helps both to convey "staying power" to members and to foster deep levels of trust and cooperation. Indeed, when we look at the social basis of the alliance of nations currently fighting the terror networks, we see that cooperation is often quite conditional—for example, observe the deleterious effects of the divisive international debate about the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 on the antiterrorist alliance.

Even within nations, the ability of various departments of government—military, law enforcement, intelligence, and diplomatic—to engage in the broad sharing of information among and

between their members, a true hallmark of networking, is generally impeded by a social ethos that defines individuals' identities in terms of their parent organizations. The highly problematic response of the newly formed Department of Homeland Security to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 saw many examples of the social backwardness and balkiness of traditional organizational forms in action. Hierarchies simply do not breed the kinds of social connections needed and empowered by networks.

With the foregoing in mind, it should be possible to assess the course and conduct of a strategic "net shift" as seen in an exemplary case of its application. In this instance, the case to review is Iraq.

Lessons from Iraq

From fairly early in the U.S. intervention in Iraq, it became apparent that a fundamentally different dynamic was driving the conflict. The war began in the spring of 2003 with a combination of aerial "shock and awe" and armored "thunder runs" that swiftly toppled Saddam Hussein. Yet terror and insurgency were on the rise at the same time, much of it fomented by an al Qaeda franchisee, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, whose primary goal, embraced by Osama bin Laden late in 2004, was to spark a Sunni-Shi'a civil war.[6] Zarqawi did a great deal of damage before being killed in an air raid in the summer of 2006.

The violence continued. Neither the capture of the tyrant nor the killing of the terrorist leader could bring victory to coalition forces; they were fighting networks that did not depend on lone, charismatic commanders. Trying to defeat them with counter-leadership targeting proved fruitless and wasteful of resources, for these were networks that did a lot of self-synchronizing by sharing best practices over the Internet (for ambushes, the placement of improvised explosive devices, and so forth) or sending liaison operatives back and forth, spanning the boundaries among various network elements.

Indeed, the Iraqi insurgents exhibited several of the behaviors predicted in *The Advent of Netwar*: they operated in many small bands, used swarm tactics, and eschewed central control but were still able to pursue the common goal (that is, they existed in a state of panarchy) of resisting American occupation. The diversity of the resistance would prove one of the insurgency's most telling features. At the height of the violence, there were at least eight major network clusters made up of Sunni and Shi'a tribesmen, former military and regime members, and the foreign fighters operating throughout Iraq.[7]

The biggest clusters of insurgents fell under the broad categories of the Sunni tribes in Anbar Province, the Shi'a Mahdi army, and the die-hard supporters of Saddam. Al Qaeda operatives, while constituting a small percentage of total insurgents—by almost all measures well below one-tenth—worked closely with the Sunni tribes, giving them much additional leverage. Also, given the goal of fomenting civil war, having large numbers of al Qaeda operatives involved was less important than selecting targets carefully, with their maximum "outrage effect" always in mind.

This was not the sort of campaign that could be won by shock and awe or other traditional tactics. Yet coalition forces were to persist for nearly 4 years in their mostly conventional approach, laagering in on a relatively small number of large forward operating bases from which they occasionally poured forth on sweeps, or in reaction to insurgent attacks on Iraqis and ambushes on U.S. military patrols and convoys. There were also two major urban battles in Fallujah in 2004.

On top of all this, American airpower continued to be used liberally, guaranteeing a continuing stream of Iraqi noncombatant casualties. Finally, however—probably beginning in earnest in late 2006—the sense that networks lay at the heart of the problem in Iraq, and were the key to the solution, began to take hold high and low, and a new strategy emerged.

This conceptual shift was actually introduced by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who had begun referring publicly to the conflict in Iraq as a netwar in December 2004.[8] But this perspective had begun to find its way into popular consciousness even earlier. It can be seen, for example, in an article published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in the summer of 2004 by renowned terrorism and irregular warfare expert Bruce Hoffman. In it, he concluded that "what we find in Iraq is the closest manifestation yet of 'netwar,' a concept defined in 1992 by the RAND analysts John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt."[9] Fareed Zakaria of *Newsweek* arrived at a similar conclusion a few months later.[10]

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In the field, the officers carrying the heaviest burden in this fight—the company commanders each in charge of just a few hundred soldiers—knew they were up against a network and created a network of their own, in the form of "Companycommand.com." Tactics that worked against the terrorists anywhere were soon being diffused virtually everywhere. The essence of networking was on full display in the first flowering of this truly grassroots military network.[11] Initially, only company commanders were allowed on the site, encouraging free-flowing, frank discussion. Eventually, for "security reasons," the site was handed over to supervision from above, so some of the zip went out of the exchanges. Still, on balance, this Web site has had a hugely beneficial effect on field operations.

But awareness of the network phenomenon alone did not have an immediate impact on the course of the campaign. Rather, this new understanding allowed U.S. forces to gain a better grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of enemy field and support units—such as they were—and encouraged systematic analysis of the aforementioned five levels that seem to typify all networks. This type of analysis was much needed, since at the outset of the war the insurgent networks had the edge in every category. Organizationally, they proved supple, exhibiting a capacity for putting Louis Beam's concept of "leaderless resistance" into action. In terms of doctrine, the swarm characterized both the tactical level (for example, in coordinated attacks on truck convoys) and the operational level (with the orchestration of a drumbeat of simultaneous strikes all over Anbar Province and even reaching out elsewhere in Iraq).

The insurgents' social bonds were also tight, bearing out a point that Loretta Napoleoni made about Muslim terror networks: "Islamist armed organizations tend to be formed via social bonds."[12] These ties were reinforced by a common narrative based on resistance to American occupation, a story that grew in strength with the revelation of abuses such as those at Abu Ghraib, and the increasing toll of collateral damage on the Iraqi people. Indeed, this narrative of resistance to occupation brought together disparate groups of what David Kilcullen calls "accidental guerrillas" to join the fight.[13] These fighters almost surely had no interest in al Qaeda's grand visions of a

restored caliphate. Instead, they became allies of convenience because al Qaeda's principal adversary had come to their homeland and presided over the dispossession of the Sunnis.

The insurgent networks were even good at the technological level, the best example being their generally swifter actions in the complex electronic warfare campaign waged around improvised explosive devices (IEDs). If the coalition chose to introduce jammers, the insurgents quickly shifted to the use of base stations, which could not be jammed. The eventual "up-armoring" of vehicles was also quickly offset by the introduction of explosively formed projectiles. The swiftness of enemy reactions made it seem that they had their own version of Companycommand.com.

But there were striking weaknesses in the enemy camp, too—or at least vulnerabilities. The insurgents' organizational structures proved open enough to allow infiltration.[14] In terms of doctrine, the insurgents were not the only ones who could swarm. This tactic was parsed by coalition company commanders, as noted above, who at one point even conducted a successful Operation *Swarmer* against enemy swarms.

Finally, at the social level of analysis, kinship and other ties may have been tight within tribes, but not as tight across them, because rivalries and resentments could be exploited. And a wide chasm separated the Sunni and Shi'a, a gap broadened by Zarqawi's campaign to foment civil war and bin Laden's willingness to go along with it. Perhaps most important, though, al Qaeda cadres undermined their own narrative by their harsh conduct when they tried to consolidate their hold on Anbar—acts ranging from outright extortion to demanding bribes to operating kangaroo courts and executing dissenters. It was these excesses that sparked the rise of a counternetwork against al Qaeda, drawing members from the ranks of the insurgents themselves. It came to be known as "the Awakening Movement," and its fighters were called the "Sons of Iraq."

Under the rubric of a concept I had been recommending and calling "outpost and outreach" since the summer of 2004, the netwar against al Qaeda in Iraq got under way late in 2006. The outpost part of the scheme consisted of creating a physical network of platoon-sized outposts in which friendly Iraqi forces and Americans were collocated. This got many of our troops off the large forward operating bases that had limited their ability to develop intelligence and slowed their responses to attacks. As one of the officers who led the first wave of this netwar noted, the outposts served as "lily pads for mechanized quick-reaction forces" and "also acted as flybait . . . for the insurgents who suffered heavy casualties" when they attacked them.[15]

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The outreach part of the concept was aimed more at social engagement. The outposts improved response time and enabled us to swarm better at the doctrinal level, but it was the social networking phenomenon, the hallmark of the Awakening Movement, that improved intelligence coming into our system and catalyzed the creation of many more friendly nodes. Respect increased among Iraqis for the Americans' willingness to deploy their forces in small posts near the action and far from the protection afforded by big bases. That helped build up our own narrative, even as the

enemy's "story" was unraveling because of al Qaeda's many excesses in Anbar.

Even the campaign against the IED networks benefited from a shift toward a more network-analytic approach. Where technological fixes by the coalition forces—from electronic jamming to the rise of "moving fortresses" such as the mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle—were introduced slowly and insurgent networks fielded countermeasures swiftly, a focus at the organizational level quickly paid large dividends. It turned out that the IED networks were reliant on a relatively small number of key nodes—especially in terms of people like financiers and locations such as bomb factories—that acted as hubs from which chains of operatives (for example, "bomb placers") emanated. Once the social dynamic empowered by the outpost-and-outreach concept began to take hold, a virtual "golden seam" of information about the IED networks opened up. Once the enemy system was understood and illuminated, the means for countering it came naturally and were to prove much more successful than the previous emphasis on the earlier, technology-focused efforts to win the IED fight.

the war in Iraq has featured almost laboratory-like conditions for examining the effects of the netwar approach to counterinsurgency

For all the positive developments that flowed from reframing the campaign in Iraq along netwar lines, at this writing there is a growing risk that previous gains will soon dissipate; some of the key elements in the counterinsurgent network are either being disassembled or coming undone, due to the withdrawal of American troops from small outposts—they are largely back on the big operating bases—and the decreasing willingness to continue engaging tribal actors.

The network of outposts, while still in place, has been weakened terribly by the withdrawal of the U.S. garrisons to larger, more remote bases. This removal severs hard-forged social ties and will soon have the dire dual effects of reducing the flow of incoming intelligence and fostering a renewal of sectarian frictions. There is much evidence in the renewed violence in Iraq that this is what is happening.[16]

From a netwar perspective, the right strategy would be to keep residual American troops circulating through the small, local outposts as much as possible. These are key physical nodes in the counterinsurgent network, and a wide range of social interconnections radiates out from them. If the positive momentum in the campaign of the past 3 years is to be sustained and built upon, American soldiers must come to and through these sites regularly. This can still be done relatively easily in strategic and logistical terms—even in the face of impending sharp force drawdowns—because the total number of troops in all these outposts, throughout Iraq, never exceeded about 5 percent of overall U.S. forces in country. Even with steep reductions in total forces in Iraq, the garrisons can still be manned and supplied, and their security supported by remainder forces. The point is that the outpost network is physically small enough to be able to keep functioning despite force drawdowns that might leave a residual presence of just a few tens of thousands of soldiers.

In sum, the war in Iraq has featured almost laboratory-like conditions for examining the effects of the netwar approach to counterinsurgency, providing insights at each of the five levels of network analysis. An almost universal consensus held that the situation was dire until late 2006—in journalist Thomas Ricks's view, a

"fiasco." At that point, the net shift took place. Organizationally, coalition forces went from a relatively few large units of action on a few large bases to an order of battle comprised of hundreds of small combat teams distributed across a wide network of platoon-sized outposts.

In social terms, the network was hugely empowered by the decision to reach out and work with Sunnis who had previously been fighting alongside and/or working with the insurgents—or at least tolerating them. Their openness to switching sides was catalyzed by al Qaeda's missteps at the narrative level. The terrorists' "brand" had changed from freedom fighters against the American occupation forces to oppressors of the indigenous insurgents.

These great improvements at the organizational, social, and narrative levels made it possible for a swarming doctrine to emerge, with al Qaeda in Iraq operatives struck from every direction. This approach was further aided by the provision of some communications equipment to the Sons of Iraq who, thus connected, were able to assist in striking at swift-moving enemy units by passing along timely, targetable information to their compatriots as well as to coalition forces.

For all the ostensible differences between the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan—which seemingly get most of the official attention—it should be realized that there are some similarities as well. And on examination, it appears that there are good opportunities for transplanting many elements of the successful netwar campaign in Iraq to Afghanistan, as is argued in the next section. At a minimum, the "outpost and outreach" concept of operations can be taken there. But there can be even more to netwar in Afghanistan, as openings abound to craft a new narrative, build new social ties, and overwhelm the Taliban with the rekindling of a swift, smart, swarm-oriented approach.

Netwar in Afghanistan

If the conflict in Iraq started out with little in the way of netwar-style operations—which emerged only some 3 years into the campaign there—Operation *Enduring Freedom* clearly took the networked approach from the outset. This was most evident at the organizational, doctrinal, and technological levels. Instead of deploying a few hundreds of thousands of massed troops to invade Afghanistan, the offensive mounted in the fall of 2001 was conducted by 11 Special Forces A-teams—some 200 Soldiers—riding horses at the outset. They worked with and were able to empower much larger, friendly Afghan forces totaling over 10,000 fighters, but they were still organized in small, widely distributed units and outnumbered by the Taliban and al Qaeda by about 3 to 1.[17] Nevertheless, they swept their enemies before them, and drove the Taliban out of power in just a few weeks.

Their supple organizational structure aside, it was the ability of the Special Forces to strike at the Taliban simultaneously from several points, supported by at-the-ready airpower, that contributed so significantly to the swift success of this campaign. It was the essence of the swarming doctrine so naturally well suited to networks. The ground teams and the attack aircraft were further knitted together at the technological level, where information was widely and quickly shared, in part due to the skillful use of the Tactical Web Page (TWP) by the Special Forces.

Originally intended for logistical and other combat support functions, the TWP was soon used by the A-teams for battle coordination and management purposes. Tight coupling with attack aircraft made for a networked level of cooperation perhaps never seen before. The U.S. Navy, whose aircraft provided most of the sorties in the campaign—though not the majority of the tonnage dropped—made a true netwar-oriented

decision early on to refrain from predesignating targets, relying instead on the benefits to be had by allowing their pilots simply to connect directly with the network nodes on the ground. Timeliness and accuracy were greatly improved, especially when measured against the opening, air-only weeks of *Enduring Freedom*, before the Special Forces were set loose.

To be sure, the campaign was not perfect. Most of the Taliban and al Qaeda leaders and fighters got away, crossing Afghanistan's eastern border into the tribal badlands of Pakistan.

it was the failure to address the narrative aspect of the netwar with far more nuance that made it possible for the Taliban to make a comeback

Many explanations have been given for this. The leading accounts are that too few U.S. troops were on the ground and that apparently friendly Afghan allies may still have harbored soft feelings for the Taliban and al Qaeda, allowing them to escape from Tora Bora. However, a netwar-based analysis of the campaign would lead to another conclusion. For all the distributed nature of the first-wave assault, followup operations were far too linear, focusing on a step-by-step, city-by-city process of liberation.

A more fully netwar-oriented approach would have viewed the battlespace in a less linear way throughout the campaign, and elements of American follow-on forces—principally the airborne and mountain troops—should have been moved (or jumped) into blocking positions along the border quite early on. This would have been more consistent with the nonlinear logic of netwar and would likely have prevented the mass exodus of enemy fighters through our slower-moving pincers at the end of this opening campaign.

There were other problems as well, though their effects were not felt until much later. For example, at the narrative level, our close association with the Northern Alliance—seen by many as brutal Russian proxies in the Afghan civil war—made it hard to portray the campaign as a straight liberation. This point was only reinforced when some members of the Northern Alliance, appointed to positions in the new government, were perceived to behave in corrupt ways and to resort to violence to consolidate their control. Indeed, it was the failure to address the narrative aspect of the netwar with far more nuance that made it possible for the Taliban—with their own "repaired narrative" well on display—to make a comeback, starting in earnest about 2005. Needless to say, these problems at the narrative level resonated socially as well and have contributed to our difficulties over the past few years.

In the face of these mounting reverses, instead of keeping what worked about our netwar and addressing the areas in which we were deficient—the narrative and social levels—strategic choices were made that both undermined our successes and worsened our problem areas. The principal cause of the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan was the organizational shift from a network of "the many and the small" units of action to something more akin to "the few and the large." The nimble network of A-teams and other light forces gave way to a much heavier footprint. Instead of emphasizing the creation of many small outposts, a few bases became quite large—Bagram in particular.

Doctrinally, the shift to more of a big-unit style of operations made us slower to respond to fleeting targets and much less able to achieve surprise. Furthermore, this approach led to a

U.S. Air Force (Brenda Nipper)

IED killed and wounded multinational forces near German embassy and U.S. base in Kabul

fixation on hunting down enemy leaders—a problematic practice given the highly networked nature of the insurgency.[18]

Even at the technological level, there was some retrograde movement as more centralized control was imposed and enforced, even from afar. After all, the same technology that empowers networking enables over-control. These developments also contributed to the growing amount of collateral damage in counterinsurgency operations, which caused the narrative and social dimensions of the netwar effort to deteriorate. Indeed, at this point, the period roughly between the summer of 2007 and summer of 2009, it became hard to continue viewing the campaign in netwar terms.

The reconstruction efforts that have played an integral role in the campaign to stabilize Afghanistan have seen less a networked approach than a more centralized national one as well. The best evidence can be seen in the disparity between the number of active nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the country—over 150 today—versus the more than 2,000 for-profit contracting firms on the ground. While the NGO networks have made real strides in improving health, education, and the condition of women throughout the country, the private contractors have often had much less beneficial impact. Indeed, they have often bred resentment by their perceived overbearing behavior, causing many Afghans, including their leaders, to lump the NGOs in with them as targets of their opprobrium.[19]

Overall, as we consider the strategy currently pursued, the distance from netwar seems only to grow. In terms of force levels, the United States is in the process of roughly doubling its military presence to about 100,000 troops. This is clearly an attempt to replicate the claimed effects of "the surge" in Iraq, but the real improvements in Iraq had more to do with creating a network of small outposts

and reaching out to form a social network with many of the very insurgents who were fighting us until they were embraced. It was not a result driven principally by numbers.

the real-world effect of killing the wrong people is to spark blood feuds, energize enemy recruitment, and raise the risk of setting off a social revolution in Pakistan

Similarly, more troops in Afghanistan will not by themselves make a positive difference in the campaign. Instead, there need to be radical changes in organization and doctrine that will reawaken the iconic netwar qualities of being "smaller, quicker, closer." In this regard, there are a few bright spots. The Special Forces are trying to operate in this fashion, as are the Marines, who are increasingly settling in small outposts, apparently for the duration of their tours. In this respect, Green Berets and Marines seem to be rekindling some of the best attributes of the early small-unit war in Vietnam, which should be viewed as an embryonic case of the use of netwar against insurgents.[20]

But beyond the Special Forces and Marine small unit efforts, General David Petraeus is using most of his other forces to focus on winning a few big engagements (for example, Marjah), while at the same time many small outposts are being closed. The counterinsurgent network is thus, in a real sense, being dismantled in favor of a more traditional effort. Another step back from netwar can be seen in the attempt to win with a Predator bombing campaign against Taliban and al Qaeda targets located in Pakistani territory.

President Obama has quite determinedly ratcheted up the intensity of these unmanned aircraft attacks. The most difficult aspect of this approach has been that it lacks the kind of network on the ground that existed when the 11 Special Forces A-teams were set loose late in 2001. There are almost surely some operatives across the border who are providing occasional targeting information, but that is a far cry from running a swarming maneuver campaign in many places in the FATA, forcing the enemy to leave hide-sites and scramble from one location to another under fire.

Another problem with the Predator campaign—beyond its low operational utility—is that it is causing grievous damage at the social level. Inevitably, some of the damage in a bombing campaign that lacks a true ground network to link up with is done to noncombatants. "Collateral damage" may be a convenient, cool euphemism, but the real-world effect of killing the wrong people—even if only small numbers of them—is to spark blood feuds, energize enemy recruitment, and, in a case of war contagion, raise the risk of setting off a social revolution in Pakistan. Tensions in this strategically important country are already high given the sustained, American-inspired effort to foster a fuller form of democracy there at a time when Pakistanis may not yet be ready, by dint of their history and culture, to embrace our brand of political pluralism.

This last point about our "democracy project" brings the analysis back to the narrative level of netwar in Afghanistan, where this aspect of our strategy revolves around trying to build a legitimate, participatory central government in Kabul. The problems with this narrative are twofold. First, inside Afghanistan, our association with leaders perceived to be corrupt in their wielding of power has made democracy a hard "product" to market to the people. And the overt fraud that was associated with the

August 2009 election did quite grievous harm to our preferred narrative.

But there is a second problem: the American-led democracy project overall is pursued in highly inconsistent ways. For example, the United States, while striving to spread democracy to Afghanistan and Iraq, seems content to keep dealing with authoritarian rulers in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and elsewhere throughout the 44 Muslim countries of the world. Such contradictory behavior is sheer poison for the narrative aspect of netwar. Until the pursuit of democracy is perceived as being part of a consistent policy everywhere, the persuasive power of the call to pluralism will remain much inhibited in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

What Is to Be Done?

The foregoing analysis has conveyed the sense that, in Afghanistan, a good start went badly wrong—not immediately, but surely and steadily. So the question is how to get back on course, and to identify what the netwar perspective offers by way of policy-relevant guidance. The answers are clear using the five levels of netwar analysis, and the policy shifts implied may not be all that difficult to parse, either.

At the narrative and social levels, for example, the implication is that Afghanistan is probably not a country where much effort should be given to try to form and sustain a strong central government. Instead, something looser—cantonal, like Switzerland, or confederated, as in Joseph Biden's early (and misplaced) plan for a "soft partition" of Iraq—seems far more appropriate.[21] But going beyond thinking about a new national narrative, we ought to be forging strong social ties to the many tribes that can be turned against Mullah Omar's Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda. Just as the Anbar Awakening Movement sliced away large swaths of the insurgency in Iraq, so a similar movement can succeed in Afghanistan. Much has been said about the differences between these theaters of operations; netwar allows us to see their similarities more clearly.

These narrative and social shifts—away from centralization to something looser and more networked—would then reenergize a return to the organizational forms and doctrinal concepts that initially shone so brightly in the fall of 2001. Remote outposts in this largely rural country could be both manned and sustained with small American and allied contingents working hand in hand with friendly, newly empowered Afghan tribes. There should also be a shift away from for-profit private contractors in favor of growing the NGO networks and leveraging their already deep ties to many of the tribes by focusing on the health, education, and human rights initiatives they have done so much to carry forward. The military outposts and the NGO outreach could truly form a winning combination.

The implication here is that U.S. forces in country did not need to be doubled in size, and command and control of them does not need to be tighter. Instead, far fewer forces—probably less than 50,000—would prove sufficient for populating and supporting a physical network of small outposts and nodes in the NGO network. Reaching out to reconcilable tribal elements will then create a social network that will provide both additional friendly fighters and a cascade of intelligence about enemy numbers, dispositions, and movements.

In fact, this networked approach would allow allied forces in Afghanistan—long hampered in their ability to cooperate by balky, hierarchical, too-separate organizational structures—to coordinate their campaign efforts far better and to seize the clear initiative from the enemy. When conducted in the context of

truly irregular military operations, netwar is all about fusing "sensors and shooters"—that is, it is about using ubiquitous information flows best by allowing many small units of action *to act*, largely on their own initiative, but still within the overall rubric of campaign objectives. For this approach to take hold, senior leaders have to be willing to "hold the reins loosely," as they did in that first campaign in the fall of 2001.[22]

With the foregoing in mind, it appears that the netwar paradigm provides a fresh perspective on American endgame strategies in Afghanistan. And the options that emerge from this analysis can be easily summed up in terms of the five levels of netwar analysis. First, there is the whole question of narrative that, as has been noted, should shift away from a story about creating a strong central government in a place that has never really had one, or at least not for long. Instead, an image should be cultivated of an Afghanistan that is much more loosely confederated, with security provided by strong tribes fully able to defend their parts of the country. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, before hewing to the "centralist line," actually seemed to be pursuing this more networked approach when he spoke of it not being useful to try to create a democratic "Valhalla" in Afghanistan.[23]

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The benefit of returning to Gates's more limited view of central governance is that it would completely energize the social dimension of the netwar, bringing many tribes over to the counterterrorist cause—much as occurred in Anbar in Iraq—and putting the insurgents on the run. This offensive would consist of an ongoing swarming of the enemy, the third key element in the netwar that could unfold there. The added bonus to all this would be that the campaign in Afghanistan could be won *in* Afghanistan—much as the campaign in Iraq was turned around without having to take the war beyond its borders—relieving the stress and strain on the Pakistani people and polity. This is not to say that the terrorists will be granted haven in Pakistan; rather, the point is that Afghanistan's crisis can be resolved without cross-border escalation. As to terror networks in Pakistan, they can be treated to a tailor-made netwar campaign that would form part of our "global pursuit" of them.

But first, and probably most important, in order to use netwar to win in Afghanistan, we must return to the appropriate organizational design there. This facet of the netwar paradigm is perhaps the simplest to understand: we must not be a military force of the "few and the large" units of action. Instead, we must craft an armed force of the "many and the small" units of action and return to an emphasis on technologies that help us to see more and to move information swiftly among our many distributed units, more like the 11 Special Forces A-teams of 2001 and the TWP that so empowered them by linking them to each other and to the attack aircraft that helped make their victory possible.[24]

This does not mean that the campaign must be conducted entirely by special operations forces. But it does suggest that these elite troops have become, to some extent, a doctrinal laboratory for waging netwar and that their best practices should come to guide all our field forces—special or not.

All this emphasis on getting the military concept of operations right should be undertaken along with, not instead of, the rekindling

of the other key elements that, taken together, would constitute a net shift in Afghanistan. Especially important will be engaging the enemy at the level of ideas, a process reliant on the skillful use of strategic communications and public diplomacy. The netwar perspective raises our consciousness in this issue area in two key ways. First, given the inability to control the many conduits of information, from global media to word-of-mouth links in rural areas, special attention should be given to the role that physical actions play in sending messages. Unambiguously clear actions, such as closing some detention centers, firing corrupt contractors, challenging fraudulent elections, and withdrawing the bulk of our field forces, make it harder for the enemy's propaganda to take hold and more likely that our own message will come through the media clutter. Second, listening is an important aspect of strategic communications—something all good networks do that reflects their profound participatory social norm. This does not mean giving up one's values or most necessary policies, but it does mean being willing to make some changes in flexible ways, based on feedback from those we seek to influence.

With all the foregoing in mind, there is at minimum a strong case to be made for launching a serious inquiry into the prospect of making a net shift in Afghanistan. Given the success of a similar shift in Iraq, and the parlous state of affairs in the campaign against the Taliban reached by having pursued more traditional counterinsurgency approaches, it is difficult to see how a change to a more netwar-oriented approach can be resisted. A strategy that puts a focus on networks at its heart rather than on an inevitably troubled nationbuilding quest will prove more socially, culturally, and historically sensitive to the deep patterns of Afghan life. Such a netwar strategy would also allow for a smaller but smarter—and thus more effective—military campaign, while at the same time reenergizing and empowering the civil society networks that have already done so much in Afghanistan, and are poised to do so much more. A net shift now is the change we need. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] For a detailed description of Chechen swarm tactics in the first conflict, see Stasys Knezys and Romanas Sedlickas, *The War in Chechnya* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999). The second conflict is thoroughly and thoughtfully analyzed in Mark Kramer, "The Perils of Counterinsurgency," *International Security* 29, no. 3 (Winter 2004/2005). For analysis of a smaller example on the use of swarming—the terrorist attack on Mumbai in November 2008—see John Arquilla, "The Coming Swarm," *The New York Times*, February 15, 2009.

[2] For a thoughtful discussion of networks and their growing ability to swarm, see Howard Rheingold, *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution* (Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002), and Dorothy Denning, *Information Warfare and Security* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1999), especially 228–230, which provide a good survey of early hacktivist practices.

[3] Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), especially 152–158 and 168–171.

[4] Ibid., 144.

[5] See Louis Beam, "Leaderless Resistance," *The Seditionist*, no. 12 (February 1992).

[6] On Osama bin Laden's grudging decision to acknowledge Zarqawi's leadership in Iraq, see Loretta Napoleoni, *Insurgent Iraq: Al Zarqawi and the New Generation* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005), 123–124.

[7] For details on these networks, see Ahmed Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), especially chapter 2, and John Robb, *Brave New War: The Next Stage of Terrorism and the End of Globalization* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2007), 74–79.

[8] Rumsfeld's adoption of the "netwar perspective" is noted, for example, in Thomas Donnelly, "Donald Rumsfeld's War," *The Weekly Standard*, December 16, 2004.

[9] See Bruce Hoffman, "Plan of Attack," *The Atlantic Monthly* (July–August 2004).

[10] Fareed Zakaria, "How to Win the 'Netwar' in Iraq," *Newsweek*, October 11, 2004.

[11] See N. Dixon et al., *Company Command: Unleashing the Power of the Army Profession* (West Point, NY: Center for the Advancement of Leader Development and Organizational Learning, 2005). A more concise description of this network of company commanders can be found in Dan Baum, "Battle Lessons: What the Generals Don't Know," *The New Yorker*, January 17, 2005, 42–48.

[12] Napoleoni, 125.

[13] David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[14] Of course, infiltration went both ways, with many formations of the reconstituted Iraqi military and police being penetrated by insurgents as well.

[15] Niel Smith, "Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point," *Military Review* (March–April 2008).

[16] See the assessment of Iraqi journalist Emad Al-Shara, "Iraq Fears Renewed Violence," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 25, 2009.

[17] Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002), 14, fn. 30.

[18] An early warning against focusing too much on "leaders" can be found in John Arquilla, "Not Wanted: Dead or Alive," *Los Angeles Times*, December 30, 2001.

[19] See, for example, Justin Huggler, "Afghan Candidate Calls for Expulsion of 'Corrupt' NGOs," *The Independent*, September 13, 2005. This is a call that President Hamid Karzai has taken up as recently as spring of 2010.

[20] This networked approach had a major technological dimension, too—in the form of a remarkable array of unattended ground sensors. See Michael Maclear, *The Ten Thousand Day War: Vietnam: 1945–1975* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), especially 207–222.

[21] A good analysis of the perils of trying to shore up central government in Afghanistan can be found in Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "No Sign until the Burst of Fire," *International Security* 32, no. 4 (Spring 2008), 41–77.

[22] Aside from its stirring narrative of the campaign, Doug Stanton's *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of U.S. Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* (New York: Scribner, 2009) also contains a deeply insightful analysis of the kind of power unleashed when command and control is allowed to become command and "decontrol." It is an approach that engenders some risks when the offensive is conducted by a much outnumbered force, but the returns are even higher.

[23] See Ann Scott Tyson, "Gates Predicts 'Slog' in Afghanistan," *The Washington Post*, January 28, 2009.

[24] The template for reconfiguring our organizational and technological approaches to campaigning in Afghanistan should be the remarkably insightful analysis by C.H. Briscoe et al., *Weapon of Choice: U.S. Army Special Forces in Afghanistan* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004).

Analytics and Action in Afghanistan

BY THOMAS BLAU AND DARYL LISKEY

In fragile states such as Afghanistan where governments are weak and violent actors threaten civil peace, the United States finds itself trying to establish stability on the ground in the short term and under fire. In this difficult situation, the U.S. Government has sought "transformation," which has become a central concept of operation. This concept unifies civilian and military stabilization operations to mitigate the root causes that drive instability. Other things being equal, this is more attractive than treating the symptoms of instability after they appear.

Increasing stability by mitigating root causes is not a new idea. During the Cold War, the U.S. strategy for stabilizing what were then called underdeveloped countries was to provide development assistance to mitigate causes of instability, seen as poverty, lack of essential services, and weak governance. This policy had mixed results. The negatives have been clearer than the positives.

Therefore, it is worth examining the concept's underlying idea, which is that we can identify the root causes and then mitigate them enough to "transform" conflict. We seek to trace the idea's origins and results. We then examine how nearly the present situation on the ground in Afghanistan resembles the challenges of the past. We see a need to reexamine premises and assumptions from which current concepts of operation spring.

Furthermore, we show that the interest, validity, or robustness of some ideas may not be equally developed in theory vs. practice, in analysis vs. action. An idea's theoretical interest may be high, but that does not ensure that it can immediately be put to work in action.

Archeology of Our Ideas

The modern idea of concrete, definable, and recognizable root causes that drive outcomes in society can be traced to the emergence of sociology as a positive science, when Auguste Comte (1798–1857) led the search for causal laws of social mechanics. These accounted, at least

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in principle, for any social phenomenon—its root causes, to use today's terminology. The basic idea is that what we observe in everyday life are the symptoms of deeper forces—root causes—that account for social change. Comte also believed that scientific analysis of root causes—or the laws of social mechanics—could apply to the real world to drive progress, which would increase individual rights and humanistic morality.

Such ideas apparently were "in the air" at the time. In the United States, they gave rise to the Progressive movement, a relatively upper-class reaction to perceived social pathologies associated with immigrants. The rise of an immigration-fueled urban mass society shocked elites such as the old English and the New York Dutch. The new Americans, without money or status, had no tradition of deference to an American elite. They instead turned to traditional authority such as family, ethnicity, religion, and locality, and utilized the power of their numbers in big city politics.

the patron-client system of mutual obligation made sense to machine supporters, as did authority based on traditional values and not rational-legal and abstract values such as efficiency

The "new Americans" organized politically in what came to be known as party machines because they voted in blocs as instructed by a hierarchical party structure rather than judging the merits of individual candidates or causes. The machine was held together with patronage, material rewards, assistance in managing the new world including government and work, and the psychic rewards of seeing "their own" in the halls of political power. The patron-client system of mutual obligation made sense to machine supporters, as did authority based on traditional values and not rational-legal and abstract values such as efficiency.

Typical machine leaders, or "bosses" as their opponents called them, included George Washington Plunkitt of New York, who defended the fortune he made in the late 19th century through advanced knowledge of city business as "honest graft." He said, "I seen my opportunities and I took 'em." His counterparts in other big cities, such as Chicago's "Hinky Dink" Michael Kenna, a saloon keeper, and "Bathhouse" John Coughlin, a masseur, were similarly raffish characters.

The elites responded by forming what came to be known as the Progressive movement. They attacked the patronage political system (beloved by the Plunkitts and Hinky Dinks) through state and Federal civil service law (1883), weakened elected officials by supporting direct legislation through referenda, attacked big business (Sherman Act, 1890), sought social modernization through public education (led by the philosopher John Dewey), and prohibited the drinking of alcohol (1919).

While much good came from some of these reforms, the complications of the real world ensured unintended consequences. Dismantling or weakening targeted organizations, for example, did not automatically eliminate the functions they performed. So with the effective dismantling of American political party structure in the last 40 years as a consequence of Progressive reforms, a largely unintended consequence—although one predicted by Ted Lowi over four decades ago—was that labor unions and associations (interest groups) would become the heirs to the political machines.[1]

U.S. Marine Corps (James Purschwitz)

Discussing counterinsurgency operations in southern Afghanistan with district administrator and town elder

Political machines run by the likes of Plunkitt and Hinky Dink performed a function. They integrated the former outsiders—the immigrants—into the political system through party membership and organization. For reasons more complex than just "corrupt politicians," patronage persists today, most blatantly in the form of "earmarks" where legislative votes are traded for "bringing home the bacon" (or "pork"). While many disdain legislators because of it, the failure to bring home the bacon can damage an elected official's career. Behavior such as patronage—providing individual or small-group rewards to secure the beneficiary's loyalty at the expense of the larger group—has persisted even after the dismantling of the political machine and despite its economic, policy, and moral defects.

The Progressive programs of modernization in America sought to transform what they saw as root causes of backwardness—patronage politics, weak governance, poverty, want of social services, and unenlightened immigrants who obeyed traditional, not rational-legal, authority. The Progressive program, however, generated unintended consequences, not always for the better. Progressives promoted progress, science, law, neutral bureaucracy, and enlightenment, but they did not understand or accept the reasons for traditional personal relations such as those between patron and client. (See Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather*.) That made them vulnerable to surprise when these relations persisted.

This persistence supports Robert K. Merton's 1938 suggestion that institutional structures exist to perform not only their manifest functions—their mission statement—but also latent functions that are less visible but at least as important.[2] For example, the Progressive goal of Prohibition did not destroy the liquor trade; it just drove it into the arms of those who worked

outside the law and charged extra for it. The rise of modern organized crime after the turn of the century coincided with Progressive victories over machines. In Chicago, Hinky Dink and Bathhouse John lost their dominance and were overshadowed by the "mob," led by Big Jim Colosimo, whom they had employed as a precinct captain in the early days. Big Jim's reign as Chicago mob chief ended with his murder by his deputies Johnny Torio and Al Capone. As relatively minor corruption was driven out, the latent functions of the crime industry developed a much harder edge. In Chicago, the underworld move from Hinky Dink to Al Capone[3] was not an improvement.

countries that received American development assistance in Asia and Latin America did not become democratic, rich, prosperous, stable, or free

Progressivism also deeply affected scholars of "underdevelopment" or its presumed cure, "modernization."[4] Modernization theorists saw development as progress toward modernity. The linkage between Progressives and modernization is evident in the comments of theorist Edward Shils, who in 1959 asserted that:

> *Modernity entails democracy, and democracy in the new states is, above all, equalitarian. Modernity therefore entails the dethronement of the rich and the traditionally privileged from their positions of pre-eminent influence. . . . It believes the progress of the country rests on rational technology, and ultimately on scientific knowledge. No country could be modern without being economically advanced or progressive. . . . All this requires planning and the employment of economists and statisticians, conducting surveys to control the rates of savings and investments, the construction of new factories, the building of roads and harbors, the development of railways, irrigation schemes, fertilizer production, agricultural research, ceramics research, and research of fuel utilization. . . . It is the model of the West detached in some way from its geographical origins and locus.*[5]

Like the Progressives, modernization scholars believed in progress—that history, aided by science, led from dark backwardness to enlightened modernity. Underdeveloped countries had failed to progress to what Max Weber called rational legalism because of the grip of traditional authority.

The modernization scholars saw development as emerging from transformation of an interrelated set of economic, political, social, and psychological factors. They believed that modernization would be spurred by economic development, democratic institutions, and responsive governance; education and training to improve skills and change orientations; and institutional development to increase capacity and bridge parochial divides.

Yet by the beginning of the 1970s, "backwardness" was slipping as a cause of instability for a growing number of academics. Modernization theory as applied in Vietnam (what Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara called "the first social scientists' war") appeared to fail. Countries that received American development assistance in Asia and Latin America did not become democratic, rich, prosperous, stable, or free.

The concrete claims of modernization theorists were problematic. Walt W. Rostow's highly influential *Stages of Economic Growth* provided major support to big, centrally run

development projects.[6] He suggested that the American economy "took off" in the 19th century once the Nation, with government support, invested in the railroads. However, Robert W. Fogel's detailed empirical work calculated the net national benefit of the railroads and showed that the "social saving," as he called it, was small at best.[7] Other modernization scholars asserted that poverty could be a root cause of revolution, insurgency, or tyranny. Analysis of this connection, however, has yet to convincingly support the claim. The comprehensive survey of Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi concluded emphatically that:

> *The emergence of democracy is not a by-product of economic development. Democracy is or is not established by political actors pursuing their goals, and it can be initiated at any level of development. . . . Only once it is established do economic constraints play a role: the chances for the survival of democracy are greater when the country is richer.*[8]

The claim that oppression and deprivation create instability is also dubious. Alexis de Tocqueville a century and a half ago showed that, contrary to sophisticated opinion, more oppressed and deprived French provinces were less likely to support the French Revolution.[9] Similar observations are easily made about Russia before the revolution and Vietnam five decades ago.[10] Furthermore, some theorists came to believe that the prescriptions of modernization for development themselves could cause instability. Samuel Huntington in 1968 suggested that traditional societies became unstable when they transitioned into economic development, causing rising expectations to meet weak institutional capacity[11] (which fits the cases of France, Russia, and Vietnam, among others).

By the 1970s, the modernization scholars looked like they had misdiagnosed the root cause of instability because they took the United States as the model of a stable society. Since then, other root causes for instability have been proposed. Dependency theorists viewed instability through a Marxist lens, but by the 1990s, they were largely discredited, empirically as well as ideologically, by the rise of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan in Asia, and Chile in Latin America. In the 1990s, sectarian violence was seen as a root cause for civil violence and instability. Today, growing out of African experience in the 1980s and 1990s, "greed" and "grievance" are also cited as root causes.

It is still debatable which theorists were on the right track. We can say that economic development and education do appear to be *associated*—a loose term—with more democracy, prosperity, and stability in East Asia and elsewhere, as the modernization theorists predicted.

today, as before, we view lack of finance, basic services, democracy, institutional capacity, and social justice as root causes of instability

But the process leading to stable, prosperous, and democratic societies such as our own is at best a long one.

Today, as before, we view lack of finance, basic services, democracy, institutional capacity, and social justice as root causes of instability. For example, former Vice President Al Gore, while generally supporting the Bush administration response shortly after 9/11, identified "root causes of the war against terrorism" to be:

another axis of evil in the world: poverty and ignorance; disease and environmental disorder; corruption and political oppression. We may well put down terror in its present manifestations. But if we do not attend to the larger fundamentals as well, then the ground is fertile and has been seeded for the next generation of those born to hate the United States of America.[12]

Attention to such factors is an American tradition, driven by a creed of progress through science, democracy, economic prosperity, and enlightened social values. We even see such ideas anticipated by the Founding Fathers. American social science, starting a century later, reinforced them. Such ideas are part of what makes us American. The results in development, however, have not always been positive, have had unanticipated costs, and have depended on some assumptions that are not universal.

the range of military security activities broadened from those directly related to civil security, to include mitigating root causes of instability

Aligning Military and Civilian Stabilization

The ideas of modernization theorists that we can mitigate root causes of instability through assistance for increasing services, economic development, and the democratic rule of law continue to be in the air. These ideas are central to the emerging concept of operation for stabilization of fragile states. This concept of operation also serves to unify civilian and military stabilization operations when violent actors are present.

Before 2002, both U.S. civilian- and military-led forces had distinct stabilization missions and objectives. The primary focus of military-led stabilization was to secure the environment by using force against spoilers, gain the support of the population, and build capacity of indigenous security forces. Once civil security was set, the lead transitioned to civil authority. Civilian-led development assistance aimed to build institutional capacity, mitigate social grievances, and foster economic development. The differing military- and civilian-led efforts were phased. First the military-led effort would surge to establish a secure environment in the short term. Then civilian-led developmental assistance would build stability for the longer term.

After the 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, the objectives and phasing between military- and civilian-led stabilization operations became increasingly blurred. Major civilian-led operations now focused more on short-term objectives, such as establishing a secure environment. At the same time, the focus of military-led stability operations shifted to include conditions for more enduring stability. And there was now a challenge to unity of effort across different agencies with their own structures and cultures.

In the early 2000s, the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) established major stabilization programs to mitigate social forces that could disrupt civil security. In 2003, USAID began the Quick Impact Project to carry out short-term stabilization activities in Afghanistan. The USAID Office of Transition Initiatives followed military units into Iraq and worked with military authorities on short-term stabilization programs. These initial efforts to

Table. Stabilization After the 2002 National Security Strategy

Dimension	Civilian-led development	Military-led stability operations	Phase IV
Goal	Enduring stability	Immediate security	Fuse
Objective	Transform root causes	Gain support of the population	Both
Focus of effort	National authorities	Local authorities	Both
Timeframe	Long term/steady state	Short term/surge	Short term

support civil security were followed by the current Community Stabilization Program (CSP) in Iraq and the Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) Program in Afghanistan.

The role of civilian involvement in short-term stabilization was institutionalized with the establishment of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in 2004. S/CRS leads the coordination for the whole-of-government effort for short-term surge stabilization operations. The planning horizon is 2 to 3 years. The objective of these operations is conflict transformation.

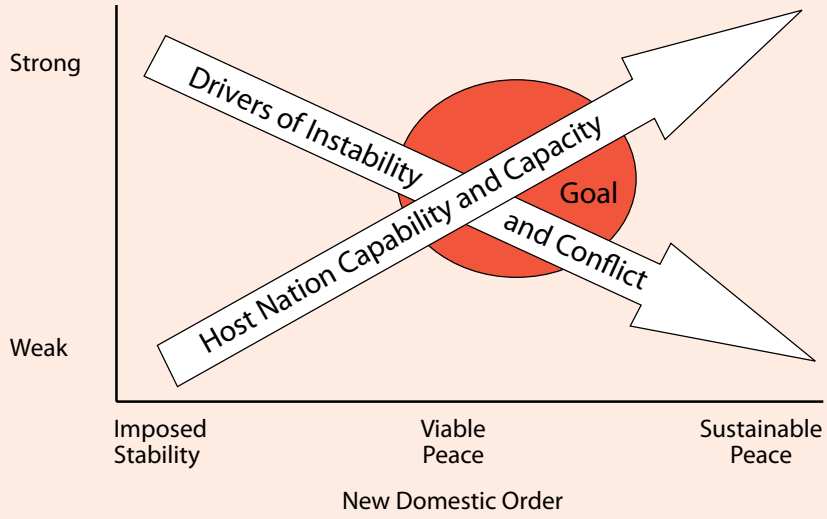
At the same time, the military became more deeply involved in what traditionally had been civilian development assistance operations. In 2005, the status of military stability operations was raised to a core military mission on par with combat operations by Department of Defense Directive 3000.05. That directive defines *stability operations* as "Military and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish order in States and regions." Here, the goal of stability operations broadens to include creating conditions for "sustainable peace."

The 2006 version of Joint Publication (JP) 3–0, *Joint Operations*, established stability operations in joint doctrine. Unlike the 2001 version, it added a "stabilization phase," or phase IV (with Change 1), between dominating and enabling civilian authorities. JP 3–0 states that the stabilization "phase is required when there is limited or no functioning legitimate civil governing entity present." Furthermore, the publication states that in the stabilization phase:

> *The goal of these military and civil efforts is to eliminate root causes or deficiencies that create the problems (e.g., strengthen legitimate civil authority, rebuild government institutions, foster a sense of confidence and well-being, and support the conditions for economic reconstruction).*

A similar emphasis on root causes and conflict transformation appears in the 2008 version of the U.S. Army Field Manual 3–07, *Stability Operations*. There, the strategic approach to stability

Figure. Conflict Transformation



Source: Adapted from Covet, Dziedzic, and Hawley (eds.), *The Quest for a Viable Peace*

operations includes "conflict transformation" that "focuses on the root causes of conflict or strife." The range of military security activities broadened from those directly related to civil security, to include mitigating root causes of instability. Military stability operations now include "creating an environment that fosters host-nation institutional development, community participation, human resources development, and strengthen[ing] management systems."

Expansion of military stability operations to include long-term development objectives, and of civilian development assistance to include short-term security objectives, led to developing similar and overlapping essential mission elements and tasks for phase IV (see table). During phase IV, civilian and military organizations perform similar tasks and activities for similar missions, which resemble those espoused by the modernization theorists.

Separate command structures for civilian and military efforts increase the importance of aligning objectives for unity of effort on the ground. Central to aligning civilian and military objectives is an emerging common concept of operation: conflict transformation, to achieve a viable peace where indigenous forces can manage conflict. This goal is to be achieved by increasing host nation capacity and mitigating the drivers of instability and conflict (see figure).

We put aside here the issue of building host nation institutions. Areas of responsibility between different U.S. agencies are fairly well defined by correspondences with host government agencies. Issues of prioritization and coordination of effort remain but are solvable with better interagency planning and coordination.

How to align U.S. civilian and military effort to achieve conflict mitigation is less clear. Each operates in the same geographic area and undertakes development assistance projects to mitigate conflict. The challenge is to identify with confidence the root causes that drive conflict in a form that allows inference of courses of action to mitigate it. A similar challenge plagued the modernization theorists a half-century ago. Failure to adequately identify root causes undermines short-term efforts to reduce the levels of conflict and unify effort. And it can lead to unintended consequences that may increase rather than decrease stability, as it did in an earlier era.

In Practice: On the Ground in Afghanistan

The concerns raised in our review of the modernization theorists arise again in Phase IV conflict mitigation. These are:

- Development assistance may work over the long haul but contributes little in the short term.
- Root causes that drive conflict cannot be confidently identified, much less mitigated.
- Transformational efforts to establish enduring stability may have unintended consequences.

Therefore, Phase IV short-term stabilization efforts may be ineffective, civilian and military efforts may lack unity of effort, and such efforts may reduce stability. To see if these concerns may affect operations, let us review conditions on the ground in Afghanistan, with three questions.

1. *Has civil developmental assistance in Afghanistan increased stability on the ground?* In the "Archeology of Our Ideas," we found that the effects of development assistance—despite the goals of both modernization theories and conflict transformation—did not substantially affect short-term stability.

Stability in Afghanistan has been decreasing since 2005, perhaps because of Taliban strength, or government corruption and ineffectiveness. Since we cannot reliably control these variables, the contribution of civilian and military-civil assistance to stability or instability is unclear, at best.

a USAID-sponsored study of a major stabilization program in Iraq found no evidence that civil development assistance increases stability

The evidence we find does not convincingly demonstrate that development assistance contributed to short-term stability in Afghanistan. Andrew Wilder studied the relationship between assistance and stability, finding "little evidence that poverty and lack of reconstruction are major causes of the insurgency in Afghanistan, so it is not at all clear how reconstruction projects can be effective in addressing the insurgency."[13] On the other hand, Wilder notes that "Afghans' perceptions of U.S. and international aid . . . have grown overwhelmingly negative. . . . the single overriding criticism of aid was the strong belief that it was fueling massive corruption."[14]

More generally, a USAID-sponsored study of a major stabilization program in Iraq found no evidence that civil development assistance increases stability:

> [The Community Stabilization Program] *appears to be based on the development*

hypothesis that carrying out the stated activities leads to social and economic stability resulting in a reduced incentive for participation in violent conflict. The critical and apparently untested assumption is that there is a linkage and attribution from the activities => to stability => to desired result. . . . Unfortunately to date, [the Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Program, Phase II] has found little-to-no in-depth studies or documented reports in the United States to support this supposition.[15]

Furthermore, USAID audits of the short-term stabilization CSP program in Iraq[16] and LGCD program in Afghanistan[17] did not find a relationship between these programs and stability. Cheechi and Company Consulting's study of the LGCD program concluded that it "has not met its overarching goal of extending the legitimacy of the Afghan government nor has it brought government closer to the people or fostered stability."[18]

a 2008 ISAF study reported no statistically significant relationship between PRT projects and frequency of antigovernment attacks

Studies we reviewed on the role of Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) projects in Afghanistan also offered no conclusive evidence of civil development assistance increasing short-term stability. Typically, a study from the Center for Naval Analyses states that "there is no evidence that PRTs on their own have quelled violence . . . [based on] many hours examining the relationship between PRT projects and the numbers of insurgent attacks, comparing the amount of money spent in each province and district to the number of attacks."[19] I.D. Westerman found no support for the view that PRT civil development assistance increased stability. A 2008 International Security Assistance Force study he read reported no statistically significant relationship between PRT projects and frequency of antigovernment attacks.[20]

We found only two studies that provided evidence that civil assistance increases stability. Germany's overseas development assistance agency BMZ found that development assistance improved attitudes among Afghans toward foreign forces and state legitimacy. However, these effects were "short-term and cannot be stockpiled." The positive effects were quickly undone by increased perceptions of insecurity.[21]

Researchers Eli Berman, Jacob Shapiro, and Joseph Felter found that Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) projects in Iraq were correlated with fewer incident reports in 2007 and 2008, whereas correlation of reports with non-CERP projects was not significant.[22] Because CERP projects tend to follow incidents (whereas non-CERP projects do not), and the researchers lagged projects by 6 months, these findings may reflect the down trend in incidents in 2007 and 2008, caused by other developments such as the surge or the Awakening. An optimistic interpretation is that development assistance (non-CERP) projects have little effect, while CERP, used as patronage (or "money as ammunition"), may be effective.

The studies reviewed do not provide convincing evidence that development assistance improved or substantially contributed to stability in the short term. If assistance did increase stability, benefits seem short term and reversible by perceptions of insecurity.

2. *Has the current alignment of objectives led to a unity of effort on the ground in Afghanistan?* In the "Archeology of Our Ideas" above, we saw the unreliability of past attempts even to identify root causes. If we cannot do that, then root causes are unlikely to be useful, as an overarching objective either for unifying efforts or transforming conflict.

While our observations are largely anecdotal and therefore tentative, we did find questions about objectives among both civilian and civil-military units on the ground in Afghanistan. There are many reports of frustration and delays arising from misunderstandings over objectives for USAID short-term stability programs.[23] Confusion was apparent over identifying the short-term objectives on the ground, not only in Afghanistan but also in the Community Stabilization Program in Iraq.[24] The confusion of USAID field program officers and contractors may at heart be conceptual. What are the root causes to mitigate? What action mitigates them in the short term?

There also was confusion among military units, such as whether the goal of civil-military assistance was to win population support through a patronage strategy or to generate general development assistance. For example, considerable local hostility arose after a PRT commander refused to assist the local community in deepening a now-dry canal that the PRT had previously cleared. The reason given was to avoid long-term "aid dependency." Here, longer term development concerns of sustainability were given priority over gaining the immediate support of the local population. Or, put differently, a sophisticated concept—"long-term aid dependency"—trumped real-world practice. Similarly, recent PRT projects are larger and increasingly oriented toward major infrastructure construction, that is, toward longer-term development.

There also were conflicting perspectives from civilian and military forces. Involving Afghan civilians in security operations led to accusations of funding insurgents, while long lead times did not provide short-term impact.

Afghans who accepted that the purpose of development assistance was to help Afghans loyal to the government are likely to be baffled by assistance for Afghans who apparently were not

Military-led development assistance is said to have militarized security, which paints civilian development assistance as part of the counterinsurgency force, yet contributes little to development. These claims suggest different civilian and military objectives: Improving lives of the people? Mitigating root causes of conflict? Pacification or civil security?

Perhaps most damaging is confusion among the people, who face the same questions. Afghans who accepted that the purpose of development assistance was to help Afghans loyal to the government are likely to be baffled by assistance for Afghans who apparently were not. Ambiguity about objectives will send mixed messages and undermine promises.

3. *Have long-term stabilization efforts in Afghanistan led to unintended consequences that increase instability?* In the "Archeology of Our Ideas" above, we noted how efforts to mitigate root causes can lead to unintended short-term consequences. A key challenge is to synchronize short- and long-term efforts.

In the current concept of operation, to establish a "viable peace" in Afghanistan, long-term development and short-term civil security efforts are undertaken concurrently.

At both the local and national levels, civilian-led long-term development assistance seeks to build civil capacity and extend the reach of the state and rule of law, to establish a responsive and representative democratic political system, and to build foundations for self-sustaining economic development. We also want to counter corruption and narcotics production and build respect for women's and human rights. This is a big menu.

Are the long-term stabilization efforts consistent with short-term civil security? As we have seen, maybe not. What about the extension of Afghan state authority? According to Barnett Rubin, the reach of state authority in Afghanistan has always been weak. Historically, attempts to extend its reach have led to resistance and civil strife, setting back the state-building enterprise.[25] More recently, the 1979 Russian-assisted Khalq seizure of power tried to extend state authority and make Afghanistan a Soviet system, only to trigger a widespread rebellion.

where the state successfully weakened or replaced local authorities, it weakened or destroyed local legitimacy

In 2002, the United States again sought to extend the authority of the state on secular lines as well as to establish a modern liberal democratic society in Afghanistan. Based on what we observed in Kunar Province, the extension of authority of the state continues to be resisted and drives violence and instability. Attempts to extend state authority to Pech districts correspond with increasing antigovernment violence. Attempts to insert government authority into the valleys such as Korengal, Watapor, and Wagal have been violently contested.

Resistance is explained by threat to the authority of local power holders by an expanding state authority constituted along Western lines. Masood Karokhail and Susanne Schmeidl observed in Paktika Province that "traditional elements clearly do not have a central role, but are essentially competing for space and power with the modern state."[26] The national police empowered by the state challenges the traditional sway of armed tribes. Laws made in Kabul usurp local tribal and religious laws as well as economic ways of livelihood. For example, the Afghan government law to regulate logging went against the economic interests of powerful patrons in Korengal, Nari, and Nuristan. An order that is based on the way things have worked is being challenged by a new order that is perceived as largely ineffective, corrupt, and perhaps foreign.

Where the state weakened or replaced local authorities, it weakened or destroyed local legitimacy. When state authorities are too corrupt or inefficient to replace local legitimacy, insurgents have an opportunity to establish themselves among the people.[27] Robert Egnell observes this dynamic playing out in other parts of Afghanistan as well. In the south, Egnell notes that coalition forces siding with a weak central government in opposition to traditional local legitimacy created an opening for the Taliban to establish shadow governments that champion traditional legitimacy.[28]

More globally, academic work that draws from Charles Tilly argues that state formation is associated with violence because of resistance by autonomous groups.[29] Another group of scholars following James C. Scott argues that the extension of the state disrupts the moral economy or legitimacy of local communities, which leads to revolt.[30] These works consistently point to the conflict between state

and local legitimacy as leading to instability and violence.

The unintended consequence of U.S. assistance for extending the reach of the state along legal-rational lines drives resistance to the state, which provides opportunities for insurgents to establish themselves. Those resisting state authority find common cause with, and may gain material support from, antigovernment elements.

Taking a step back, the consequences of other long-term assistance efforts may similarly have the unintended consequence of driving short-term instability. Democratic governance may be opposed by minority groups. Local enterprises and ways will lose out to more modern, larger, nationally based enterprises. Champions of traditional moralities (tribal or religious) are at odds over Western influence and notions of human and women's rights. Those involved in narcotics production can protect their livelihood by gaining protection from antigovernment elements.

While these conflicts are the stuff of politics over the long run when violent actors are not present, attempts to rapidly accelerate them decrease support and stability and provide increased opportunities for bad actors. The more transformation is sought, the more short-term pressure for instability increases rather than decreases.[31] We are not arguing against long-run transformation efforts. We do raise concerns about unintended consequences arising from short-term transformation efforts.

Conclusion

Our review raises concerns about a concept of operation premised on identifying root causes of conflict. The premise that we can know root causes is necessary for social science, but it may not be useful in the real world. Identification and mitigation of root causes that drive conflict may not be reliably attainable. Therefore, basing policy on such a premise may be ineffective and result in confusion and disunity of effort. Therefore, we propose these questions for further research:

Should mitigation of root causes of conflict be an objective during phase IV? If we cannot reliably identify root causes, then attempts to mitigate them may largely be counterproductive.

Should objectives for civil security and more transformational efforts be realigned? If transformational efforts increase instability, then the answer is, yes.

Should there be separate objectives for military- and civilian-led efforts? If development assistance adds little to short-term stability (or worse), then a phased rather than a concurrent approach may work better.

the premise that we can know root causes is necessary for social science, but it may not be useful in the real world

These questions seem fundamental for aligning stabilization objectives in Afghanistan-like situations. As in the Cold War experience, we believe that the heart of the problem is attempting to transform root causes that are deeply important social science issues, but that cannot be reliably known. As a consequence, we see the "lack" of *our* values and conditions as root causes. So a driver of instability may be the very assistance that we provide to mitigate it. What modernization theorists viewed as root causes of instability—poverty, ignorance, and repressive traditional governance (in short,

backwardness)—makes intuitive and analytic sense, but it does not easily translate into action for near-term results.

There is also a logical problem: The idea of general root causes of societal ills is practically tautological. There are virtually no circumstances in which such plausible root causes cannot be suggested, but that which is "everywhere" is nowhere.

Yet even if we feel confident that some causes are "roots," we face a major task in tracing their dynamics—how they affect events. Identifying the priority and degree of root causes is even more difficult. Unlike Root Cause Analysis in systems engineering, in complex societies, especially those of which we know little, it is not yet possible to identify all the relevant variables, their degree of influence, or even the direction of causation, to say nothing of feedback and other complex interactive effects. Their causality is difficult to use for practical purposes because of the multiplicity of intervening variables, the lack of robust theory about how they work, and even more basic, the lack of firm characterization of these variables in ways that can be reliably operationalized (What is the shape of this equation?).

The major impact of the term *root causes* may be polemical: My causes are "roots"—authentic and important—while yours are not. In both moral and scholarly contexts, the problems of these societies are certainly worthwhile projects. They are worth trying to ameliorate in the real world out of simple humanity. They are worth studying in the seminar room because study improves understanding. Yet in the near-term "real world," they do not furnish reliable guidance for *what to do*, *why*, *when*, and *how*. PRISM

Notes

[1] Theodore J. Lowi, "Machine Politics—Old and New," *The Public Interest*, no. 9 (Fall 1967).

[2] The institution of the church is not just about theology, nor is marriage just about child rearing or love. Therefore, even if we change structures, latent functions persist in seeking expression. See Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 2d rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1968).

[3] See John Landesco, *Organized Crime in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

[4] Including some critics of progressivism, the modernization theorists included brilliant scholars such as Gabriel Almond, Clifford Geertz, W.W. Rostow, Neil Smesler, Lucian Pye, David Apter, Myron Weiner, Karl Deutsch, Daniel Lerner, James Coleman, and Edward Shils.

[5] Edward Shils, speech at Rockefeller estate, Dobbs Ferry, NY.

[6] W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

[7] Robert William Fogel, *Railroads and American Economic Growth: Essays in Econometric History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964).

[8] Ibid., 177.

[9] Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Anchor Books, 1955). Originally published in 1856.

[10] Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam* (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1968).

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

[12] Al Gore, speech before the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, February 12, 2002.

[13] Andrew Wilder, "Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan," in *Afghanistan, 1979–2009: In the Grip of Conflict*, Viewpoints Special Edition (Washington, DC: Middle East Institute, December 2009).

[14] Andrew Wilder and Stuart Gordon, "Money Can't Buy American Love," *Foreign Policy*, December 1, 2009. Masood Karokhail and Susanne Schmeidl write: "Foreigners are not as welcome as they used to be, and according to many Afghans, they are like a cow that drinks its own milk, benefiting from the money that was meant for Afghans." See Masood Karokhail and Susanne Schmeidl, "Integration of Traditional Structures into the State-building Process: Lessons from the Tribal Liaison Office in Loya Paktia," available at <www.tlo-afghanistan.org/fileadmin/pdf/SchAfgahnEn.pdf>.

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[16] USAID Office of Inspector General, *Audit of USAID/Iraq's Community Stabilization Program*, Audit Report No. E–267–08–001–P, March 18, 2008.

[17] USAID Office of Inspector General, *Audit of USAID/Afghanistan's Local Governance and Community Development Project in Southern and Eastern Regions of Afghanistan*, Audit Report No. 5–306–09–003–P, March 11, 2009.

[18] Bradley Austin, Elizabeth Dvorak-Little, and Edward Joseph, "Final Report: Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCD) Evaluation," Washington, DC, Cheechi and Company Consulting, Inc., January 2009.

[19] Carter Malkasian and Gerald Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do We Know They Work?* Letort Paper (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, March 2009).

[20] I.D. Westerman, "Provincial Reconstruction in Afghanistan: An Examination of the Problems of Integrating the Military, Political, and Development Dimensions with Reference to the U.S. Experience in Vietnam" (Master of Philosophy diss., Pembroke College, 2008), 56.

[21] J.R. Bohnke, J. Koehler, and C. Zurcher, "Assessing the Impact of Development Cooperation in North East Afghanistan 2005–2009, Final Report," German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development [BMZ] Evaluation Division, January 2010.

[22] That the findings reflect a decline in kinetic incidents is consistent with noting that the substantial effect was in Sunni areas. Eli Berman, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter, "Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq," presentation at the Western Economic Association, December 2009.

[23] Austin, Dvorak-Little, and Joseph, "Final Report," 3; *USAID Office of Inspector General, Audit of USAID/Afghanistan's Local Governance and Community Development Project*, 10.

[24] Herr and Mason.

[25] Barnett R. Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 29. An account of resistance against state authority more rooted in "Pashtun Ways" is recounted by Robert Egnell, "Winning Legitimacy? A Critical Analysis of Hearts and Minds Approaches in Afghanistan," paper presented at the International Studies Association convention, New Orleans, February 20, 2010, 18–19. This account draws largely from the works of Anatol Leven.

[26] Masood and Schmeidl, 72.

[27] Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, "The Rise (and Sometimes Fall) of Guerrilla Governments in Latin America," *Sociological Forum* 2, no. 3 (1987), 473–499.

[28] Egnell, 18–19.

[29] Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" *Comparative Politics* 5, no. 3 (April 1973), 435–477. See also Youssef Cohen, Brian R. Brown, and A.F.K. Organski, "The Paradoxical Nature of State Making: The Violent Creation of Order," *American Political Science Review* 75, no. 4 (December 1981), 901–910.

[30] James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976).

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Afghanistan
Long-term Solutions and Perilous Shortcuts

BY ALI AHMAD JALALI

This summer, a series of interconnected events is expected to strongly influence the political and security landscape of Afghanistan, with potentially fateful consequences. In May, some 1,600 delegates (women among them), including government and elected officials, tribal elders, religious personalities, community leaders, and civil society activists met in Kabul to advise the government on basic terms for negotiation with the armed opposition and ways to accommodate reconcilable insurgents. This was to be followed in July by an international conference in Kabul called for by the London Conference in January.[1] The Kabul meeting was attended by foreign ministers from neighboring countries and by Afghanistan's leading partners. The delegates made commitments to improve governance, security, and development in Afghanistan under Afghan leadership.[2] Meanwhile, the U.S.-led coalition launched a major military effort to enhance security and facilitate effective governance in Kandahar, the second largest Afghan city and the spiritual home of the Taliban.

All these events came against a backdrop of several years of poorly resourced and ill-coordinated reconstruction efforts leading to continued insecurity and violence, which have peaked this year to the highest level since the removal of the Taliban from power in 2001. Now the public mood in Afghanistan is a combination of anxiety and hope. While people suffer daily from insecurity

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and violence, a feeling of suspense and nervousness persists. Hopes for the future are seriously blunted by fears that the U.S. exit strategy may lead to a military drawdown before the Afghan government becomes capable of facing the threats. On the other hand, Afghans across the country hope that a new U.S. approach, coupled with a military and civilian surge, might reverse the security decline and pave the way for stabilizing the situation.

A recent public opinion survey by ABC News, the BBC, and ARD German TV found that after a steep decline in recent years, there has been a 30-point spike in the percentage of those who believe that the country is headed in the right direction; 70 percent now say it is, the most since 2005. The number of Afghans who believe their own lives will be better a year from now has jumped by 20 points to 71 percent, a new high.[3]

Missed Opportunities and New Approaches

The current situation in Afghanistan is an inevitable result of previous domestic and international responses to the country's political and security challenges. The Taliban were removed from power but not defeated. The issues of the group's internal ability to reconstitute itself and to regain its external support were not addressed. The co-option of notorious human rights violators after the Taliban's defeat perpetuated their malign influence in the long term, while achieving only short-term tactical gains in stabilizing the country. Additionally, insurgents, criminal networks, freebooters, and domestic and foreign opportunists filled the vacuum created by the inadequate deployment of international troops and the slow development of Afghan state institutions.

too often, means have defined goals, tactics have driven strategy, supply has determined demand, and short-term necessities have taken precedence over long-term priorities

Afghanistan's enormous challenges cannot now be solved purely through Western arms and money, especially if delivered in an uncoordinated and haphazard manner. The local, regional, and global dimensions of the conflict are inextricably intertwined and require an integrated strategy and international partnership. The absence of a shared vision for Afghanistan has blurred the distinction between means and ends. Too often, means have defined goals, tactics have driven strategy, supply has determined demand, and short-term necessities have taken precedence over long-term priorities. This failed vision has led many to question whether the U.S.-led operation is aimed at securing Afghanistan, reshaping the whole of South Asia, or simply setting the conditions for a responsible exit plan.

However, as the experiences of the past 9 years indicate, unifying the efforts and coordinating the actions of stakeholders with uneven capacities and divergent political concerns in a highly volatile and dynamic environment has so far proven elusive. The key to future success is a shared vision for the endstate in Afghanistan, and the building of indigenous capacity to achieve this goal.

The new U.S. policy for Afghanistan and Pakistan aims at disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al Qaeda in both countries and preventing its return.[4] Building a viable government in Afghanistan that can control its territory and win the trust of its people is the

U.S. Army (Russell Gilchrest)

Afghan National Police officers at their graduation in Logar Province

prerequisite for achieving these goals. The eradication of violence and terrorism cannot presage establishment of a stable government, but rather a stable government must presage the eradication of violence and terrorism if these gains are to be sustained. Although Afghanistan cannot be turned into a full-fledged democracy overnight, it can eventually be transformed into a stable country defined by democratic principles. The fulfillment of such a potentiality will require the governments of Afghanistan, the United States, and coalition partners to forge a shared vision of an Afghan state able to govern its citizens justly, grow its economy steadily, and secure its territory independently. During the last 8 years, policies designed to stabilize and democratize Afghanistan have failed not because of their infeasibility, but because of the uncoordinated and poorly resourced efforts to support them. International involvement in the state-building process was an afterthought to the fight against global terrorism and was driven by the desire to remove the threat to the United States emanating from Afghan territory. From the outset, contradictory concepts dominated international efforts to stabilize the country.

Practicable democracy is a prerequisite for America's successful involvement in Afghanistan and its political future. This requires a long-term commitment. It is an intricate process, and it is not cheap. A long-term state-building process, however, can be hindered by short-term political agendas, as well as by excessive dependence on external assistance. In 2003–2004, the rush to a quick solution for integrating the incompetent, and often corrupt, demobilized militiamen by dumping police structures on them undermined the long-term development of the National Police, who continue to suffer from rampant corruption and professional incompetence.

At the January 2010 London Conference, the international community reaffirmed its support for building indigenous capacity to enhance security, stability, and prosperity in Afghanistan. This commitment was a recognition that the growing violence in Afghanistan and the concomitant instability in Pakistan have serious consequences for the region and beyond. As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Michael Mullen stated in testimony before a U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, "The outcome of today's conflicts will shape the global security environment for decades to come."[5]

the true test of the London Conference approach will come when troops move from "clearing" insurgents to "holding" territory and "building" security

It is thus quite understandable that the London Conference dwelled on the Afghanization of stability operations, the reconciliation of insurgents, and the development of governance capacity. These efforts are necessary to facilitate the handover of security responsibilities from foreign to Afghan forces. However, the success of such a strategy depends on resources, sound Afghan leadership, coordinated international partnership, and, most importantly, time.

While the next 12 to 18 months are critical for reversing the insurgents' momentum and consolidating security gains, it is not expected that Afghanistan will become capable of facing the threats without major commitment of international forces extending another 5 to 10 years. The military operation earlier this year in Helmand Province and the pending military effort in Kandahar should serve as a microcosm and test of the new approach of creating space for building good governance, rule of law, development, and Afghan-led security. It is expected that over time, such services will undermine the appeal of the Taliban among the population and lure them away from the insurgents.

Tackling the insurgency in Afghanistan requires two sets of mutually reinforcing measures. It is necessary to, first, reduce the threat level and, second, to build and mobilize effective Afghan leadership capacities and Afghan ownership of stabilization and development efforts. The main obstacles to achieving these are ineffective and corrupt governance, difficulties in expanding the quantity and quality of Afghan security forces, and the diverging strategic interests of Afghanistan's neighbors.

Reintegration and Reconciliation

As is often stated, reducing the threat level requires separating the committed insurgents from the rest of the population. The true test of the London Conference approach will come when troops move from "clearing" insurgents to "holding" territory and "building" security. To be effective, the enlarged International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) deployments in Afghanistan must provide security for the population not principally by fighting the Taliban, but instead by preventing the Taliban from coercing or communicating with the population.

To achieve this, there must be a reconciliation and reintegration of less ideologically zealous fighters, and a regional cooperation plan that limits the foreign support for insurgents. Providing a way for individuals to rejoin a law-abiding society will be at least as important as any military operations to kill or capture opponents of the government. As thousands of U.S. and Afghan forces head

to southern Afghanistan, the operation must aim at confronting Taliban influence in the area. But one of the most difficult parts of the mission will be tackling the corrupt power structure in Kandahar, where a strong, personality-driven political order is emerging that undermines building sustainable state institutions and the rule of law.[6]

The key to stabilization is curbing the ability and desire of insurgents and spoilers to continue the violence, while simultaneously creating a national capacity to transform war-torn structures into peace-building institutions. This process involves constructing a credible legal and political system, reestablishing public confidence in state institutions, and shifting from a culture of violent opposition to one of peaceful competition for power and influence.

Despite the stated commitment of the Afghan government to national reconciliation with the Taliban and other insurgents, the process so far has been devoid of strategic vision, clearly defined parameters, and unity of effort. Rhetoric has been more prominent than substance. There has been no clarity about whom to talk to, what political cost is acceptable to achieve peace, and what kind of endstate is envisioned. Attempts by different Afghan and foreign actors to engage the insurgents have lacked transparency and have been fragmented, uncoordinated, transient, and often counterproductive.

The potential for a grand peace deal is limited by the competing interests of domestic, regional, and international actors vested in Afghanistan. Local deals may be achievable but can only be initiated in an environment conducive to fruitful negotiations. There must be incentives for the opposition to talk in hopes of gaining what cannot be achieved through violence. Currently, such conditions exist only in some localized areas. The reconciliation process should be pursued only where the relative dominance of the government makes negotiation worthwhile.

While there is a need for pursuing a reconciliation process, it cannot succeed unless a favorable regional environment is created. This requires integrating the peace process into a unified counterinsurgency strategy among all stakeholders. Building a sustainable peace requires joint efforts by Afghanistan and Pakistan, supported by the international community, to tackle extremism both militarily and ideologically.

As President Hamid Karzai stated after the London Conference:

> *A successful reconciliation program must have two main components: Reintegration and reconciliation. The reintegration is for the thousands of Taliban soldiers and village boys in our country who have been driven out of their homes—either by fair means or by intimidation, by bad behavior on the part of NATO* [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] *forces or by bad behavior from Afghan forces—and who do not stand ideologically against the Afghan people or the international community. They must be persuaded by all means to return. . . . Then there is the political structure of the Taliban, which has its own environment of relations with the rest of the world and the question of al-Qaida and the terrorist networks. Our neighbors and the international community will be involved in this. That's going to take a lot more effort.*[7]

However, while there is wide support for the reintegration of the Taliban rank and file into Afghan society, there is little consensus

among different actors regarding reconciliation with the leadership of the Taliban. The Afghan government and Pakistan see peace talks with those leaders as a key to peace, while the United States doubts that negotiation with them from a currently weak position in Kabul will help.[8] Washington favors reintegration of low-ranking Taliban members into Afghan society, but does not favor political reconciliation with its leaders.[9] It is expected that the impact of the U.S. military surge in Afghanistan in the next 18 months and the planned expansion of indigenous security capacity and governance next year will create a favorable environment for meaningful negotiation with the insurgents' leadership.

organizing indigenous capacity for efficient, effective service delivery and economic development is the only viable long-term strategy to ensure stability

Regional Cooperation

Afghanistan's neighbors and other regional powers can be obstacles, or they can be solutions to the country's problems. Progress requires stability in Afghanistan to be seen as an extension of other nations' strategic priorities. Openness and cooperation with regional powers offer the best prospects for security and economic progress. However, no regional approach can be fully effective without the influence of major outside powers (NATO, China, India, Russia, and the United States) that are involved in the area.

Four points are of key importance. First, regional interference and intervention in Afghanistan will continue as long as the country remains unstable. Second, Afghanistan's capacity to overcome its political and economic problems is unavoidably linked to the strength of its regional relationships. Third, Afghanistan's bilateral relationships with Iran and Pakistan are closely influenced by their attitudes toward the United States and India's involvement in the region. Whether these neighbors cooperate or create obstacles for Afghanistan's recovery is greatly influenced by American strategic policies in the area, Iran's problems with the United States, and Pakistan's disputes with India. Finally, the perception that U.S. interest in Afghanistan and the region is fading drives domestic opposition forces and regional views of the Karzai regime.

Building Indigenous Capacity

Simultaneously with reducing overall insecurity through a regional approach, efforts must be expanded on a second set of measures aimed at building Afghan capacity to govern. Organizing indigenous capacity for efficient, effective service delivery and economic development is the only viable long-term strategy to ensure stability. However, constructing a nearly 172,000-strong Afghan National Army (ANA) and 134,000-strong Afghan National Police (ANP) by October 2011 is an overly ambitious and unrealistic program. The obstacles include recruitment, illiteracy of recruits, poor professional leadership, a low-quality officer corps, desertion, drug addiction, competing factional and ethnic loyalties, corruption, retention, and long-term sustainability. According to a recent report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, only 25 percent of the ANA and 12 percent of the ANP are capable of operating independently.[10] Given the relatively low rate of retention and high rate of desertion, the ANA and ANP will need 5 to 10 years to become viable institutions serving

When government provides basic security, citizens have confidence in rule of law and economic growth

U.S. Army (Matthew Freire)

the people rather than individual powerbrokers. In the meantime, there is a tendency to create and support stopgap security/logistics entities including private security companies and local militias. Unless these groups are strictly controlled and gradually phased out as ANA and ANP expand, such

shortcut security measures can add to lawlessness and seriously undermine long-term security and governance priorities.

The immediate focus must be on training the ANP to a high enough standard of professionalism and discipline that they are able to defend themselves against insurgent attacks and protect the population. The inadequate training of police forces, and the resultant high casualty rates they sustain in battle, contributes to a poor retention rate of officers in a force that will need to expand significantly in size and capability in order to meet its challenges.

Meanwhile, the situation dictates that soldiers must learn how to be police, and police must learn how to fight like soldiers. Traditional police functions relating to upholding justice and the rule of law cannot be effectively performed amid severe insecurity. Until conducive conditions emerge, police will inevitably function primarily as a security, rather than an investigative, force. Police work should be understood as fulfilling two key aspects of the counterinsurgency plan. A paramilitary police force (or gendarmerie) must be assigned to do the "holding" of cleared areas and other heavy-duty police work. This must be balanced with purely civilian police work to uphold the rule of law and protect the population against crime. The concept of upholding the rule of law has been too frequently ignored in Afghanistan—by politicians and military strategists alike.

the government's reputation for bribery and inefficiency has led many Afghans and members of the international community to simply bypass it

The notions of government legitimacy and the rule of law are particularly important when considering calls for enlisting cooperation of local communities in fighting insurgency and facilitating local security. Traditionally, local communities have complemented efforts by Afghan governments to enhance security. However, such collaboration has been possible only when the communities believed in the political and structural legitimacy of the central government, its viability, and its sustained capacity to deliver services.

In many areas, this social compact has been transformed during years of war and displacement. Traditional leaders and tribal structures have been sidelined, replaced by parties with guns, money, and links to extremist and criminal networks. In such an environment, arming purported tribes to face the insurgency cannot work as it did in Iraq. Attempts in the recent past to arm communities led to the emergence of unregulated militias. In the absence of full government control, these militias not only sharpened ethnic frictions but also got involved in criminal activities, terrorized populations, and undermined the very rule of law they were supposed to protect.

Governance

Afghanistan's transition from conflict to peace demands the creation of a set of institutions, capacities, resources, and provisions for the rule of law. Success will be defined by the government's ability to control territory, win the trust of the people, and prevent infiltration and subversion from abroad.

However, more than nearly a year after the presidential elections, the government had yet to form a full cabinet, and ongoing tension between the executive and legislative branches undermines its effectiveness. Civil society is dangerously excluded from major policy decisions. Significant portions of the country have

a limited or nonexistent government presence, so some areas are completely controlled and governed by the Taliban or local powerbrokers. The government's reputation for bribery and inefficiency has led many Afghans and members of the international community to simply bypass it.

In his speech in London, President Karzai stressed the importance of reforming state institutions and fighting corruption. He stated, "Our approach to good governance is expanding the reach of the central government to the remotest parts of the country as well as building up systems of governance at the village level. We expect the international community to support us in these vital endeavors."[11] All these are good words, but unless the institutional legitimacy and effectiveness of the government are established, it will be hard to mobilize traditional institutions in the interest of good governance.

To stabilize Afghanistan, the capacity of Afghan society must be mobilized to achieve what the people aspire to, and not what is imposed on them through supply-driven assistance. There is a debate whether the change can come through a centralized government from the top or through a local approach from the bottom. It is not one or the other, but both. The process at Bonn started with a tacit bottom-up approach, allowing regional strongmen and warlords to seize power in the provinces and operate independently. To counter this excessive decentralization, the constitution adopted in 2004 introduced a strong centralized government that failed to respond to local requirements. There is a need to fine-tune the balance of power between the center and the peripheries. The basic unit of reconstruction is the "district," and this should be reflected in power and budgetary responsibility.

The commitments made in the Kabul Conference should further democratic accountability, equality, human rights, gender equality, good governance, and economic growth. It is quite clear that business as usual will not help. There must be changes in the conduct of the Afghan government and both the type and level of support offered by the international community.

Conclusion

For the Afghan people, and thus for the government and its international supporters, the current security situation is untenable. Renewed international attention offers a vital opportunity to reverse the course of the conflict. Failure to address the inadequacies of the government in the areas of justice provision, welfare, public service delivery, institutional transparency, probity, and, most importantly, security will soon fundamentally undermine the legitimacy of state authority.

Practicable democracy is a prerequisite for America's successful involvement in Afghanistan and the country's political future. This requires a long-term commitment. It is an intricate process, and it is not cheap. A long-term state-building process, however, can be hindered by short-term political agendas, perilous shortcuts, and militarization of development.

practicable democracy is a prerequisite for America's successful involvement in Afghanistan and the country's political future

Unless the Afghan people are given substantial and sustained reasons for supporting government institutions, they will

understandably not be prepared to risk the violent reprisals of insurgents. However, if the government and its partners can provide basic security and minimal development impetus, the Taliban will become irrelevant and marginalized. Their ideology and governance are not popular, but through intimidation, coercion, bribery, and propaganda, they are currently able to fill the vacuum of authority that exists in much of the country. Optimistic but pragmatic, and fed up with rhetoric and empty promises, Afghans need change they can believe in. PRISM

Notes

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[2] "Foreign Ministers to Attend Kabul Conference: NATO's Envoy," *Xinhua*, May 19, 2010.

[3] ABC News/BBC/ARD Poll, "Afghanistan—Where Things Stand," available at <http://abcnews.go.com/PollingUnit/abc-newsbbcard-afghanistan-poll-note-methodology/story?id=9512487>.

[4] Transcript of speech by President Barack Obama on Afghanistan, December 2, 2009, available at <www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/12/01/obama.afghanistan.speech.transcript/index.html>.

[5] Ibid.

[6] See Carl Forsberg, *Politics and Power in Kandahar*, Afghanistan Report 5 (Washington, DC: Institute of the Study of War, April 2010), 6–7.

[7] Interview with Hamid Karzai, "There Has to Be Peace Now," *Der Spiegel*, January 31, 2010, available at <www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,675140,00.html>.

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[11] Office of the Afghanistan President, Statement by His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, at the London International Conference on Afghanistan, January 28, 2010, available at <www.president.gov.af/>.

U.S. Army (Richard W. Jones, Jr.)

Providing security for Afghan populace is key part of U.S. counterinsurgency strategy

Recalibrating the Afghan Reconciliation Program

BY AMIN TARZI

In December 2001, the framers of the Bonn Agreement laid out a plan to end conflict in Afghanistan, heal a divided, wounded nation, and bring about lasting peace.[1] However, 9 years later, stability remains elusive, and these goals have yet to be fully realized. Theories abound but are ever evolving as to how to make progress; bright new ideas are mixed with transplanted

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success stories but yield unsatisfactory results. One area that has warranted much attention is the promotion of national reconciliation. Reintegration and reconciliation are recognized as key strategies to conducting a successful counterinsurgency. Reintegration focuses on individuals within enemy ranks who can be incentivized to abandon their allegiance to the cause; reconciliation offers amnesty and political position to enemy leadership to bring them into the fold.

the government, in its peace and reconciliation program, has decided to cast the widest net possible in offering talks to almost all segments of the insurgents of Afghan origin

Such efforts have been under way in some fashion since the Taliban lost control of Kandahar, its last major stronghold. However, lacking a cohesive, cogent strategy, the various local and international promoters of reconciliation often undermine each other's efforts and confuse their target audiences—the Afghan people and insurgents—emboldening an otherwise fragmented enemy and forcing a large segment of Afghans to seek alternative measures for their future safety. A critical eye on the past and frank discussions with senior Afghan government officials should elucidate the present and offer lessons learned and insights into how to realize national reconciliation.

Road to Reintegration and Reconciliation

The journey began in December 2001 with the Taliban's evacuation of Kandahar. Since that time, both Afghan authorities and the international coalition have made formal and informal overtures to the Taliban and subsequent neo-Taliban to reintegrate them into the Afghan constitutional system. Both the international and Afghan-led tactical and operational level reintegration initiations to lure neo-Taliban underlings and foot soldiers have reported some successes. However, when seen through the lens of the realities on the ground and with the increase in the areas controlled by insurgents, the overall picture is not a cause for celebration. Furthermore, these independent, uncoordinated efforts have at times worked at cross purposes, leading to confusion and undermining their effectiveness.

Part of the challenge has been defining the targets of reintegration and reconciliation efforts. According to Robert Crews of Stanford University, between 2001 and 2007, "no clear legal or political guidelines" were offered to differentiate between "moderates" and "extremists" when it came to reconciliation or reintegration agendas with respect to the neo-Taliban in Afghanistan.[2] Afghan government rhetoric over the years reveals the challenge for promoters of reconciliation to direct their efforts at the correct individuals. Hamid Karzai, prior to being selected as the chairman of the Interim Authority of Afghanistan on December 22, 2001, declared a general amnesty for all Taliban forces except the "criminal" elements within the movement. He explained in April 2003 that there was a distinction between "the ordinary Taliban who are real and honest sons" of Afghanistan and those "who still use the Taliban cover to disturb peace and security in the country." No one had the right, Karzai warned, to harass or persecute anyone "under the name Talib/Taliban" from that time onward.[3] A year later, in February 2004, Karzai—perhaps in an attempt to clear some of

the ambiguity surrounding the identity of the irreconcilables among the neo-Taliban—further clarified that there were roughly only 150 problem Taliban leaders who had links with al Qaeda.[4] However, the Afghan government has yet to publicly identify these 150 individuals, and it has not actively pursued them.[5]

A further challenge that has been perpetuated by this ambiguity is the lack of a coordinated strategy between the Afghan government and international coalition. Currently, there are a number of parallel and at times competing reconciliation programs. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), in its peace and reconciliation program, has decided to cast the widest net possible in offering talks to almost all segments of the insurgents of Afghan origin in the country. The criteria by which insurgents can be reintegrated and reconciled, according to the GIRoA-led agenda, are renunciation of violence and joining "in a constructive process of reintegration in order to benefit from a chance at peace, improved governance, and economic development."[6] But the gap between what is desirable and what is achievable remains wide, and most stakeholders are either reluctant to measure the width of this gap or, for expediencies beyond the Afghan borders, choose to see it as a trench worth ignoring. The haphazard, divided, and seemingly conflicting nature of the ongoing peace initiatives has given the impression among an increasing number of Afghan leaders and large segments of the Afghan population that the agendas of both the GIRoA and foreign peace initiatives go beyond persuading the neo-Taliban to accept the current constitutional system. The question asked by many senior members of the Afghan National Assembly's lower house, the Wolesi Jirga (House of the People), is whether the peace and reintegration process is meant to make the insurgents a part of the national process, or if it is the other way around.[7]

While the ambiguity continues through 2010, there are positive steps toward uniting under a common vision. Since 2009, the major players have come to agree that absent a viable, broad-based reintegration and reconciliation plan, the Afghan conflict will not end within a politically acceptable timeframe. The Afghan-led efforts on reconciliation and reintegration as outlined by Afghan President Hamid Karzai in the January 2010 London Conference have enjoyed backing by Afghanistan's international partners, including the United States.[8] While Washington began in 2004 to support Karzai's call for reintegrating former members of the Taliban, and certain troop-contributing states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) had reached out in one form or another to the neo-Taliban since the early days of military campaign in Afghanistan, it was not until November 2009 that ISAF officially embraced a reintegration agenda by officially joining the peace and reintegration program with the establishment of the Force Reintegration Cell (F–RIC). To justify this action, the main argument has been that the attacks of September 11, 2001, were not perpetuated by the Taliban, nor was building a functioning democracy in Afghanistan a major goal of the U.S.-led international intervention

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U.S. Navy (Mark O'Donald)

Karzai's peace and reconciliation program for neo-Taliban forces promises political struggle

there following the attacks. The goal, as articulated by President Barack Obama in March 2009, was (and has remained) to "disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return in either country in the future."[9] As such, if the neo-Taliban—inclusive of Hezb-e Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (HIG) and other affiliates, but exclusive of al Qaeda or any

terrorist outfit with an international agenda and reach—come to the table and accept the current Afghan governing structure, then compromises offered by GIRoA would be accepted and indeed supported by ISAF. As President Obama stated, other than the "uncompromising core of the Taliban," the rest of the insurgents should be provided an opportunity to reconcile.[10] At the London Conference, the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan, among other countries, pledged upward of $150 million to support the reintegration process.[11]

But the devil is in the details, and uniting under a common strategy to achieve the vision will prove challenging. The GIRoA and some ISAF member states believe in a wholesale, blanket amnesty for all Afghan insurgents. The plan for the GIRoA-led strategic level peace and reintegration program was partially laid out during National Consultative Peace Jirga (NCPJ) held in early June 2010 in Kabul. The aim of NCPJ was to build a national consensus among Afghans to support the reintegration and reconciliation efforts. Through the NCPJ, the Afghan authorities conveyed that the people of the country desire peace. There were no expectations of a miraculous deliverance by the NCPJ, but the sentiment among foreign backers was that the NCPJ should set the agenda for future steps toward reconciliation and reintegration as well as establish inclusive guidelines for the principles of Afghanistan's statehood in light of the challenges of absorbing these combatants, for whom the very nature of the state formed out of the Bonn process is anathema. Bureaucratically, the NCPJ was the link between the London Conference and the Kabul Conference held in July where details for Afghanistan's peace and reconciliation program were formally presented to the donor community for funds and political support.

The United States and a sizable number of Afghans both inside and outside the political system have reservations about reconciling those members of the Taliban who may be inseparably linked to international terrorist networks. For Washington, the issue of wholesale reconciliation has both domestic political and legal hurdles, even if a policy change was put into effect to align with the GIRoA position more closely. As the main vanguard of democracy and human rights, the United States would find it difficult to support a reconciliation program that would result in curtailment of the rights of women and minorities, have a noticeable adverse effect on freedom of expression, and lead to the dismantlement of democratic institutions.

Leaders of major Shiite and Uzbek-dominated political parties stayed away from the NCPJ out of fear of appeasing the neo-Taliban

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at the expense of achievements Afghanistan has attained since 2001. In a prepared statement, Hajji Mohammad Mohaqiq, leader of the People's Unity Party of Afghanistan, stated that while peace and stability were vital to all Afghans, "the constitution and values it protects, like freedom of expression and faith, human rights, lawful administration, rights of social and ethnic groups, should not be sacrificed to appease the militants."[12] Mohaqiq and the Uzbek-dominated National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan supported Karzai during the 2009 presidential elections, but the

policies of negotiation with the neo-Taliban leadership have steadily driven a wedge between the Afghan president and his most important non-Pashtun political allies.

Talking to the Neo-Taliban

Parallel to the official Afghan-led, ISAF-supported reintegration program, the Afghan president has multiple efforts under way to reconcile with the leadership of various neo-Taliban insurgent groups. Unlike the early attempts by Karzai in which select, albeit unspecified, insurgent leaders were deemed criminals, and thus irreconcilable, the latest carte blanche peace offerings seek to engage all neo-Taliban factions. Since 2008, according to press reports, President Karzai, through his family networks and with facilitation from the highest levels of the Saudi Arabian government, has established links with individuals within the Quetta Shura Taliban (QST), Haqqani Network (HQN), or HIG, apparently regardless of their individual status within their respective organizations.[13]

The negotiations with HIG have since become formal, with Karzai himself meeting representatives of that party in Kabul in March 2010. During this encounter, the HIG representatives presented the GIRoA with a 15-point document entitled "National Peace Pact." Key to their pact is the staged withdrawal of foreign forces by spring 2011. Furthermore, the pact requires new elections for the National Assembly with strict prohibitions on participation, excluding those individuals accused of corruption, impiety (bedini), national treason, and war crimes.[14] Current members of the cabinet and provincial governors would be allowed to partake in the future government only if they resign from their posts 3 months prior to the new elections.

officials in both Kabul and New Delhi characterized ISAF troop-contributing states as planning on "subcontracting" Afghanistan's security to Pakistan

Rumors abound that Karzai's negotiations with mainstream Taliban, most notably with those members of QST who are deemed by Kabul as less controlled by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), are an attempt to thwart Pakistan's influence within QST. In Kabul, the theory that both supporters and foes of the unofficial reconciliation efforts with the QST leadership subscribe to is that the ISI is trying to influence the leadership of the QST into submitting to Pakistan's dictates in post-ISAF power arrangements in Afghanistan. Accordingly, the Afghan perception in general is that the arrest by the ISI in early 2010 of Mullah Abdul Ghani "Beradar," known to be the second in command of QST, was part of Pakistan's efforts to purge those members of the Afghan insurgency, regardless of their rank, who were becoming less obedient to Islamabad's plans. Discussions with Afghan, Indian, and ISAF officials a week before the NCPJ convened confirmed that the Afghan perception is that Pakistan's aim is to call the shots in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of foreign forces by using QST, HQN, or HIG members and other willing partners who submit to Islamabad's vision of Afghanistan's road to stability.[15]

An Afghan foreign ministry official recently told this author that any arrangements with the neo-Taliban would be a transitory and unstable fix; for a more permanent and stable peace in Afghanistan, arrangements ought to be made with Pakistan with full ISI participation and acquiescence. According to a senior Afghan official involved in national security

affairs, Islamabad does not favor reintegration, but prefers reconciliation between the GIRoA and all segments of the Afghan insurgency—but not until July 2011. It is then that the United States is expected to begin a drawdown of its forces, and the neo-Taliban would be poised to demand a much more favorable arrangement than that currently being offered by Kabul. Meanwhile, the official suggested, insurgents would maintain some pressure but would not fully engage ISAF forces in combat operations. Regardless of the actual troop strength and focus of the U.S. forces in Afghanistan, the sentiments in both Afghanistan and neighboring India are that troop reduction is in the plans, which would change the game on the ground in favor of the insurgents and, by extension, Pakistan. In a stark similarity of language, officials in both Kabul and New Delhi characterized ISAF troop-contributing states in general and the United States in particular as planning on "subcontracting" Afghanistan's security to Pakistan. While Islamabad is worried about a Kabul–New Delhi axis intended to keep Pakistan busy on two fronts, with regard to reconciliation and reintegration policies, India appears to have taken a harder line than Afghanistan, generally viewing the term good Taliban as an oxymoron.

Regardless of the true sentiments of the majority of the Afghan people, at the conclusion of the NCPJ, the GIRoA—namely Karzai—secured a national mandate, at least on paper, to achieve a peaceful end to the country's three decades of almost perpetual conflict through national reconciliation. As expected, details of the reconciliation process were not agreed upon by the NCPJ, which called for the formation of a High Peace Council to handle the modalities of the peace process. The period between the end of the NCPJ and the Kabul conference provided the GIRoA and its foreign backers time to concentrate on the minutiae of the reconciliation program and hammer out the details to discern between desired and achievable endstates. Time, unfortunately, is not on the side of the Afghan government, as the neo-Taliban's strategy increasingly is to wait out the presence of ISAF combat forces. The current narrative of the conflict in Afghanistan and the region is that the West, led by the United States, is tired of its engagement and is looking for an honorable exit and wishes to leave behind a system bolstered by financial and political support that could maintain power in Kabul and other major population centers.

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Clarity of Objective

The GIRoA concept paper on peace and reintegration begins with the preamble that the Afghan people "desire not only short-term security, but a consolidated, sustainable peace."[16] The GIRoA actions to carry out peace and reintegration efforts, most recently the NCPJ, increasingly appear to be short-term tactical moves lacking clear objectives for achieving a long-term consolidated, sustainable peace. The mere fact that the Hazarahs and Uzbek political leadership, who supported Karzai's reelection efforts, chose to stay out of the NCPJ, is an indicator that if the peace and reconciliation program remains ill defined, Afghanistan may be heading toward the divisive environment that followed the fall of the last communist regime in Kabul in 1992.

For Hazarahs, who as members of the Shiite minority were subjected to directed brutality by the Taliban, the talk of inclusion of their former foes into the political spectrum reinvigorates horrible memories. Beyond concerns about the viability of the Afghan constitution, Mohaqiq cited the dispute between Hazarahs and Pashtun nomads in Behsud District of Wardak Province over grazing pastures as a reason for staying away from NCPJ. Hazarahs assert that nomads who have been infiltrated by the Taliban have attacked civilians in Behsud over pasturing rights, citing 19th-century claims to the land. The fact that the Behsud dispute coincided with the NCPJ was a vivid example of what Hazarahs call "the Peace Penalty"—namely, that those parts of Afghanistan that are peaceful have been denied not only political attention but also financial incentives. The Behsud dispute further fueled this sentiment. Consider the message being sent: neo-Taliban members bent on the destruction of GIRoA are being incentivized to join a peace process, while those who have remained peaceful and loyal to the GIRoA and are believed to have been victimized by the neo-Taliban sympathizers are penalized.

most of the talks until now have been conducted by the Afghan president's family and close associates with minimal transparency

The history of the last debacle in Afghanistan when no clear plan was drawn for managing a postcommunist settlement should be revisited and lessons learned by all involved in the current peace initiative. Most of the individuals directly involved in the postcommunist civil wars that plunged Afghanistan into perpetual chaos, which eventually led to the emergence of the Taliban, are still in leadership roles. Therefore, they should be familiar with the dangers of making short-term deals without considering their long-term consequences. Selective historical memory will prove Karl Marx correct: "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce"—a distorted, costly farce.

Most of the Afghan, ISAF, and European Union officials consulted by this author agreed that there is a growing sense of uncertainty among the Afghan population. The following is a compilation of their recommendations regarding clarity of objective to guide GIRoA as it pursues its reconciliation program:

- The goal of reconciliation should be defined and contextualized.
- Clear, precise information campaigns explaining the reconciliation program's goal of sustainable peace and countering the perceptions that the program is providing ISAF a graceful exit should help to alleviate Afghans' concerns over the aims of the program.
- Shaping public debate about ISAF troop withdrawal is a shared responsibility of all troop-contributing states.
- The GIRoA needs to define and clarify the incentives that it can offer to the neo-Taliban leadership.
- The GIRoA needs to articulate the targets of the reconciliation efforts—defining who's in and who's out. Some expressed fear that some among the neo-Taliban leadership may still seek revenge for their defeat in 2001 and see reconciliation as a means to avenge their losses once the threat from international forces is diminished.

Mechanisms for Negotiations

The GIRoA concept paper on peace and reintegration designates Kabul—which translates into the executive branch of the GIRoA—as the overseer of the peace and reconciliation program. The GIRoA has established mechanisms for pursuing the process of reintegrating neo-Taliban foot soldiers into broader society. In addition, ISAF's F–RIC is fully engaged in supporting the Afghan-led process. However, for targeting the neo-Taliban leadership there should be an identifiable Afghan entity in charge of reconciliation. Most of the talks until now have been conducted by the Afghan president's family and close associates with minimal transparency. While a level of secrecy may be necessary for talks between a government and armed opposition forces, in a democracy that has an elected parliament and depends on a coalition of foreign forces for the bulk of its security requirements, the benefits of involving the elected officials and seeking a consensus among foreign partners outweigh the need for strict secrecy.

The challenge is that both reintegration and reconciliation are needed for success. As stated by Lieutenant General (Ret.) Sir Graeme Lamb, advisor to the ISAF commander in F–RIC, "Reintegration is not a standalone activity. . . . [it] is inextricably tied to reconciliation. For one without the other fails and both . . . are an integral part of the wider counterinsurgency campaigns."[17] A senior member of the Wolesi Jirga indicated that the body was ready to play a constructive role in the reconciliation process if asked by the executive branch. In support of reconciliation, he argued that if the neo-Taliban were afforded a chance to play a political role through participation in democratic processes, their stance might become less militant. Those unable or unwilling to change, the official concluded, would not be incentivized through the overtures available through the Afghan government.

Afghan, ISAF, and European Union officials provided the following points to promote success of future negotiations:

- Women need to be active participants in the reconciliation program, not only in the NCPJ and its proposed High Peace Council, but also as part of the future negotiating teams. A common concern was that women's rights would become the most expedient sacrifice to lure conservative members of the neo-Taliban to join the current system in Afghanistan.
- The GIRoA needs to make specific reference to the safeguarding of Shiite rights as enshrined in the current Afghan constitution. Those consulted were confident that the GIRoA would emphasize minority rights; however, due to the sensitive history of the Shiite minority in Afghanistan, they argue that the GIRoA needs to provide clear and specific assurances to build confidence within the population that Shiite rights are a nonnegotiable part of any future agreements with the neo-Taliban.
- The GIRoA negotiating team needs to include respected Sunni scholars who can challenge the legality of neo-Taliban religious assertions (for example, rights of Shiites, education for women) from an Islamic perspective.
- On the role of foreign representatives, there was disagreement among the Afghans consulted. Most preferred an Afghan-led process with the direct backing of the United States

while some preferred that the foreign presence be that of an Islamic state such as Indonesia, Jordan, or Egypt. Two other countries mentioned were Turkey and Saudi Arabia; however, a senior Afghan security official dismissed Turkey for Ankara's special relationship with Afghanistan's Turkic ethnic groups, and more than one Afghan official voiced apprehension about Saudi participation because of Riyadh's "special" relationship with Islamabad and its history of support for the Taliban.

The U.S. Role in Reconciliation

According to Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, National Security Advisor to President Karzai, no war or peace effort can move forward in Afghanistan without U.S. leadership.[18] Similar sentiments were echoed by a senior member of the Wolesi Jirga, who said that the premature departure of the United States would spell disaster. However, other Afghan officials claimed the United States could and would do as it pleased, which energizes the conspiracy theorists to conjure up Washington's "true" intentions in the region. The rationale is that if a power can do almost everything it wishes and chooses not to exercise this power, then it must have ulterior motives. With this backdrop, and as urged by a senior Afghan Foreign Ministry official, the United States needs to provide a clear explanation of its agenda in Afghanistan, including the duration of its military deployment in order to control, or at least positively influence, the public narrative.[19]

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Finally, officials from within the Wolesi Jirga and the broader GIRoA agreed that reconciliation and also reintegration require military strength to be successful. While there may be a trickling in of reintegrationists due to financial or other incentives, absent the threat of U.S. and other ISAF members' military might, the incentive for reconciliation would be minimal to nonexistent. Many Afghans consulted pinned much hope on the operations expected to be launched in Kandahar against the neo-Taliban to demonstrate the strength of the Afghan government and the international coalition. A senior Afghan official involved in security affairs termed the anticipated Kandahar operation as "key" to all peace and reconciliation programs.

Afghanistan's troubled history over the last few decades should serve as a lesson to both the GIRoA and its foreign backers. Lesson number one is that deals and promises have been broken by various Afghan parties as fast and as often as they were concluded, even when such agreements were sponsored by foreign patrons and signed in Islam's holiest place, Mecca, in Saudi Arabia, and that sadly, the only game-changer has been the threat and/or use of force by one of the local parties or from an outside source. The rise of the Taliban in the mid-1990s and their subsequent defeat by the U.S.-led military campaign in 2001 are vivid examples.

Today, because of Operation *Enduring Freedom* and subsequently ISAF, Afghanistan finds itself on the road to a democratic and inclusive future. Never before have segments of the population, including women and religious minorities, enjoyed the constitutional rights they do today. In this light, while fully agreeing

with General Lamb's statement that reintegration is an inextricable part of reconciliation and that both are integral components of the current military operations, the collective effort now officially endorsed by the NCPJ needs to be discussed earnestly against the backdrop of historical evidence of past Afghan reconciliation efforts and with the foresight to avoid the pitfalls that haphazard deal-making may engender. The potential victims of botched and hasty negotiations may not be limited to minorities and women, but could include the Afghan constitutional system.

Lesson number two is that Potemkin villages built in Afghanistan have a tendency of falling on more than those who live near them. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] "Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions" (Bonn Agreement), signed December 5, 2001, available at <www.un.org/News/dh/latest/afghan/afghan-agree.htm>.

[2] Robert D. Crews, "Moderate Taliban?" in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, ed. Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 241.

[3] Amin Tarzi, "The Neo-Taliban," in *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, 278–279; see also Ashley J. Tellis, *Reconciling with the Taliban? Toward an Alternative Grand Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009), 5–6.

[4] Tarzi, 281.

[5] The list was presumably advocated for by Marshal Muhammad Qasem Fahim, the current first vice president of Afghanistan. See also Michael Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2009), 30.

[6] Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), Summary Sheet of the Peace and Reintegration Program, May 2010.

[7] Discussions with members of Wolesi Jirga, Kabul, May 24 and May 27, 2010.

[8] For more on the London Conference, see <http://afghanistan.hmg.gov.uk/en/conference/>.

[9] "Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," March 27, 2009, available at <www.whitehouse.gov>.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy* (RL30588) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, March 1, 2010), 36.

[12] "Mohaqiq and Noorullah Saddat Won't Attend Jirga," *Daily Outlook Afghanistan* (Kabul), June 2, 2010, available at <www.outlookafghanistan.net>.

[13] Ibid.; Tellis, 8–9.

[14] "Misaq-e melli-ye nejat," unpublished document presented to GIRoA by HIG in March 2010. I am grateful to Dr. Hussein Yasa, editor-in-chief of *Daily Outlook Afghanistan*, for providing me with a copy of the original HIG document.

[15] I held discussions with Indian, Afghan, European Union, and ISAF officials in late May 2010.

[16] GIRoA.

[17] General Lamb's remarks from Emerald Express Strategic Symposium Series, *Afghanistan: The Way Ahead*, Marine Corps Base, Quantico, VA, April 21, 2010.

[18] Meeting with Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Kabul, May 26, 2010.

[19] Meeting with senior Afghan Foreign Ministry official, Kabul, May 25, 2010.

Countering Taliban Information Operations in Afghanistan

BY TIM FOXLEY

[I]n one particular area [the Taliban have] had the better of 2008: information operations. They've beaten us to the punch on numerous occasions, and by doing so they've magnified the sense of difficulty and diminished the sense of progress. This is down in part to their skill, and in part to our own failings.

—UK Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, December 2008[1]

Even 9 years after international intervention in Afghanistan, little is understood about the tribes and ethnic groups that make up the country. How they react, think, feel, and prioritize remain largely unknown quantities, and therefore international attempts to influence them are perhaps unsurprisingly proving problematic. But perception is everything in Afghanistan, and information activities are playing an increasingly important part in shaping perception and generating support for insurgents and counterinsurgents alike, both inside and outside the country. Hundreds of different groups and actors are at work, from the diverse component parts of the Afghan populace to the array of governmental, military, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) elements of international effort. All are communicating—some even coherently. All are influencing—some intentionally, some unintentionally.

The Taliban are increasingly employing a variety of media to communicate messages in support of their overarching goals of removing foreign military presence and returning the country to their

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U.S. Army (Aubree Clute)

U.S. Special Forces extracted after executing air assault mission disrupting Taliban communications

own unique interpretation of Islam. Combinations of communication activities by Taliban insurgent groups in Afghanistan and Taliban leadership in Pakistan are continuing to hamper the efforts of the international community and the Afghan government to bring stability to the country. Defining what we mean in this new information battlespace is difficult. For the purposes of this article, and conscious of the fact that I am crunching over all manner of theories and definitions, I generally refer to all communication activities in support of political or military goals in the context of Afghanistan as information operations (IO).

In the spring and summer of 2006, I worked in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters as an analyst. While there, it struck me how frequently I was hearing statements to the effect that "well, of course, the Taliban are much more sophisticated and effective at IO than ISAF." Aside from being an IO victory in itself for the Taliban, it also occurred to me how little evidence I could find to support these claims (which are still routinely repeated). As a result, in 2007, I made an attempt to explore the issues of Taliban propaganda and information activity.

I would like to briefly recap some of the main conclusions from my original paper and then refresh them based on my interpretation of developments over the last 3 years. My thinking has certainly evolved in a number of different directions. I then intend to look at ISAF, but predominantly Taliban IO strengths and weakness, and to suggest possible ways in which Taliban messaging might be countered. So yes, at the end, I will most certainly make a plea for "more research needed."

But, in essence, I still believe that Taliban IO sophistication and effectiveness are probably more myth than reality—that the *idea* of Taliban IO capability has long since outstripped Taliban *actual* capability and that a proper analysis of this area is long overdue. The Taliban's efforts are clearly having a corrosive effect, and they are improving each year. However, it is difficult to measure with any certainty just how effective the Taliban are in this information battle. The Taliban may not always secure direct support from the populace—in many ways they are perhaps winning short-term minds but not long-term hearts—but they are helping their military and political goals. They are also undermining the resolve of the international community and causing the population to withhold support for international and Afghan government efforts. But the Taliban have numerous vulnerabilities that more proactive international and Afghan IO opponents could expose, exploit, and attack.

Background

Since their removal from power in late 2001, the initially anti-modern Taliban have increasingly recognized that modern technology and media can (and even *must*) be utilized in support of their confrontation with the Afghan government and international community. From a belief system that actively rejected many of the trappings and processes of quick and effective communication, the Taliban have had to learn to communicate in order to support their goals. Their approach has thus been increasingly pragmatic, and their understanding and usage of communication media have grown accordingly.

Taliban communication methods have embraced old and new techniques and have been utilizing an expanding range of media and communications resources: fax, landline, mobile and satellite telephones, radio and television, newspapers, interviews, intimidating anonymous notes ("night letters"), direct contact with the population, and the Internet. They make extensive use of spokesmen to make claims and statements, and generally to promote or clarify Taliban messages.

My original conclusion was that Taliban IO is not as sophisticated or effective as many suggest, but that their efforts did appear to be significantly assisting the insurgency. They appear much more effective at the local level (mainly in southern, southeastern, and eastern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan), where they have a cultural and linguistic advantage in operating within the Pashtun tribal areas from which most Taliban fighters originate. They are much less advanced at the strategic level (communicating to the Afghan government, region, and international community), where a lack of understanding of the wider world, poorly articulated goals and intentions, and paranoia about "Western media" are handicapping their performance.

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This limited awareness has prevented the Taliban from fully understanding and therefore exploiting strategic and powerful communications media such as television, mobile phones, and the Internet. We should resist the assumption that their engagement in these media means *effective* engagement. But they are improving their understanding, willingness, and ability to communicate, particularly in the

messages they direct toward the international community. They have significant potential to improve further, and this could be damaging to the combined efforts of the international community and Afghan government. But there are many weaknesses in what the Taliban do, say, and *do not say* that could be proactively exposed and exploited.

there is a tendency to assume that if the Taliban are saying something—and saying it in rapid reaction to an event on the ground—it, first, is effective and, second, must be countered

In 2007, I concluded with some predictions as to where Taliban media activities might go over the next few years:

- more effective and articulate media use, with more effective use of the Internet
- combat actions on the ground coordinated with messages designed to influence the international community
- better quality and content of video productions focusing on wider issues
- better coordination of messages (with positive as well as negative incentives to the population) and better response to incidents
- more sophistication: growing understanding of the wider world and how to influence it—targeting particular nations, governments, or NGOs—even civilian or military individuals
- greater inclination to discuss wider issues when challenged—the Taliban have already demonstrated that they can be provoked to comment on Taliban education, their constitution, suicide bombing, and the causing of civilian casualties
- increasing use of media methods employed by Iraqi insurgents and other violent Islamic networks.

I suggest that most if not all of this has taken place, although Taliban willingness to tackle wider issues has improved slowly. But there is still significant scope for Taliban improvement, and this should be of concern.

Yet crucially, we still do not have a good understanding of how effective Taliban information operations actually are. More to the point, it is difficult to identify which specific aspects of their IO activities are damaging and must be countered and which can be ignored (or even encouraged *or copied*). Part of the problem is that it is hard to disentangle IO activity from other activity likely to influence behavior on the ground. Words frequently work only if supported by deeds. The disengagement of a local village may be a result of an effective Taliban information operation, such as night letters. Equally, it may be because the Taliban executed someone recently for talking to an ISAF patrol, or an airstrike killed a civilian, or through general frustration at the lack of progress in their village, or any combination thereof. Furthermore, there is a tendency within ISAF to assume that if the Taliban are saying something—and saying it in rapid reaction to an event on the ground—it, first, is effective and, second, must be countered. This assumption, combined with continual senior international, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and ISAF statements about Taliban effectiveness and sophistication, is an IO victory that is being gifted to the Taliban and is causing resources to be spent

reactively chasing a Taliban-determined tempo of messaging.

Evolutions in Approaches

It is possible to note some shifts in Taliban emphasis as they attempt to find more effective ways of undermining the resolve of the international community and creating "fence-sitters" within the population. They have expended an increasing amount of effort addressing the international community directly, including the targeting of individuals and specific nations. They also devote more time to highlighting ISAF failings, particularly where ISAF might have been involved in killing civilians or damaging property or livelihood.

There is perhaps little doubt that the Taliban have suffered greatly at the hands of airpower—it certainly appears to be something that the insurgents fear and respect. They may have redressed the balance though IO activities by highlighting, exaggerating, and even inventing reports of collateral damage and civilian casualties from air attacks. The domestic audiences of troop-contributing nations are particularly susceptible and sensitive to reports of civilian deaths. The Taliban clearly recognize this vulnerability. Certainly ISAF is now under continual and intense pressure to revise and further reduce its use of airpower. Perhaps what the mujahideen achieved against Soviet airpower in the 1980s with guided missiles, the Taliban are achieving, 20 years later, through the power of guided information.

But this issue also helps to highlight one of the biggest boosts to the Taliban IO effort: the support gained from the (often uncritical) amplification of its claims and messages by the international media. But it is unclear whether the Taliban fully understand the manner in which they can exploit this. I suspect they do not. They still seem conflicted about the partiality of this same forum, retaining a fierce suspicion, even paranoia, which is almost certainly blinding them to opportunities.

This paranoia is perhaps fueled by a growing Taliban sensitivity to international criticisms of its own behavior:

> *Islamic Emirate has observed a devilish propaganda of the international media, whenever a martyrdom attack is carried out by a Mujahid of Islamic Emirate, or when we blow up landmines or target a convoy of the enemy, its seem* [sic] *that Mujahideen always end up killing or wounding civilians, the hypocritical media propagates the issue of civilians, instead of reporting the realities of Mujahideen operations.*[2]

At one point, in May 2008, the Taliban genuinely appeared to suggest a joint Taliban/international community/ISAF team to investigate reports of casualties among civilians. One can only speculate on the outcome if they had been taken up on the offer.

The Taliban are increasingly aware of "weak links" in the multinational "chain" of nations that is ISAF and have focused messages intended to target the resolve of individual nations. Key themes are the inevitability of ISAF casualties, the unending nature of the conflict, and the differences between Europe and the United States. In addition, they are also learning to take note of Western media, government, and academic critiques of the international effort in Afghanistan. For all their overarching suspicion of the international media, they are now incorporating such texts crudely into their own statements. They are taking timely steps to expose the apparent dissent among the international community:

> *After the dissolution of Dutch government following its parliament's hot discussion over the American war in Afghanistan, now Canada and Australia have decided to respect views of their people for unconditional withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. . . . Observers believe that the Austrian* [sic] *and Canadian decisions to pull out of Afghanistan indicate the beginning of the fall of American empire and mastership.*[3]

The Myth of Taliban IO Capability

There are two complementary assumptions that go unchallenged: the Taliban have a very effective IO campaign, and ISAF has a very ineffective IO campaign. But how do we know this to be true? The Taliban are not al Qaeda. Use of late 20th-century technology (mobile phones, Internet) does not necessarily make the Taliban sophisticated. Speed-dialing journalists to take credit for an attack similarly does not necessarily make the Taliban effective. There is too much focus on the medium used and not enough on the content of the message. I submit that ISAF does not yet know the effectiveness of Taliban IO, propaganda, and media activities and that therefore it does not know which parts it should be looking to counter. There is likely to be much Taliban IO activity that ISAF could afford to ignore. Some of it may even be working against the Taliban in the longer term, such as its crude and continual use of fear. The Taliban may be winning pragmatic minds in the short term but alienating hearts in the long term.

Measuring Effectiveness

Understanding the effectiveness of Taliban IO must be the essential step before countermeasures of any sort can be drawn up and resources allocated. Information that might allow analysis of Taliban IO effectiveness at the local level includes:

- evidence of messages—type, content, and frequency
- population knowledge of, and willingness to repeat, messages
- population support for, and agreement with, messages
- compliance of population with messages
- reasons for compliance of population with messages
- changes in nature, frequency, and targets of security incidents
- opinion polls
- willingness of population to engage with ISAF, the Afghan government, and Afghan security forces
- level and nature of such engagement
- level and nature of population engagement with insurgents.

At the regional and strategic levels, analysis should include studies of the way in which Taliban information is received (whether it is unchallenged, supported, or critically challenged) not only by key nations, regions, and constituencies, but also by the media and key governments, as well as individual political, military, or religious personalities.

As is so often the case with multinational operations, much of the raw evidence needed for such analysis has likely been gathered, but is almost certainly languishing, buried. It will be found amid the databases of different headquarters, battle groups, patrols, the Afghan National Security Forces, Operational Mentor

and Liaison Teams, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, NGOs, Afghan government ministries, embassies, and international and local media. Such data might not be packaged in a format conducive to the quite specific task of analyzing Taliban messaging effectiveness. However, if Taliban efforts in some areas are assessed as ineffective after analysis, then they could be ignored. If they are judged counterproductive to the Taliban, they might even be encouraged.

I cannot now say with certainty what ISAF does to study the potential effectiveness of Taliban messages, but given the difficult and labor-intensive process of defining, collating, measuring, and analyzing data, I suspect in-depth study has yet to be done. Certainly open-source media and academic works routinely avoid the question of Taliban effectiveness by making a quick assumption or simplistically skimming over the issue, with little evidence presented.

For instance, an otherwise valuable study of Taliban information warfare posed the question "Are the Taliban effective?" and concluded, "The short answer is yes," and ended the analysis there. Even Thomas Johnson's excellent analysis of Taliban night letters, while conceding that although they could be "devastatingly effective" in some areas, concluded that when discussing the support of the Afghan populace for the Taliban, "it is impossible to evaluate specifically how the Taliban's night letter campaign contributed to this 'support.'" Evidence of Taliban IO effectiveness is generally localized, anecdotal, and difficult to quantify. Wahee Mozdah, a former Afghan foreign ministry advisor, stated: "The Taliban like to show themselves as powerful and their enemies as weak—I don't know how much the people believe that in the villages."[4]

It is necessary to understand not only *what* the Taliban are saying, but also *how* and *why* they might be saying it, and to whom. In other words, it has significant bearing on the ability to understand and therefore counter a Taliban message if we know whether they are saying something because:

- they genuinely believe it
- they do not believe it but think it might help them in the short term
- they are deliberately lying
- they do not know what is going on
- they do not understand what is going on
- they are having to react to external factors beyond their control.

Again, my point is not necessarily that the Taliban are ineffective at information operations, but that I have yet to see evidence that we have a good understanding either way.

Strengths and Weaknesses

I want to focus on the weaknesses of both ISAF and the Taliban, but it should be understood that ISAF has a huge range of intellectual, financial, and technological resources that the Taliban will never be able to replicate. Conversely, the Taliban's greatest messaging strengths—communicating at the local level among the Pashtun tribal populace in southern and eastern Afghanistan—are qualities that ISAF and the international community possess in abundance. They merely need to ensure that they work in full cooperation with the Afghan government, its security forces, and the population, including Pashtuns, tribal elders, mullahs, and former insurgents, to communicate in ways that reflect the culture, traditions, values, concerns, expectations, and worldviews of the population.

ISAF. ISAF information efforts appear to fall into three categories:

- routine "good news" stories (bridges built, hospitals repaired, money spent)
- defending against its own mistakes (ISAF special forces kill the wrong people)
- reacting to Taliban IO initiatives (Taliban claims of airstrike casualties).

ISAF seems to have difficulty conducting information operations. The reasons would be familiar to anyone with an awareness of the challenges that all international institutions, military and civilian, have encountered in Afghanistan since 2001. To a still limited understanding of the culture, language, and customs of Afghanistan can be added an unresolved debate as to what IO is and can achieve, what an IO strategy should be, and how such a strategy should be applied. Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding of how the Taliban conduct IO, how to measure the effectiveness of Taliban IO (and therefore which elements of it are actually genuinely damaging), and how best to generate and balance reactive and proactive responses.

there are extremely high demands on ISAF, in particular the expectation that it should always provide 100 percent accurate and accountable information

There are major problems with coordination of messaging—the Afghan government, individual nations, NGOs, aid agencies, the United Nations, and European Union are all pushing and pulling in different directions. They are sending out different messages, only some of which are intentional. This lack of coherence is compounded by the regular rotation of personnel, resulting in loss of experience and fragmentation of effort. There are extremely high demands on ISAF from a variety of critical and "media-savvy" audiences, in particular the expectation that it should always provide 100 percent accurate and accountable information—which takes time and is frequently next to impossible. Finally, the key Taliban "safe havens" across the border in Pakistan, where the Taliban find much support and conduct recruitment, are much less accessible to ISAF, Afghan, or international messages.

The Taliban. The Taliban have strengths and weaknesses in their approach to information operations. But we only have to look at the origins of the movement and the background and experiences of the Taliban leadership to gain a sense of where these strengths and weaknesses might lie. In terms of strengths, they come from the same tribal, cultural, and linguistic base as a key target audience—the Pashtun tribes on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. This gives them a significant advantage over ISAF and the international community as a whole. But their knowledge of the wider world—politics, governance, international relations, and the media—is much weaker. Strategic communications is surely unlikely to be a strong point.

The Taliban do not have the same pressures that ISAF has to be accurate in their statements and claims, and they present powerful and easy to understand messages to local audiences, portraying the international community as "infidels" who kill civilians and threaten customs and livelihoods. Furthermore, the Taliban show potential to improve in their understanding of the international community and therefore ways in which they might better apply their IO activity. They appear to be learning, albeit slowly, from international media techniques. It seems easier for

the Taliban to judge what impact they may be having with their IO campaigns by monitoring international media to see how their messages are received and observing the debates and disputes in national and international political and military circles.

My caveats about the difficulties of measuring Taliban IO effectiveness aside, some parts of their operations are clearly having an impact. I would judge Taliban IO successes to include:

- weakening the resolve of the international community
- increasing recruitment to the insurgency
- achieving disengagement of the population from Afghan government and international efforts (fence-sitting)
- curtailing ISAF military activities (use of airpower, use of artillery, house-to-house searches, special forces operations)
- limiting the engagement and effectiveness of the Afghan government.

The Taliban have clearly improved their game as they attempt to communicate with Western audiences, progressing from incoherent messages such as, "This is mention the able the rags of airplane were delirium in the location of incident and many people came for the trip,"[5] to:

> *Your colonialist rulers have invaded our country under the pretext of terrorism to augment the wealth of a few capitalists and spread the net of neo-colonialism over our country. Every day, our youths, old men, women and children are martyred by your bombs and rounds of mortars. The invaders raid houses of our people at night. They destroy our green gardens, public properties, educational and commercial centers. Countering this atrocity and aggression and the defense against it, is our legitimate and national right. We will use this right of ours with all our resources and sacrifices.*[6]

There is also a growing focus on the fears and concerns of individual troop-contributing nations. In May 2006, an Italian ISAF vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in Kabul, which resulted in the death of two Italian soldiers. An Italian journalist managed to interview the Taliban spokesman shortly afterward and asked whether the Italians had been specifically targeted because they were coming to the end of their tour (a case, perhaps, of the media unintentionally helping to shape the Taliban's response). The response came back in the negative: "For us, infidels are infidels. As long as they are allies of the Americans, they will remain our enemies."

Exactly 2 years later, a Taliban commander told *Der Spiegel* that "to kill and attack Germans is the goal." The Taliban are increasingly differentiating between ISAF nations and attempting to target perceived weaknesses in resolve of the different ISAF members. An even more recent statement, from April 2010, also aimed at Germany, makes an appeal to the historically strong relations between Germany and Afghanistan, with an appeal entitled "Germany Should Not Sacrifice the Historical Relations with the Afghans for the Interests of America." Perhaps unhelpfully, the statement attempts to make a virtue of Afghan support in the 1940s for Nazi Germany as proof.[7]

Taliban messages are frequently uncoordinated and contradictory, often with an erratic variation in tone

The Taliban must often react to events just as quickly as ISAF does. Being able to claim responsibility for an attack minutes after it took place often means having to backtrack once it becomes apparent just how many civilians have been killed. Taliban messages are frequently uncoordinated and contradictory, often with an erratic variation in tone.

One situation is worthy of closer examination. In an ambush in Logar Province claimed by the Taliban on August 13, 2008, three unarmed female Western aid workers and their Afghan driver were shot and killed. On August 17, the Taliban posted an open letter "to the Canadian people" about the incident, warning Canada not to continue its involvement in Afghanistan or to support "the terrorists in [the] White House." It was interesting to see the language used by the Taliban and the way it shifted over the 4 days from the attack to the open letter—in particular, the way the Taliban described the victims. The Taliban's initial "combat report" described the incident as an ambush followed by a 1-hour firefight in which five Americans, including three women, were killed.[8] The description of the victims went from "terrorists" and "spies" to "soldiers" to "female citizens," suggestive of some of the confusion the Taliban have in getting accurate information. It also highlights their weakness for creatively "filling in the gaps" with stock phrases and descriptions (terrorists, spies, "their arms were booty"). More significantly, it demonstrates Taliban recognition (perhaps because their spokesman was in high demand for statements in the aftermath) that this was a controversial incident that might impact their international and local credibility.

Taliban spokesmen do not appear to have developed the media skills to debate or discuss fast-moving or strategic events—particularly when accusations have been leveled at them

From their claims and statements, the Taliban continue to demonstrate an obsession with "body count" and the language of war, of victory and defeat. There is little evidence of understanding—and certainly no attempt to address—issues that opinion polls consistently show are of major concern to the Afghan populace: education, accountable government, representing the people, justice, human rights, law and order, medical care, reconstruction, and employment. After 9 years, they still appear to have nothing to say on these issues—in fact, they actively avoid such topics unless compelled to address them. Perhaps they should be compelled more often. They are dangerously misunderstanding the desires of the majority of the population, and I would judge this to be their biggest weakness. Now, more than ever before in their history, the Afghan people have been exposed to the wider world and are increasingly aware of their own potential and opportunities. They want to hear positive and constructive messaging that goes significantly beyond calls for unending jihad.

Taliban under Pressure

The Taliban do not deal well with negative publicity and stick with the language of, for want of a better description, old communist regimes. Their media world is a black-and-white one, where terms like "lies," "baseless," "fake," and "provocations" replace reason or counterargument. The Taliban perceive that the international media are actively working against them, and they still do not appear comfortable, capable, or confident when it comes

to bad publicity. This paranoia is evident right to the top, and a study of Taliban statements is helpful in giving clues as to what the Taliban most worry about. For instance, in September 2008, Mullah Omar stated, "Our enemy due to its devilish nature is very clever in making trickeries. And at the time of its defeat it always put these trickeries to work. And Muslim Ummah often gets caught in these devilish trickeries." Mullah Omar is likely to be talking about IO in some form.

Taliban spokesmen do not appear to have developed the media skills necessary to debate or discuss fast-moving or strategic events—particularly when accusations of any sort have been leveled at them. Their default approach still seems to be to delay, deny, or denounce.[9]

Moreover, the Taliban appear overly sensitive to a range of issues:

- reports of Taliban operations killing civilians, particularly when caused by questionable tactics such as suicide bombings
- that they take bribes or drug money
- that there are splits or disputes within the Taliban and leadership
- that they are engaged in talks with members of the Afghan government or the international community
- losses they have allegedly suffered
- media stories portraying them badly, such as their treatment of the South Korean hostages. In addition, in February 2008, Mullah Omar announced that beheadings of people suspected of spying for ISAF would stop.[10]

Also in 2008, the Taliban started to issue statements outlining their assessment of casualties inflicted upon ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces. The statements are short, grossly inflated by any standards, and make no attempt to explain, justify, or clarify: "The fatalities of the invaders forces reached 5,220, and the fatalities of their puppets Afghan army and police reached 7,552. 2,818 military vehicles belonging to the invaders forces and their puppet forces were destroyed, also 31 various aircraft were shot down."[11]

It is likely that the Taliban continue to perceive that inflicting casualties on international and government forces is one of the most important aspects and measures of their campaign, but it may also suggest that they remain sensitive to the casualties they themselves are suffering. The Taliban do not yet appear to be in a situation where they genuinely want to issue actual figures and credibly contest the figures of the Afghan government, international community, and independent organizations such as icasualties.org.

When the Taliban do believe that they have a case to make (criticizing ISAF airstrikes and civilian casualties, denying that they are negotiating with the Afghan government, refuting the claim that they broke the Musa Qala deal), they tend to expound at length in their media statements. Their choice of easy to grasp topics suggests that they might be uncomfortable if pressed to elaborate on the validity of the statistics and the sources. This may not matter to the Taliban. The figures may look good to important and perhaps susceptible audiences (and potential recruits) in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and also to potential backers in these countries and the Middle East. They will also know that international media sources will pick up and run with the story. Even if the media generally fail to be convinced of the accuracy of Taliban figures, the Taliban may have judged that some international audiences may find the

figures useful to criticize or question the international military presence in Afghanistan. We should ask ourselves, "What evidence is there that these claims are helping the Taliban?" Perhaps these claims have no impact at all. Perhaps they are making the Taliban look foolish and naïve. More understanding of the actual impact of Taliban IO may be needed before a response can be given. To ignore these statements is certainly an option, but there may be even more potential in turning them back on the Taliban. Challenging the Taliban to prove their claims may cause them a loss of credibility, force them to respond, or pressure them into revising what they say and how they say it.

Opportunities

In the last few years, I judge that there have been significant missed opportunities to proactively tackle the Taliban in the media arena. As suggested earlier, the Taliban appear to handle negative public relations in a clumsy way. Furthermore, they have an overarching inability or unwillingness to discuss any wider vision for the future of Afghanistan beyond jihad and the need to kill infidels—no expounding of politics, accountable government, the economy, education, or employment. The Taliban issued their new Afghanistan constitution in December 2006, but they have not pushed, promoted, or even referred to it since. The Taliban response, whenever put under pressure in the war of ideas, is routine, unconvincing, and uninspiring: "Now we are at war. When we are in power, then we will decide."

In tackling Taliban messaging, the international community should aim to:

- create coordinated messages with the Afghan government and international community
- gain the initiative—changing the tempo to suit the Afghan government and international community, not the Taliban
- remove the Taliban from their messaging "comfort zone" of battle, body count, and jihad, taking them into political discourse
- expose Taliban contradictions
- expose and exploit Taliban fears
- reduce and focus ISAF effort—expending resources only when necessary
- cause the Taliban to distrust and disengage from the media
- cause more confusion and paranoia among the Taliban
- expose Taliban reliance on use of fear.

There is a strong need for a better understanding of what the Taliban are saying, how they say it, why, and to whom. Above all, effort must be put into measuring and assessing Taliban IO effectiveness. Only once this process has been adequately completed can appropriate responses (words, deeds, or both) be adopted. Responses should perhaps fall into combinations of five main categories: countering, attacking, ignoring, encouraging, or copying.

In this process, it will also be useful to consider the prime fears and concerns of the three major groupings of actors in Afghanistan to understand how best to conduct defensive or offensive IO countermeasures. I suggest that a study of Taliban fears could give an indicator as to how to regain the information initiative.

The following is a selection of missed media opportunities over the last 5 years where the Taliban have been vulnerable:

- In May 2005, Mullah Omar was stripped of the title "Leader of the Faithful" by the same Kandahar shura that bestowed it on him in 1996.
- In March 2006, the Egyptian Grand Mufti ruled that suicide bombing was illegal—this was picked up by at least one Afghan newspaper, bemoaning the fact that this sort of crucial information was not being adequately promoted across Afghanistan.
- In November 2006, Ahmed Rashid highlighted a Pashtun peace jirga in Pakistan that rejected Taliban violence.[12]
- There have been several instances where the Taliban have been spontaneously resisted by locals—including Pashtuns. In July 2008, in Faryab Province, Pashtun villagers killed two Taliban—including a Taliban shadow provincial governor—who attempted to enter their village and abduct aid workers.[13]
- Brian Glyn Williams's paper on Taliban suicide bombers highlights several anti-Taliban incidents as a result of such attacks.[14]
- An intriguing Taliban request was made in July 2008—apparently to the international community—to form independent investigation teams, including a Taliban and NATO representative in each team, to conduct an Afghan-wide survey of civilian casualties through military action.

Marjah and Beyond

The success or failure of the ISAF operations in and around Marjah is too early to judge. But looking at some of the language that the Taliban are currently using in response, they appear confused about the messages they should be using against new ISAF and Afghan government strategies. They have defaulted to the language of combat—they expect battle, they want battle, and they couch what they see in Marjah (that is, reasonably sophisticated, population-centric counterinsurgency) in terms of battle alone. But they are sounding increasingly out of their depth and still seem to be talking as if they are dealing with a Soviet-style invasion. Further ISAF operations in Kandahar may confirm this. Perhaps in this media environment there are areas where ISAF and the Afghan government could seize the messaging initiative by easing away from "combat" language and into politics, governance, development, and reconstruction. These are the areas where the Taliban are least qualified to engage and indeed reveal their weaknesses with naïve, ill-informed, and clumsy messaging.

the Taliban are sounding increasingly out of their depth and still seem to be talking as if they are dealing with a Soviet-style invasion

Conclusion

The reach and influence of Taliban information at both local and strategic levels—its messages, threats, warnings, claims, and statements—are certainly contributing to the faltering of international and Afghan efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan, particularly at the crucial local level. Although the Taliban are now making more use of modern technology, however, their approach remains unsurprising

DOD (Chad J. McNeeley)

Marjah tribal elders participate in consultation about removing Taliban insurgents

and unimaginative. They have the potential to do much better—and this should be of concern. But they remain limited by their own worldview, their focus on combat and fear to the exclusion of the political and developmental, and an inherent distrust of what they see as "Western" media. This is ironic, as the international media are playing a key role in amplifying their messages. Yet when one looks at the content of their messages, it becomes clear that there are many contradictions and inconsistencies. They do not have the capabilities, reach, and understanding of al Qaeda's information machine and should not be put in the same category. The Taliban have many vulnerabilities that could be proactively exploited.

Being able to measure the effectiveness of Taliban messaging appears to be a big gap in Afghan and international capability. There is a strong temptation to assume that, because the Taliban are saying things quickly, they are saying things effectively. The international community, the Afghan government, and ISAF need to quantify and identify the effective elements of Taliban IO that are genuinely hindering progress in order to proactively counter, rather than reactively "ambulance chase," Taliban claims. Much more analysis is needed of what the Taliban are saying, how they say it, and why they might be saying it—with more use of regional expertise: Afghans, Pakistanis, Pashtuns, and former Taliban. A better understanding of the audiences the Taliban are trying to reach remains crucial.

The current information environment is perhaps the most difficult it has ever been for getting the Afghan population off the fence and supporting international and Afghan government efforts. Nine years of international involvement have seen an increasingly confident and capable

insurgency, dwindling international resolve, lack of confidence in the Afghan government, and the impending unilateral disengagement of two key NATO members. All these factors are creating significant information momentum for the Taliban, and a countercampaign based purely on good news stories will be ineffective. The international community should beware of relying too much on well-drafted and efficiently delivered messages that bear no relation with the ground truth as experienced by the Afghans receiving the message.

We should be aware of the limitations of IO, the limitations of our understanding of Taliban IO effectiveness, and the blurred relationship between actions and words in this context. The biggest "message" put out by the Taliban is their physical presence across the country manifested by insurgency on the ground and the casualties, destruction, and uncertainty they can now inflict. It is this presence that is undermining international resolve and causing Afghan disengagement and uncertainty. If the Taliban could not deliver this physical impact, their messages would be almost entirely irrelevant. The most appropriate counter to local Taliban presence will not be sophisticated countermessaging but "clear, hold, and build"—replacing Taliban presence with a competent and noncorrupt Afghan government presence. Only then can messages be expected to gain any credence among the population. What the Afghans need is the boringly predictable certainty that a government is going to be present and functioning in their neighborhood—and for decades. This is the most important message for them, as it is one that enables them to plan for the future.

At the strategic level, however, there appears to be greater scope for proactively tackling the Taliban with information, targeting their confusion, incoherence, contradictions, and fears. The Taliban should be forced away from their comfort zone—the language of violence and conflict—and called upon to expound on their plans for Afghanistan's future (politics, economic development, reconstruction, employment, education, and human rights). This is something they have routinely and spectacularly failed to do, other than with a handful of naïve and simplistic statements. This is surely a real opportunity. If the Taliban are found wanting and clearly have no credible plans (as appears likely from a review of their statements over the last few years), they can be undermined and exposed as offering no hope for the future of Afghanistan. However, if they attempt to develop ideas and show a willingness to explain themselves, they are moving slowly away from insurgency and into politics and government, like so many other insurgent groups throughout history. Perhaps then the Afghan populace (and the international community) might find it easier to entertain the notion—which is gaining increasing traction regardless—of a Taliban presence in government in some manner. PRISM

the biggest "message" put out by the Taliban is their physical presence across the country manifested by insurgency on the ground and the destruction they can inflict

Notes

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Afghanistan
The German Factor

BY JAMES D. BINDENAGEL

In December 2009, President Barack Obama revised the American strategy for Afghanistan. He announced an increase of 30,000 American troops for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Concurrent with this increase, he also announced the planned withdrawal of U.S. Armed Forces beginning in 2011. In the 18-month period between the influx and drawdown, NATO must act collectively to counter the full range of threats against Alliance members from terrorist attacks and to build capacity for the Afghanistan government to self-govern effectively.

Americans anticipate relatively less of a combat contribution from Germany and other European Allies. Steven Erlanger described the American view of Europe as a partner that is "seen just now as not a problem for the [United States], but not much help either."[1] In an address about NATO's strategic concept, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates expressed concern about what he perceived to be demilitarization by European powers in light of the collapse of Dutch government support and the public opposition to military deployments to Afghanistan in many European countries, even in the face of serious 21st-century threats.[2] The refusal of Germany and other European Allies to accept a combat role as part of their NATO commitment is at the root of the clash between American and European leaders on Afghanistan policy.

While NATO military counterinsurgency (COIN) operations are essential to provide security from the Taliban threat and to defeat al Qaeda, the American emphasis on the use of force to accomplish these twin objectives is not matched by comparable civilian operations to build capacity for governance in the Afghan central and regional governments. Complex operations—nonkinetic military operations encompassing stability, security, transitional peacebuilding, and reconstruction—provide a basis for NATO strategy to build governance capacity in Afghanistan.[3] Unity of the NATO mission is critical and comes from combined operations. Both kinetic and nonkinetic

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capabilities are essential for the Alliance to successfully fight the wars of the 21st century. Moreover, each NATO member must participate fully in combat and noncombat roles.

The German Federal Defense Force (Bundeswehr), the third largest NATO troop contingent in Afghanistan, functions in a peacebuilding, reconstruction, and stabilization role. The German public is deeply averse to the militarization of the Bundeswehr and its engagement in combat roles, except under specific, narrowly defined parameters mandated by parliament. Each Bundeswehr deployment depends on a case-by-case parliamentary decision, which is by nature political rather than military in character. In the case of Afghanistan, the mandate explicitly limits the German Bundeswehr to nonkinetic peacebuilding operations and force protection. German politicians have been slowly urging the German public to be more involved militarily and to accept a military-combat role in NATO operations. If the United States wants to count on Germany (and NATO) as an effective ally in the next 20 years, we need to empower German politicians to overcome public resistance—and French, British, and Russian resistance as well.

limitations on Bundeswehr actions are currently politically expedient, but that can change if the United States helps create the possibility of a German mandate as part of essential NATO functions

There is no doubt that the lack of a unified German security strategy has led to ambiguity in the political decisionmaking process on troop deployments. Yet German interests in NATO solidarity for collective defense, as well as for national reasons, are persuasive. History shows that the limitations on Bundeswehr actions are not set in stone; they are currently politically expedient, but that can change if the United States helps create the possibility of a German mandate as part of essential NATO functions. The Bundeswehr potentially could assume combat roles if they arose specifically and exclusively within the context of joint NATO missions of collective defense—planned, trained, and executed together with U.S. forces as the German government slowly and deliberately seeks to build domestic political support. Decisionmaking on the Afghanistan conflict will determine German military posture for the next 20 years. The United States needs to support German politicians' effort to overcome public resistance to combat roles, and similar resistance from the French, British, and Russians of a remilitarized post–World War II and post–Cold War Germany.

NATO and Germany's Rules of Engagement

The German factor is important for NATO to succeed. In response to the revised U.S. strategy for Afghanistan, Chancellor Angela Merkel proposed strengthening German operations, and the parliament approved an increase in troop levels primarily to conduct civilian capacity-building programs. The German goal was to assist ISAF in preparations to turn governing responsibilities over to the Afghan government.

Germany's political consensus-building process determines the international deployments of the Bundeswehr on a case-specific basis, taking constitutional requirements and both historical and current circumstances into account.

Martin Stollberg

German soldiers in Kunduz waiting for start of patrol

The constitutional debate is critical to the process. The German High Court set limits on modern German military engagements through its interpretation and legal reasoning of the German constitution (Basic Law) in a decision handed down on July 12, 1994.[4] That decision, specifically authorizing German Luftwaffe crews on Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) missions outside of the NATO area, examined and affirmed the constitutionality of any international military deployments. By agreeing to the constitutionality of Bundeswehr deployments outside Germany, the High Court ended the strictly territorial defense role of the postwar German military and extended it to out-of-area deployments governed by specific parliamentary mandates.

The lesson of the court decision is clear. German security strategy is dependent on the support that the German public is willing to lend its parliament. As Aristotle said, "He who loses the support of public opinion is no longer king." Speaking about the Bundestag decision to support NATO's 1999 bombing campaign in Kosovo, German commentator Detlef Puhl noted that "public support for government action is a fragile thing that has to be fought for every day and there is no alternative to freely consented public support. This is especially critical in times of military action."[5] The High Court set the conditions for out-of-area missions operations. Deployment debates will remain current topics in domestic German politics and will be decided by the Bundestag. Sometimes the court will be involved, which means that ultimately the political process will be very public and slow—much more difficult than the War Powers Act in the United States.

Unified Germany has come a long way from the former West German role in NATO, limited to territorial defense of the inner German border against an attack from Warsaw Pact countries

along the Central Front of the Cold War. West German security strategy was first set in 1955 after Joseph Stalin's death and the Korean War. Ever since the unification of Germany in 1990 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Germany, especially the German public, has maintained its defensive and noncombat security philosophy.

the U.S. National Security Strategy promulgated in 2002 began to decouple American security policy from its international base in Europe

At the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia, German forces were sent on missions out of the NATO area in what could be termed territorial defense of the European Union (EU) in the Bosnian War. Defensive operations, rather than aggressive use of military force, were the German strategy until the Bundeswehr supported NATO bombing of Serbian forces in Kosovo to end ethnic cleansing. Following Kosovo, the aggressive use of force as an element of German security strategy was short-lived, with limited public support.

The 9/11 attacks on the United States led to strong solidarity among NATO members as they decided the attack fit the definition of Article 5 of the NATO treaty that an attack on one was an attack on all. This solidarity backed the U.S. decision to attack the Taliban in Afghanistan. However, the United States chose to conduct the initial invasion primarily alone. Germany has participated in Afghanistan NATO operations exclusively with civil construction, police, and military training.

The 9/11 attacks were also a historical turning point that shook loose the old U.S. response to security threats and set a new American course to defeat global terrorism. The U.S. response—a new National Security Strategy—proposed revolutionary changes in international conflict resolution, including regime change in rogue states and preemption.

In the course of the 2002 German election campaign, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, with strong support from the electorate, objected to the U.S. plan for a preemptive strike against Saddam Hussein. After his reelection, Schröder refused to participate in the 2003 war in Iraq. That opposition was also popular, and opponents coalesced to solidify the political limits on the German use of military force. Schröder was not alone. Europeans questioned Iraq's link to al Qaeda terrorists, while agreeing that Saddam was an evil dictator. Plans for war in Iraq were laid without support of many U.S. Allies, and the European-American alliance began to crack. The U.S. National Security Strategy promulgated in 2002 began to decouple American security policy from its international base in Europe. The divisive issue was whether the just cause was preemption or rather a preventive war as it was implemented by the United States and United Kingdom in Iraq. When the military action was over, no weapons of mass destruction were found, and unease about the "preemption doctrine" continued among Europeans, despite the rapid military victory against Saddam's regime.

The Europeans responded to the U.S. security strategy in June 2003 when Javier Solana presented a draft European security strategy to extend European security, strengthen the international order under the United Nations (UN), and counter threats from nonproliferation, failed states, and global terrorism. Germany worked multilaterally within the EU Common Security and Defense Policy process. Throughout the debates about Afghanistan,

Germany's approach has focused on being transparent with the public regarding the fact that the Bundeswehr is in Afghanistan for civilian reconstruction, with authority for self-defense but not to conduct combat operations.

The German approach, however, fails to address the two necessary prerequisite NATO strategy goals: counterinsurgency strategies to provide security against the Taliban threat, and to defeat al Qaeda. U.S. efforts to shape joint planning and the execution of complex operations depend on whether the United States can maneuver around the deep-seated German public aversion to the use of force and the limited role for its Bundeswehr.

Consistent with the German position, NATO could focus on Germany's nonkinetic role in complex operations. Likewise, Germany could consider building a consensus on a NATO strategy that integrates combat and complex operations. The German military has changed during the short 20 years since the country was unified and deserves more comprehensive treatment. Since unification, the country has developed its strategic concept but has not fully articulated a national security strategy.[6] While the United States debates whether—and if so, how—its military should conduct operations otherwise considered civilian in character, Germany has won wide elite political support for Bundeswehr missions by unequivocally putting civil operations ahead of warfighting ones. Yet Germany needs to play its proper comprehensive role to meet the threats of the 21st century and fully engage with NATO.

Historical Context

Germany's national security debate is essentially historical-contextual. The process of unifying Germany 20 years ago raised the specter of Germany's history of militarism, which culminated in the disaster of two world wars and revived the German question about how strong or influential a role the nation should have. Through years of debate, Germany, its European neighbors, and the United States agreed that a unified Germany should remain a partner in NATO.

The Allies, who stationed forces in Germany and retained some decisionmaking authority through treaty, struggled with each other and with two politically distinct German states to chart a future for Europe. On the issue of reunification of Germany, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and French President François Mitterrand had to be persuaded that it would not pose a security threat. President Mikhail Gorbachev was equally concerned about the reunification security question.[7]

Within Germany, too, the question of continued participation in NATO following unification was debated. Markus Meckel, who became foreign minister of East Germany just prior to unification, advocated withdrawal from NATO and demilitarization. West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl strongly objected and insisted that Germany remain a NATO member and maintain its military.

The United States remained committed to its established policy in support of German unification and participation in NATO. President George H.W. Bush articulated the position that "unification should occur in the context of Germany's continued commitment to NATO and an increasingly integrated European Community, and with due regard for the legal role and responsibilities of the Allied powers."[8] Secretary of State James Baker reaffirmed U.S. support for full German membership in NATO as early as December 11, 1989.[9] Providing security and stability in Europe was at the heart of the speech about designing and gradually putting into place a new architecture for a new era.

Although he spoke of new security architecture, Baker also made clear that Europe must have a place for NATO, even if the Alliance served new collective purposes in a new era.

unified Germany kept its NATO membership and accepted the obligations of common defense of all other members

Speaking of a united Germany in this new Europe, Baker argued that it must include arrangements that satisfy the aspirations of the German people and meet the legitimate concerns of neighbors. With that in mind, he recalled President Bush's reaffirmation of America's longstanding support for unification. Then he succinctly laid out the four principles that would guide U.S. policy:

- Self-determination must be pursued without prejudice to its outcome. The United States should not at this time endorse or exclude any particular vision of unity.
- Unification should occur in the context of Germany's continued commitment to NATO and an increasingly integrated European Community, and with due regard for the legal role and responsibilities of the Allied powers.
- In the interests of general European stability, moves toward unification must be peaceful, gradual, and part of a step-by-step process.
- On the question of borders, the United States should reiterate its support for the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.[10]

On October 3, 1990, unification restored full sovereignty and with it the duty to provide and protect Germany's freedom and security as well as to promote prosperity for all its citizens, East and West. Unified Germany kept its NATO membership and accepted the obligations of common defense of all other members. There would be no renationalization of security policy and no return to militarism. This unconditional recognition of Germany's ties to the West represented an important watershed in party politics. Meeting these military obligations was a serious turning point in Germany's domestic politics and its security debate.[11]

Unified Germany

The security debate in united Germany has encompassed four important themes:

- aversion to the use of force in West Germany's culture of restraint
- territorial defense against the Soviet (Russian) and Warsaw Pact threat
- abhorrence of combat missions
- protecting, when vitally necessary, the inviolability of human dignity under Article I of the German Basic Law.[12]

In the debate over the use of force, Germany has embraced the essence of the protection of human dignity, which embodies its raison d'être in the constitutional mandate of the Basic Law (constitution). The Basic Law sets out legally binding language of basic rights, including that "human dignity shall be inviolable and to respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority. The German people therefore acknowledge inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community, of peace and of justice in the world. . . . basic rights shall bind the legislature, the

executive and the judiciary as directly applicable law."[13] Germany's constitutional commitment to human dignity followed shortly after the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a direct outcome of World War II and the Holocaust. German security policy for the first 4 years of united Germany was dominated by two considerations: remaining in NATO and repatriating Russian soldiers.

Obstacles to developing a usable security strategy came from West German traditions of pacifism, moralism, and democracy. The ideology that "never again shall war arise from German soil" (*Nie wieder Krieg vom Deutschen Boden*) was widely shared across the political spectrum and reflected the responsibility that weighed heavily on this generation of German leaders. A second set of traditions come from EU integration, NATO membership, multilateralism of the UN, and a political commitment to democratization, all of which have strengthened the belief in political solutions without the use of force.[14]

The transformation of Germany's new armed forces in NATO was complicated by its relationship to Russia during World War II and the Cold War, and the stationing of Russian soldiers in East Germany. When Germany combined the Bundeswehr with the East German armed forces, the National People's Army (Nationale Volksarmee, or NVA), the Soviet/Russian military was still stationed in the eastern part of united Germany. In the unification agreement, Germany agreed to limit the number of soldiers in its combined military to 370,000 to emphasize its previous role in territorial defense and its determination not to move to aggressive combat missions.[15] The Russians could be reassured Germany would not be aggressive against Russia, which remains a political theme today.

Soviet forces remaining in the former East Germany led to delicate talks about how to manage the departure of all Soviet/Russian troops from the territory of the former German Democratic Republic after unification. In the end, Gorbachev agreed to a 4-year process of repatriation of Soviet forces, a decision foreshadowed by his UN speech in 1988 in which he stated that sovereign countries could decide on their own what alliances to join.[16] Germany won agreement to repatriate all Russian soldiers from united Germany by August 1994. The Germans remember that their country was divided and occupied in their lifetimes as a result of the catastrophe of World War II.

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In reaching that agreement on repatriation, NATO agreed with Gorbachev not to move its forces eastward where Soviet forces were still stationed. Consequently, during the repatriation period, NATO refrained from deploying its forces on the territory of the former East Germany. Throughout the repatriation period, the territory of the former German Democratic Republic was given special status, and only Bundeswehr-Ost territorial defense forces of the new national army were stationed there.

The Bundeswehr would be transformed, with much of the credit for the transformation in the early years given, correctly, to Generals Klaus Naumann and Joerg Schoenbohm.[17] After unification, they were tasked with dissolving the NVA

and with commanding the new Bundeswehr-Ost as some 11,000 NVA officers and other ranks were integrated into the Bundeswehr. In addition, Naumann and Schoenbohm, who was later state secretary in the defense ministry, carried out Bundeswehr reform, adapting the forces to new post–Cold War political and security requirements, as well as making them operational in the event of an international crisis.

The decision by NATO to station its forces in the eastern part of Germany would wait a long time after unification day (October 3, 1990) to be made.[18] In September 1994, the Alliance officially accepted the former East German territory in its first enlargement.

Over time, the role of the Bundeswehr would be to develop component capabilities and train soldiers for crises. The new combined army would plan and train for missions, including:

the Basic Law requires that Germany's deployments be part of a collective security system

- territorial defense for sovereign Germany's democracy
- NATO defense missions and contributions for crisis management
- early warning and analysis capabilities
- collective security missions beyond NATO
- interoperability and international cooperation
- confidence-building, cooperation, and verification.[19]

The capability to take on these future missions, to be achieved by 2000, would face an early challenge. The breakup of Yugoslavia demanded military force in 1991, not 2000. The culture of restraint was soon tested when a bold act in 1991 led the way for international diplomatic recognition of Croatia and Slovenia, essentially turning the civil war into a conflict in which European powers more or less took sides.[20] That national push for internationalizing the war in Yugoslavia did not end the conflict. Rather, war and ethnic cleansing challenged the Germans to act. The limitations on the military role, which had grown strong, also dragged America into the conflict despite its lack of vital interests in the area.

When Germany and the EU were unable to prevent the escalating military conflict, a bitter experience ensued for the United States, Germany, the EU, and the UN. This early transatlantic rift over deploying the military, backed by the use of force, continues in disputes over military capabilities and in debates about war, peacekeeping, and nationbuilding. The German public has not yet accepted the adage of Frederick the Great: "Diplomacy without arms is like an orchestra without instruments."

These military missions were challenged, as noted above, in the Karlsruhe Constitutional Court, which decided on July 12, 1994, that they were allowed under the constitution. The decision came down during President Bill Clinton's 1994 visit in Berlin. When the United States learned German soldiers could be deployed out of Germany as part of an alliance and with the consent of the Bundestag, Chancellor Kohl, in his news conference with Clinton, immediately declared that the decision did not mean "Germans to the Front." Nevertheless, the decision meant exactly that.[21] A closer look at that court decision is warranted.

In its judgment handed down on July 12, 1994, the Karlsruhe Constitutional Court

considered the use of AWACS surveillance aircraft over the Adriatic Sea.[22] In what has become a cornerstone of German constitutional law, the case demarcates a constitutional boundary that requires that any deployment of the Bundeswehr outside its federal territory first be approved by the Bundestag parliament.[23] However, the Bundestag acts on the proposal of the chancellor, which includes the modalities, dimension, and duration of the operations, and the necessary coordination within and with the organs of international organizations.[24] The court announced the concept of a "parliamentary army," which attempts to strike a balance between executive effectiveness and parliamentary participation.[25]

Although the Basic Law does not set out an authorization requirement of the Bundestag to conduct external deployment of armed forces, the court based its decision on the general constitutional framework of the Basic Law to articulate the principle. The court relied on Article 24.2 of the Basic Law, which requires that Germany's deployments be part of a collective security system, and Article 59.2, which stipulates that the Bundestag must approve the mutual collective security system.[26]

The court case has required security debates to be conducted by the parliament. While the chancellor, foreign minister, and defense minister all have important roles, no deployment can be made without a Bundestag mandate. Domestic political concerns play a heavy role in determining the limits on Bundeswehr deployments.

Two other cases show that the partisans in the debate are quite willing to return to the High Court to press their interests in limiting German use of force, even by challenging the NATO strategic concept as a fundamental change to the treaty requiring a new parliamentary vote on NATO membership.[27] Although the court reasoned that the new strategic concept of NATO was not an amendment to the treaty and therefore did not require a renewal of parliamentary approval of the treaty, deploying German soldiers is not a straightforward decision.[28]

Since the main High Court decision in 1994, security strategy planning and execution have been conducted on a case-by-case basis as Bundeswehr out-of-area NATO deployments were proposed by the chancellor and then considered, debated, and decided by the parliament. Bundeswehr deployments for the Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the NATO request for Luftwaffe Tornado aircraft missions came soon after the last Russian soldier had left Germany, and the High Court had paved the way for the Bundestag to decide on deployments.

War in Bosnia was raging and Germany was asked to do its part. General George Joulwan, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, approached the government in November 1994 asking for Tornado fighter aircraft for NATO operations.[29] General Klaus Naumann sought political clearance for the request, which was delayed until a formal NATO request to protect the UN Protection Force soldiers in Bosnia was received. Immediately, the political debate began in earnest and the seemingly straightforward request soon became mired in historical debates about German militarism rising again and political demands to prevent any deployments where the Wehrmacht had fought in World War II.

Proponents focused on solidarity with the UN Security Council, NATO, and the EU and argued that national interests and Germany's role in "protecting the international order were grounds for the mission."[30] There was strong

opposition in the Social Democratic Party to the use of military force and support for the position that missions be strictly limited to noncombat roles.[31]

The Bundestag voted in June 1995 with 386 for, 258 opposed, and 11 abstentions to approve the government recommendation that Germany contribute to the UN Rapid Reaction Force. Another vote followed on December 6 and allowed for the deployment of 4,000 Bundeswehr soldiers for IFOR.

protecting the inviolability of human dignity took center stage with the NATO decision to intervene militarily in Kosovo to end ethnic cleansing

After the 1994 court case set the rules for deployments in its decision about German crews' participation on AWACS missions over Hungary, the Bundestag consequently decided on requests for Bundeswehr logistics and support troops in Bosnia, the use of Tornado aircraft in combat missions, and eventually combat infantry on the ground. Stabilization Force Commander General William Crouch, USA, by 1997, chose a Bundeswehr general to be his chief of staff.[32] Naming a German general to the chain of command, with decisionmaking authority over combat missions, was a critical political step in the developing German security policy, but it still met with a skeptical public.

Next, NATO considered accepting new members. NATO enlargement would mean more German responsibility for its neighbors; however, that responsibility was again territorial defense, not a change in strategy. After the Dayton Accords, President Clinton moved to enlarge NATO and extend security guarantees to former Warsaw Pact countries. Chancellor Kohl was willing to support NATO enlargement in 1997 for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.[33] That decision to help protect those three countries was a major step in Germany's acceptance of new security responsibilities in NATO.

Protecting the inviolability of human dignity took center stage with the NATO decision to intervene militarily in Kosovo to end ethnic cleansing. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer led the debate, and the decision was reached, with other European Allies, to authorize NATO to bomb Kosovo. That humanitarian/military intervention ended Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic's genocide and campaign of ethnic cleansing.

Already in October 1998, NATO authorized Operation *Eagle Eye*, an aerial surveillance in which 350 Bundeswehr soldiers were to participate, and for which the German government sought Bundestag approval. On October 16, the Bundestag permitted the NATO aerial operations with 500 voting "yes," 62 saying "no," and 18 abstaining. The departing government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl had consulted with the incoming government of Schröder and Joschka Fischer before the vote.

On November 19, 1998, the Bundestag added its specific approval of Bundeswehr participation in the Extraction Force by 553 to 35 with 2 abstentions. There was one "no" vote each from the Social Democratic Party and Alliance '90/The Greens.[34]

On February 25, 1999, the Bundestag debated and approved a German contribution to international troops for Kosovo that would be under NATO command. Ultimately, 553 deputies voted in favor of a military implementation of the Rambouillet Accords (calling for a NATO force to maintain order in Kosovo);

41 voted against it (including only 2 Social Democrats and 5 Greens); and 10 abstained. This vote laid the foundation for Bundeswehr participation in Kosovo Force.

From January to March 1999, the conflict intensified, and the Racak incident, where Serbian troops killed some 45 Albanians, was condemned by the UN Security Council as a massacre. On March 18, 1999, the Rambouillet Accords were signed over the objections of the Russians and Serbians. Consequently, to enforce the accords and in an all-out effort to end Serbian ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, NATO conducted a bombing campaign against Serbian forces from March 22 to June 11, 1999. This was the first time since World War II that the Luftwaffe participated in combat missions.

There was no formal declaration of war by NATO; instead, the bombing was characterized as a military action to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. The Serbs withdrew, the Kosovo Force entered Kosovo on June 3, 1999, and the war ended on June 11, 1999.[35]

The effort to define German security interests advanced when the German Foreign Office in April 1999 stated the following objectives for the operations in the Kosovo crisis:

- bringing violent ethnic conflicts under control as a precondition for lasting stability throughout Europe
- preventing migration caused by poverty, war, and civil war
- getting democracy, human rights, and minority rights to take root as a goal of a foreign policy guided by values
- building up market economies with stable growth to reduce the prosperity gap in Europe
- creating economic interests (expandable market outlets and investment sites)
- establishing cooperation and credibility for international organizations in which Germany plays an active role (EU, NATO, Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, and UN).[36]

The consequences for the German security debate were important. After that aggressive use of force in Kosovo, the German slogan *Nie Wieder Auschwitz* (Never Again Auschwitz) took on a new meaning: Germany must use force to prevent genocide.[37] The old motto that "no war could be allowed to emanate again from German soil" was no longer able to protect human dignity, end ethnic cleansing, or prevent war. Acting with NATO in the aggressive use of force, Germany was true to its postwar constitutional mandate to protect the inviolability of human dignity. It also led to the UN Principles of the Responsibility to Protect.

The 21st-century Bundeswehr Goes Global

The Bundeswehr's Afghanistan mandate and German security debate have not led to a new German security strategy. The sad fact is that after Chancellor Schröder said no to deployments in Iraq, and then German politicians conflated Iraq with Afghanistan, which confused the threat assessment, the public was left with the view that Afghanistan was more of a civilian development project than a war. Now the government is looking for a way to turn over governance responsibility to the Afghans and withdraw its soldiers rather than debating complex operations and changing the rules of engagement to allow more aggressive combat operations. German politicians who send

soldiers to war and then limit them to civilian operations do the soldiers no favor.

When the Bundeswehr's Colonel Georg Klein called in a NATO airstrike in September 2009 against a group of Taliban who had hijacked two fuel trucks in Kunduz, which were to be used against the German troops, he popped the illusionary bubble that Germany was not at war. The Kunduz attack has changed the debate; Germans in Afghanistan are at war and war is rejected by a significant majority of Germans at home. After the Kunduz attack, which took place in the midst of the September 2009 German election campaign, Chancellor Angela Merkel had to intervene in the parliamentary debate with a statement to the Bundestag. That statement kept the Afghanistan debate out of the election campaign at a time when some 60 percent of Germans wanted an immediate withdrawal. *The Financial Times* reported on February 23, 2010, that 56 percent of those polled believed the NATO mission would fail, and nearly 70 percent called for withdrawal.[38]

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The new mandate's rules of engagement only allow the Bundeswehr to be stationed in the ISAF regions of Kabul and the north (provinces of Faryab, Sar-e Pol, Jowzjan, Balkh, Samangan, Kunduz, Takhar, and Badakshan).[39] Recognizing that the most intense fighting is in the south, the mandate does allow the Bundeswehr to deploy in other regions for a limited time for missions that ISAF itself cannot fulfill. It also allows the Luftwaffe to fly Tornado aircraft in surveillance missions in all ISAF areas. The underlying reasoning that was acceptable to the Bundestag was that the new strategy is designed to prepare for withdrawal of German troops.

German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle explained the goal of withdrawal by 2014 as President Hamid Karzai had proposed. Germany's mission is to enable a responsible handover to the Afghan government, which is critical to allowing the withdrawal of German soldiers. Germany's mission in Afghanistan is preventing an attack on Western values from terrorists in Afghanistan, demonstrating solidarity with the international community, and participating in the UN-mandated mission there as carried out by NATO.[40]

The German military mission as part of ISAF is also clear: ensuring security of Bundeswehr forces, preventing Afghanistan from becoming a safe-haven for terrorists, and fulfilling constitutional obligations to fellow human beings. The conclusion to the debate will be whether German reliance on civilian operations and American reliance on military operations can lead to a joint strategy and integrated operations.

Even without an articulated national strategy, on February 26, 2010, the Bundestag approved a new mandate for continuing the deployment of German soldiers to Afghanistan as part of ISAF. Lawmakers voted 429 to 111 with 46 abstentions to increase the number of soldiers allowed to serve from 4,500 to 5,350.[41] The numerical increase, however, came with politically necessary operational conditions. To secure sufficient votes, German leaders had to emphasize the civilian reconstruction efforts and minimize aspects of the mission authorizing combat operations.

Martin Stollberg

Securing German presence near Katachel village

Public support in early 2010 for sending more soldiers to the Hindu Kush in Afghanistan is weak: only 25 percent favor the decision, while 69 percent oppose it.[42] The collapse of the support of the Dutch government in the wake of disagreement about Afghanistan could in turn cause a political ripple effect and reduce or eliminate support for the mission in other European countries. A consensus between German elite and public opinion does not exist. Germany, above all, must convince its public that the mission in Afghanistan serves the vital collective security interests of the country and its European partners. The premature end of German involvement would spell disaster for NATO.

The Bundeswehr's missions—military, police and leadership training, stabilization measures, logistics, and civil-military cooperation—are certainly supportive of the ISAF mission. However, two parallel tracks are not amenable to joint operations and poorly support each other. German armed forces need to be fully integrated in military operations against the Taliban and al Qaeda as well as in complex reconstruction, stabilization, and government capacity-building activities.

The current Afghanistan mandate certainly highlights the differences between the U.S. and German approaches to the use of force, planning, mustering personnel, providing adequate equipment, and training for the implementation of complex operations. Germany has been criticized for using police training methods suited to conditions in European cities rather than needs in Afghanistan.[43] ISAF has stationed U.S. Army Special Forces in Kunduz, but they do not train jointly with the Bundeswehr. U.S. forces conduct practical training for the Afghan army in real combat situations, which falls outside the German mandate.[44] This reluctance to use military force diminishes the continental European contributions to common strategy and joint operations and

reduces their participatory strategic decision-making role.

The Future of Complex Operations

Germany's embrace of pacifism since World War II was, to paraphrase Secretary Robert Gates from his remarks at the National Defense University, a blessing in the 20th century that prevented the resurgence of Prussian militarism.[45] However, since the unification of Germany, historical circumstances have changed, and Germany is adapting. Germany's singularly focused approach to complex operations and aversion to the use of force must be adjusted to overcome resistance from its citizens and its neighbors based on its history, politics, and society, to meet current security demands.

Germany's singularly focused approach to complex operations and aversion to the use of force must be adjusted to overcome resistance from its citizens and its neighbors

Although Germany accepts its responsibility to confront threats beyond its own borders, it has no comprehensive national security strategy. The Defense Ministry did publish a white paper on security policy in 2006 that described the role of the Bundeswehr in protecting Germany's democracy from external threats. In 2008, as the European security debate was picking up, the German Christian Democratic Union, Christian Social Union, and the strategy paper defined Germany's national interests in terms of five issue areas: the fight against terrorism, nuclear proliferation, energy and pipeline security, climate change, and the prevention of conflicts.[46]

In this, the document does not stray far from the British and French versions. On the other side of the political spectrum, the Social Democratic Party has proposed a European army but has also voted consistently over 15 years to deploy the Bundeswehr in NATO operations.

This analysis shows, first, that German security decisionmaking is fragmented among the chancellor's office, defense ministry, and Bundestag and is developed without a vaunted German *Gesamptkonzept*, or comprehensive concept. This case-by-case policy process coupled with a deep-seated aversion to the use of military force is a hindrance to the creation of a comprehensive security strategy. Nevertheless, German soldiers have served in UN, NATO, and Western European Union (WEU) missions globally.[47] The Germans kept full membership in NATO[48] and have deployed the Bundeswehr in out-of-area missions to Cambodia, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.[49] In other words, Germany has a strategic concept if not a national security strategy.

Second, Germany's aversion to military force and belief that military force alone cannot solve security issues in the 21st century have broad public support in Europe, but that does not mean Europe is demilitarizing. Debates such as those over Afghanistan need to address the political will to use military force as a last resort to protect vital interests, as was done in Kosovo.

Third, while Germany does not have a comprehensive national security strategy, it has, after 20 years, defined its first principles. Politically and through the High Court, Berlin has affirmed its willingness to act militarily in solidarity within its alliances, NATO, WEU, and UN. It will remain mindful of Russian interests in light of agreements on unification and according to national interests. The Bundeswehr will retain its territorial defense mission, while responding

to its alliance obligations. Its aversion to the use of force supports its priority to provide training, civilian reconstruction, and stabilization operations. Germany will use force to protect victims of genocide and to prevent crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing. It will not support the use of force in preemptive attacks, such as the invasion of Iraq.

Fourth, the lack of a two-track approach is the root of the clash between American and European policies. Emphasis alone on either the military or civilian operations will fail. When NATO leaves, Afghans must be able to govern themselves. That is the challenge, and neither development aid nor security is sustainable without good governance. NATO is deeply engaged in Afghanistan with military counterinsurgency operations, which are essential to provide security from the Taliban threat and to defeat al Qaeda. The American emphasis on the use of military force is not matched by comparable civilian operations. On the other hand, the Europeans emphasize civilian action, and the German mandate for the Bundeswehr in Afghanistan calls for civilian capacity-building programs to allow ISAF to turn over its responsibilities to the Afghans. Success in Afghanistan demands a complex operations approach.

Fifth, we must use a comprehensive approach toward complex or civil-military operations that demonstrates that NATO can succeed. Such operations will likely play an increasingly important role in NATO strategy that combines civilian and military operations to fight the wars of the 21st century. In Afghanistan, as noted in Field Manual (FM) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency*, the primary objective of counterinsurgency is to foster effective governance by legitimate government. NATO policy should aim to develop that local legitimacy though a combination of civilian and military operations—that is, complex operations. When the NATO mission is finished, the use of force will be transferred from NATO to the Afghan government. Unless it has the consent of the governed, Afghanistan is likely to become a failed state.

Clearly an approach different from centralized governance in the region is sorely needed. The Afghanistan-Pakistan region is one primarily of ethnic groups that want to govern themselves (as warlords, tribal leaders, and princes) and then reject the exclusive control of the central government in Kabul. Without legitimacy, the Kabul government will fall back on coercion against regional powers and maybe also with cooperation of the Taliban, using its own military force once NATO has departed.

a decision by the Afghans to convene a Grand Council to decide to share power between Kabul and regional leaders would be a powerful tool for NATO

Legitimacy and success in Afghanistan will likely be based on shared power among local leaders that could form the basis for sustainable governance in Afghan society. Good governance might be possible if the Karzai government could share power with local leaders. A decision by the Afghans to convene a Loya Jirga (Grand Council) to decide to share power between Kabul and regional leaders would be a powerful tool for NATO. Such a grand council could examine the role of the central government, decide on changes that would devolve power to local leaders, and establish a balanced power-sharing relationship with the presidency in Kabul. Unfortunately, the current constitution does not command genuinely deep popular

support and cannot contribute to national stability—nor can it allow NATO to transfer power to Afghans to ensure security.

Sixth, counterinsurgency doctrine in FM 3–24 addresses unity of effort in integrating civilian and military activities at the operational level. This integration for operations in the field also provides a template for integrating at the policy level. Over past decades, civilian agencies of the U.S. Government have lost the capacity to deliver civilian operations. Although recent efforts such as the creation of a State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization began the process of internal capacity-building, those efforts will take years. In the meantime, European and especially German civilian capabilities could be integrated into U.S. kinetic and nonkinetic operations, as called for in the field manual.

As NATO forges a common transatlantic policy on Afghanistan and complex operations, the United States will continue to look to Europe and to Germany. They are the partners we have come to expect to help secure peace in Afghanistan. Berlin could lead the policy debate to integrate NATO complex reconstruction and stabilization projects, while Washington takes the lead in shaping the consensus on training and operating joint combat operations against the Taliban and al Qaeda. Yet both also need to engage fully in combat and noncombat roles in all their complexities.

Overcoming the public's residual aversion of the use of force is difficult but necessary if Germany is to accept full NATO engagement. The public understands the importance of collective actions and the collective security purpose of the Alliance.

The Bundestag, noting the principle of solidarity with NATO strategy of collective defense and German interest in stability and reconstruction in Afghanistan, would likely continue to support the current deployment and might also approve rules of engagement required for joint military operations. NATO's goal, after all, is to turn over these missions to the Afghans, and that goal needs successful civil-military operations. From my own experience in the Third Infantry Division, I believe that unless operations are jointly planned, trained for, and executed, they remain separate and thereby weakened and undermined in effectiveness.

Finally, German political leadership needs to summon the will to confront its public with the reality of the need to use force to defend German interests, while continuing to provide development assistance. Likewise, the U.S. Government needs to confront its public with the need to fund civilian agencies to build American capacity for civilian projects. Reforging common two-track but unified combat and complex operations policies for joint missions can lead to a security strategy sustained by both publics. PRISM

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Stabilization Operations Beyond Government

Joint Venture Public-Private Partnerships in Iraq and Afghanistan

BY MATTHEW W. PARIN

Against the backdrop of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and a changing strategic environment in the broader Middle East, political leaders now are confronting the difficult question of how to achieve long-term stability. The toppling of the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan and removal of Saddam Hussein from Iraq displayed the capability of America's military to marshal overwhelming conventional force against its enemies. However, this overwhelming capability soon was eclipsed when this same force struggled to secure durable peace either in Iraq or Afghanistan.

No longer is the debate focused on how to "win the war"; rather, it has shifted to "winning the peace." Indeed, global power is measured not by the number of bombs a nation can drop, but by the number of opportunities it can provide.[1] According to John Nagl, "It is time for America to take the long term view. . . . America's stake in a stable, peaceful, secure Middle East will [not] vanish when the last American combat brigade departs."[2] General David Petraeus puts it more bluntly: "To prevail, [we need] long-term development and stabilization."[3]

Unfortunately, the U.S. Government has not always taken a synchronized, whole-of-government approach to stabilization operations. As I witnessed firsthand during my recent civilian

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tour with Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF–I), the combination of 1,000 Embassy staff, 500 Provincial Reconstruction Team members, and more than 130,000 Servicemembers did not result in a synchronized long-term approach to Iraq's transition from a conflict to a postconflict state. Although the National Security Council (NSC) did establish the Joint Interagency Task Force–Iraq (JIATF–I) in April 2008 to bring together full-time representatives from MNF–I, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Departments of State, Energy, and Homeland Security into "smart power"[4] planning teams,[5] this organization only focused efforts against two threats to Iraq's future stability: Iran and al Qaeda in Iraq. With this focus, there existed no central organization to combat what many see as the true long-term threat to Iraq: a lack of economic development and integration into the global economy.[6]

only by elevating economic development to the level of political development will stabilization operations have a truly lasting impact

In many ways, pursuing development concurrent with—if not prior to—the creation of political institutions aligned with America's interests is the ultimate example of global risk management.[7] Moreover, the current era of information age warfare demands attention to the entire spectrum of operational lines, as success in one line of operation reinforces success in others.[8] For too long, the U.S. Government has pursued national-level governance in conflict states while implicitly neglecting the importance of development for host country nationals.[9] To remedy this situation, the transition of a conflict state to a durable postconflict state status demands broad-based development as a precursor to thorough integration of conflict states into the global economy. Hence, the creation of a civil-military stabilization operation initiative will bring together U.S. Government, private sector business, and possibly international organization (for example, the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, United Nations Development Program) representatives under a JIATF framework to pursue a two-stage strategy of economic development and global integration.

In the first stage, the organization will foster diversified economic growth through joint venture[10] public-private partnerships[11] to satisfy the near- to mid-term economic needs of host state entrepreneurs—including but not limited to capital finance and global market access. In the second stage, the JIATF organization will work with host nation entrepreneurs, universities, and institutions to foster the bottom-up adoption of U.S. business models, procedures, and standards. This will give the U.S. Government an early start in developing the relationships critical to the long-term development of modern state institutions.

With time, Washington can use this approach to grow monetary and political capital and as a method to position itself geostrategically. Many have noted that achieving strategic objects in Iraq and Afghanistan requires leadership and the synchronization of effort to provide enduring political and economic opportunities to stem the cycle of violence. However, only by elevating economic development to the level of political development will stabilization operations have a truly lasting impact.

Globalization and Modernization

The goal of stabilization operations along the economic line of operation is to modernize

Combat Correspondent (Heidi Agostini)

Afghan woman employed by nonprofit organization weaves rug in her home

and moderate host nation policies in line with international standards. Implicit in this thinking is the transformational power of international commerce. When states open to the world, human rights and political reform are usually far from the goals political leaders have in mind. Nevertheless, deepening ties with global businesses force states to change laws and practices—to adopt what Thomas P.M. Barnett calls the transparent modern "rule sets" of the world's developed and well-integrated "core."[12] A legal and bureaucratic system forced to change in one area becomes more receptive to change in other areas as well. Moreover, working to bring host nation economies more fully into the web of globalization can push the status quo to the tipping point where national leaders have little choice but to embrace change and try to make the most of it.[13] Despite its intuitive appeal, however, scholars are divided on the causal links among commerce, modernization, and moderation.

Modernization theory in its most basic form argues that countries develop by moving from an agricultural economy to an industrialized one and then to the development of a large service sector. As a consequence of these structural changes, a greater share of the population moves to urban areas, education levels increase, incomes and standards of living rise, and traditional beliefs and practices are replaced by more "modern" ones based on scientific rationality. Rationality and the ability to incorporate developments into state decisionmaking are important because politicians can and will adjust policies when faced with changes in the underlying makeup of a policy. If, for example, individual politicians have static beliefs, then change is only possible through regime change. But as we have seen in a great many cases throughout the centuries, politicians can adjust policies when faced with a changing tactical and strategic environment.

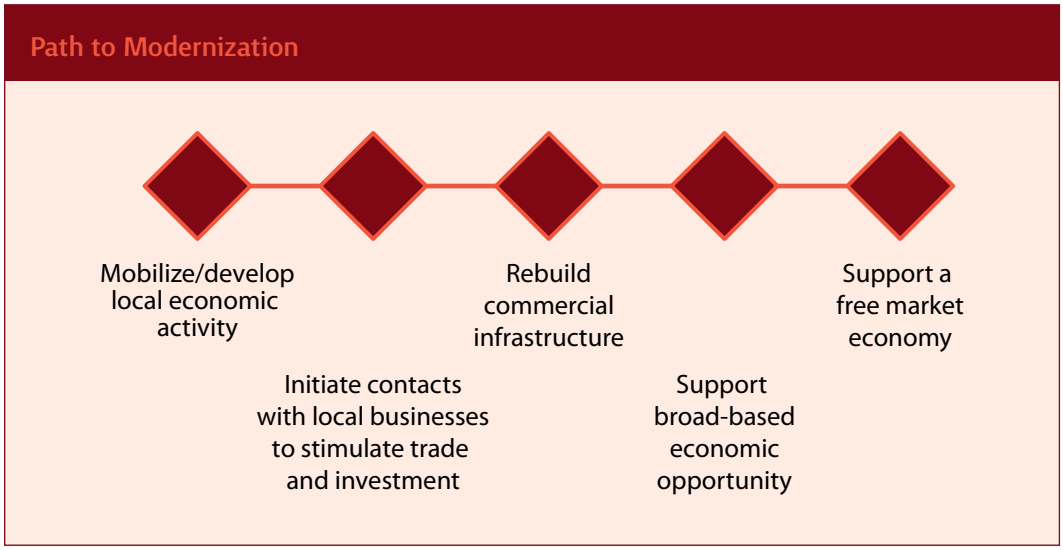
Assumptions to the contrary are not only shallow, but also dangerous.

If rational is assumed to be moderate, then the answer of how to moderate state policies should be strikingly simple. Moderation of state policies is achieved when the underlying variables of a government's policy change, thus necessitating a rational adjustment. If, for example, a state severs economic ties with its top trade and export partner due to that state's purchase of a defensive weapons system—no matter how this political change is viewed by external actors—the politician is acting irrationally. Conversely, if a state liberalizes trade policy due to groundswell support for increased trade with Western nations, then the state is acting rationally. Perception of rationality will complicate the "rational versus irrational" dynamic; however, this does not discount the notion that rational states will pursue policies based upon a calculation of a state's interests. Thus, the United States should seek to drive change from below through a process of co-option rather than coercion.

although the establishment of space to grow globalization is important, policymakers must be sensitive to the character of development projects, especially in conflict zones

Trade and investment are the bricks and mortar for construction of modern, moderate states. Although development scholars understand the importance of these qualities, they disagree over what approach to take to achieve a desired endstate. Some assess that institutional development drives greater global economic integration (for example, governance first), while others assess that global economic integration drives institutional development (globalization first). From the governance-first perspective, Indra de Soysa and Jo Jakobsen found that absent other factors, foreign direct investment follows market conditions, and therefore flows more to states with modern democratic institutions and less to states with stagnant authoritarian systems.[14] In particular, they found that financiers and global businesses are more likely to sign deals in countries with basic levels of development rather than to speculate in emerging markets due to exposure to political risk.[15] It is from this perspective that the majority of U.S. development projects place the greatest emphasis on governance over other lines of operation. Turning to the globalization-first perspective, Jonas Johansson found through a statistical analysis comparing the *Freedom in the World*[16] index with various measures of globalization that an increasing degree of socioeconomic development paralleled a more globalized state. And with a more globalized state, conditions tend to better support the development of democratic institutions and values.[17] Thus, Johansson's findings demonstrate that the extent to which a country is intertwined in the global economy contributes to the overall understanding of the predictors of democracy and modernization.

Although the establishment of space to grow globalization is important, policymakers must be sensitive to the character of development projects, especially in conflict zones. Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi found that the level of economic development was sometimes not a good predictor of modernization. They argue that although prospects for modernization increase in wealthier countries, some authoritarian regimes can remain stable at high levels of economic development (such as China). This is somewhat the case in Iraq and



Afghanistan, where capitalist classes are not inherently proponents or even supporters of modernization. Generally speaking, capitalists in highly corrupt states tend to support the ruling regime when their material interests benefit from the regime's policies or when they fear that a new regime's policies, such as a top-down anticorruption campaign, would harm their interests. But when the capitalists believe that the ruling regime can no longer defend their interests or when they perceive that the strength of the prevailing political winds has reached a critical velocity, their support for the status quo can change to opposition, thus helping trigger a tipping point.

Ultimately, however, the debate over modernization will continue. Despite differing opinions among development scholars as to the theoretical drivers, modernization theory continues to guide the thinking of scholars and policymakers alike.[18] As Vali Nasr asserts, "Fueling the activities of the Middle East's rising middle class, and working to bring the economies of the region more fully into the web of globalization, can push the status quo to the tipping point where national leaders have no choice but to embrace change and make the most of it."[19] Indeed, economic development strategies, when pursued in an ordered, synchronized fashion, can contribute positively to the modernization, moderation, and stabilization of conflict societies.

Modernization: How to Get There

How best can the United States achieve modernization, especially in "difficult" states? Recent foreign policy indicates the perception that military force is the only way the international community can process such states into the broader global community. Supporters of this policy believe the security situation in these countries will not improve on its own because exploiting these situations is what helps keep the Muammar Qadhafis and the Kim Jong-ils in power. In short, where the international community permits security gaps to linger, only bad actors will fill the vacuum, resulting in political intrigue, economic corruption, endemic violence, and a climate that incubates future threats. This is why Thomas Barnett believes that "taking down all the Saddams is a good thing, because each regime

change fixes a 'broken window' and—by doing so—sends a signal to prospective bad actors regarding rule sets the international community is serious about enforcing."[20]

Alternatively, some are beginning to believe that it is time to think less about civilizations clashing and to recover the great insights—which lie close to the foundations of classical liberalism and modern political thought—about the transformative power of markets and commerce. Commerce, as David Hume and the other great minds of the Enlightenment often point out, softens manners and makes a politics based on reason and deliberation, rather than fighting and romanticism, far more imaginable.[21] However, the United States must change the character of its development approach in order to achieve the lasting positive impact it seeks. The United States has been supporting economic reform and business initiatives with too much focus on working with government planners and the top-level business elite.[22] Change will not come from this upper crust; it has too much invested in the status quo and depends too heavily on the state. It is business with a small "b" that should hold the attention of the United States and the global community. If genuine capitalism in the broad sense experienced by the West is to develop and thrive—where individuals working through markets account for growth and prosperity—it will come from grass-roots entrepreneurs and not from state-led initiatives or the state-sponsored economic elite associated with them who have traditionally ruled "difficult" state economies.

attraction via soft power often has a diffusive effect of creating general influence, rather than producing an easily observable specific action

The transformative thesis of commerce is encapsulated in the scholarship on hard power, soft power, and smart power by Joseph Nye. According to Nye, soft power is the ability to co-opt or attract an actor to want the same outcomes as another actor. In a sense, it is the ability to see through the adoption of *the other's* models, *the other's* procedures, and *the other's* standards. Soft power depends more than hard power[23] upon the existence of willing interpreters and receivers. Moreover, attraction via soft power often has a diffusive effect of creating general influence, rather than producing an easily observable specific action, as is often the object of hard power.

The conditions for projecting soft power have transformed dramatically in recent years. The information revolution and globalization are transforming and shrinking the world. At the beginning of the 21st century, those two forces have enhanced American power. Yet no matter how logical or necessary the new rule sets appear to American actors, if the United States cannot sell them to a large chunk of the planet, it loses credibility as a competent superpower, and invariably those rules will be dismissed by other cultures as reflecting an American bias.[24] According to U.S. Foreign Service Officer Kurt Amend, the creation of a strategic narrative that "explains the purpose of all government plans and programs" is the starting point for winning local support to plans and operations.[25] This narrative should contain long-term objectives, underlying assumptions, and specific measures needed to achieve those objectives. Furthermore, it should be developed in close coordination with the U.S. military, development and intelligence agencies, nongovernmental organizations, host governments,

and international partners. In Amend's words, "Any political strategy lacking the contributions and support of key stakeholders is doomed to failure."

A strategic narrative for the United States that internalizes the transformative nature of commerce will comprise support from a wide spectrum of agencies. Two U.S. Government organizations currently are tasked with promoting integration of U.S. businesses with foreign partners and with fostering the integration of host nations into the global economy: the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). Established in 1934 by an Executive order and made an independent agency in the executive branch by Congress in 1945, Ex-Im Bank is the official export credit agency of the Federal Government. Ex-Im Bank seeks to create and sustain American jobs by financing and insuring foreign purchases of U.S. goods for customers unable or unwilling to accept certain levels of political and commercial risk. Similarly, OPIC, founded in 1971, is an agency that helps U.S. businesses invest overseas and promote economic development in new and emerging markets. The agency provides political insurance against the risks of inconvertibility, political violence, or expropriation. OPIC also provides financing through direct loans and loan guarantees.

Ex-Im Bank and OPIC are at the heart of the U.S. Government's broader development program; strikingly, however, they have been absent from development-based stabilization operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.[26] Looking at the budget of these organizations from 2003 to the present, we can see why they have not stepped into the development vacuum left by American armed forces. In 2003, Ex-Im Bank operated on a budget of $325 million. Currently, its budget is nearly zero—hence, Ex-Im Bank now relies on user fees to continue its operation. This means that it increasingly will make mission decisions based on free market cost-benefit analyses rather than on political priority. Although it has not suffered as severely as Ex-Im Bank, OPIC's operation budget has been cut by nearly 50 percent from 2003 levels.[27] If these agencies continue to operate at or below current budget, it will remain difficult for international traders and investors to flow capital into war zones, failed states, and extremist havens, the very places such capital is often needed most.

Ultimately, it appears that much of the literature on foreign direct investment emphasizes business-oriented decision frameworks as to whether to enter a given market. Moreover, these market analyses often toss conflict zones into the dustbin as no-go zones—which ultimately levels greater responsibility on national governments to push initiatives without the assistance of the private sector. Although logical from the private sector cost-benefit calculation, it may prove more useful for the U.S. Government to synchronize business entities into the broader government efforts to support the radical changes needed in conflict states. When compared to the vast outlay of taxpayer cash required to reform a country through force, approaching the issue in terms of economics seems rather novel.

Partnering for Success

If the U.S. Government is indeed internalizing the positive impact and transformative nature of private sector growth for a host nation transition from conflict to postconflict status, the U.S. Government must find a way to better incorporate the talent and insights of the private sector into all levels of planning. Many

A Unique Private Sector Methodology

Eurasia Group brings together political scientists with a broad range of country expertise, which enables them to provide comparative country analysis. PricewaterhouseCoopers brings together enterprise risk management specialists and business advisors with deep sector experience to recommend practical approaches for mitigating identified risks, enhancing opportunity, and evaluating alternative courses of action.

Eurasia Group's Regulatory Riskwatch service is one example of the ways in which the company provides a comparative and forward-looking platform for thinking about risk. Regulatory Riskwatch estimates three key dimensions of regulatory change: impact, probability of the regulatory change, and time horizon. By considering these elements, business leaders can adjust strategy to deflect adverse effects on operations or take advantage of opportunities.

companies already are charting the murky waters of globalization. Yet many of these same corporate leaders lack a framework for understanding how local political and market dynamics affect foreign ventures, according to Ian Bremmer.[28] Moreover, Bremmer believes chief executive officers (CEOs) may be unaware of social, regulatory, and energy issues around the next curve in the road. To mitigate these vulnerabilities, CEOs and business strategists routinely consult economic and political risk analysts from firms such as Eurasia Group and PricewaterhouseCoopers in order to make the most informed global investment decisions possible for emerging or high-risk markets.

To its credit, the U.S. Government has been engaged in economic and political risk analysis—better known as diplomatic cabling—for decades, and every American Embassy around the world utilizes this to relay host country developments back to Washington. Being aware of the political and economic dynamics of a host country enables the U.S. Government to anticipate micro- and macro-level shifts that could affect its interests. Hence, it should be useful to synchronize private sector companies with the political discussions of the United States in order to create more thorough interaction among actors engaged in the economic line of operation and to allow private sector company management to make well-informed decisions about the future of their ventures. Until the connections are made, both public and private sector entities are merely speculating as to what the other entity wants.

This proposal runs counter to conventional development planning. However, globalization and the new era of information-based warfare demand breaking down organizational stovepipes to capitalize on the talent and insights from all possible partners. Moreover, confidence in an economic approach will not occur until the U.S. military, civilian corps, and private sector expertise partner in a joint environment to tackle the most difficult economic development questions facing the Nation.

With a clear organizational approach to economic development and integration for conflict states, joint venture public-private partnerships hold the best possibility to achieve the goals of

the overriding strategy. Joint ventures, to their credit, set the conditions necessary for adoption of international standards and values without the coercive nature often associated with foreign ventures. Moreover, joint ventures allow host nation entrepreneurs to reinvest profits into their own independent ventures after learning how to design and implement a successful business, branding, and marketing plan. Although criticism may be leveled at such ventures for their high risk and low return on investment, these criticisms are of less importance when these ventures are pursued through a public-private partnership. Distinct from common private ventures, public-private partnerships have an added benefit insomuch as they are supported by the U.S. Government (and possibly other governments as well). This government support, when effectively utilized, can shelter business from the risk associated with investing in emerging markets, which can tip the scales of cost-benefit analyses in favor of the joint venture.

Recommendations

Understanding that the United States and its international partners must take steps to better integrate host nation entrepreneurs into the global economy, the United States should do what it does best: allocate money, enlist the help of the private sector when possible, and inspire entrepreneurs and investors to fill a new market as quickly as possible. Furthermore, it should seek to extend the durability of our soft power influence by institutionalizing the incentives for future generations of stakeholders to support continuation of globalized values.

Use a Joint Structure to Bring Global Connection. Experts and practitioners often lament that in Iraq and Afghanistan, no single individual or institution has the power of resources and mandate to direct civilian efforts in reconstruction, economic development, and political stabilization—even though the military and State Department fully acknowledge that their efforts will not be successful unless those tasks are met. All too often, the structures in these countries have been impromptu arrangements with different Federal agencies using unclear mechanisms for accountability—adding possibly years of deterioration in both wars.

joint venture public-private partnerships hold the best possibility to achieve the goals of the overriding strategy

To process Iraq and Afghanistan to post-conflict status as well as to secure long-term influence with host governments, I propose the creation of a two-stage campaign that emphasizes the singular goal of bottom-up change through the adoption of international standards and practices in line with the broader strategic narrative outlined by key stakeholders. For the first stage of the initiative, I propose an organization not radically different from that already in place in Iraq under the JIATF–I. According to one of my USAID colleagues from Iraq, "The advantage of [the JIATF framework] is, in theory, it gets at the coordination problem, which is one of the fundamental issues."[29] Similar to JIATF–I, the organization should fall under the NSC and should incorporate civilian and military representatives; however, the organization also must place special emphasis on the integration of highly skilled private sector employees to support the building of public-private partnerships. Bringing private sector employees into a public sector–centric organization performs two basic functions. First, private sector employees are able to bring their considerable knowledge of global investment,

trade, and financial markets to bear in a way that can make a true impact on the future of a host country and its citizens. And second, integration of private sector employees strengthens America's soft power message.

The first stage of the process would involve buying into companies already in operation, or companies that were in operation and have the basics required for success in a postconflict situation. Developing the knowledge of host country companies and entrepreneurs likely would necessitate a systematic analysis, down to the local level, of a host of issues, including but not limited to:

the U.S. Government should strive to develop the next generation of host nation entrepreneurs

- What are the local business unions, and on what basis are they organized?
- Which groups within a population fall inside business unions, and which do not?
- What economic activities are likely to shift support of population segments to the government's side?
- How can economic dead zones be made active?
- Within the various tiers of leadership, who are the "fence-sitters," and how can they be won over?
- Who are the spoilers, and what incentives or disincentives can marginalize them?

Answering these and other essential initial questions developed within the JIATF organization would allow for identification of companies and individuals to bring into the initiative.

Once such entities are identified, small teams of experts should meet with them and ask what types of investment, training, and market accesses they need to be successful. Follow-up meetings would establish needs for training in branding and marketing—training that most likely would fall to private sector firms. As a final component of stage one, the U.S. Government would bring companies and entrepreneurs (complete with standardized business plans, branding, and marketing plans) together with Western investors. The U.S. Government would provide special incentives for joint venture public-private partnerships by providing political risk insurance and capital financing at a rate established by an internationally recognized, objective source.

The reader may note that the soft power strategic narrative originally coined by Kurt Amend includes considerable space for host government partners. One might ask, then, why the JIATF organization proposed does not include such a role. Given that a central tenet of the organization is to break free from host country elite entrepreneurs who often benefit from a continuation of the status quo, it is only logical that JIATF does not collocate host government officials within the JIATF organization. This does not mean that the task force does not work in close collaboration and cooperation with the host government; this could not be further from the truth. We should use the host government to gain access to locations and networks little known or unknown to members of the organization. Upon learning of new entrepreneurial networks and entrepreneurs with the potential for incorporation into the joint venture public-private partnership initiative, we could seize the opportunity to conduct outreach activities.

U.S. Army (Samantha R. Ciaramitaro)

Iraqi business owners wait in line to complete paperwork for micro grants

In the second stage of the initiative, the U.S. Government should strive to develop the next generation of host nation entrepreneurs. To do this, I propose the incorporation of Western university educators and administrators into the JIATF organization to build up the host nation's human capital, which in the case of Iraq and Afghanistan has been left in a decimated state after years of authoritarianism, isolation, and war. Using the joint venture public-private partnership as a step-off point, the United States could use the newly acquired expertise to create in-country training and education in entrepreneurship, business administration, and management. This training and education would most likely begin as a follow-on program for individuals involved in the joint venture public-private partnership initiative; however, successful piloting of the program could lead to its wider adoption. And as an added benefit for top students, programs akin to the Fulbright scholarship can be designed to bring students to U.S. schools and companies to learn and gain hands-on experience. Although discussion of the role of education and training is limited by the scope of this article, we cannot discount the central nature of these follow-on initiatives in the long-term success of the broader economic initiative.

Leverage U.S. Development Agency Mandates to Address Private Sector Business Concern. Beyond the structure of an organization, most important for the overall success of joint venture public-private partnerships are the financing mechanisms and methods by which the U.S. Government would shelter private business from political risk. Although rhetoric from global political leaders is important in setting the context for increased investment and trade with conflict states, a tipping point would not be reached until the businesses see decreased risk associated with such transactions.

As discussed earlier, two U.S. organizations exist to support this process. However, throughout the past decade, the operations budgets of these organizations have been cut to the point that they support ventures based on free market capitalism rather than political priorities. Although it is perfectly rational for American political risk firms to employ a free market approach, this approach implicitly scuttles any and all possible joint ventures in conflict zones. Furthermore, this approach will likely not satisfy the demands of a conflict state seeking to achieve trade and investment levels needed to cross the theoretical tipping point.

whether with an urbanized population such as Iraq, or a rural population such as Afghanistan, the transformative nature of commerce knows no bounds

To confront the lack of an organization that can address the insurance and financing needs of businesses in conflict zones, the U.S. Government has two options. As a first option, it could revise the operating budgets of the Ex-Im Bank and OPIC to incorporate higher risk ventures into their scope of activities, especially those in conflict states. This process would allow the organizations to reclaim their founding missions and might create spillover effects for development projects in other areas. Unfortunately, this would negatively impact the free market narrative of these organizations. Also, simply increasing the budgets of agencies would not necessarily guarantee that monies would be directed to joint venture public-private partnership initiatives in conflict zones—as some monies might be reallocated at the agency level. As a second option, the U.S. Government could incorporate Ex-Im Bank and OPIC representatives in the JIATF organizational structure. In this way, the United States would be better able to direct funds to projects it views as important to overall success of key foreign policy ventures. Moreover, monies allocated for these joint ventures would have a more direct link to conflict zones and would have less chance of being absorbed into projects not directly linked to foreign policy priorities.

Conclusion

Going forward, the most important next step is to recognize the utility of joint venture public-private partnerships as well as follow-on civilian training in fostering the integration of conflict societies into the global economy. Only by internalizing this belief can leaders take up the mantle to implement the above recommendations for Iraq, Afghanistan, and other states. Whether with an urbanized population such as Iraq, or a rural population such as Afghanistan, the transformative nature of commerce knows no bounds. And it is from this perspective that the United States should embrace cooperation across governments, agencies, and businesses—and reject the tendency to see success only through the lens of one's department or agency.

To address the issue of bureaucratic budget competition, the U.S. Government should consider establishing a multiagency fund specifically for addressing stabilization and reconstruction planning and operations and providing sufficient consultation and oversight for Congress.[30] Doing so would address a number of the concerns departments and agencies may level against standing up a JIATF for reconstruction in conflict states. Moreover, with the necessary legal mandates, a separate budget account might allow for more efficient and effective

incorporation of private sector business expertise—a primary requirement for the overall success of the model proposed above. Whatever the case might be, until the U.S. Government adopts a usable structure to create economic opportunity in earnest, we will continually struggle to secure durable levers of influence beyond the ephemeral level of security our military can provide. PRISM

Notes

[1] U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, December 2006), E–5.

[2] John A. Nagl and Brian M. Burton, *After the Fire: Shaping the Future U.S. Relationship with Iraq* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, June 2009), 3.

[3] FM 3–24, A–13.

[4] *Smart power* involves the strategic use of diplomacy, persuasion, capacity-building, and the projection of power and influence in ways that are cost-effective and have political and social legitimacy—essentially, it is the engagement of both military force and all forms of diplomacy.

[5] Robert M. Birkenes, "Interagency Cooperation: The JIATF in Iraq," *Foreign Service Journal* (September 2009), 28.

[6] FM 3–24, 2–1.

[7] *Risk management* is the identification, assessment, and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events.

[8] FM 3–24, 5–8.

[9] Political, social, and economic programs are most commonly and appropriately associated with civilian organizations and expertise; however, effective implementation of these programs is more important than who performs the tasks. If adequate civilian capacity is not available, military forces fill the gap.

[10] A *joint venture* is an entity formed between two or more parties to undertake economic activity together. The parties agree to create a new entity by both contributing equity, and they then share in the revenues, expenses, and control of the enterprise.

[11] *Public-private partnership* describes a government service or private business venture that is funded and operated through a partnership of government and one or more private sector companies.

[12] See Vali Nasr, *Forces of Fortune: The Rise of the New Muslim Middle Class and What It Will Mean for Our World* (New York: Free Press, 2009), 25.

[13] Ibid., 26.

[14] Indra de Soysa and Jo Jakobsen, "Rewards of Freedom: Democracy and the Inflow of Foreign Direct Investment, 1984–2001," paper presented at MNE Conference, Washington University, St. Louis, MO, 2005.

[15] *Political risk* is any political change that alters the expected outcome and value of a given economic action by changing the probability of achieving business objectives. Political risk can further be divided into three categories: micro-level, country-level, and macro-level.

[16] The most recent data can be found in Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2010: Global Erosion of Freedom* (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2010).

[17] Jonas Johansson, "Globalization and Democracy: An Overlooked Connection," in *Development and Democracy: What Have We Learned and How?* ed. Ole Elgström and Göran Hydén (London: Routledge, 2002), 23–47.

[18] William J. Burns, remarks at the 2009 Middle East Institute Annual Conference, National Press Club, Washington, DC, November 10, 2009.

[19] Nasr, 26.

[20] Thomas P.M. Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Berkley Books, 2004), 306.

[21] Nasr, 26.

[22] Ibid., 12.

[23] According to Nye, *hard power* is a term describing power obtained from the use of military and/or economic coercion to influence the behavior or interests of other political bodies. As the name would suggest, this form of political power is often aggressive, and is most effective when imposed by one political body upon another of lesser military and/or economic power.

[24] Barnett, 57.

[25] Kurt Amend, "The Diplomat as Counterinsurgent," *Foreign Service Journal* (September 2009), 22.

[26] *Stabilization operations* are the application of military power to influence the political and civil environment, to facilitate diplomacy, and to interrupt specified illegal activities. Their purpose is to deter or thwart aggression; reassure allies, friendly governments, and agencies; encourage a weak or faltering government; stabilize a restless area; maintain or restore order; and enforce agreements and policies.

[27] United States Office of Management and Budget, Fiscal Year 2010 President's Budget—Analytical Perspectives, accessed at <www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Analytical_Perspectives/>.

[28] Samuel A. DiPiazza, Jr., and Ian Bremmer, "Integrating Political Risk into Enterprise Risk Management," PricewaterhouseCoopers and Eurasia Group, 2006.

[29] Birkenes.

[30] Richard G. Lugar, "Stabilization and Reconstruction: A Long Beginning," *PRISM* 1, no. 1 (December 2009), 8.

Colombia
Learning Institutions Enable Integrated Response

BY THOMAS A. MARKS

Current emphasis in irregular warfare highlights whole-of-government response and the imperative for "learning institutions." Only by being the latter can the former engage in the timely, flexible mastery of constantly changing circumstances imperative for successful implementation of the "ends-ways-means" methodology. Few countries have worked harder or made greater steps in this direction than Colombia.

Though Colombian progress toward an acceptable steady-state has been much remarked upon,[1] especially several of the more spectacular Colombian special operations that have in recent years seriously damaged the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC),[2] there is much more that can be learned from Bogota's experience.

Colombia as "New War" Battleground[3]

It seems almost ancient history to recall that little more than a decade ago, many analysts had all but written off Colombia as both a failed state and a lost cause.[4] In the years before the turn of the millennium, an insurgency that had its roots in the aftermath of the bloody civil war—called simply "The Violence" (*La Violencia*), 1948–1958/1960—had grown to the point that massed FARC columns of multiple-battalion strength proved capable of overrunning or mauling army units of reinforced company strength and in seizing distant points, such as the most remote state capital in Colombia, Mitu, which was held for 3 days in mid-1998.

It was therefore a daunting situation that confronted the administration of President Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002), which took office even as such disasters began to take on momentum. Internal dislocation caused by the growing drug trade, U.S. efforts to "punish" Colombia during the Ernesto Samper administration (1994–1998) for inadequate cooperation in counternarcotics

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efforts, and mediocre senior military leadership had all combined to cripple a state response. A misguided Pastrana strategy of negotiations was to be enabled by military pressure, but there was no effective coordination between the two pillars of strategy.

Even as negotiations foundered because of FARC insincerity, one of the most effective and capable irregular warfare militaries in the world today was built. This was accomplished within the space of 4 years in the face of daunting odds and a profound shortage of means. Virtually every aspect of the military as an institution was touched by a sweeping reform movement driven by Colombian officers. In the field, FARC efforts to move from maneuver warfare (using large units capable of fighting the military to a standstill) to "war of position" (liberating and holding the emerging counterstate) were soundly defeated.

so-called new socialism meshed with the more traditional strongman populism of an earlier, military-dominated era

Though FARC sought to project its strength through the usual tripartite division of Marxist-Leninist structure—a party (the Clandestine Communist Party of Colombia), an army (which FARC itself claimed to be, the "Popular Army," or FARC–*Ejército del Pueblo*), and a united front (the Bolivarian Movement for a New Colombia)—it was a "new war" phenomenon independent of external state aid. Instead, it relied upon exploitation of the drug trade (mainly cocaine), kidnapping, extortion, and criminality (cattle rustling and vehicle theft) for generating funds. This allowed it not only to exist but also to grow, regardless of societal shifts that increasingly shrank its social base and encouraged insurgent behavior that appalled most potential supporters, domestic or international. Essentially, the combatants became the movement, but their independent funding profile allowed just enough connection with marginalized population fragments (such as migrant workers in the drug fields) that expansion was all but guaranteed.

Similarly, FARC ideology was illustrative of the new world order. Though communism itself had seemingly "collapsed" with the end of the Cold War, in reality, it was alive and well.[5] Latin American regional context was considerably more favorable to left-wing approaches than one would have expected based on international circumstances. So-called new socialism meshed with the more traditional strongman populism (*caudillismo*) of an earlier, military-dominated era to morph into the neo-Marxism of "Bolivarianism" most prominently in Colombia's neighbors, but especially Venezuela.[6] This favorable context further enabled FARC by providing sanctuaries, secure supply lines, and state support, both overt (for example, at solidarity conferences) and covert (the Venezuelan but also the Ecuadoran effort).

Further assisting the FARC counterstate were traditional nonstate actors with non-Marxist ideologies, but ideologies nevertheless built upon a powerful sense of ideological-nationalist grievance. These groups sought force multiplication in Colombia through a meeting of minds and capabilities. The likes of the Provisional Irish Republican Army of Northern Ireland and *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* of Spain secretly sent numerous teams to work with FARC. In exchange for FARC solidarity, they offered funds, training spaces, and lethal contributions from their own violent repertoires, such as the mechanics of mass casualty bombing.[7]

To this traditional challenge was added a more nontraditional threat, "lawfare," waged by parastates implacably hostile to the Colombian state itself.[8] What Bogota had early on labeled the "human rights cartel" comprised international human rights groups, functioning in alliance with thousands of local cause-oriented groups (often with interlocking leadership directorates and processes), which claimed a certain sovereign immunity by virtue of the nobility of their cause (often termed the "halo effect") to wage a sustained assault on state processes and legitimacy. They used publicity (invariably framed in legal and activist jargon), links to certain important members of Western political establishments, and the law itself in tactical and often noncontextual ways to challenge the right of the state to self-defense.

Indispensable for the successful use of lawfare was *shaping* the battlefield by a determined effort of framing and narrative; that is, the creation of a negative picture and accompanying storyline that cast the Colombian state as "the bad guys," thus altering the very nature of the field of battle.[9] The goal was to fill those virtual spaces of legitimacy that the state had simply never thought about or sought to fill. FARC's struggle, then, was *framed* as quasi-legitimate rebellion by the oppressed and marginalized against an imperfect, brutal state (enabled by the usual suspects in the West). The *narrative* "described" the frame in various ways but always with the goal of portraying the Colombian state as both suspect and murderous, especially its security forces.

In reality, multiple, regular surveys in the period under discussion showed the Colombian security forces (the military and police) to be among the most positively viewed segments in the country, with the military invariably at the very top in popular esteem.[10] Yet with processes and funding that were neither transparent nor accountable, the parastates claimed to have a more accurate view of reality and worked tirelessly to eliminate or cripple the Colombian counterinsurgency, as well as its American assistance. They were supported by elements within the U.S. polity. Though such had also been the case during the Cold War, the "new war" environment saw the process accelerate as it was enabled by the extreme fragmentation of American foreign policy consensus and dwindling agreement on the economic, social, and political fundamentals toward which any society should work. Consequently, there was little empathy in some key circles of policy for the challenges of an emerging state such as Colombia. Ironically, the state was seen as legitimate by its own population, as could be discerned by any metric.

Nevertheless, in the pre-1998 years, FARC grew steadily in strength, filling the vacuum that was Colombian rural space, most particularly in the large area of the *llanos* and *amazonas*, the jungle and true jungle of eastern Colombia, with 60 percent of the national territory but only 4 percent of the population. Long before *ungoverned spaces* and *failed/failing states* became terms driving academic analysis,[11] Latin American realities dictated that almost any insurgent group could for a time find secure base areas in the hinterland. Che Guevara was perhaps only singularly unlucky in attracting both the notoriety and the competent response that led to his being hunted down and killed

critical was Colombian abandonment of U.S. "military operations other than war" doctrine, with its division of conflict into "war" and "other than war"

in southeastern Bolivia in 1967. FARC experienced no such fate until the events of the Pastrana administration forced it to go on the strategic defensive.

Critical to this reversal was Colombian military abandonment of U.S. "military operations other than war" doctrine, with its division of conflict into "war" and "other than war." The revised Colombian approach enabled the emergence of a new holistic approach to conflict.[12] It was built upon a correct assessment of the threat. Previously, FARC had been categorized as a problem of "public order," which necessarily (and legally) involved a law enforcement response. Correctly recognizing that any struggle in which massed guerrilla units seized towns could hardly be equated with a struggle against criminals, the military reframed the battle as "war." More accurately, it was a particular type of war, a Marxist-Leninist insurgency using People's War doctrine to advance on multiple lines of effort with the ultimate objective of seizing power. Recruiting from a limited social base was accompanied by criminal fundraising, but the political project was the focus of all FARC strategic plans and efforts.[13]

This assessment stood in stark contrast to the U.S. strategic view during the Clinton administration (1992–2000), which it sought to impose upon the Colombians. In Clausewitzian terms, the United States saw the drug trade as the "center of gravity." Counternarcotics, in fact, was the sole rationale for most assistance provided under "Plan Colombia" (an amount ultimately in excess of $1 billion). The Colombian counterassessment argued that this confused an *operational* center of gravity with the *strategic* center of gravity—legitimacy, or the support of the people. Indeed, if funding was one operational center of gravity, argued the Colombians, a second was "FARC structures," the counterstate (that is, the clandestine infrastructure of Vietnam-era terminology) because by 1998 FARC's combatants essentially were the insurgency. The mass base of FARC doctrine and ideology did not exist.[14] The key to counterinsurgency, then, was security for the population.

It should not be surprising that this approach, articulated formally by the Colombians, is essentially that of U.S. irregular warfare best known through Field Manual 3–24, *Counterinsurgency*.[15] Any irregular conflict that has progressed to the point Colombia had by mid-1998 (or Afghanistan today[16]) necessitates commitment of military power adequate to establishing security for the population, even as state reform addresses the roots of conflict.[17] Colombian forces, of course, were on home ground, so they faced no language or cultural issues or lack of national will to prosecute the fight. There was no hostile diaspora to contribute to the insurgent cause. Instead, the central obstacle to success was strategic confusion.

This was ended by Álvaro Uribe, a third party candidate for the presidency in 2002, who tapped public frustration with Pastrana's years of unsuccessful negotiations with FARC to sweep into power with a first-round electoral victory. When he took office in mid-year, Uribe quickly made good on his promise to proceed forcefully to the extent of moving beyond whole-of-government[18] to what can only be labeled "whole-of-society" warfighting.

Conceptualizing Whole-of-Society Response

Uribe's administration began even as the profound shock of 9/11 had led to a dramatic evolution away from the U.S. approach during the Clinton years. In effect, under President George W. Bush, the barrier that

had separated counternarcotics from counterinsurgency was dropped. Among the most significant new initiatives was the deployment of 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) personnel to embattled Arauca Department to train a new "infrastructure protection brigade." Indeed, an indicator of just how seriously the Bush administration took the problems of Colombia was its issuing of National Security Presidential Directive 18, "Supporting Democracy in Colombia," which called for the State Department to write and implement a U.S. political-military plan in direct support of a Colombian national security strategy.

With U.S. encouragement, Uribe, early in his administration, created a true counterinsurgency plan. Unlike Plan Colombia of the Pastrana/Clinton years (all but written by the United States), which had been a catalogue of national ills with proposed solutions beyond Bogota's ability to operationalize or fund, the new *Democratic Security and Defence Policy* (officially released in June 2003) was intended as a course of action. As such, it was built upon three basic tenets:

- A lack of personal security is at the root of Colombia's social, economic, and political ills.
- This lack of personal security stems from the absence of the state in large swaths of the national territory.
- Therefore, all elements of national power need to be directed toward ending this lack of national integration.

Addressing this assessment was the policy itself, the thrust of which is stated directly:

> *Security is not regarded primarily as the security of the State, nor as the security of the citizen without the assistance of the State. Rather, it is the protection of the citizen and democracy by the State with the solidarity and co-operation of the whole of society. . . . This is, in short, a policy for the protection of the population.*[19]

The policy stated that threatening the stability of the country and its citizens was an explosive combination of "terrorism; the illegal drugs trade; illicit finance; traffic of arms, ammunition, and explosives; kidnapping and extortion; and homicide."[20] The hitherto intractable nature of Colombia's security conundrum stemmed from the interlocking nature of these threats.

The strategic objectives of the *Democratic Security and Defence Policy* were therefore published as:

- consolidation of state control throughout Colombia
- protection of the population
- elimination of the illegal drug trade in Colombia
- maintenance of a deterrent capability
- transparent and efficient management of resources.

These, in turn, led to six courses of action:

- coordinating state action
- strengthening state institutions
- consolidating control of national territory
- protecting the rights of all Colombians and the nation's infrastructure
- cooperating for the security of all
- communicating state policy and action.

Each of these courses of action had integral components. "Co-ordinating state action," for instance, stated that a National Defence and Security Council would be established to ensure "co-ordinated and unified" action by all "state bodies." No longer, in other words, was counterinsurgency a duty assigned by the state only to the security forces (mainly the army). "Regional authorities" were directed to set up similar bodies, with their membership left to local circumstances. A Joint Intelligence Committee was also established, and the Ministry of Defence was explicitly charged with coordinating the activities of both the armed forces and police (a statutory arrangement that had been largely ignored under the most recent pre-Uribe administrations).

no longer was counterinsurgency a duty assigned by the state only to the security forces (mainly the army)

Other components in the policy further highlighted the Uribe administration's awareness of the multidimensional nature of counterinsurgency. "Strengthening state institutions," for instance, began with a discussion of the need to bolster the judicial system; moved on to analyze strengthening the armed forces, police, and intelligence; and concluded by examining ways to strengthen state finances.

If one course of action stood out as central to the whole, it was "consolidating control of national territory," as mentioned above, as the indispensable element of any counterinsurgency. A "cycle of recovery" was detailed that evoked images of the approach used in successful counterinsurgencies such as those of Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Peru.[21] It further outlined precisely the strategic approach to be used:[22]

- "The Government will gradually restore state presence and the authority of state institutions, starting in strategically important areas."
- "Once the Armed Forces and the National Police have re-established control over an area, units comprising professional soldiers, *campesino* soldiers [that is, local forces] and National Police *carabineros* [police field force] will maintain security and protect the civilian population. This will enable state organizations and criminal investigation authorities to work in the area."
- "Once a basic level of security has been established, the State will embark upon a policy of territorial consolidation, re-establishing the normal operation of the justice system, strengthening local democracy, meeting the most urgent needs of the population, broadening state services and initiating medium to long term projects aimed at creating sustainable development."

Operationalizing the Plan

Necessarily, given the nature of the irregular threat, the security forces undertook the most prominent and difficult tasks. Though responsibilities were tasked to all state ministries and bodies, it was the security forces that were to provide the shield behind which restoration of legitimate government writ took place. Hence, it was the security forces that had to engage in institutional learning and adaptation beyond anything seen in nearly a century.

A small group of officers was dominant during the 8 years of the Pastrana (1998–2002) and first Uribe (2002–2006) terms. FARC's efforts to launch major attacks had been shattered by the commander of IV Division, Major General Carlos Alberto Ospina Ovalle, who worked intimately with his superior, *Comandante del Ejercito* General Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel, and *Comando General de las Fuerzes Militares*[23] (Commanding General [CG], Joint Command) General Fernando Tapias Stahelin. Mora eventually took the place of Tapias upon the latter's retirement when Uribe became president; Ospina became army commander. When Mora himself retired in November 2003, Ospina became CG Joint Command.

What these officers shared was both theoretical and practical maturity, significantly enhanced by force of character and personal bravery. Mora and Ospina were noteworthy for their close working relationship and the general esteem with which they were held throughout not only the army but also the armed forces. Both had proven themselves tactically time and again as they had advanced through the junior ranks, then operationally as more senior commanders. Ospina was apparently the most combat-decorated officer in the army at the time he became CG Joint Command, in addition to being generally regarded as the army's premier strategist, with a deep knowledge of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Together, working under Tapias, Mora and Ospina fashioned highly effective army annual campaign plans that, as they were instituted, forced FARC into the strategic defensive. Their correct appreciation of the situation, though, could not be translated into a true counterinsurgency, with a whole-of-society approach, until the election of Uribe.

Under the Ministry of Defence (*Ministerio de Defensa Nacional*, or MDN[24]), the security forces prepared their own plans to implement the *Democratic Security and Defence Policy*. Both the military's Joint Command and police (*Policia Nacional*) were subordinate to MDN and used as their guide the strategic document drawn up by the ministry. Their product was issued as a 4-year vision applicable to the entire Uribe first term (2002–2006).[25] The original five strategic objectives were reworked to seven (specific to the defense sector),[26] a total that returned to five in the Joint Command strategic guidance and command policy publication.[27] The army's objectives were for all practical purposes those of the Joint Command.[28]

working under Tapias, Mora and Ospina fashioned highly effective army annual campaign plans that forced FARC into the strategic defensive

Discrepancies were not serious[29] and became moot when considered in conjunction with explanatory material.[30] They apparently stemmed primarily from what was the near-simultaneous (though coordinated) preparation driven by the beginning of a new administration. The central elements remained "protection of the population" and "elimination of the illegal drugs trade in Colombia," to be accomplished through the application of national will, resources, and power. As the premier element of national power in the internal war at hand, therefore, the military clarified its role further in a "general military strategy" issued by CG Joint Command, General Mora.[31] This remained the key document for the application of military action to support the president's "democratic security" counterinsurgency approach.

Therein, the Joint Command's original five strategic objectives became six more

detailed "General Military Strategic Components and Objectives," divided into two groups of three, offensive and defensive (see below). The defensive components had the objective of countering the "protracted war of the Narcoterrorist Organizations [ONTs]."[32] The offensive components had the objective of implementing a "war of decisive action and rapid resolution" against these same ONTs. The final strategic objective, toward which both offensive and defensive components were directed, was to end the will of the ONTs to continue armed struggle. In turn, each component (or "campaign") had a number of subcomponents. A foundation for the whole was provided by "support components."[33] Thus:

Offensive Components: Implement War of Decisive Action and Rapid Resolution

- Neutralize ONT finances
  - implement Plan Colombia (that is, counternarcotics)
  - facilitate end of domination (in areas by ONT)
  - take action against kidnapping and extortion
- Exercise (establish) territorial control
  - dominate and control strategic areas
  - dominate mobility corridors
  - institute a neighborhood watch network[34]
  - control population and resources
  - facilitate presence of the state
- Neutralize ONT plans and armed capacity
  - dismantle militias
  - attrite armed groups (through attrition, diminish armed groups)
  - capture leaders
  - neutralize informants
  - neutralize traffic of arms, munitions, and explosives.

Defensive Components: Counter Protracted War of the ONT

- Protect the population and human rights
  - establish units with mission of local security
  - engage in counterterrorist actions
  - guarantee security and mobility of population
  - enhance respect for human rights and international humanitarian rights

- Protect economic infrastructure
  - secure transportation infrastructure
  - secure energy infrastructure
  - secure communications infrastructure
- Strengthen deterrent capacity
  - stockpile strategic materials
  - stand up covering forces
- Support components
  - strengthen and modernize forces
  - conduct integral action (civic action)
  - conduct combined and special operations.

Specific responsibilities (taskings) were not enumerated in this document, such having previously become a matter of operational reality before publication, with the army's force dispositions and programs driving the whole. Predictably, when army strategic objectives were aligned with their Joint Command counterparts (as per above, they are essentially the same), the breaking out of subtasks and responsibilities did, in fact, become even more specific, though only to the extent of assigning missions to "operational units" or "Director of Operations."

The professional transformation of the security forces that had taken place during the Pastrana years meant that Uribe's approach required no substantial changes on their part. Instead, they could build on what existed. Some 600 local forces platoons were formed, based in medium and small towns and augmented by tens of thousands of "neighborhood watch" participants, extending permanent government presence to rural areas. They were integrated within regular battalions for command and control purposes and manned by volunteers from the annual draft levy. The battalions themselves, the face of the much bigger ground forces (together with the marines), were also draftees, but the strike units were manned completely by volunteers. These counterguerrilla battalions, grouped into mobile brigades, conducted relentless operations that in the main task force area—the FARC "strategic rearguard" in the jungles of eastern Colombia—lasted for years (using block leave procedures to sustain permanent presence). The result was a relentless grinding down of FARC strength.

Units of all types were brought into the force structure according to plans predating Uribe but now funded: new counterguerrilla battalions and mobile brigades; urban special forces[35] (joining "rural special forces," the traditional mode of operation); special transportation network protection units (*Plan Meteoro*, or "Plan Meteor"); high mountain battalions specifically situated and equipped to block insurgent mobility corridors through hitherto inaccessible heights; strengthened infrastructure protection units; and local forces to provide security, in particular, for rural urban centers.[36] Simultaneously, from the same funding source, enhancement of individual effectiveness was to be improved by converting draftee slots to volunteers at the rate of 10,000 per year—an

local forces platoons were formed and augmented by thousands of "neighborhood watch" participants, extending permanent government presence to rural areas

expensive undertaking since it costs approximately 10 times more for a volunteer than for a draftee.[37]

All components related to each other. Standing up local forces platoons, for instance, though intended initially as a step to enhance security of the population, was soon found to produce greatly enhanced information flow to the forces and thus served as the basis for more accurate and intense employment of regular and strike units. Greater activity in an area forced the insurgents to move, especially the leadership, presenting targets for enhanced special operations capability. Loss of leaders led to surrenders, which allowed psychological warfare units to exploit defections with a variety of innovative programs, from rallies to radio broadcasts. Fewer insurgents meant greater freedom of movement, and special units secured the transportation arteries, just as they did the critical infrastructure. Business picked up, the economy improved, kidnappings and murders dropped substantially, social tension diminished, and political participation increased.

in the field, the security forces opened up the space for the invigoration and reform of Colombian democracy

If there was one element in the approach that provided the missing link, it was the deployment of local forces. These were indispensable to establishing state presence in affected areas and neatly sidestepped legal objections (and fierce opposition from the parastates) by utilizing a 1940s era law, discovered still on the books, which allowed a portion of the national draft levy to opt for service in their home towns—in local defense units. Despite its substantial agricultural sector, Colombia is classified as approximately three-quarters urban, and the troops—initially called *Soldados Campesinos* ("Peasant Soldiers"), a name they themselves disliked—were universally located in rural towns. Hence, *Soldados de mi Pueblo* ("Home Guards" would be the most useful rendering) came to be used simultaneously.

Local forces had all the more impact because the police, using the same approach as the *Soldados de mi Pueblo* program, systematically established presence in every *municipio* (county) in the country. Those areas from which they had been driven, or which historically had been considered too dangerous for police presence, were manned by what effectively was a police field force, though under regular police jurisdiction. They functioned in units of the same size and nature as the army local forces but were more mobile and often better armed. Where necessary, veritable forts were constructed to allow secure stations for the projection of state presence. Backing them up was a highly trained reaction force.[38]

Such police involvement as an integral component of the counterinsurgency highlights a further development in adaptation: the increasingly joint nature of Colombian operations. Though answering to a CG Joint Command, the military services themselves had functioned together more as a matter of courtesy than command. This had not posed any insuperable problems, particularly given the army's dominance, but it was not the ideal way to conduct counterinsurgency, where unity of command was crucial. It was especially the case that the police, under Pastrana, were not integrated at the national level in any of the counterinsurgency planning. This ended under Uribe.[39]

Within the military itself, a clear trend toward greater jointness had emerged under

Tapias, as CG Joint Command had matured under Mora (during the Uribe administration) and then blossomed under Ospina. Plans to implement joint operational commands in place of the exclusively army divisional areas were tabled in summer 2004. They were met with fierce resistance in parochial circles but had the support of the president and began to be implemented in December 2004, when 1st Division became a joint command.[40]

Learning Organizations

If this discussion appears unduly focused on military elements, it is because in Colombia circumstances dictated precisely what we see in the U.S. case: domination of operational and budget facets of internal warfighting by the defense establishment. In the field, however, the security forces in fact opened up the space for the invigoration and reform of Colombian democracy. In particular, Uribe, in his first 4-year term, held numerous 1-day "town hall" meetings in various parts of the country. In all cases, he was accompanied by key cabinet-level representatives to include agents from the military high command. A general session with a question-and-answer period featured not only the president and other national officials but also the local and state officials concerned. Democratic process was on display as government was shown to be transparent and accountable. Breakout sessions followed, devoted to development and security.

Reassembly saw courses of action tabled and acted upon on the spot by consensus of the whole. The impact of these sessions was substantial and led to astonishing levels of support for the president and his government (as measured by polls). Legitimacy was captured so completely that polls found such minimal levels of support (in any form) for FARC year after year as to approach less than 1 percent (except for occasional 3 percent spikes among activist sub-populations, such as university students).

Building on this and still further security force enhancements, state presence was steadily expanded. All national territory and population were incorporated to an extent never seen in Colombian history, with the same perhaps true of the extent to which Colombian democracy reflected mass participation and the will of the electorate.

If there was irony, it was that the spectacular levels of support displayed by the public for the state and its representatives throughout the entire 8 years of Uribe's two terms were all but ignored in the approach and publications of the "human rights cartel." The frames whereby the parastates assessed the conflict remained virtually unchanged, and in some cases, their narratives actually became more shrill in judging the Uribe years as little save an unmitigated disaster for the country. Unlike the past, though, the state did not simply cede virtual space to its attackers. Rather, both state and civil society aggressively defended national policies and strategies.

In constructing his own frame, Uribe was consistent in his portrayal of Colombia as a legitimate democracy challenged by illegitimate terrorism in the form of FARC, a group that had no mass following and had to sustain itself wholly through criminal activity that targeted the people themselves. The national narrative—which increasingly reflected the reality of reformed, enhanced democracy—was that the state and its security forces were at one with the population in resisting those who would oppress them. Significant effort went into facilitating access of (in particular) the Colombian media and to disseminating the state version of events.

Abroad, Colombian embassies pursued much the approach of the state at home, interacting regularly and often with important constituencies, especially in the United States. Uribe and his ministers were frequent visitors to Washington, where their own facility in English allowed them to engage with both supporters and critics. Enhanced cooperation led to further pressure on FARC's external links, which increasingly were forced to rely on the assistance of sympathetic governments in the newly declared Bolivarian states, especially Venezuela.

By the end of the first Uribe term, all patterns had been set that continued into the second term. New military leadership in 2006 ushered in a "Consolidating Democratic Security" plan, but there were no essential changes.[41] What was enhanced was the special operations component of the original strategy because FARC no longer was capable (in most areas and circumstances) of massing forces. Thus, its smaller, fleeing units were followed relentlessly. It was within this special operations command that the Raul Reyes and *Jaque* operations occurred.[42]

regardless of the prominence of U.S. aid—which remained overwhelmingly dedicated to counternarcotics throughout—Bogota had primacy in all matters of strategy and operational art

State presence and functions were normalized as FARC was driven from areas. Concerns that the civil component of the effort was not robust enough led to greater emphasis on impact efforts that would kick-start local governance. There continued to be apprehension about the degree to which progress in security, which was considerable and relentless, was accompanied by incorporation. New coordination bodies were stood up with U.S. assistance and funding.

Other concerns were of equal moment, in particular explosive revelations that the pressure for "results" had caused certain military elements to cut corners and deliver "kills" by the subterfuge of "false positives" (that is, dressing vagrants or other innocents in combatant garb and killing them, then passing off the victims as dead insurgents). Until 2006, it is unlikely this would have been possible due to the relegation of killed-in-action/wounded-in-action insurgents to very low priority in the daily metrics tallies. Favored instead were indicators of initiative (for example, FARC initiation of major actions, such as attacks on towns) and security (for example, whether local officials were able to remain "in their towns overnight"). Changes in personalities and metrics, however, fostered a new dynamic that led to the scandal.[43]

Yet it is the nature of the state's reaction that highlights how far both Colombia and its counterinsurgency forces have come. Investigation, prosecution, and enhancement of oversight mechanisms have occurred. Dramatically enhancing the legal means tasked with ensuring adherence to rule of law goes far beyond merely reacting vigorously to the alleged crimes. In but one prominent example, lawyers have now been assigned to battalion level in all ground forces.[44] Likewise, in other challenging situations, where circumstances could easily have led to more trouble, the security forces sought new legal means to enable their efforts. They thus avoided makeshift and problematic courses of action.[45] Such action is not the exception but generally the rule.

Even this brief discussion has highlighted the degree to which Colombia and its forces have engaged in a constant dialectic of

Three U.S. Government contractors held hostage by FARC and rescued by Colombian security forces are transported safely to the United States

U.S. Air Force (Lance Cheung)

adaptation driven by the changing dynamic and context of the conflict. What has been stated above but bears emphasis is that the Colombians were fighting for and in their own country. Just as crucial, regardless of the prominence of U.S. aid—which remained overwhelmingly dedicated to counternarcotics throughout—Bogota had primacy in all matters of strategy and operational art. Indeed, as noted earlier, the Colombian leadership displayed a greater understanding not only of their own irregular war but also often of the principles of irregular warfare in general throughout the conflict.

Contributing still further to this process was possibly the most overlooked adaptation of the entire conflict: the transformation of Colombia's civil-military relations. Tapias, Mora, and Ospina each contributed in his own way to the implementation of a balanced civil-military partnership that took the place of the previously separate spheres of conceptualization and execution. Ospina, in particular, demonstrated an astute understanding of an elected president's needs. While focusing on the military domination of local areas and the pursuit of FARC into its base areas, he delivered "progress" in whatever form necessary to Uribe's viability as a wartime leader.[46] Thus, even as FARC's "people's war" foundered, Colombian democracy emerged more vibrant than perhaps at any time in its history.

Conclusion

The preceding sentence, it could be argued, is just part of my own narrative that proceeds from an incorrect framing of the insurgency discussed herein. Certainly, a contending narrative continues to be put forth by some who remain bitter foes of all that the Uribe administration has attempted. This would seem to miss the mark. From a position of absolute weakness, the Colombian state and its institutions, notably the security forces, went through a process of learning and adaptation that culminated in implementation of what I have argued elsewhere can in many ways be seen as a textbook case of counterinsurgency.[47] Whether we use the terminology *whole-of-government* or *whole-of-society* to describe the *Democratic Security and Defence Policy* plan, it has been a masterpiece of ends-ways-means in action.

Has it been "perfect"? The query is misplaced. The "fog" of war, as Clausewitz would certainly observe, makes that impossible. Indeed, Colombia, though it has one of the leading economies of Latin America, remains but the equivalent of a middling U.S. state in its available fiscal resources—hence, in the mobilization it can effect in the face of a still dangerous enemy, FARC.

Faced with crushing defeat, the insurgents have sought to relocate to secure refuges where they can regenerate. These lairs have been both in marginal, difficult terrain within the country, such as high mountain territory, and outside Colombia's borders. Simultaneously, FARC has dramatically upped its international effort to receive a legitimacy from fellow travelers that it has been unable to gain from Colombians themselves. It remains a major player in the narcotics industry and has apparently expanded its distribution networks to West Africa so as to facilitate movement of more "product" to the lucrative European market.

Yet Colombia has proved equally adaptable. Whether in doctrinal shifts or rapid changes in individual course content, the security forces have kept pace with their foes. The very attraction of Colombian society has served to create a hemorrhage of defectors from FARC's ranks, even as the state has continued to mature in incorporating its physical and popular elements. It is possibly more cohesive and more representative than at any time in its history.

Most decisively, the Colombian case demonstrates that even in a "new war" battleground, certain fundamental principles of counterinsurgency continue to hold. The strategic goal is legitimacy; the operational goal is the neutralization of the insurgent counterstate; the tactical goal is the domination of human terrain (that is, the security of the people). In reaching this last goal, the Colombian case is noteworthy because the population has demonstrated extraordinary support for the administration throughout the Uribe years, even as the assault by the parastates discussed above has continued unabated. The lesson is sobering, as states ranging from Israel to Sri Lanka have discovered.

Beyond traditional modes of adaptation such as we have seen carried out by Colombian forces and the state, therefore, there must be an appreciation that irregular warfare in today's world-historical context and moment faces an alignment of foes that extends far beyond the immediate battlefield. The intangible dimension that is virtual space is balanced in importance with the effort to establish facts on the ground. And the foes in that intangible dimension are every bit as lethal as a FARC is in the tangible dimension that is physical space. Dealing with both dimensions requires careful consideration and planning if adaptation and integrated response are to be effective. Colombia has demonstrated that this is possible. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] My most recent contribution to this literature is "Regaining the Initiative: Colombia Versus the FARC Insurgency," in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, 2d ed., ed. Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (New York: Osprey, 2010), 209–232. See also Robert D. Ramsey III, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience*, 1998–2008, Occasional Paper 34 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, December 2009), available at <www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA514131&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>.

[2] Best known are the March 2008 precision guided munitions killing of FARC second-in-command, Raul Reyes, inside Ecuador, and the July 2008 rescue, inside Colombia, of the most high-value hostages held by the

insurgents. Benefit from the Reyes strike went far beyond his elimination because the subsequent sweep of the ground by Colombian special operations personnel resulted in the capture of what essentially were FARC's electronic master-files, the exploitation of which continues. The rescue effort, Operation *Jaque* ("Checkmate"), ended FARC's most concerted effort to use prisoners, who included three Americans, to force concessions from the government. Widely available on the rescue (in Spanish) is Juan Carlos Torres, *Operactión Jaque* (Bogota: Planeta, 2009); from the American viewpoint of the three hostages, see Marc Gonsalves et al., *Out of Captivity: Surviving 1,967 Days in the Colombian Jungle* (New York: William Morrow/HarperCollins, 2009).

[3] Extant theory sees what were once simply termed "internal wars"—as opposed to traditional state-versus-state wars—as "new" due to the manner in which they are embedded in the post–Cold War global context, which has unleashed a host of forces that revolve around an individual and group search for identity. What once was local now invariably becomes international, and normally can only be dealt with through a marshaling of multifaceted international response. Furthermore, the means, especially funding, are drawn from nontraditional sources such as criminal activity. Necessarily dealing with "new wars" calls for skill sets that extend beyond kinetic action. See Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, 2d ed. (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2007). This may be usefully supplemented by Donald M. Snow, *Uncivil Wars: International Security and the New Internal Conflicts* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1996); Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom, *Rethinking the Nature of War* (New York: Frank Cass, 2005); and Herfried Münkler, *The New Wars* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2005). On groups themselves, see Querine Hanlon, "Globalization and the Transformation of Armed Groups," in *Pirates, Terrorists, and Warlords: The History, Influence, and Future of Armed Groups around the World*, ed. Jeffrey H. Norwitz (New York: Skyhouse, 2009), 124–134.

[4] The subject of "failed/failing states" has generated a body of literature perhaps more voluminous than that of new wars. Another post–Cold War concept, it holds that there are states that fail on any number of metrics and consequently do not perform as stable states. Whether a state has failed or is merely failing depends on the metrics chosen, on which there is no agreement (Colombia is invariably listed as either failed or failing). There are cases, though, such as Somalia, where there is acceptance that the state has "collapsed." Useful references, mercifully devoid of histrionics, include I. William Zartman, ed., *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995); Robert I. Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); and Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Rotberg has edited a collection of case studies in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003). Valuable is his introduction, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators." Pre-Uribe administration Colombia is specifically discussed in Harvey F. Kline, "Colombia: Lawlessness, Drug Trafficking, and Carving up the State," 161–182.

[5] This was especially the case in South Asia, where a Maoist upsurge has produced a failed state in Nepal and has been deemed by India's prime minister as the greatest threat to that country's security. For details, see Thomas A. Marks, "Return of the Nightmare," *India and Global Affairs* (New Delhi) 2, no. 2 (April–June 2009), 78–85.

[6] For a sympathetic treatment of this synthesis, to which (it can be argued) FARC aspires, see Sujatha Fernandes, *Who Can Stop the Drums? Urban Social Movements in Chavez's Venezuela* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

[7] The Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) even attempted to impart to FARC the mechanics of using poison gas in shells launched from improvised mortars, ramplas, the firing mechanism for which PIRA itself had originally been responsible, but which had made its way to Colombia in perfected form via the FMLN (*Farabundo Martí* National Liberation Front) of El Salvador. Indeed, FARC warfighting doctrine was essentially borrowed from the FMLN, which had taken it from the Vietnamese. At least twice, Vietnamese personnel trained their "fellow Marxists," FARC, inside Colombia.

[8] Use of the term *parastate* has moved beyond original reference to any substate challenge, legal or (more often) illegal, to an existing state. It is now more widely used for organizations that have taken unto themselves many of the attributes of states but exist in a parasitic or (forced) symbiotic relationship with the host state or states. Structural examples would be organized crime or major international human rights organizations, which can exist as both tangible and intangible (virtual) phenomena. International human rights organizations, for example, are often as much virtual as physical realities. Parastates, then, differ from *counterstates* in that they do not seek the overthrow of the state but cohabitation or even domination (as in the case of organized crime in Mexico). In contrast, counterstates advance a rival new order that seeks to replace the old order. Intriguing for analysts is the situation of numerous (especially but not solely) African *quasi-states*, variants of the failing (for example, Congo) or failed (Somalia) category discussed earlier. Quasi-states are those lacking one or more key attributes that allow them to be true states (such as a resource base or a functioning government possessing a monopoly of violence). The critical distinction between them and failing/failed states may be that the inadequacies are structural, thus little amenable to remediation through human agency. See Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[9] *Frames* create the boundaries within which an event is interpreted, while *narratives* provide the plot. The concept has leaped to our present official consciousness through the ongoing discussion concerning "winning the battle of the narrative." See, for instance, Akil N. Awan, "Success of the Meta-Narrative: How Jihadists Maintain Legitimacy," *CTC Sentinel* 2, no. 11 (November 2009), 6–8; or Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Countering Violent Extremist Narratives* (January 2010). For a general treatment, see Pippa Norris, Montague Kern, and Marion Just, eds., *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government, and the Public* (New York: Routledge, 2003). Background on concepts may be found in Karen S. Johnson-Cartee, *News Narratives and News Framing: Constructing Political Reality* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005).

[10] The easiest way around this reality was to attack the credibility of the surveys themselves and to claim they were part of the state's assault on the legitimate representatives of the revolution, FARC.

[11] Excellent on the general subject are Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, eds., *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

[12] For a discussion of this process by one of its central figures, ultimately commanding general of first the army, then the armed forces themselves, see Carlos Ospina Ovalle, "Insights from Colombia's 'Long War': Counterinsurgency Lessons Learned," *Counterterrorism* 12, no. 3 (Fall 2006), 26–33. His key observation is: "We were using American doctrine, where we conceptualized the continuum as 'war' and 'other than war.' This was absolutely incorrect. There is only war, with the enemy fielding different mixes of the elements of war" (29). U.S. doctrine in question may be found in Joint Publication 3–07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, June 16, 1995).

[13] The information upon which Colombian intelligence was based was voluminous and all-source. Necessarily, it was primarily drawn from human sources, which meant that it was strongest precisely where U.S. capabilities were (and remain) weakest.

[14] Activists, as well as cause-oriented and solidarity groups, deny that this is so. See, for example, the quite different analysis contained in James Petras, *Revolutionary Social Change in Colombia: The Origin and Direction of the FARC–EP* (New York: Pluto Press, 2010). Interestingly, the parastates, while hostile to the Colombian state, generally do not go so far as to support an analysis such as that of Petras, who sees Colombia on the verge of a revolution with FARC in the lead. Nevertheless, the parastates make quite clear that they see state agency as the heart of Colombia's woes as opposed, say, to structural issues or the dislocation caused by the insurgents themselves.

[15] Most easily available is the version published by the University of Chicago Press in 2007. Unfortunately, the reality that politics, armed or otherwise, can only take place among the populace has given way in the U.S. military to an often acrimonious debate on the varied interpretations of the short-hand label "population-centric." See Gian P. Gentile, "A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army," *Parameters* (Autumn 2009), 5–17. The United States (principally the Army) is increasingly faulted as having allowed physical protection of the population to overshadow necessary kinetic action. Of more importance, perhaps, is the obvious conflation of "economic development" with "governance" in virtual negation of the central strategic role political development plays in counterinsurgency.

[16] A comparison of the Afghanistan situation now to that of Colombia during the period under discussion may be constructed by exploring two current references: Gretchen Peters, *Seeds of Terror: How Drugs, Thugs, and Crime Are Reshaping the Afghan War* (New York: Picador, 2010); and Pierre-Arnaud Chouvy, *Opium: Uncovering the Politics of the Poppy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[17] Though discussed, the personal and professional experiences that prepared General David Petraeus for successful command in counterinsurgency have not been explored in depth. It would seem logical to examine course content at West Point while Petraeus was a cadet (1970–1974) since the relevant handouts and readings were universally focused upon balancing kinetic and nonkinetic facets of response. The same could be said of the U.S. doctrinal approach to counterinsurgency in El Salvador, which at one point was under the command of U.S. Southern Command commander and Petraeus's mentor, General Jack Galvin. Petraeus spent 6 weeks with Galvin and his command between his first and second years as a social sciences instructor at West Point. For details, see David Cloud and Greg Jaffe, *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2009), 60–67. For the metanarrative, see David Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era: Transforming the U.S. Military for Modern Wars* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009).

[18] Whole-of-government is simple in theory but has led to rather less discussion in fact. The most tangible expression of what whole-of-government means is the application of the "instruments of national power." The instruments are most commonly equated in the U.S. construction with the acronym MIDLIFE, indicating military, intelligence, diplomacy, law enforcement, information, finance, economics. This is a formulation perhaps appropriate for the United States in expeditionary mode but necessarily incomplete for a state fighting within its own boundaries. There, a more accurate approximation of the instruments of national power might be government ministries and the elements of civil society that can be called upon in the struggle. This was the Colombian interpretation.

[19] Presidency of the Republic/Ministry of Defence, *Democratic Security and Defence Policy* (Bogota: Ministry of Defence, 2003), 13–14 (English version). The original Spanish version, *Politica de Defensa y*

Seguridad Democratica, requires slightly more pages for its presentation but is identical to the English edition in all other respects.

[20] Ibid., 23–30.

[21] For details, see Thomas A. Marks, *Maoist People's War in Post-Vietnam Asia* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2007).

[22] Colombian strategic documents are normally unclassified and accurate in their presentation of plans, courses of action, and particulars. They are quite straightforward in approach and abundant in detail. For the three quoted elements that follow, see *Democratic Security and Defence Policy*, 42.

[23] Literally, "Commanding General of the Military Forces," which accurately defines the authority and responsibility inherent to the position. It is rendered as "CG Joint Command" to facilitate the analysis presented here.

[24] Recent official documents drop "national" in their translations.

[25] See Presidencia de la Republic/Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Sector Defensa: Una Vision, Una Mision—Plan Estrategico 2002–2006* (Bogota: Ministry of National Defence, undated), in Spanish only.

[26] Ibid., 50–51.

[27] Comandante General Fuerzas Militares (Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel), *Direccionamiento Estrategico y Politicas de Comando 2003* (Bogota: Joint Command, undated), 2_6 [sic]; in Spanish only. An outline chart comparing the three sets of strategic objectives—national, defense, and military—is found at 4_8 [sic].

[28] Comandante del Ejercito (Carlos Alberto Ospina Ovalle), *Guia Operacional y Politicas de Comando 2003* (Bogota: COLAR, undated), 22–23; in Spanish only. The "strategic alignment of the objectives" for all levels discussed thus far—national, defense, military, and army—is found at 34–35.

[29] Though not always persuasive: for instance, as extracted from the national document, "Consolidation of state control throughout Colombia" is combined in the Defence document with "maintenance of a deterrent capability" to "establish security force presence throughout the country" (*lograr presencia fuerza publica en todo territorio nacional*). Though a discussion accompanies the conflation (52), it does not clear up the combining of these "apples and oranges."

[30] In the Defence document, this discussion takes the form of "strategies [for implementation]," *Sector Defensa*, 52–55; for the joint forces, discussion forms the entirety of *Direccionamiento Estrategico 2003*.

[31] Fuerzes Militares de Colombia, *Estrategia Militar General 2003* (Bogota: Joint Command, undated); in Spanish only.

[32] Use of the label *narcoterrorist organizations* (ONT) stems from two sources: first, Colombia's long-standing desire to find a viable term for the insurgents, such as the "CT" (communist terrorists) used by the British during the Malayan Emergency (1948–1960); and second, Bogota's awareness that its terminology needed to be in harmony with that of its principal benefactor, the United States. If, in Washington, "insurgents" were to be called "terrorists," Bogota was willing to go along tactically—while operationally and strategically it sought to avoid the analytical confusion that appeared at times to bedevil the U.S.-led "global war on terror."

[33] The six components and their relationship to the political objectives of "democratic security" and the national interests are on page 20. They appear again on pages 12–13 as part of the framework under discussion here. The version used here is from pages 12–13, since it is self-evidently the more correct. The translation is intended to convey the sense in which the elements are understood by the Colombian forces, rather than proceeding literally (verbs, for instance, are often absent in the original Spanish version).

[34] This is not the most literal translation, which is "institute a network of those who cooperate," also rendered as "institute an informant network." Yet "neighborhood watch" is closest to what is desired by the concept and is the term used in English by CG Joint Command.

[35] Urban security was singled out for special consideration in *Democratic Security and Defence Policy*. While recognizing that local authorities themselves had to take the lead, the same principles were emphasized that inform the document as a whole: coordinated, appropriate action. The innovative, highly successful "Local Security Front" initiated by the Bogota mayor was used for illustration. For details of the Bogota effort, see John Marulanda, *Plan Maestro Defensa Ajustado*, support package prepared in the course of implementing the Bogota Local Security Front.

[36] This was not as straightforward as it should have been, because, upon taking office, the Uribe team discovered that the previous administration's borrowing from "next year's budget" to "pay this year's expenses" had created a serious defense deficit. This had a stunning impact on Plan de Choque because the division of the $670 million windfall from the one-time "war tax" had been calculated to be spread over the 4 years of the Uribe presidency. The 2002 shortfall had been $138 million, but the 2003 budget structurally included an additional $109 million deficit. Thus, the 2002 *Plan de Choque* expenditures of $118 million, combined with the 2003 Plan costs of $149 million, used up more than three-quarters of what was intended to last 4 years. This could only be made good by appropriating funds from the regular budget or relying on unrestricted U.S. aid.

[37] To illustrate: The lowest rank in COLAR, *Cabo Tercero* (C3), equivalent to a U.S. private, E–1, had a monthly base pay of pesos 538,060, or ~$207 (at the August 1, 2004 exchange rate of pesos 2,600/U.S. $1). An entry level draftee historically made slightly less than 10 percent of that figure.

[38] For details on the program (but not the reaction force), see *Policia Nacional, Direccion Operativa, Programa Escuadrons Movils de Carabineros*, PowerPoint presentation, undated.

[39] A fascinating illustration of just how far matters have progressed is provided by the situation in 3d Division area, centered on Cali, Colombia's third largest city. There, in March 2010, Colombian air force officials noted that 80 percent of their missions were being generated by police intelligence and participation—a sea change, as the air force officials concerned were quick to note.

[40] This transformation alone would have been enough to produce a measure of turmoil within the military, regardless of the myriad other changes inherent to the reform movement. Even the existence of a special task force, *Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta*, dedicated solely to dominating FARC's critical base areas, its "strategic rearguard," had generated disquiet in some circles, particularly as it became clear that it was a model of what was to come. Now, as still ongoing plans are pushed through, the individual services will become more "service providers" in the U.S. sense, while CG Joint Command will exercise operational control of joint forces that resemble U.S. combatant commands (for example, U.S. Southern Command, which supports Colombia's effort). Such a development would be entirely logical in waging counterinsurgency but is a considerable change in the way Colombian services have functioned throughout their history.

[41] See *Policy for the Consolidation of Democratic Security* (Bogota: Ministry of National Defense, 2007), available at <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Colombia_English-2007.pdf>.

[42] The operations are placed in the context of the rapid and complex developments of the time in John Otis, *Law of the Jungle: The Hunt for Colombian Guerrillas, American Hostages, and Buried Treasure* (New York: William Morrow/HarperCollins, 2010). Its gaudy title notwithstanding, the volume is a solid examination of the subject.

[43] By late March 2010 (my most recent visit to Colombia), the number of individuals under investigation numbered roughly a thousand, though the count of alleged murders was smaller. This stemmed from unit action, for which all implicated members were charged as accessories.

[44] As an illustration, Marine battalions have two lawyers assigned, one to handle operations, the other to look after disciplinary matters. At the brigade level (the highest level for the Marines), there are four lawyers, the same two as listed for the battalion plus a general legal advisor and a human rights advisor.

[45] This is well illustrated by the prominent role played by the navy in passing legislation needed to address the widespread use of submersibles by FARC (and other illegal armed groups) for moving drugs. Scuttling of the craft upon discovery confronted the intercepting units with a rescue mission and a complete lack of evidence for prosecution. Thus, laws had to be passed that made illegal certain specific actions, such as owning and operating a submarine, which could be prosecuted using eyewitness testimony.

[46] Indispensable for a general treatment of this subject—"an elected president's needs in wartime"—is Herman Hattaway and J. Archer Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

[47] See, for example, Thomas A. Marks, "A Model Counterinsurgency: Uribe's Colombia (2002–2006) vs. FARC," *Military Review* 87, no. 2 (March–April 2007), 41–56.

U.S. Army (Olanrewaju Akinwunmi)

Soldier maintains security for nearby humanitarian mission in Iraq

Blind Ambition

Lessons Learned and Not Learned in an Embedded PRT

BY BLAKE STONE

We're worse than the blind leading the blind because at least the blind know they are blind.[1]

—David Atteberry, USAID Representative, Rasheed ePRT, September 3, 2007

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and their much smaller and operationally leaner dependencies, embedded PRTs (ePRTs), have made meaningful and lasting contributions to U.S. postconflict reconstruction and stabilization efforts in Iraq since their inception in November 2005.[2] This article presents the observations and experiences of one person on a single ePRT operating in the same expanse of Southern Baghdad Province over a period of 18 months from the tail end of the "Baghdad

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Surge" in late 2008 through the Council of Representatives election and transfer of power in March 2010. Toward that end, what follows is mostly anecdotal and does not necessarily reflect what surely were different experiences and operational realities on other PRTs and ePRTs in other parts of Iraq.

While much of what is contained in this article is critical of both the Department of State and Department of Defense, it is in no way meant to deprecate the personal efforts, sacrifices, bravery, or character of those who volunteered to go into harm's way by serving on these teams in a dangerous place during a critical time in U.S. history. Neither is it designed to take away from the personal sacrifices and exemplary character of the men and women who voluntarily wear the uniform of our country and daily put their lives on the line in the name of furthering both national security goals and the American way of life.

from the local level, there was absolutely no sense of linkage between the reconstruction efforts we were executing and the stated goals of either Presidents George W. Bush or Barack Obama

The purpose of this article is not to cite an extensive list of organizational miscues, which would only raise the question, "What did you do to remedy the situation?" Rather, my hope is to focus on how future attempts at postconflict stabilization and reconstruction may be better planned and executed. More important, I hope these observations and suggestions will drive a more focused analysis of the operational and tactical planning and execution that must occur as preconditions for achieving our strategic endstate. This article also suggests the absence of a clearly defined provincial level plan from Embassy Baghdad for the achievement of U.S. national security and foreign policy goals in Iraq. From the local level, where my team worked in the "Sunni Triangle of Death," there was absolutely no sense of linkage between the reconstruction efforts we were executing and the stated goals of either Presidents George W. Bush or Barack Obama. "Hope," it was once said, "is not a [planning] method."[3] At our ePRT, all we had by way of guidance was hope and the Hippocratic oath of "Do no harm."

A Primer

PRTs were a concept introduced to Iraq during the tenure of Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, who borrowed the idea from his experiences in Afghanistan.[4] The PRT mission was to "assist Iraq's provincial governments with developing a transparent and sustained capability to govern, promote increased security and rule of law, promote political and economic development, and provide the provincial administration necessary to meet the needs of the population."[5] PRTs focused on five thematic areas: governance, economics, infrastructure, rule of law, and public diplomacy.[6] Our ePRT took on the additional areas of agricultural development and women's social equality issues.

Embedded PRTs were typically smaller, leaner versions of the PRT, and they were embedded with U.S. Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) in Anbar, Baghdad, and Babil Provinces.[7] At the program's zenith, there were 31 American-led PRTs across Iraq, with 13 ePRTs.[8] The stated roles of the ePRTs were to support counterinsurgency operations by bolstering moderates who rejected violence as a means of achieving their goals; promoting reconciliation and facilitating dialogue across Iraqi

Goat is vaccinated for Iraqi during medical and veterinarian civil action program

U.S. Navy (Denny C. Cantrell)

society; and fostering economic development, largely through microfinance initiatives and building governmental capacity, especially as it related to the delivery of essential services.[9]

When I arrived on-station at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Mahmudiyah in early November 2008, my assigned ePRT (Baghdad 4, later redesignated Baghdad South) had recently merged with

teams Baghdad 7 (Iskandariyah/FOB Kalsu) and Baghdad 8 (Madi'an/FOB Hammer/Combat Outpost Cashe South).

At its height, our ePRT had an interagency advisory staff of 14, made up of mostly State Department employees, but also personnel from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Public Health Service–Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The team also had six bilingual, bicultural advisors (BBAs), which were a mix of Defense and State Department personal service contractors who were Iraqi-born subject matter experts within our various lines of operation. We also had several contracted local national interpreters and subject matter experts. Most of the State Department advisors on our team were former Active-duty military with previous Iraq experience. Others, although lacking previous Iraq experience, brought significant prior uniformed experience in providing public health services throughout the developing world.

there was nothing by way of guidance from the team leader, PRT Baghdad, or the Embassy, which left individual team members scrambling to find ways to add value

By way of comparison, PRT Baghdad had a staff of around 100, worked in the International Zone, and lived at the Embassy. Their focus, rightfully so, was squarely on the instrumentalities of the Baghdad provincial government—the Provincial Council, Baghdad Governor's Office, and numerous Iraqi ministry directors general responsible for the delivery of governmental services across the province. The ePRT's focus was much lower to the ground: engaging local councils, governmental officials, tribal leaders, "Sons of Iraq" leaders, business leaders, and other, more informal powerbrokers across a geographically expansive and predominantly rural area of Southern Baghdad Province referred to as the Sunni Triangle of Death.

Sunni Triangle of Death

The triangle is the area of Mahmudiyah Qada formed by connecting the points between the population centers of Yusifiyah, Latifiyah, and Mahmudiyah. This area was devastated by sectarian violence precipitated by the January 2006 bombing of the Al Askari mosque in Al Samarya, which did not relent until the area fell under the combined effects of the Sawha (Sons of Iraq) movement and the U.S. military buildup brought about by the Baghdad Surge of 2007–2008.

Mahmudiyah Qada stretches south from the Baghdad city limits to the southern tip of Baghdad Province near Iskandariyah in Babil Province. It is bordered on the east by the Euphrates and by the Tigris to the west. This was literally ancient Mesopotamia, "the land between the rivers." The population of the *qada*[10] is approximately 493,000, but this figure represents a mere estimate, as Iraq's last national census was held in 1978.

Mahmudiyah is the breadbasket of Iraq. It contains more arable farmland than the entirety of neighboring Jordan. Its terrain is cross-hatched by an expansive system of irrigation canals dating back millennia and perfected by the British during the years of the Mandate. This was our team's backyard and operational environment.

The rural areas of Yusifiyah and Latifiyah are relatively homogenous Sunni enclaves, occupied by formerly staunch Ba'athists and often overt supporters of both Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath resurgence movement. Mahmudiyah is the most populous city within the *qada* and is primarily Shia, and its political allegiances are

split almost evenly between Moqtada al Sadr's *Jayish al Mahdi* (Mahdi Army) and the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq's militant arm, the Badr Organization (called Badr Corps during the darker days of the insurgency). Both ostensibly claimed to have renounced violence and represented merely political movements, but in Iraq, one can never separate political movements from their propensity for violence.

The northern expanse of the *qada*, known as the Al Rashid District, sat precariously upon a Sunni-Shia faultline, which also incorporated one of the most strategically important road junctions in the country, the interchange of main supply routes (MSRs) Jackson and Tampa, the major north-south and east-west highways in the Baghdad area. This region was the hardest hit in the *qada* during the insurgency, with entire villages either being leveled or their residents forcibly removed from their homes. Local orphanages teemed with the effects of the sectarian violence.

In May 2009, as part of the ePRT phaseout, we merged with ePRT Baghdad 1, which operated in the Doura and Rashid neighborhoods of southern Baghdad, and were redesignated ePRT Baghdad South. Our new area of responsibility stretched from Route Irish in the north down to the border with Babil Province as our southern trace. Therein lay the backdrop for our postconflict reconstruction efforts.

Absence of State Department Planning

Upon arrival, it soon became apparent that our team lacked any sense of operational direction. There was nothing by way of guidance from the team leader, PRT Baghdad, or the Embassy, which left individual team members scrambling to find ways to add value. This resulted in a rather haphazard approach to reconstructing an area decimated by sectarian violence and almost wholly lacking in local governmental capacity to provide even the most basic essential services.

Although our team was made up of professionals capable of using good judgment and initiative in the absence of official guidance, we were left wondering how, or even if, our efforts were at all consistent with meeting the Ambassador's and/or the President's strategic intent. In the absence of such tactical and operational guidance, there was no way to determine how (or if) our efforts were furthering progress toward achieving the strategic endstate.

Such operational guidance for our government's civilian reconstruction efforts at the provincial and subprovincial levels simply did not exist in any usable form. The Embassy's Office of Provincial Affairs (OPA) ran the PRT program and was responsible for planning and coordinating with Multi-National Corps–Iraq to develop the Unified Common Plan, which ostensibly provided guidance on how the civilian efforts of the PRTs and ePRTs fit into the overarching U.S. plan. The guidance disseminated by OPA lacked the degree of specificity needed to be useful. Part of this may have stemmed from each PRT and ePRT having its own unique situation, issues, and challenges. For their parts, however, neither the Embassy nor OPA—nor our titular "mother ship," PRT–Baghdad—ever once issued guidance to the field that was of any benefit to our efforts in planning and executing reconstruction and stability operations at the tactical level.

Certainly, this partially rested with the fact that situations varied widely throughout the country. The situation faced by the PRT in Mosul was certainly different from the rather pacified situation in Ramadi, which differed wholly from Baghdad and Basra. That being said, rarely did anyone from the comparatively large OPA staff leave the relative safety of the New Embassy Compound nestled in the

International Zone to venture to our FOB and better understand the situation on the ground.

This lack of specific planning guidance stemmed from the inherent inability of the State Department to engage in this sort of work—executing what essentially amounted to the last two phases of a military operation. State Department Foreign Service Officer (FSO) skill sets are much too passive—the collecting and reporting of information, for example, were the professional stock-in-trade of both of our political cone FSO team leaders. The primary interests of both our team leaders and OPA generally were good reporting and submitting weekly reports to Washington. The absence of the ability to plan, execute, and lead stability and reconstruction operations was painfully apparent—it just was not a required skill set or core competency within State. For those of us who came to the State Department directly from the military, this nearly universal truism was a constant source of frustration and disappointment. Our State Department leadership failed either to plan effectively or to lead the civilian reconstruction effort.

initially, we unwittingly did more to destabilize this fragile region than to stabilize it

During the latter part of 2008 and the bulk of 2009, the team's focus was building upon the post–Baghdad Surge's security gains in the hope of increasing the capacity of local governments to deliver essential services, especially water for drinking and irrigation, electricity, sanitary methods of sewage disposal, access to health care, access to primary and secondary education, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, trash removal.

In the absence of being able to dovetail our operations into a larger, more comprehensive operational level plan, the resulting effect was a high incidence of "feel good" projects—those that produced some tangible example of American good works (typically complete with an information operations event, such as a grand opening ceremony with a conspicuous number of attending dignitaries and robust media coverage). These projects (usually taking the form of brick and mortar construction) often lacked coordination with the government of Iraq to ensure that they fit within its capital improvement planning. Additionally, we had little way of knowing if such projects furthered progress toward meeting the strategic endstate. There was little to no linkage between the strategic and tactical levels of the civilian-led aspects of our national reconstruction and stabilization efforts. We were left hoping we were doing the right thing and advancing in the right direction. It was tantamount to collecting Scouting merit badges, with each project representing another badge. The merit badges could be touted by the Embassy as tangible proof of reconstruction progress, but there was little connection (other than perhaps an accidental one) between the projects and other reconstruction efforts executed at the local level and the achievement of our strategic endstate.

Initially, we unwittingly did more to destabilize this fragile region than to stabilize it. The absence of competent government of Iraq officials to work through at the local level resulted in our local project work (agriculture, economic development, and some of USAID's general development projects) being implemented by either local sheikhs or nongovernmental organizations, which themselves were created in response to State Department funding regulations and designed to benefit the same group of sheikhs. This included projects funded by both the State Department's Quick Response Funds program and the Army's Commander's Emergency Response Program

(CERP). Neither the State Department nor the Army understood the effects of project funding on the balance of tribal power in this mostly rural area. Projects or their attendant funding increased the power, prestige, or influence of a particular sheikh or tribe in one area while simultaneously decreasing the influence of another sheikh or tribe. Creating the conditions for stability in one area often destabilized another area.

This truism played out across the entire Mahmudiyah Qada in the form of one battalion commander's desire to assist local stability and tribal reconciliation efforts in Al Rashid *nahiyah*, which lies on a notorious Sunni-Shia faultline in the northern part of the *qada* in the vicinity of the intersection of MSRs Jackson and Tampa. The battalion commander purchased over $300,000 worth of tractors to benefit local agricultural associations through the *nahiyah* council (the Iraqi equivalent to city or township councils in rural areas). The game plan entailed the council delivering the tractors prior to the January 2009 provincial elections.

Delivery was delayed until months after the Provincial Council election due to factors beyond the Army's control, but the ability to achieve nonkinetic effects on election security had certainly lapsed. The tractors, in the final analysis, benefited only a select number of sheikhs in a relatively small area of our operational environment who had allied themselves with Sheikh Ammash Khadim Sari al Robaei, the well known and charismatic (and some would claim corrupt) chairman of the Al Rashid *nahiyah* council. The anticipated second- and third-order effects of disenfranchising numerous tribes and sheikhs within the *qada* were known to the BCT's senior leadership at the time of the decision but were disregarded.

Word of mouth on the Iraqi street moves at an amazingly quick pace. Within days of the "big tractor giveaway," sheikhs from other parts of the *qada* were contacting our civil-military operations center at FOB Mahmudiyah asking when they would be supplied with tractors or complaining that the Americans somehow "owed" them similar treatment because of the support they delivered in the form of security gains during the Baghdad Surge. Every other *nahiyah* council soon demanded its own tractors. The *qada*-wide agricultural cooperative association, with member organizations across the *qada*, flatly refused to work with the Americans until they were provided with equivalent support. The decision proved disastrous, and its negative repercussions were felt for a full year.

Our team leaders championed projects designed to improve local agriculture, which looked good on paper; however, the net effects served only to increase the wealth and prestige of a few select sheikhs to the detriment of others in different areas of the *qada*. Those areas not receiving direct U.S. assistance invariably felt slighted and often became publicly critical of, if not overtly hostile toward, what they perceived to be American intervention in Iraqi affairs.

This practice continued right up through February 2010, a time when our team leader went to great pains to garner as much media coverage as possible for the grand opening of a local chicken processing plant built largely with CERP funding and ePRT technical assistance. Our team leader personally invited the Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission to attend the opening. The project was grossly over budget (the project's final cost was approximately $2 million), a year behind schedule, benefited a single sheikh, and was only a staged "grand opening" because the facility was not operational at the time of the ceremony. This is the type of reconstruction we engaged in, but the project's details tended to be overlooked in the name of touting tangible examples of progress.

Lack of Unity of Effort

While the State Department was wholly incompetent to lead our national reconstruction efforts, the Army brigades we worked with operated in only a slightly less incompetent manner. The Army brought numerous assets to the table: a significant number of personnel for the task, a very significant budget, and the logistical and mobility assets that allowed it to be nearly everywhere in the operational environment at once. The downside to this well-intentioned Leviathan was organizational inertia on a grand scale that had no outlet (save reconstruction operations) in the post–June 30 Security Framework Agreement Iraq. Precluded from conducting combat operations, the Army focused on nonkinetic effects—its shorthand for reconstruction operations.

while the State Department was the lead Federal agency for reconstruction and stabilization, the BCTs we were embedded with had their own separate agendas

While the State Department was the lead Federal agency for reconstruction and stabilization operations,[11] the BCTs we were embedded with had their own separate agendas. This lack of coordination was compounded by our team leaders' willingness to cede primacy to the military in the name of "maintaining good relations with the Army." The first brigade we worked with, 2d Brigade, 1st Armored Division (2/1), viewed the ePRT simply as a "brigade enabler" and expected the civilian efforts of the ePRT to be subordinate to the overarching brigade concept of the operation. This caused friction on numerous levels. First, the brigade's deputy commanding officer ran his own set of engagements with numerous civilian Iraqi governmental officials, often without any coordination with the ePRT governance team, whose role it was to engage with, train, and mentor the same set of officials. This often led to the embarrassing situation of unwittingly meeting with the same official the day after the Army met with them, sometimes regarding the exact same issue.

Programmatically, the ePRT and 2/1 Armored Division's differences stemmed primarily from two wellheads—first, a difference of opinion regarding where we sat on the operational continuum; and second, different timelines. The net effect was an almost complete lack of unity of effort and the Army and State Department working from two completely different playbooks.

The Operational Continuum

The 2/1 Armored Division justified many of its reconstruction/"nonlethal" decisions by framing them in the context of security measures necessary to further its counterinsurgency objectives. Many of us on the ePRT looked at the same local political reconciliation/security situation and felt it had matured beyond "straight-up" counterinsurgency (COIN) operations and was ripe for postconflict governmental capacity-building, which involves the concept of sustainability—for which the Army seemed to have little understanding.

The Army tended to move into a decimated area and immediately start a myriad of reconstruction projects, most of which did improve Iraqi quality of life there. The problem was that just funding projects for the Iraqi government replaced capacity rather than developing it. During COIN operations, using "money as a weapons system"[12] in order to produce (or perhaps purchase) desirable nonkinetic effects makes perfect sense. When transitioning to

more traditional postconflict stability and reconstruction operations, however, this longstanding practice actually served to retard Iraqi governmental capacity rather than build it.

The United States was universally viewed by local Iraqi governmental entities as the funding source of first resort. Due to longstanding spending habits, our ability to influence eventually became directly proportional to the amount of money we brought to the table. Some local *nahiya* councils that we worked with completely stopped preparing council budgets for review and funding by the government of Iraq, preferring U.S. Army funding for developmental needs. American money was simply too plentiful and too easily obtained.

Part and parcel of our attempt at teaching local councils to become more self-sufficient (an inherently difficult task in that local councils had no stand-alone budget or income source) was teaching them how to prioritize their developmental needs across the various Iraqi government funding streams and to establish the necessary intergovernmental relationships in order to obtain funding commitments. Our prodding fell largely on deaf ears, as the Iraqis simply approached American commanders who were all too willing to open the CERP checkbook in the name of "building relationships" with local powerbrokers and the achievement of "nonkinetic effects."

Reconstruction Timelines

Another inherent disconnect between Army operations and those of the ePRTs was different timelines. The ePRT, through its USAID representative, tended to look at longer term, often multiyear projects. The Army, on the other hand, had a time horizon of a year or less, usually benchmarked to the length of the unit's tour. Military projects tended to focus on the "quick win" with visible indices of "progress," such as schools, health clinics, and road improvements. The Army focused on "bright and shiny objects" and things that lent themselves to media coverage and "information operations effects."

the Army tended to do projects "for" the Iraqi government rather than forcing them to step up to do things themselves

This practice made good sense during COIN operations, when influencing the populace is of primary importance, but did little to assist with institutional capacity-building. Again, these short-game wins tended to replace capacity rather than to build it. The Army tended to do projects "for" the Iraqi government rather than forcing them to step up to do things themselves. The Iraqis were more than content to sit back and let the United States do the work they should have done. This practice was the antithesis of capacity-building.

Lessons Learned

There are numerous things we need to do better in future stability operations. While this list is not exhaustive, it is representative of the problems faced during our ePRT operation over 18 months, three BCTs, and three FSO team leaders.

- State Department FSOs should not lead ePRTs. FSOs are talented and dedicated public servants, but they lack the skill sets to be effective leaders of ePRT operations. First, they seem to lack the leadership experience required to effectively direct the efforts of what amounts to a small

unit. Second, they lack the military experience to effectively conduct phase four and five operations with our military partners. State Department skill sets are passive (for example, political reporting) and not well matched to the realities of the job; thus, ePRTs would be better led by "3161" Excepted Service, direct-hire term appointees (which currently comprise the bulk of the State Department's complement on both ePRTs and PRTs) who often possess a better mix of significant and relevant military experience and civilian-acquired skill sets necessary for postconflict reconstruction/international development work. The 3161s with prior military experience have the ability to keep one foot firmly planted in each camp—Defense and State.

- Military leaders need more training in interagency reconstruction and capacity-building operations. Most of the military leaders at the BCT level lacked a fundamental understanding of what "the interagency" brought to the warfight, how to harness its vast capabilities, and even more basic concepts such as "who was in charge" (that is, the lead Federal agency). Lacking this understanding, what should have been a symbiotic relationship was fraught with friction. Most military leaders viewed the ePRT as merely a "brigade enabler" rather than at least a partner in its operations or, more realistically, the lead agency within the unit's operational environment for postconflict reconstruction and capacity-building. This turf battle was a constant driver of inefficiency. The military needs to make the mandate of Department of Defense Instruction 3000.05—that it be as proficient in stability operations as in combat operations—a reality.[13]

- Lead Federal agencies need to actually *lead*. We received precious little by way of operational guidance from PRT Baghdad, the Embassy's Office of Provincial Affairs, or the two Ambassadors I served under. To the extent there was "front office" involvement in PRT/ePRT issues, it primarily focused on the PRT drawdown plan. While much time and energy were expended in determining the size and composition of the subnational civilian footprint, what seemed absent from the calculus was the fact that civilian assets were drawing down at a quicker and more significant pace than the military component. This seemed rather counterintuitive, in that most reconstruction models call for a corresponding increase in civilian capacity (that is, a "civilian surge" of sorts) as the military presence draws down. This left gaping holes in our overall ability to continue reconstruction operations as we approached the post-election transition of power.

- Reduce the rate of military area of operations turnover (that is, "my school needs to be rebuilt . . . again"). The rate of battlespace turnover between military units ("transfer of authority") was probably too frequent to build good civil-military relationships with our Iraqi interlocutors. Every 9 months or so, Iraqi governmental officials as well as tribal and business leaders with whom we would regularly engage would have to learn a whole new panoply of military commanders, Civil Affairs personnel, and other personalities. This also gave the Iraqis, who were astute opportunists, the ability to pitch their wish list to successive commanders on at least a yearly basis. This led to many otherwise unnecessary projects

being started or funded in the name of "building relationships."

- "Money as a weapons system" is probably the preeminent tool in a counterinsurgency. It has the unparalleled ability to independently influence decisionmakers, provide access to them and to other "levers of influence," and turn enemies into allies (as exemplified by the Sons of Iraq movement). Efforts to build governmental capacity, on the other hand, often benefit from not leading with money. The government of Iraq became conditioned to look to the U.S. Army particularly and the U.S. Government more generally as the bill payer of first resort. We were often unable to get the government of Iraq to move forward on its own until we convinced it that we lacked or were otherwise unable to provide money to apply against whatever the problem of the day happened to be. Once the government was forced into that position, it would actually start coordinating and breaking bureaucratic stovepipes.

Our efforts were often derailed by the U.S. Army losing millions of dollars of CERP funding in the name of "spend it or lose it to the Afghanistan effort." This resulted in numerous unnecessary projects being funded, as well as numerous CERP microgrants being made in less than well thought out ways. This problem was exacerbated by the Army's flawed metrics, which evaluated relative "success" by the amount of CERP money obligated, projects funded, and microgrants made without regard to effects. Microgrants, for example, were given primarily to business owners, which created the perception within the community that our only interest was "making the rich richer."

Taken with our affinity for assisting tribal sheikhs under the guise of "security," this perception seemed well founded. The net effect was that our ability to influence, or even get a seat at the table, was directly proportional to the amount of money we brought. When the money dried up, so did our influence.

Conclusion

The use of ePRTs and PRTs as civilian adjuncts to the military's counterinsurgency operations has proven its worth during our military and diplomatic involvement thus far in Iraq. Unfortunately, we seemed to traipse blindly down what turned out to be an uncertain path toward our national strategic endstate.

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While part of this was certainly due to the relative novelty of such operations (save the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program utilized with success during our involvement in South Vietnam[14]), we could have been more effective if the State Department leadership would have demonstrated competency in its responsibilities for planning and executing the civilian aspects of the U.S. national reconstruction efforts. The absence of goals and the lack of progress left many wondering why the department was put in charge of such critically important work in the first place. Second, had the military possessed

a more complete understanding of the civilian/interagency capabilities, what they "bring to the warfight," and how to better harness these capabilities, the overall U.S. effort would have been more effective.

In future conflicts, the civilian/interagency contribution will undoubtedly be critical to achieving the strategic endstate. It should be better utilized. To do this, it will need to be better led (presumably by civilian leaders) and better understood by its military counterparts. To "win the peace," we must be just as effective in phases four and five as we are in decisive combat operations. Until we make such successes a priority in our doctrine, training, and resourcing—to include requiring proven competency in the skill sets required for such operations (especially proven leadership abilities)—we will simply remain the "blind leading the blind" down an uncertain path. PRISM

Notes

[1] United States Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2009), 303.

[2] Ibid., 241.

[3] Gordon R. Sullivan, *Hope Is Not a Method* (New York: Doubleday, 1996).

[4] SIGIR, 240.

[5] Unclassified Baghdad 4045, "Action Plan to Build Capacity and Sustainability within Iraq's Provincial Governments," from U.S. Embassy Baghdad to the Secretary of State, 010330Z, October 2005.

[6] U.S. Embassy Baghdad, "PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Teams) Fact Sheet," March 20, 2008.

[7] Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Fact Sheet: Expanded Provincial Reconstruction Teams Speed the Transition to Self-Reliance," July 13, 2007.

[8] U.S. Embassy Baghdad; Office of the White House Press Secretary.

[9] Office of the White House Press Secretary.

[10] A *qada* is a political subdivision or "district" within the Bagdad Provincial Governorate. Within the city proper, or *amanat*, there are 9 districts divided into 89 neighborhoods. Outside of the Baghdad *amanat* there are six rural *qadas* administered by the Baghdad Governorate: Mada'in, Mahmudiyah, Abu Ghrahib, Taji, Tarmiyah, and Istaqial. It is probably most analogous to a county within the United States.

[11] National Security Presidential Directive 44, "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization," December 7, 2005.

[12] Multi-National Corps–Iraq CJ8 SOP, "Money as a Weapons System (MAAWS)," appendix H, June 15, 2008.

[13] Department of Defense Instruction 3000.05, "Stability Operations," September 16, 2009.

[14] The Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support pacification program in rural Vietnam is an interesting precursor to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams used in Afghanistan and Iraq. See R.W. Komer, "Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: Institutional Constraints on U.S.-GVN Performance in Vietnam," RAND Report R–967–ARPA, August 1972; Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1999); and Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Vintage, 1989).

An Interview with Said Tayeb Jawad

Embassy of Afghanistan

As a candidate, Barack Obama campaigned on the principle of reaching out to our adversaries, and he has done so most notably with Iran. If Mullah Omar were to extend an "open hand" to President [Hamid] Karzai, what should and would be President Karzai's response right now?

STJ: President Karzai has publicly said that he is ready to talk with Mullah Omar. We think that reconciliation is an important part of fighting insurgency in Afghanistan. Of course, the issue of reconciliation, especially with a group such as the Taliban—with a very dark past—is complex not only for President Obama or the U.S. Government. Even internally in Afghanistan, there are different approaches, ideas, and opinions on how to reconcile with the Taliban and what should be the extent of the compromises to be made. If we have full military power at our disposal—Afghan security forces or international security forces—we should continue the military pressure on the terrorists and other groups. But if everyone is in Afghanistan half-heartedly and with limited commitment, then we have to be realistic and seek every possible way of ending the war and violence in Afghanistan.

What do you think of the concept of justice and reconciliation in terms of taking legal steps against those guilty of atrocities in the past?

STJ: When you have limited resources at your disposal in a postconflict country like Afghanistan, you are forced to choose stability over justice. There is no other option: first, because you do not have the enforcement capability; second, you do not have the proper institutions to deliver justice. If you don't have the proper institutions to deliver justice, what you

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deliver will be revenge, not justice. However, in the long run, if you do not deliver justice, the stability will not last.

What about international institutions for transitional justice? For example, in the case of Rwanda, an international tribunal was established—the same with Yugoslavia. Would anything like that be welcome, acceptable, or viable in Afghanistan?

STJ: I think the solution in Afghanistan will be more like South Africa—people should acknowledge what they did to their own people, the atrocities they have committed, and then decide jointly to turn the page. There has been enough violence and revenge in Afghanistan. We should look forward to a new opening, a new tomorrow based on hope, forgiveness, peace, and stability.

Given the significant perception of fraud in the recent election and the justified doubt about President Karzai's ability to distinguish between his interest and Afghanistan national interest, what steps do you think the president should take to reassure the international community? Should he state that he will not seek another term when this current term ends?

STJ: First, the perception in the media and the perception among the international community do not comply with the reality on the ground. There has been a lot of intentional propaganda against the political leadership of Afghanistan, unjustifiably. He is an elected leader of Afghanistan; he has a difficult job; he is facing a brutal enemy; he has limited resources at his disposal; and he is the best partner that the West can find. Therefore, he should be supported. As far as seeking another round, no, this is not possible. The president has no intention of doing that, and the Afghan constitution will not allow this to take place. We have to make sure, however, that in the remaining 4 years, we work together to focus on our common enemy of terrorism and work closely to achieve our shared objective of peace and prosperity for the Afghan people.

Afghanistan is in the process of trying to establish a consolidated, independent state. In the past, Pakistan has played an interventionist role in Afghanistan, and if you agree with the Pakistani author and journalist Ahmed Rashid, he has argued that the Inter-Services Intelligence* [ISI] *in particular has been extremely intrusive in Afghanistan's internal politics. What is your assessment at this time of the role of Pakistan—the overall net role of Pakistan in Afghanistan's consolidation?

STJ: First, on the national consolidation of Afghanistan, Afghanistan has been a nation for 2,000 years. Pakistan as a state is younger than I am. These are two different distinctions. We as Afghanistan are a strong nation with weak state institutions. What we need to focus on in Afghanistan is to build state institutions and improve the capacity of the state institutions to deliver services to our historically strong nation.

There need be no fear of disintegration of Afghanistan, despite the atrocities of the Taliban, the civil war by the mujahideen groups, the Soviet invasion; we never had a scenario of Afghanistan splitting into different states. In fact, when I was helping with drafting the new constitution, while we were discussing possibilities of even a federal state, people at the grassroots level were very much against it

because they would consider that a way of weakening national unity. So people are jealously maintaining the national unity of the country. But what you need to do—to establish—is to improve the capacity of the government to serve the people.

The role that Pakistan can play is to recognize that terrorism is a threat to the *region*—both to Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will not have stability in Afghanistan unless Pakistan fights extremism and terrorism sincerely, both in Pakistan and in its cross-border infiltration. And vice versa. We have to work with Pakistan closely. This is our closest and best transit route to the outside. Pakistan could benefit from stability in Afghanistan to access the Central Asian market, and the flow of energy from Central Asia through Afghanistan and Pakistan would benefit the region. So we are like twins; our destiny is intertwined. What we are hoping is that all institutions in Pakistan work with us to fight against our common enemies and to work together to achieve our mutual goals of financial prosperity and regional economic reintegration.

Do you believe that the ISI and those people in Pakistan who are considered extremists are continuing to support the Taliban in Afghanistan?

STJ: Unfortunately, the biggest phobia or fear in Pakistan is India. So sometimes in order to confront India or reduce India's influence, extremism is regarded as a tool of policy. We know that this is a dangerous route. Countries in the region—in the world—have taken that path and have paid a heavy price. We see today in Pakistan that the Pakistani people are paying this price through terrorist attacks. Cities such as Lahore, which were centers of civilization and were known for their libraries and bookshops, are now grounds for suicide bombing and roadside bombing. This is unfortunate, and the people and the civilian government of Pakistan have realized this.

Could you discuss the ramifications for Afghanistan of the U.S. decision in 2003 to invade Iraq?

STJ: We are grateful for U.S. assistance. I think the United States came rightfully to Afghanistan, as demanded by the Afghan people and supported by strong international consensus, to fight an enemy that was a threat to the Afghan people, to the region, to the world. It is questionable that the same kind of threat existed in Iraq. We were hoping when the invasion in Iraq took place that the United States would have enough resources to handle both crises, but a lot of attention and resources were diverted to Iraq. The consequences of the continued conflict there also made, by oversimplification and analogy, the rightful Afghan struggle to fight terrorism look similar to the situation in Iraq. So we did pay a price not just in terms of reduction of resources and attention from the United States, but also in that the global perceptions changed to a certain degree—a just and fair war in Afghanistan was compared to Iraq.

Do you believe that if the United States had not diverted those resources, if it had "kept its eye on the ball" in Afghanistan, the problems we are facing today in Afghanistan, the insurgency, could have been headed off much earlier?

STJ: Certainly. If we had had adequate resources to fight the Taliban and terrorists from

the beginning, in a decisive way, we would have permanently resolved the threat. The fact was that the Taliban were not beaten, defeated, or eliminated; they were pushed aside, and military operations stopped when they were pushed aside into the countryside or into Pakistan. If we had continued that fight in a resolute way to completely defeat them and put adequate pressure on the countries in our neighborhood and the region to stop the ideological, financial, and logistical support of the Taliban, we would have not had to pay the prices that we and you are paying today, in terms of military operations and stability costs in Afghanistan.

One of the "solutions" that U.S. forces have concluded will help is the so-called population-centric counterinsurgency. Do you think that will have the effect of defeating the insurgency?

STJ: It will deliver a sense of security, at least to major urban centers, and frankly, it is much more difficult to create a sense of security and stability in big cities than in the countryside because the nature of the terrorists and our brutal enemy is that they use suicide bombing and roadside bombing—tactics that have a lot more psychological impact in more populated areas and big cities. In the countryside, it is less evident.

Talking with my Afghan military folks in Afghanistan—particularly those who fought the Soviets and now are part of our Ministry of Defense—I clearly hear that they have their doubts about the effectiveness of focusing on delivering security only in the big cities. They have fought on the other side, as insurgents too, and they have said to me that if, for instance, you remove a military post on a mountaintop or on the remote roadside in the countryside, then you are making it easier for the terrorist to reach a city in 1 or 2 hours instead of traveling 2 or 3 days over mountain passes to avoid those outposts.

They come to the cities, and they are a lot more lethal in the cities. The point is that if you leave roads in the countryside unattended and these roads are used to supply the terrorists, suicide bombers, and others, then access to the city is much easier. That is what I hear from my generals. That is what I hear from my former anti-Soviet fighters. Once you leave the countryside undefended, the Taliban will not just sit there; they will come to the cities.

So you see this as a risk of the urban population-centric approach?

STJ: The Taliban claim more control of the countryside, and they force more people to join near them. This gives the enemy a bigger playing field. Also, any time and every time that they succeed in bringing a car full of explosives or a suicide bomber, the impact is much greater.

The other side of the coin, if you will, is the so-called civilian surge. In addition to a surge of military personnel, President Obama has proposed a surge of civilian personnel who are diplomatic and development professionals. After nearly a decade of American presence in Afghanistan, do you think that Afghanistan's citizens will welcome civilian Americans?

STJ: Definitely. If Americans, NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization], civilians, or the military came with the mission of helping and protecting Afghan people, they are welcome. Why wouldn't they be? My country is poor. Our only hope is that we will build

Afghanistan through our partnership with the rest of the world. However, if the civilian surge means bringing an expert with a laptop into our ministry or into a remote province, the impact will be limited. We can use the same resources to recruit qualified Afghans. There is capacity in Afghanistan today. However, there is limited capacity of the Afghan government.

The reason that fewer Afghans are working for the Afghan government is that the international organizations, the donors, and even Afghan businesses can afford to pay a lot more. Fortunately, the economy is growing, but Afghans are making a lot more money by forming their own construction companies instead of working for the Ministry of Rural Development. So I think a combined approach of seeing a capacity or competency surge by Afghans, along with bringing a limited number of technical assistants, would work best. I think the civilians coming to Afghanistan should come with a specific, long-term mission of providing technical assistance. They should not push aside or compete with Afghan institutions. And you are right; if they elbow Afghans out, there might be resentment. Overall, better plans of recruiting, empowering, and enabling Afghans will be less expensive, more effective, and a lot more sustainable than bringing a consultant who comes in with a laptop, writes a report on a laptop, and leaves with a laptop. You should invest more in building Afghan human capital.

Do you think that the Afghanistan security forces will be able to assume the full responsibility for national security before the withdrawal of U.S. forces or the International Security Assistance Force?

STJ: They are completely willing—the security forces, the Afghan government, and the Afghan people—to do so. However, their ability to do so effectively depends on two factors. First, to what extent their professional capacities are being built. For instance, we are making significant progress by building the Afghan National Army, and they are fighting well. At the same time, the army still depends heavily for their transport and movement on heavy firepower and air protection, and for their surveillance and intelligence on international sources. We have to build these capacities as part of the army—especially air transport, heavy firepower, close-combat air force, surveillance, and intelligence. That is one factor.

The second factor is how serious the threat remains in Afghanistan. The threat coming to Afghanistan has its roots in the neighborhood, in the region. So if you are able to reduce the amount of support that the terrorists and Taliban are getting from the countries in the region, then our job will be easier. But as long as that support continues, not only Afghans, but our allies in the United States and the NATO countries, will have a tough time defeating this menace. So if we work closely and sincerely at the regional level with our partners, with our neighbors, and if we truly build the capacity of Afghan security forces—meaning army and police—and equally important, the capacity of the Afghan government to deliver services, we will be able to take full responsibility. It is not just enough to have capable soldiers and police forces; the court system should be functioning, the school system, the clinics. So here we are talking about truly enabling the Afghan government to deliver services so that the people can say, "Yes, there is a difference. If the government is here, I am better off." If people do not reach the conclusion that the presence of the government means betterment in their life, they will be neutral; they will take sides as it is

convenient to them. It is the Afghan government's responsibility to show them that if you take our side, we are there to serve you. That capability and these resources are still not there.

You mentioned the relatively successful performance of the Afghan National Army. What about the Afghan National Police? Why are we doing so much less well with the police, and how do we remedy that?

STJ: First, we had the wrong approach. We had the so-called lead nations concept. Germany was the lead nation in building the police force. This was the wrong concept. The lead nation to build anything in Afghanistan is Afghanistan. Everyone else is in the supporting role, and we—Afghans and the international community—should not feel that if the Germans are doing it then we are off the hook; they're on it; we are not. That is what happened. And Germany started with a systematic approach of building police appropriate for peacetime. I remember well engaging with German authorities back then and even our Minister of the Interior; they were talking of giving to the Afghan police force only batons and pistols. It is a noble idea of a civil police, but the enemy is coming at them with RPGs [rocket-propelled grenades], and the police cannot just issue a citation that says "you're wrong being here"; they'd get killed right away. So it was the wrong approach.

And second, there are very limited resources. Since we were initially offering something like $70 per month, we had to enlist whoever showed up, and a lot of people that showed up had no qualifications or had ill intentions. They used the gun and the uniform to make themselves rich. Now this is changing. We are paying better. There is a better training system in place. But still, building police overall is tougher than building the army because in the police force, you have to recruit locally. If you do not have a sense of stability in the locality, in the region, the police force performance will be impaired because the enemy, the terrorists, know who they are—who is their brother, who is their father, who is their uncle—especially in a tribal society. So they get this message, and it says, "Look, we know you are working for the police, but don't forget that we know where your father lives, too." As far as equipment and uniforms, the police are doing much better, but as far as professional training, a lot more investment needs to be made—first to recruit better officers, and second to train them adequately and equip them even more properly.

Is there more the international community could be doing on that particular front?

STJ: We are short 3,000 trainers right now. Of course, you, especially your NATO partners, can send more trainers.

Are Pashtunwali and Afghan Islamism compatible with democracy as we understand it in the United States and Europe?

STJ: Beginning in the 18th century, a certain degree of romanticism and fascination with the Afghan culture and history started, mostly by authors and researchers who came from Europe with colonial powers and troops. Pashtunwali is a code of conduct not different from codes of conduct in Senegal or Colombia, or an Indian tribe in Montana. It is completely compatible with values of freedom, and it is based on equality and dignity.

Frankly, what you mention as Afghan Islamism is the most moderate reading of

Islam that existed before the Soviet invasion. Historically, Afghanistan has been a country where mysticism, which is the most humanistic way of looking into Islam and religion, had strong roots. Even if you look at the prominent Afghan leaders such as President Mujadedi, he's the leader of the Mujadedi, or Naqshbandiya, mystic or Sufi order; so is Pir Gilani, another Afghan leader. So Islam in Afghanistan before the Soviet invasion, before the infusion of extremism from outside and the arrival of the Arabs and other foreign extremists, had the most humanistic, the softest approach that you could imagine.

But yet, are they compatible with democracy? Again, we should look at this question as human beings. If democracy means going to bed without fearing the state secret service or the invasion of an armed group, if democracy means being assured that when your wife gives birth, she and your newborn will survive, if democracy means hoping to have access to basic government services, this is what every human being deserves and demands anywhere in the world. That is our nature as human beings. We want to have a life where we do not have to fear the state police or a terrorist group coming in the middle of the night into our home and ordering us around and asking us if we had prayed that night or not. So the values of freedom, the values of a sense of personal security are universal. Who would want the happy occasion of his wife giving birth to a child turning into tragedy because there is no clinic and his wife is dying? These are the rights to basic services and basic freedoms that people demand. Democracy is a value that is demanded naturally by human beings everywhere. If we think that there are some people who are naturally happy with terror or tyranny, this is racist. That is not right. That is against the nature of human beings.

Furthermore, you are not in Afghanistan to build democracy. We know. But you and I together are in Afghanistan to prevent the imposition of tyranny. We have no option. We have to prevent the imposition of terror and tyranny, and the only way that we can do it is to give a voice to the people, and when they have a voice, when they ask for something, deliver for them. The credibility of democracy is in our ability to deliver. It is not just that you allow a person to express his or her wishes through the media, through the free press or television—we have done that. But the other part is when they say, "I do want a clinic," "I'm fed up with insecurity," "I want a capable police force," you and I should be able to deliver. Otherwise, we undermine this process of building pluralism.

In Afghanistan, we are spending hundreds of millions of dollars empowering people to elect their member of parliament, but that parliament has no say about how the money is spent in Afghanistan, about where the money goes. Imagine you are the delegate of a poor district in Afghanistan and I as a poor Afghan farmer or a poor Afghan teacher come to you and say, "I'm proud I've elected you as my delegate to parliament. We need a school in our village," and you tell me, "Go see the commander of the PRT [Provincial Reconstruction Team] or the director of USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development]." So what will be the level of my confidence in the political system that we've established? Why should I go to vote next time if I see that my government and my representative neither have the information about where money has been spent nor the authority to direct these resources?

But there is also the question of corruption—another aspect of democracy to me is fairness. There have been allegations

of endemic corruption in Afghanistan—that some people, some families, some members of families are getting very rich and building very big houses outside of Kandahar, whereas many people are not benefiting from the transition that Afghanistan is struggling through.

STJ: That is right and this is a serious challenge that we have to examine to find out why it is happening. Why is it that, for instance, an official of the government is getting rich with a salary of $100 or $200 a month? Why is it that the international community is giving a contract to the governor of a province? Nepotism is wrong. Why are a lot of the criminals that have formed the so-called security companies getting paid extensively?

So I absolutely agree with you that corruption adversely affects the life of every Afghan as much as waste affects the perception of state institutions and state-building in Afghanistan. You as a taxpayer have the right to ask why the cost to build a school in Afghanistan is $1 million when an Afghan can build it for $200,000. We have these examples that Afghan nongovernmental organizations and individual Afghans have gone and rebuilt their school in their village for $80,000 while next to it, exactly the same school is being built through the international contracting system for $600,000. That is the challenge that we face. Corruption is a serious problem in Afghanistan. You have mentioned some big corruption—of building these huge houses. That is equally as bad as the petty corruption. The life of an Afghan is sometimes more impacted by the $5 corruption by the police because he has to deal with it every day, as much as the big political corruption.

Here we need to work together. We have to. On our part, we have started the process of registering the property of every government official. We have to take the next step—and the laws are right now being changed—not only to register but ask, "Where did you get this?" "What is the source of this income?" We have just conducted the trial of a former minister accused of taking bribes under new, strong anticorruption laws [designed] to strengthen the mandate of the Anti-Corruption High Office. There is no way to justify waste with corruption or corruption with waste. Both of them are equally bad and both of them create a perception of impunity. I know that there is increased pressure on the contracting system in Afghanistan and that is very welcome. This has been, unfortunately, the case. Most of the post-conflict countries are suffering from this kind of problem because of the big infusion of money coming into the country, and in Afghanistan the matter is even worse, with narcotics, which generate a lot of money.

What is the strategy that you would propose for dealing with the narco-economy that has become such a huge part of Afghanistan's economy?

STJ: That's an excellent question. The international community and the Afghan government together at the beginning did not actually make fighting narcotics a high enough priority in the struggle against terrorism. I think that fighting narcotics and corruption both should be part of the mandate of fighting terrorism because both endanger the lives of Afghans and people in the region and the world. We will only win the fight against terrorism if we deliver the safety and security of the Afghans. If we say that we are here to kill some foreign terrorists who are operating in the mountains, they say, "It's not my fight. I'm not interested." If we fail

to protect the interests of the people, we lose the fight. From the beginning, the mandate for fighting terrorism did not include fighting narcotics. That was a mistake.

Second, a lot of resources—billions of dollars—were spent on eradicating poppy fields. Mistake. Second major mistake. You cannot fight narcotics with eradication. The way to fight narcotics is to prevent cultivation. Once it is cultivated, it is too late. If you eradicate, you push the farmers into the hands of the terrorists. If you do not eradicate, part of the proceeds and money will go to the terrorists. So how we prevent cultivation is by giving an alternative to the farmers. People are not criminal by their nature. If you give them a dignified option, they will take it. But if you push them against the wall, they will kill to survive. Everyone will do this—it's not just in Afghanistan but anywhere. If you and I have to keep our family alive, you would probably break the law if needed. And so, the way to prevent cultivation is to give an alternative. That alternative on one hand could be some new crop, let's try soybeans in Afghanistan. Noble idea, not such a bad idea. However, people have been growing things in Afghanistan for 2,000 years. An Afghan farmer knows exactly what grows in his province, in his village. What we need to do is to add value to this crop by building processing facilities, cold storage, cold transport, and opening new markets for our agricultural products. If people are growing pomegranates in Kandahar or grapes in the Shomali plain north of Kabul, we should be able to transport that to Dubai, to Frankfurt, to Moscow, to somewhere where the value of that increases—or turn it into pomegranate juice instead.

Of course, alongside that we need to keep the pressure on by focusing on interdiction and removing some of the big criminals. The real money in narcotics is in trafficking. It is not in cultivation, it is in trafficking. That is where the value is added. But to answer your question, the best strategy is really to prevent cultivation by providing alternatives to the farmers.

I like the way that you started out with the connection of corruption, terrorism, and illicit drug trafficking. It sounds like what you envision is a holistic approach that realizes their connectivity. Is that a fair description of your comprehensive approach?

STJ: Absolutely. I grew up in Afghanistan. As a child, we did not have a problem of addiction or corruption in government or society. If it were some corruption of paying 5 Afghanis, which is like 10 cents, to get some certificate from some government office, then that kind of corruption might be going on in many other countries; it might be going on in Afghanistan, too. But we never had someone paying $200,000 to a judge. That kind of money did not exist in the entire village where I grew up. We never heard of it, nobody could have seen, actually, 200,000 or 2 million Afghanis. As I grew up, I never saw that much cash in one place. So the issue of corruption is related to narcotics and to insecurity and to these huge infusions of cash through narcotics, through neighboring countries, through development assistance.

We can fight these phenomena only if we assure the Afghan people that what we are doing is to improve their lives. In the fight against terrorism, one of the problems is that we have lost the interest of some of the Afghans. Everybody welcomed the United States when they came into Afghanistan—with open arms—and the Taliban was pushed aside quickly,

mostly with the assistance of the Afghan people because people's anticipation was that the whole world was here to help us out.

But then, when gradually the mission was defined that no, really, it is al Qaeda and certain groups who pose a threat to the region and to the world, Afghans felt that, "Well, my life is endangered by poverty, by the fact that the warlord is taking away my land or my shop. So al Qaeda is a threat. I never liked them, but it does not impact my life on a daily basis." It was not their fight. They became indifferent and said, "If you kill them, if you take them away, good for you, but it's not my fight. If you can help me against the local warlord, if you can help me build a clinic, then I'm with you. If you can't, then good luck." We have to turn this around, so with any decision that we make, any military operation that we conduct, Afghans should see a benefit to themselves that says, "Yes. If you come here and you stay in my village and make sure that the Taliban and criminals are chased away, and you build a school and a court system, I'm with you." And they will be with us. We should show them that if they are with us, they are better off. But if our police are abusive like the terrorists, why should a guy stick out his neck for any of us? You will be pragmatic. When the Taliban is in his village, he is with them. When we come with the military operation, he changes sides and is with us. But he is not going to get himself killed for us, unless we convince him that we are here to serve and protect him and his village permanently.

What should we focus on over the long term? Over the 50-year time span?

STJ: Investing in people and supporting your friends, moderate Afghans. So much was invested in elections, then there were allegations of fraud. A lot of the money that was spent in Afghanistan to finance these plastic boxes, or put them in a helicopter, should have been invested before that in moderation. Empower women's organizations. Empower a young Afghan student from Kabul University who says I want to be the president of the country or in parliament. Go with him and support him and say, "That is a good vision. I want you to be president."

The United States is doing a great job of funding processes and institutions such as elections and a police force. But invest more in building Afghan human capital, the Afghan professional capacity to run and manage these processes and institutions. Support Afghan civil society, support moderation, and support the new generation of young Afghan leaders.

People love the United States for the values it stands for. But still, Afghans need assistance, but assistance should not be giving them cash. Invest in moderation, invest in people, strengthening the culture and political parties in Afghanistan. That is the way to fight warlords, not just replacing one warlord with another. **PRISM**

An Interview with Husain Haqqani

Muhammad Mustehsan

What does success in Afghanistan look like from a Pakistani perspective, and how might it be achieved?

HH: From Pakistan's perspective, a stable Afghanistan—with a government favorably disposed toward Pakistan and that contains the Taliban threat and does not allow it to spill over into Pakistan—would represent success. Without going into history, let me just say that Pakistan's policy now is to help Afghanistan attain long-term stability and build national institutions, including the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. But at the same time, we are realistic enough to understand that Afghanistan's institutions of state will not emerge overnight; it takes decades to build an army; it takes a long time to build an ethos of a comprehensive and integrated civil service. So the first priority in Afghanistan ought to be to beat the insurgency, to contain the Taliban threat, and at the same time to make it possible for reconcilable elements in the insurgency to be brought into the political mainstream through a process of reconciliation. But Pakistan's own security is important to Pakistanis, and we certainly do not want Afghanistan to be used for intelligence or military operations aimed at undermining Pakistan's security.

Could a stable Afghanistan government include the Taliban?

HH: President [Hamid] Karzai has on many occasions said that he does not look upon the Taliban as a monolith. We in Pakistan have also had the experience of the Pakistani Taliban, and we recognize that the Taliban are not a monolithic organization. They are a loose association of likeminded people with different motives. In some cases, the agenda is much more inspired by the global jihad vision of al Qaeda, and

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in some cases it is local grievances that have turned the people into Taliban. So there are reconcilable and irreconcilable elements within the broad groupings known as the Taliban, and including some of them in a political process in Afghanistan is definitely a possibility. A lot of the Taliban happen to be Pashtun, and Pashtun inclusion in Afghanistan's government is significant and important just to be able to create national unity within the country. So I think that we need to make a distinction between reconcilable and irreconcilable elements among the Taliban and engage the reconcilable elements. Of course, it is up to Afghanistan to take the initiative on the Afghan side of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. If the Afghans need any support—political, material, or diplomatic—Pakistan will be forthcoming in providing that support in the process of reconciliation within Afghanistan, but it will have to be an Afghan-led process.

Do you think that the current U.S. counterinsurgency strategy will defeat the irreconcilable Taliban?

HH: I'm not a military man, so I do not claim superior knowledge on the subject of military strategy, but I think that any counterinsurgency strategy needs to have a military component, a political component, and a socioeconomic component. We are seeing the emergence of a comprehensive strategy. There is a military plan now with the forthcoming surge. There is seemingly a political plan relating to the process of reconciliation and reintegration. And then hopefully there will be a sufficiently effective socioeconomic program so that people do not join insurgents in reaction to their own grievances that emanate from being dispossessed.

A major problem in Afghanistan remains resentment against the presence of foreign forces, so the United States will have to address that resentment as well at some point. There are those who are waging an insurgency because they want to take power in Afghanistan, but there are those who would not even become insurgents if there were no foreign presence there. And I think that is something that is being understood by American military leaders. Not only are we the major source of logistics support for NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] in Afghanistan, but also in recent months, we have been working together to make sure that there is a hammer and anvil strategy where, when Pakistan operates against Taliban on the Pakistani side of the border, there is some attempt on the Afghan side by NATO–ISAF forces to ensure that these people do not escape into Afghanistan, and vice versa. But I think that the weakness of the Afghan military remains a factor in putting the burden of counterinsurgency on the Afghan side almost entirely on NATO and ISAF forces.

Given what you have said about the resistance to a foreign presence in Afghanistan, do you think that Western aid, which is usually provided through Western civilians or nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], will be able to win "hearts and minds" in Afghanistan and in Pakistan?

HH: The question of Western aid always becomes a catch-22 question because your own legislators would like greater transparency and accountability in the use of money that is essentially being spent on behalf of your taxpayers. At the same time, if you have a large footprint of foreigners going around the countryside in

Afghanistan or the tribal parts of Pakistan, it is likely to create resentment. People turn around and say, "What do these people really want?" So conspiracy theories are easier to spread when there are a lot of foreigners present. Finding the balance is not easy, but I think that everybody would agree that people in Afghanistan, and for that matter in Pakistan, would like American assistance for our economic growth and for our development. The only question is under what terms should this aid flow and how can the Americans find ways of accountability and transparency that satisfy American taxpayers and legislators without causing offense on the ground by having too heavy an American civilian or NGO presence.

The United States over the past 10 years has developed a "whole-of-government" approach to complex operations. What is Pakistan's strategy for meeting the challenge of its own radical element?

HH: Pakistan, of course, since the election of the democratic government in February 2008, has had a whole-of-government approach as well. Our military has been taking the lead in military operations. We have had successful operations in Swat and South Waziristan and have defeated the insurgents there—cleared a lot of territory. We continue to have the four-step policy of clear, hold, rebuild, and transfer. So the military goes in and clears, and it holds territory that would otherwise have been under Taliban influence. But at the same time, the rebuilding and the transfer require two things: rebuilding requires a lot of resources, but the transfer requires capacity-building. Civilian institutions do not have the capacity at this stage to take over all responsibilities and provide all elements of good governance in formerly Taliban-infested areas. So we hope that we can, with the help of the international community, have an effective policy in which we can use the military to fight, but we can also use political and socioeconomic instruments to ensure that we do not have a recurrence or resurgence of the radicals whom we have already defeated.

So what is the correct approach to the Taliban in Pakistan? Is it the whole-of-government approach or a military answer for insurgency like in Sri Lanka or Algeria?

HH: There is no military answer to an insurgency that involves large numbers of people, many of whom have the support of their tribes or their fellow villagers based on religious sentiment. I think that we need to fight the hardcore and defeat them, but at the same time, we need to create a culture of hope where people realize that they can have a better life here and now and therefore do not need to listen to people who invite them to blow themselves up to be able to have a better life in the hereafter.

We must also understand the social underpinnings of insurgency: the lack of governance or opportunities and the absence of justice that people complain about. One-third of Pakistan's population live below the poverty line and another one-third live just above. To make the argument that the fact that so many people do not have any opportunity for their future, do not have anything to look forward to, has nothing to do with their willingness to become radicals is to deny a significant contributing factor toward the insurgency. I think that there are hardcore ideologues who contribute to radicalism in Pakistan, but then there are a lot of people for whom this is about global injustice, this is about not having a job, this is about not having been to school

ever or having no chance of an education or an opportunity. So we really have to work on several dimensions and make sure that the 42 percent of school-aged children in Pakistan who *do not* go to school can somehow come into the schooling system—that we can actually give young Pakistanis hope that they can have a good life making shoes for Nike rather than improvised explosive devices for the Taliban.

Let's talk about justice for a minute. Some people see the Pakistani judiciary as heroic in upholding democracy and particularly in the movement to return to civilian government. Should the United States provide assistance to the Pakistani judiciary?

HH: We must understand that when people say that they are being denied justice, they're not talking about the constitutional arguments in superior courts. They're talking about the day-to-day running of civil and criminal cases, and there I think that Pakistan's judicial institutions need a lot of investment.

We have fewer judges at the lower levels than we need; our courts are clogged; and litigation usually, especially in civil disputes, proceeds at a slow pace. Similarly, the criminal justice system also suffers from inadequate funding. If we had a good law enforcement machinery, if our police had the kind of equipment and mobility that would help prevent crime, and then if the prosecutorial side of the criminal justice system was able to collect evidence and present it before a court in a timely manner, then we wouldn't have the spectacle of cases—criminal cases—pending for 10, 12, or 15 years.

Try seeing the thing from the perspective of somebody who has been charged, but wrongly so, and has not even been convicted but has had a case pending against him for many years. It's a charge that is pending without the ability to clear the name or for that matter to have a sentence pronounced and then completing that sentence. It's like purgatory for a very long time.

So those are the issues that people are talking about when they say that we need a lot of support for our judicial system. It's not just the superior courts where constitutional and political issues are sometimes addressed; it's the lower courts at the smallest level—the judge for the district who sits in the district headquarters but hardly has any influence over some isolated village. That is where the support and investment are needed.

If the United States wanted to develop a strategy to help Pakistan consolidate the rule of law, what would be the characteristics of that strategy?

HH: First of all, any strategy for the consolidation of rule of law in Pakistan would have to be led by Pakistanis, and any role that the United States has would have to be supportive of that Pakistani strategy. In recent years, there has been a tendency, especially among the aid community in the United States, to think that the solution to corrupt or ineffective government is to bypass government and work through nongovernmental organizations. In some areas, nongovernmental organizations work fine—reproductive health, gender issues. You allow certain women's groups, collectives, et cetera, to work, and you support them with money and resources. That's fine. But in matters such as building of rule of law or building a law enforcement machinery—if you bypass government then you really do not help build institutions of state. You have to work through the state. You have to work through the government.

I think what is needed in the case of Pakistan is an understanding of what it is that has prevented Pakistan from becoming a rule-of-law state. At the macro level, it has been the historic pattern of overthrowing of governments without constitutional process. That is being addressed by the force of public opinion, by cooperation among various political parties, and by the fact that we now have a consensus constitutional reform package going through Parliament. The other part of it is what I said, a micro level—and there I think the real issue is the lack of resources, the lack of technology, and in many cases, the lack of training. And those are the three things where American resources, technology, and training can help.

What does Pakistan look like to you in 10 years? What kind of country do you expect it to be?

HH: I will rephrase the question and say I would like to talk about what kind of country I would *like* Pakistan to be in 10 years. My vision of Pakistan is that of a country with universal access to education for our school-aged children, with a more advanced infrastructure—a nation that sits at the crossroads of opportunities rather than at the crossroads of conflict. After all, Pakistan is strategically located at the crossroads of Central Asia, South Asia, China, and the Middle East. So far, we have always seen ourselves as sitting at the crossroads of the conflicts of these regions, but we can also transform it into a crossroads of opportunity for these regions.

Also, I would like to see a major economic leap forward in terms of becoming a nation that produces and exports much more than we do. Pakistan's agriculture, which used to grow at an average rate of 5 percent per annum during the 1950s, is barely growing and contributing to national economic growth now. And I think that there is plenty of potential there with some land reform, with some policy reform, and with some improved inputs, including a revamp of our irrigation system. With these, we should be able to expand our agricultural growth. And then, the massive movement of populations from the rural areas to the urban areas needs to be better managed. Instead of huge slums in cities, we hopefully will be able to create smaller cities and towns that are self-contained. So that would be the vision for Pakistan that I would have 10 years from now.

And a key element would be peace with India, with resolution of our outstanding disputes, including Kashmir, and a much more stable relationship with Afghanistan in which Afghanistan and Pakistan are partners for stability.

But would Pakistan be a country whose national ideology or national character is oriented toward fundamentalist Islam or a pro-Western orientation?

HH: Pakistanis have time and again voted for democratic, modern, liberal political parties, and I think that trend will continue. Given the opportunity, Pakistanis would like to be part of the 21st century, and while we will always be an Islamic society, we would certainly want to be a modern, democratic, forward-looking, progressive state.

After 30 years of war, do you think that Afghanistan is going to achieve reintegration and consolidation? Will it require or should it have some kind of justice and reconciliation process or prosecution of people who committed crimes in the past?

HH: I think it's a question that should be asked of Afghan leaders. In most situations, it's better to settle and reconcile matters of the past instead of holding grudges, and I think that the Afghan leaders are best equipped to find their correct mechanism for bringing justice to their society, and justice in a manner in which it does not end up becoming or is not seen as settling of scores from the past. Afghanistan has gone through a lot of trauma. It began with the Soviet occupation, but it did not end with the Soviet withdrawal. And the world really neglected Afghanistan, and by extension Pakistan, in the subsequent years. I think it was a big mistake of the United States to walk away from our region after the Soviets left Afghanistan, and I think the international community now recognizes that. That said, all the trauma that the Afghans have gone through would not be resolved if the injustices of the past end up becoming the basis for settling of scores in the present. PRISM

Book Reviews

Complex Peace Operations and Civil-Military Relations: Winning the Peace

By Robert Egnell
Routledge, 2009
219 pp. $125.00
ISBN: 978-0-415-49023-8

REVIEWED BY SCOTT W. LYONS

With the failure of the U.S. military and Coalition Provisional Authority to stabilize Iraq after the successful 2003 invasion, military analysts have noted that a lesson learned is a need for better coordination between the civilian and military powers. This book by Robert Egnell explains how civil-military integration improves both military effectiveness and operational success.

The book rejects Samuel Huntington's theory of complete separation between military and civilian affairs to maximize effectiveness, as espoused in his seminal work *The Soldier and the State*. While Huntington proposes military autonomy to protect domestic powers and military capabilities to conduct conventional warfare, his nonintegrated approach has limitations when the Armed Forces are tasked with counterinsurgency, stabilization, democratization, and economic development. If the mission goal requires an approach to win the "hearts and minds" of the population, unity of effort with the civilian components is essential for military effectiveness. The hearts and minds approach requires demonstration to the local community that the military is going to provide stability and security, and rout opposing forces. However, these military goals must be combined with minimum force, flexibility, and civil tools.

Egnell conveys his theory by contrasting British and U.S. civil-military relations, their methods of conducting warfare, and their Iraq operational failures. As he points out, the British experience in Iraq cannot serve as a complete comparison to the U.S. experience because the United Kingdom (UK) served as the junior coalition partner, was only in the Shiite south, and was not part of the main postconflict planning failures. However, Egnell's lessons learned are useful. The British military was successful fighting counterinsurgency in the colony of Malaya and establishing stability in Sierra Leone due to strong civilian-military cooperation on the ground and within UK central ministries. In Iraq, the British civil-military structures had insufficient cooperation for the military to properly work with local dynamics and politics in order to fulfill long-term stability goals. Furthermore, Egnell notes that the British military was constrained with Iraq by the failure of the interagency process to facilitate coordination at the highest levels, despite a British system designed to encourage this process.

When examining the U.S. civil-military system—founded on checks and balances and with the military largely independent from civilian influence—Egnell suggests that tensions created through the divided system prevent interagency cooperation. Only at the highest levels, with the President as Commander in

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Chief and Secretary of Defense providing civilian oversight of the Department of Defense (DOD), does integration occur. Numerous task forces, working groups, and the National Security Council have all failed to create interagency coordination. The divides even exist within DOD itself, with the structural divide between the civilian and military staffing. These divisions prevent the sharing of expertise and directly harm the conduct of nontraditional military operations.

One of Egnell's fundamental principles for increased effectiveness is the establishment of process-based trust. Interpersonal trust stems from social similarities, shared values, and persistent relationships. Military, development, and diplomacy personnel each develop strong interpersonal trust within their own institutions, while maintaining different organizational cultures and interests that conflict with those of the other institutions. Thus, trust must come from process-based interactions, reciprocity, mutual understanding, and respect across organizational boundaries. When this is not possible, institutional trust and common goals must exist to prevent tension, conflicting decisionmaking, and turf wars. The process-based trust develops through structural solutions, which encourage cross-exposure and cooperation through integration of officers and civil servants to overcome any civilian-military divides.

An example of how trust can overcome cultural divides is the British and U.S. armored divisions' cooperation in Iraq because of strong professional connections. The military cooperation contrasts with the isolation of the U.S. State Department from DOD postconflict planning and the refusal of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (later the Coalition Provisional Authority) to share headquarters with the U.S. military command in Baghdad.

Egnell accurately captures an important issue: The U.S. military and U.S. State Department have begun to recognize the need for integration both at the highest levels of command and at the mission level. The civilian-military partnership is shown through the promulgation of the "3 Ds" (diplomacy, development, and defense) in the U.S. national security strategy and in the planned integration of civilian and military capabilities at U.S. Africa Command. If the military is going to continue with complex peace operations and "military operations other than war," Egnell correctly suggests that there must be a coordinated role with civilian capacities for the effective planing and implementation of postconflict operations.

Egnell's goal is to develop Armed Forces fit for the purpose assigned to them, especially when these functions increasingly involve threats to society stemming from asymmetric warfare, failed or failing states, and transnational criminality. While institutional culture is entrenched in the U.S. military and policy structures, Egnell's recommendations for better integration, more complete contextual understanding, and increased exchange of knowledge and ideas between the civilian and military components are essential to confront the threats of the future. Egnell's work should be well received by U.S. military and civilian personnel seeking to improve military effectiveness in complex operations. PRISM

Book Reviews

American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era

Edited by Suzanne C. Nielsen and Don M. Snider
Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009
490 pp. $34.95
ISBN: 978-0-8018-9288-2

Our Army: Soldiers, Politics, and American Civil-Military Relations

By Jason K. Dempsey
Princeton University Press, 2009
266 pp. $26.95
ISBN: 978-0-6911-4224-1

REVIEW ESSAY BY JOSEPH J. COLLINS

Civil-Military Relations: Theory and Practice

Civil-military relations are a hardy perennial in the study of politics, international relations, and interagency policymaking. In the Clinton era, we worried about a military too big for its camouflaged britches and a potential "crisis" in civil-military relations. Compounding the strife was statistical proof that the officer corps increasingly self-identified as Republicans. In the post-9/11 era, we worried about an overly reticent military leadership whose professional expertise was muffled by civilians, who allegedly micromanaged military plans and operations. Much of the recent analysis reads like a political version of *People* magazine with larger than life admirals and generals—Anthony Zinni, William Fallon, and David Petraeus, for example—jousting with cabinet officers and making "power plays." Retired officers have created their own controversies, endorsing political candidates and even calling for the resignation of cabinet officers. Often absent from these vivid articles are an analysis of the theoretical foundations of civil-military relations or accurate data on what the military actually thinks and believes. Two new books do a great job in filling in some of those blanks. Both books came from officers associated, as I was years ago, with the Department of Social Sciences at West Point. All three of the authors are from the Military Academy's "second graduating class," alumni officers who came back to teach at the Academy and then returned to the Army to reinforce its corps of Soldier-thinkers.

Suzanne Nielsen and Don Snider's book is an edited volume. Such works are too often uneven and not worth the time or tedium to read. The best edited volumes, however, compound the wisdom of the individual authors and are worth their weight in gold. To get to this stage, the book has to be organized along a clear theme, be an original work, and be well designed, and it has to be tightly edited.

Colonel Joseph J. Collins, USA (Ret.), is Professor of National Security Strategy at the National War College.

American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era is such a volume, and it is a highly valuable addition to the theoretical literature on civil-military relations.

The book contains original contributions from experts who attended the West Point Senior Conference in 2007, a *festschrift* on the 50th anniversary of the publication of Samuel Huntington's epic, *The Soldier and the State*. Huntington's classic is best remembered for suggesting that the optimum division of labor is for civilians to make policy and for the admirals and generals to give military advice, avoid politics, and, in return, be accorded professional space in the conduct of tactical and operational affairs. After a few days of discussion and months of subsequent editing, the contributors to this volume—including Columbia's Richard Betts, the University of North Carolina's Richard Kohn, and Duke University's Peter Feaver—had thoroughly analyzed the classical issues, not only critiquing Huntington's basic theory but also bringing the analysis forward to the present day.

New issues are also well covered in this edited volume. Colonel Matthew Moten, USA, of West Point's History Department, wrote an excellent chapter filled with new material on the Shinseki affair, where General Eric Shinseki, the serving Chief of Staff of the Army, was harshly criticized by senior civilians in the Department of Defense for giving an honest answer (which turned out to be presciently correct) to a pointed but fair question about postinvasion Iraq from Senator Carl Levin, now the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Nadia Schadlow, of the Smith-Richardson Foundation, and Colonel Richard Lacquement, USA, of the Army War College faculty, discussed with skill and passion how the Armed Forces should broaden their view of themselves and include stability operations in their concept of military professional competence. Unfortunately, even this large collection was not able to look at the other side of that coin. While many today accept that stability operations are a part of the military's competence, the importance of the whole-of-government approach was not covered in this volume, which was focused only on the military. Noted historian Williamson Murray made important recommendations for future professional military education, and Colonel Chris Gibson, USA, and Richard Kohn suggested commonsense (but generally conservative) rules for active and retired officers to build trust with their civilian superiors, and vice versa. In the end, the civil-military game and its rules belong to the elected and appointed civilian officials in the chain of command. Professor Kohn laid out the conservative interpretation of civil-military interaction that is also pertinent to civil servants, intelligence professionals, and Foreign Service officers:

> *Civilians determine the extent of military responsibility and authority and what will be delegated, and even whether to listen or to consult. They are subject only to the limitations they impose, for various reasons, upon themselves; to the legal checks of other branches of government when they disagree; and to the military and political conditions at any given moment. . . . Thus, civilian control means that the elected leadership, and those whom they appoint, have both the right and the authority to be wrong.*

In the end, no plan survives contact with the enemy, and no classic work from 1957 could endure for 50 years without serious corrections

and amendments. Each of the authors builds on and rejects aspects of Huntington's original theory. In their excellent conclusion, Don Snider and Suzanne Nielsen summarize nine major conclusions on Huntington's theory. In their words, "The most significant shortcoming of Huntington's construct was its failure to recognize that a separation between political and military affairs is not possible—particularly at the highest levels of policymaking" (p. 291). Politics, policy, and strategy are strands in the same rope. To be immersed in the politics of national life at the highest levels of government, a senior officer cannot be a neutral vessel of knowledge who limits his or her input to strictly military concerns. Nearly 200 years ago, Carl von Clausewitz recognized the same phenomenon. He wrote that the most senior military officers required a "thorough grasp of national policy" and, without losing sight of their professional role as generals, they had to become statesmen. And therein lies the rub, as well as the importance of studying civil-military relations in general and this new book on Huntington's theory in particular.

Lieutenant Colonel Jason Dempsey, USA, adds current data and analysis to Nielsen and Snider's treatment of the basic theory of civil-military relations in his excellent book, *Our Army: Soldiers, Politics, and American Civil-Military Relations*, which focuses on the political and social attitudes and behaviors of officers and enlisted personnel in the U.S. Army. The author not only seeks to understand Soldiers, but he also wants to remind those same Soldiers of the "importance of political neutrality" (p. xv). Dempsey gives us an invaluable insight into the complexities of political attitudes within the officers and enlisted personnel of the entire Active Army. In the process, he demolishes a number of commonly held myths about a monolithic, politically active officer corps. His book is one of the first to look analytically at the attitudes and behaviors of the enlisted ranks as well as the officer ranks.

Dempsey begins by tracing the history of U.S. civil-military relations and covers George Washington with special attention. General Washington while still in uniform began our tradition of a nonpartisan military and established the principle of subordination to civil authority. Over the years, with some ups and downs, the nonpartisan, apolitical tradition became so strong in the 20th century that many senior officers such as Omar Bradley and George Marshall never even voted. The author describes the breakdown of this apolitical, nonpartisan ethos in the Cold War era, paying particular attention to the period from the Carter presidency to the present. Throughout his excellent volume, almost every observation is backed up by detailed analyses of survey data, some of which Dempsey gathered in the 2004 Citizenship and Service Survey that he himself designed.

Dempsey expertly traces the dominance of Republican Party preference identification in the Army officer corps. Citing various surveys done under the supervision of Duke's Ole Holsti and Peter Feaver, Dempsey chronicles the gradual "Republicanization" of senior officers from 46 percent after the Carter presidency, to 61 percent a decade later, to 67 percent in 1998. (New, less scientific surveys by the *Military Times* suggest that this trend may be changing and that political party preferences among officers are becoming more balanced.) Dempsey's own data partly confirms the Republican leanings of the officer corps, but he points out that enlisted personnel, ignored in most other surveys, have different and more balanced political preferences than their superior officers. On top of that, newly commissioned officers are shown to be politically savvy, more active than their

predecessors, but "almost evenly split" (p. 150) in their political leanings between the parties. In an interesting side note, Dempsey's surveys showed a majority of cadets enter West Point as self-identified Republicans and that some cadets sensed peer (but not institutional) pressure to identify with the Republican Party.

Political identification, however, is not political participation. Dempsey found that overall, "Members of the army participate in the political process to a lesser degree than their civilian counterparts" (p. 149). Contrary to unscientific declarations in the media, only the officer corps appears "to vote at rates approaching those of their civilian counterparts. Members of the Army are also less likely to display a button, bumper sticker, or sign in support of political campaigns or candidates. . . . Finally, the Army overall appears to donate money at a lower rate than the civilian population" (p. 149). Again, officers were more likely to donate than enlisted personnel or civilians.

Dempsey strongly makes the point that the Army today should serve in the nonpartisan manner exemplified by George Washington. In particular, he decries the activities of retired flag and general officers who, using their military titles, endorse political candidates and make speeches at Presidential conventions. He notes: "At times it seemed as if a virtual arms race had been initiated as both parties sought retired members of the armed forces to sit onstage behind their candidates" (p. 3). These appearances, which are clearly within the civil rights of private citizens, may reflect poorly on the force, sow confusion among its members, and make life more difficult for serving officers who have to deal with insecure civilian superiors.

While the Nielsen and Snider volume tells one how to think about the theory of civil-military relations, Dempsey's book analyzes the political orientations and behaviors of the people in the Army today. While these two books were markedly different in their subject matter and approaches, they share a number of commonsense recommendations on civil military recommendations. First, the military is a distinct profession with its own areas of expertise. The most senior officers participate in decisionmaking with civilians, who at the limit are superior to even the most senior uniformed personnel. Civilian prerogatives derive from the will of the people and are clearly recorded in the Constitution and various laws. Civil-military discourse is thus characterized by "equal dialogue, unequal authority" (p. 293), as Richard Betts reminded us in the Nielsen-Snider volume. To succeed in the highest councils, the leaders of the Armed Forces must know their subject matter, present their arguments convincingly, and earn the trust of their superiors. To do so, they must be scrupulously nonpartisan in word and action. Anything that casts doubt on the nonpartisanship of our most senior leaders is likely to harm the profession and the Armed Forces.

Potential conflicts between citizenship and service have been a constant in our history. Secretary of War Elihu Root told the officers of the Army War College in 1908 that they should serve in a manner characterized by "self-abnegation." He enjoined these Army officers to "never forget your duty of coordination with other branches of service" and ended with a thought on the duty of citizenship: "Do not cease to be citizens of the United States. The conditions of army life are such as to narrow your views. Strive to broaden your sympathies by mingling with those outside of the service and learning from them the things they can teach you. As you are good soldiers, be good citizens." **PRISM**

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