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Forging a Comprehensive Approach to Counterinsurgency Operations

BY ROBERT L. CASLEN, JR., AND BRADLEY S. LOUDON

The United States will face a myriad of new strategic challenges and opportunities in the 21st century that will test its capability and capacity to succeed in an increasingly competitive, dynamic, and uncertain operating environment. A key component to success in future stability operations will be the ability to interpret the seemingly chaotic series of weak global signals and environmental stimuli to draw logically valid connections and conclusions to recognize obstacles and opportunities in advance. Equally important will be the capability, capacity, and will to leverage the appropriate balance of national power in a coordinated, synchronized, and focused manner to mitigate risk and exploit opportunities.

While resourcing will continue to be an important component in this equation, the onus is on the U.S. Government to set the conditions now to shape success in the future. The single most important prerequisite for the assured success of future stability operations will be the ability to foster the conditions required to achieve a comprehensive whole-of-government approach that is forged from unity of effort and purpose across the depth and breadth of the government.

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This will require a cultural shift among key governmental stakeholders to foster an environment where mutually vested cooperation and coordination are the standard, rather than the exception.

Context

To offer legitimate and lasting solutions to this challenge, we must first examine the context and fabric of the current environment to frame the issues. As the United States enters the second decade of the 21st century, it faces an uncertain future that will be strongly influenced by the nature of tomorrow's global operating environment. America's strategic security posture will be impacted by the emergence of several significant global trends, whose collective impact will further test America's capability, capacity, and will to conduct stability operations in support of fragile states. A central component of American foreign policy will focus on building partner capacity with vulnerable governments whose failure would represent a significant strategic risk for the Nation. The way to achieve this strategic goal of building partner capacity will be through the application of comprehensive stability operations.

redistribution of wealth has not been equitably applied, further widening and polarizing the gulf that separates the economically privileged from the deprived of the world

The next decade will likely be defined by persistent conflict, fueled in part by the emergence of several global trends.[1] These global trends will be sources of instability and "drivers of conflict."[2]

Globalization has served to reduce the traditional barriers, boundaries, and borders that have historically isolated nation-states from events and crises in other parts of the world. Events and phenomena that have historically been contained at the national level, such as natural disasters and regime change, now have the potential to collapse the walls of isolation and manifest themselves with global effect. Economic trends such as free trade agreements (for example, the North American Free Trade Agreement), economic unions among nations (such as the European Union), and increased outsourcing of jobs from developed to developing countries have facilitated increased economic interdependence among nations and the distribution of wealth from developed economies to the rest of the world.[3] Ominously, this redistribution of wealth has not been equitably applied, further widening and polarizing the gulf that separates the economically privileged from the deprived of the world. Those disenfranchised by this process will be susceptible to indoctrination of extremist thought and ideology as they seek a viable alternative to their plight.

Increased globalization has ushered in an age distinguished by the rapid transfer of information, ideas, and technologies that have further enabled global innovation and prosperity. The Internet, cellular communications, and digital technologies have made information readily available to those with the means to access it. The information revolution has empowered individuals across the globe, offering on-demand access to a plethora of source materials via the Internet and readily available consumer technologies that are comparable to, or in some cases better than, those of the state.[4]

Information today knows no geographical boundaries. A nation-state's ability to control

U.S. Army (Venessa Hernandez)

Iraqi boy holds tomato grown on demonstration farm with use of drip irrigation technology

and/or restrict the flow of information has seriously waned, replaced by individuals and groups intent on exporting terror across the globe. Indeed, America's adversaries have successfully exploited these informational and technological advancements to further their extremist ideology and operations, and will do so increasingly in the future.[5] While these advances have had many beneficial effects globally, they have also had the converse effect of empowering individuals and groups intent on inflicting harm to the state and its people.

The world's growing population, coupled with a rapid urbanization in developing nations, will stress government capacities to provide essential services to populations, particularly in developing nations where expanding reproduction rates are projected to increase developing populations from 5.6 billion in 2009 to 7.9 billion by 2050.[6] The fragile and burgeoning governments of the developing world will be most susceptible to the destabilizing effects of unchecked population growth due to their immature and/or dilapidated infrastructures. Compounding this issue will be an increased demand for ever-dwindling natural resources, exacerbated by the growing middle-class demands of China and India,[7] which will increase competition and tensions among developed nations. The converse effect of these trends is that developing nations will increasingly struggle to secure the natural resources required to meet their populations' basic needs—potentially setting the stage for a Malthusian crisis.[8] Episodic events such as natural disasters and pandemics will continue to have the potential to aggravate the destabilizing effects of overpopulation by further heightening the demands placed on governments, and in some

extreme cases may serve to be the proverbial "straw that breaks the camel's back."

Changing Character of Conflict

As the world rapidly evolves, so too will the character of conflict. Future conflicts will vary in size and scope across the entire spectrum of conflict.[9] Combat will likely be waged by a diverse combination of state and nonstate actors. America's adversaries will pursue a dynamic combination of means, shifting their employment in rapid and surprising ways. Future adversaries will likely use a tailor-made mix of sophisticated conventional and unconventional tactics and weaponry to mitigate our advantages and accentuate their own strengths.

the first step for a successful counterinsurgency strategy is to develop a clear understanding and appreciation of the indigenous environment

Hybrid threats, epitomized by Hizballah against Israel in southern Lebanon in 2006, will increasingly challenge state actors' ability to maintain security domestically and peace internationally.[10] These hybrid nonstate actors will possess many of the same trappings as a nation-state, such as sophisticated weaponry and tactics, yet will not be handicapped by bureaucracies or restricted by geographical boundaries. They will be distinguished by their organizational flexibility, agility, and adaptability. These nonstate actors with direct or indirect state support, often operating in friendly or neutral nations, will asymmetrically employ a dynamic combination of conventional, irregular, terrorist, and criminal capabilities against the United States and its allies designed specifically to counter and neutralize our advantages.

Future conflict will increasingly be waged among the people rather than around them. Potential adversaries have taken note of America's experience in counterinsurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq, learning how irregular forces can successfully counter a larger and more powerful military force. These conflicts have shown that an insurgency can survive, despite constant military pressure, by drawing closer to a supportive and/or passive populace to conduct operations designed to attrite national will and counter efforts aimed at legitimacy.[11] As America's success in Iraq has demonstrated, an insurgency can only survive as long as it maintains legitimacy among, and thus the support of, the indigenous population. The loss of an insurgency's legitimacy will lead to its eventual defeat. Therefore, gaining and maintaining legitimacy of the host nation government and the marginalization of insurgent groups will continue to be the primary goal of counterinsurgency operations. U.S. Government ability to field people with the appropriate balance of skills and vision to bridge the cultural divide and strike a mutually beneficial relationship with our indigenous partners will be a vital component of future success.

Understanding the Operating Environment

As the Multi-National Division–North commander in Iraq from 2008–2009, I had the opportunity to put theory into practice. The first step for a successful counterinsurgency strategy is to develop a clear understanding and appreciation of the indigenous environment, all the while realizing that stability operations must be consistent with

the historical and cultural norms of the country in which our efforts reside. The web of a society is made up of numerous historic, religious, tribal, political, and economic threads, which, taken collectively, constitute the fabric of a culture. Much like the fabric of a sweater, each thread is interwoven and interdependent on the others to form the whole. Pulling on an individual thread within a sweater has an effect on the others and adversely affects the entire object. Such is the case with the interdependent threads of the cultural fabric of a society. Consequently, we must be able to invest the intellectual rigor and restraint necessary to avoid potentially adverse second- and third-order effects of American action and inaction.

What confronts our people on the ground is the most complicated battlefield in the history of warfare—an asymmetrical "three-block war." On one block, we may be engaged in a vicious fight; on the next block, we may be building a school; and on the third block, we may be restoring water and power—with all of this being done simultaneously. Each and every day, U.S. personnel will make life-or-death decisions within the blink of an eye—to process, decide, and take action. It is within this complex, uncertain, and unrelenting operating environment that the most junior people will be making decisions and holding responsibilities normally associated with more senior leaders. They must be reliant on their wits, values, and cultural understanding to succeed in this environment.

The most pressing obstacle hindering our cultural understanding is an arrogant and haughty attitude. It is critically important to understand the fabric of the society that we are working in to cultivate and develop relationships with indigenous partners; relationships must be built on a foundation of mutual trust and respect and then sustained. These trust- and value-based relationships are only realized after hours and hours of shared hardships, dialogue, and understanding. In forging these types of relationships, we must be aware of our internal biases and preconceptions, and limit their negative effects on the relationships we are trying to cultivate, develop, and build.

This is a comprehensive issue that transcends the military and affects all U.S. departments and agencies that support stability operations. Apart from the need to forge relationships based on trust and value, we must be able to develop agile and adaptive thinkers who are able to sort through the kaleidoscope of societal threads to recognize patterns and exploit opportunities as necessary. These individuals must have the ability to analyze who and what is truly important, who must be engaged, and which leaders must be marginalized—as well as when this must be done and to what degree. Above all, these individuals must be able to discern the natural hierarchy of order, to include important social patterns, nodes, and networks, and then draw logical conclusions and predictive patterns from these relationships.

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A fundamental part of this task is identifying and understanding the role of resident networks within a society. The common denominator in any analysis of these networks should center on the question of legitimacy. Does this particular network have a disabling or enabling

Soldier surveys greenhouse project started by State Company for Mechanical Industries to improve agriculture in Maysan Province, Iraq

U.S. Army (Jeremy Campbell)

impact on legitimacy? Those networks that have a disabling effect, such as vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and hostile third-nation groups, should be the focus of security efforts to eliminate or mitigate their effects. Those networks that have an enabling effect, such as essential services, businesses, and local/provincial governments, should be supported comprehensively through focused U.S. efforts.

For a government to be legitimate in the eyes of its people, it must be able to provide security, essential services, and the rule of law. One of the mental tools that we found most useful in assessing our progress was the acronym SWEAT–MTS (sewage, water, electricity, agricultural, trash, medical, transportation, and schools). This simple device helped us identify and focus our efforts on fixing, maintaining, and improving these enabling networks. By focusing our efforts, we were able to continually assess these key nodes, constantly improve them, and fix them when necessary. A fair question is: What does one of these enabling networks look like? Take, for instance, an irrigation network: to produce crops, a farmer needs irrigation, but irrigation can only be accomplished through a robust canal network capable of distributing the water from point A to points B, C, and D. To fill the canals, the farmer will need pumps that can divert water and distribute it throughout the extensive canal system. The pumps require electricity to operate. Electricity, in turn, requires generators, which require fuel and maintenance. Moreover, all of this requires the expertise of human capital that needs to be trained to operate the facets of this network properly.

Each individual operational environment requires a subjective analysis, and the tools and requirements to achieve success will most certainly vary. Yet possessing individuals capable of

bringing clarity to the operational environment has universal application, and only those nations that can leverage this human capital will achieve success. Our collective challenge is to harness the vast capacities of the U.S. Government and tap into America's inexhaustible human capital to identify, train, and progressively leverage the adaptable and agile thinkers needed to realize success in the future. This is an enduring task, for true understanding is an endless pursuit.

Unity of Effort in the Interagency Approach

The dynamic, complex, and uncertain operating environments of the 21st century will test the mental agility, adaptability, and cooperative nature of the Nation's civilian and military personnel as never before. It is within this context that our ability to plan, coordinate, assess, and focus our collective national power in an efficient and synchronized manner mitigates the conditions leading to instability. We must always be mindful that regardless of agency affiliation, our mission is the same: to establish the foundations of a lasting peace through the instruments of our national power. We must break down the cultural barriers, myopic viewpoints, and parochial agendas that hinder efforts to build a cohesive and focused whole-of-government team.

This requires a fundamental cultural shift in attitudes toward our interagency efforts. Leadership will be a vital component of this effort. Key stakeholder leaders must promote atmospheres where the spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork is encouraged, and where the negative effects of suspicion, infighting, and self-interested agendas are eliminated.

This collaborative spirit along with operational *lessons learned* and *best practices* must be comprehensively and robustly infused into our collective and individual educational and training models. To accomplish this daunting task requires honest and objective assessments of internal capabilities, limitations, and redundancies, and a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities for each organization. Only by achieving a truly united effort can we hope to eliminate the disparate and redundant efforts that hinder the accomplishment of our collective mission and foster a comprehensive approach forged from unity of effort and purpose.

Our operational role will be to mentor, assist, and enable our host nation partners to make the best decisions possible for their country as well as ours. To do so, we must have the humility to give deference and respect to the knowledge and customs of our indigenous partners—all the while remembering that American solutions to problems will likely not always be the correct answer. Conversely, we must realize that purely indigenous solutions may be flawed as well. The challenge will be to arrive at solutions based on consensus, feasibility, and overall effect. When weighing possible courses of action, we must ask ourselves: *What is good for the society as a whole*? Merely implementing a solution that is good for one particular segment of the population runs the risk of alienating and marginalizing other segments, thus creating drivers of instability as a result. It is a leader's job to weigh the possible secondary and tertiary effects and implement a solution

the operating environments of the 21st century will test the Nation's civilian and military personnel as never before

for the greater good. That is precisely why it is so important that we have the personnel who can assist our decisionmakers in understanding the operational environment.

we can never replicate the personal experience and cultural expertise of those who live in a particular society

We must be cognizant of the fact that partnerships are *defined* by the value of mutual benefit and *developed* by the interpersonal skills that seek trust, mutual understanding, and respect. This maxim applies equally to our interagency relationships, as well as to our external relationships and partnerships with nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental agencies, multinational allies, and indigenous partners. This outward-looking task is all the more daunting when viewed through the prism of Western preconceptions and agency-centric agendas. Predeployment training and education, as well as operational coordination and intelligence-sharing, can help alleviate some of the adverse effects of our own prejudices. However, they will never be enough. Regardless of how brilliant we may think we are, we can never replicate the personal experience and cultural expertise of those who live in a particular society. That is why every effort should be made to build the partnerships and relationships necessary for us to lift the cultural veil and enable our efforts.

The dynamic power of relationship-building was impressed upon us while we were in Iraq. With the implementation of the Security Agreement, American forces were precluded from conducting unilateral operations. The stipulations of the Security Agreement mandated that we conduct bilateral partnered operations with the Iraqi Security Forces. The quandary that we faced was how we were to achieve effects on the ground if we were unable to unilaterally affect the outcome. Iraq was a sovereign country, with a sovereign military, that no longer needed to heed our advice or requests. This dilemma was further complicated when American forces were required to move out of the cities on June 30, 2009. How could we accomplish our mission when we were not even alongside our Iraqi partners? The only viable solution was to fully engage our partners and build the relationships that enabled us to earn their trust. Through this trust, we had an effective mentoring and coaching partnership. The forcing mechanism of the Security Agreement compelled us to build the types of relationship that we should have established much earlier, yet had not. By building relationships based on respect and defined by mutual benefit, we were able to get the Iraqi Security Forces to achieve the effects called for.

The true power of relationships was further reinforced for us through the special bond that we forged with one of the provincial governors in our area of operations. This firebrand governor had been an outspoken Sunni opponent of the American "occupiers," as well as the Kurdish presence within Arab lands. Indeed, most saw his position as intractable, and engagement seemed pointless. Although we had to work through these concerns, by constantly developing an interpersonal relationship, we were able to ultimately *earn* his trust. By clearly laying out how our efforts could benefit the governor politically and improve the lives of the people at the same time, we were able to break through his suspicions and establish a relationship built on *value* and *vested interest*.

This relationship was also able to diffuse drivers of instability (for example, Arab-Kurd tensions along disputed internal boundaries separating Iraq and the Kurdish regional government) and achieve at least some temporary effects that benefited all.

The true lesson of this particular story is that effective relationships are not developed by happenstance. They are earned. They require people with the interpersonal skills to connect with others, overcome possible hostilities and misconceptions, and earn the other parties' trust. Relationships are defined by the value they add to each party. The strongest relationships are ones in which each party equally benefits (that is, success for one constitutes success for the other). Every effort should be made to develop and mature the interpersonal skills our personnel need to build relationships and forge partnerships. Our personnel should be armed with the negotiation and dispute resolution skills required to reach compromise and overcome impasses.[12] Relationship-building is not a task that comes naturally to the military, but it is one that we must collectively master in the future if we hope to be successful.

An important component of that effort extends back to strengthening our relationships with our joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) partners. By building these relationships based on trust and value, we can focus collective capabilities in a comprehensive and synchronized manner. These relationships need to be habitual and enduring, rather than established in-theater when the stakes are for real. This particular revelation occurred prior to our deployment. Despite predeployment training meetings with key agencies and departments, we still felt inadequately prepared in terms of training and resources on what was necessary for a practitioner to build Iraqi governance and its economy. The bottom line is that we lacked the expertise, experience, and training needed, and that our JIIM partners were not resourced to assist us in the manner required.

With nowhere else to turn, we came to the sobering realization that we were going to have to train and educate ourselves for the mission ahead. After much consideration and exhaustive searches, I came across *Tell Me How This Ends*, Linda Robinson's book about General David Petraeus's efforts in Iraq.[13] This book served as a roadmap of sorts in formulating our plan for economic recovery in Northern Iraq. We also used the agricultural expertise of the University of Hawaii to aid us in our efforts to revitalize Northern Iraq's agricultural industry. As incredible as it may seem, our efforts, which represented the tip of American strategic efforts, were based on lessons gleaned from a book and an American university. The point is that despite the vast and comprehensive training and educational enablers already resident within our national apparatus, it was still unequipped to help us on the key counterinsurgency tasks and skills required to build governance and stimulate economic development.

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Building Interagency Knowledge and Training Programs

To remedy this problem in the future, it is necessary for the United States to enforce the interdepartmental cultural changes required

by expanding the scope of interagency efforts to establish a more permanent, enduring, and robust education, training, doctrine, materiel, and organizational approach among the various agencies engaging in stability operations. This could be accomplished in various ways, some of which would simply require an expansion of existing efforts. Programs and initiatives such as embedded training opportunities and the expansion of interagency educational opportunities could help to alleviate cultural misconceptions and streamline agendas. Introducing a common language for interagency efforts would help eliminate the confusion associated with the various terminologies unique to each agency. Additionally, we must be able to build our teams prior to deployment by aligning and synchronizing deployment cycles to be mutually supportive. Above all, we must promote the social conditions necessary to develop a truly interactive and collaborative atmosphere among all stakeholders.

To add the necessary order to this process, senior American leaders must have a professional mastery of the projection of national power and a profound understanding of the underpinnings of the society in which they operate. They must be able to identify the issues, decide the effects needed and their correct sequencing, and direct how this must all be accomplished. Additionally, they must be cognizant of the changing character of conflict. Unlike days past, where combat power was massed at a singular decisive point within the operational depth of the battlefield, in a counterinsurgency decisive points manifest throughout society. These leaders must function as the focal points in interagency efforts, establishing climates of collaboration and cooperation by forging the relationships and partnerships required to achieve the desired effects.

A key component to implementing the leaders' vision will reside in subordinates who are astute and adept enough to collaboratively work within the context of an interagency environment. These agile and adaptive subordinates must possess the interpersonal skills required to build consensus and relationships among partners and the critical thinking skills to correctly identify and leverage the vast array of resources and enablers of national power. To accomplish this requires a broad graduate-level understanding of the functions, resources, abilities, and limitations of the various agencies and departments within the U.S. Government.

The creation of an "Interagency University" able to produce individuals with a comprehensive understanding of the application of national power would help to "alleviate bureaucratic, policy and resourcing friction by fostering the conditions necessary for the development, acceptance and application of comprehensive doctrine, language and processes across all United States Governmental Departments and Agencies."[14] Graduates would serve as a synchronizing element and enabling influence for future interagency training, educational, and operational efforts. These agile and adaptive leaders would be able to leverage all the instruments of national power in a precise and effective manner, unencumbered by organizational agendas and bias. This cadre of elite, multifaceted strategic thinkers would serve as a foundation in the Nation's quest to achieve a truly collaborative and cooperative whole-of-government approach to counterinsurgency and stability operations.

Conclusion

Given the complexity of the 21st-century operating environment and the rapidly evolving character of conflict, the United States must establish and maintain a unity of effort to realize

future strategic success. Forging a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency operations will require the breakdown of cultural barriers, establishment of innovative training and educational paradigms, promotion of atmospheres of collaboration and cooperation, and establishment of relationships and partnerships based on trust and value. This will only be realized by sweeping changes to how U.S. departments and agencies plan, train, organize, educate, and develop the next generation of leaders.

Perhaps the most essential area of attention is leadership development. The focus of these programs is to build agile and adaptive leaders who are not only culturally astute with indigenous populations, but also astute, knowledgeable, and effective when operating among various agencies and departments within the government. A key component of this effort will be how we collectively address this challenge. A good place to start would be in the chartering of an Interagency University devoted to producing the strategic leaders versed in the comprehensive application of national power. These individuals would serve as the foundation for future interagency efforts.

The future lies undiscovered. It is up to us to help shape and define it. This task will require hard work, sacrifice of personal and organizational agendas, and, above all, our collective focus. The challenges confronting us are varied and complex, but together we can successfully forge a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency operations in the 21st century. **PRISM**

Notes

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[2] Field Manual 3–07, *Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, October 2008), 12–13.

[3] Ibid., 1.

[4] Jarret M. Brachman, "High-Tech Terror: Al-Qaeda's Use of New Technology," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 30, no. 2 (Summer 2006).

[5] Ibid., 4.

[6] United Nations (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision* (New York: UN, 2009); UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2009 Revision* (New York: UN, 2009).

[7] Ibid., 1.

[8] Population theory postulated by British political economist Thomas Malthus (1766–1834), in which the world's population outpaces its finite capacity to secure natural resources leading to catastrophic effects. See Robert Kunzig, "Population 7 Billion," *National Geographic*, January 2011.

[9] Field Manual 3–0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, February 2008), 1–13.

[10] Ibid., 1.

[11] *The United States Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Manual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Field Manual 3–24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, April 2009), chapter 2.

[12] See Roger Fisher, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 2d ed. (New York: Penguin, 1991).

[13] Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008).

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Terrorist-Criminal Pipelines and Criminalized States

Emerging Alliances

BY DOUGLAS FARAH

On July 1, 2010, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York unsealed an indictment that outlined the rapid expansion of operations of transnational criminal organizations and their growing, often short-term strategic alliances with terrorist groups. These little-understood transcontinental alliances pose new security threats to the United States, as well as much of Latin America, West Africa, and Europe.

The indictment showed drug-trafficking organizations (DTOs) in Colombia and Venezuela—including the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), a designated terrorist organization by the United States and European Union—had agreed to move several multiton loads of cocaine through Liberia en route to Europe.

The head of Liberian security forces, who is also the son of the president, negotiated the transshipment deals with a Colombian, a Russian, and three West Africans. According to the indictment, two of the loads (one of 4,000 kilos and one of 1,500 kilos) were to be flown to Monrovia from Venezuela and Panama, respectively. A third load of 500 kilos was to arrive aboard a Venezuelan ship. In exchange for transshipment rights, the drug traffickers agreed to pay in both cash and product.

What the drug traffickers did not know was that the head of the security forces with whom they were dealing was acting as an informant for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and had recorded all conversations, leaving the clearest body of evidence to date of the growing ties between established designated Latin American terrorist organizations/drug cartels and emerging West African criminal syndicates that move cocaine northward to lucrative and growing markets in Europe and the former Soviet Union.[1] The West African criminal syndicates, in turn, are often

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allied and cooperate in illicit smuggling operations with operatives of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), a radical Islamist group that has declared its allegiance to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda.

In recent years, the group has relied primarily on kidnappings for ransom to finance its activities and is estimated by U.S. and European officials to have an annual budget of about $10 million.

An ongoing relationship with the FARC and other DTOs from Latin America to protect cocaine shipments into Europe would exponentially increase the AQIM revenue stream, and with it, operational capacity. Other cases show that AQIM would transport cocaine to Spain for the price of $2,000 a kilo. Had the proposed arrangement been in place for the 1,500-kilo load passing through Liberia, the terrorist group would have reaped $3 million in one operation. Had it been the 4,000-kilo load, the profit of $8 million would have almost equaled the current annual budget.

AQIM's stated goal is to overthrow the Algerian state and, on a broader level, to follow al Qaeda's strategy of attacking the West, particularly Europe. The ability to significantly increase its operating budget would facilitate recruiting, purchasing of weapons, and the ability to carry larger and more sophisticated attacks across a broader theater. It would also empower AQIM to share resources with al Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups in Africa and elsewhere, increasing the operational capacity to attack the United States and other targets.

The central aspect that binds these disparate organizations and networks, which in aggregate make up the bulk of nonstate armed actors, is the informal (meaning outside legitimate state control and competence) "pipeline" or series of overlapping pipelines that these operations need to move products, money, weapons, personnel, and goods. These pipelines are perhaps best understood as a series of recombinant chains whose links can merge and separate as necessary to meet the best interests of the networks involved. *Nonstate armed actors* in this article are defined as:

- terrorist groups motivated by religion, politics, or ethnic forces
- transnational criminal organizations, both structured and disaggregated
- militias that control "black hole" or "stateless" sectors of one or more national territories
- insurgencies, which have more well-defined and specific political aims within a particular national territory, but may operate from outside of that national territory.

Each of these groups has different operational characteristics that must be understood in order to comprehend the challenges that they pose.[2] It is also important to note that these distinctions are far blurrier in practice, with few groups falling neatly into one category or even two. Insurgencies in Colombia and Peru are also designated terrorist groups by the United States and other governments, and they participate in parts of the transnational criminal structure. These emerging hybrid structures change quickly, and the pace of change has accelerated in the era of instantaneous communication, the Internet, and the criminalization of religious and political groups.

What links terrorist and criminal organizations together are the shadow facilitators who understand how to exploit the seams in the international legal and economic structure, and who work with both terrorist and criminal organizations. These groups use the same

pipelines and the same illicit structures, and exploit the same state weaknesses. Of the 43 Foreign Terrorist Organizations listed by the Department of State, the DEA states that 19 have clearly established ties to DTOs, and many more are suspected of having such ties.[3]

While the groups that overlap in different pipeline structures are not necessarily allies, and in fact occasionally are enemies, they often make alliances of convenience that are short-lived and shifting. Even violent drug cartels, which regularly take part in bloody turf battles, frequently engage in truces and alliances, although most end when they are no longer mutually beneficial or the balance of power shifts among them.

An example of the changing balance of power is that of *Los Zetas*, a group of special operations soldiers in Mexico who became hit men for the Gulf Cartel before branching out and becoming a separate organization, often now in direct conflict with their former bosses of the Gulf organization.

Another case that illustrates the breadth of the emerging alliances among criminal and terrorist groups is Operation *Titan*, executed by Colombian and U.S. officials in 2008 and still ongoing. Colombian and U.S. officials, after a 2-year investigation, dismantled a DTO that stretched from Colombia to Panama, Mexico, the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Most of the drugs originated with the FARC in Colombia, and some of the proceeds were traced through a Lebanese expatriate network to fund Hizballah, a radical Shi'ite Muslim terrorist organization that enjoys the state sponsorship of Iran and Syria.[4]

Colombian and U.S. officials allege that one of the key money launderers in the structure, Chekry Harb (also known as "Taliban"), acted as the central go-between among Latin American DTOs and Middle Eastern radical groups, primarily Hizballah. Among the groups participating in Harb's operation in Colombia were members of the Northern Valley Cartel, right-wing paramilitary groups, and Marxist FARC.

This mixture of enemies and competitors working through a common facilitator or in loose alliance for mutual benefit is a pattern that is becoming common—and one that significantly complicates the ability of law enforcement and intelligence operatives to combat, as multiple recent transcontinental cases demonstrate.

In late 2010, the DEA used confidential informants in Mali to pose as FARC representatives seeking to move cocaine through the Sahel region. Three men claiming to belong to AQIM said the radical Islamists would protect the cocaine shipments, leading to the first indictment ever of al Qaeda affiliates on narco-terrorism charges.[5] Those claiming to be AQIM associates were willing to transport hundreds of kilos of cocaine across the Sahara Desert to Spain for the price of $2,000 per kilo.[6] That case came just 4 months after Malian military found a Boeing 727 abandoned in the desert after unloading an estimated 20 tons of cocaine, clear evidence that large shipments are possible. The flight originated in Venezuela.[7]

In another indication of cross-pollination among criminal organizations, in late 2010, Ecuadorian counterdrug officials announced the dismantling of a particularly violent gang of cocaine traffickers, led by Nigerians who were operating in a neighborhood near the international airport in the capital of Quito. According to Ecuadorian officials, the gang, in addition to controlling the sale of cocaine in one of Quito's main districts, was recruiting "mules" or drug carriers to carry several kilos at a time to their allied network based in Amsterdam to distribute throughout Europe.

The Nigerian presence was detected because they brought a new level of violence to the drug game in Quito, such as beheading competitors. They were allegedly acquiring the drugs from Colombian DTOs.[8]

nonstate actors exercise a significant degree of control over the regions, and that control may occasionally be contested by state forces

Because of the clandestine nature of the criminal and terrorist activities, designed to be as opaque as possible, we must start from the assumption that whatever is known of specific operations along the criminal-terrorist pipeline represents merely a snapshot of events, not a definitive record, and it is often out of date by the time it is understood.

Both the actors and territory (or portion of the pipelines they control) are constantly in flux, meaning that tracking them in a meaningful way is difficult at best. As shown by the inter- and intra-cartel warfare in Mexico, smaller subgroups can either overthrow the existing order inside their own structures or break off and form entirely new structures. At that time, they can break existing alliances and enter new ones, depending on the advantages of a specific time, place, and operation.

The Criminalized State

The cases above show the connectivity among these disparate groups operating along different geographic parts of the overall criminal-terrorist pipeline. Rather than operating in isolation, these groups have complicated but significant interactions with each other based primarily on the ability of each actor or set of actors to provide a critical service to another, while profiting mutually from the transactions. Many of the groups operate in what have traditionally been called "ungoverned" or "stateless" regions. However, in many of these cases, the groups worked directly with the government or have become the de facto governing force in the areas they occupy.

This is an important shift from the traditional ways of looking at stateless areas, but offers a prism that provides a useful way of understanding alternatively governed (nonstate) regions and the interconnected threat that they pose to the United States.

There are traditional categories for measuring state performance developed by Robert Rotberg and others in the wake of state failures at the end of the Cold War. The general premise is that "[n]ation-states fail because they are convulsed by internal violence and can no longer deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants."[9] These traditional categories of states are:

- strong, or able to control its territory and offer quality political goods to its people
- weak, or filled with social tensions, and the state with a limited monopoly on the use of force
- failed, or in a state of conflict, with a predatory ruler and no state monopoly on the use of force
- collapsed, or no functioning state institutions, and a vacuum of authority.[10]

This conceptualization, while useful, is limited. Of more use is viewing those alternatively governed spaces as existing "where territorial state control has been voluntarily or involuntarily ceded in whole or part to actors other than the relevant legally recognized sovereign authorities."[11]

It is important to note that the "ungoverned" regions under discussion, as implied in the definition above, while out of the direct control of a state government, are not truly "ungoverned spaces." In fact, nonstate actors exercise a significant degree of control over the regions, and that control may occasionally be contested by state forces. The underlying concepts of positive and negative sovereignty developed by Robert H. Jackson are helpful in this discussion because they give a useful lens to examine the role of the state in specific parts of its national territory.[12]

These regions, in fact, are governed by nonstate actors who have, through force or popular support (or a mixture of both), been able to impose their decisions and norms, creating alternate power structures that directly challenge the state, often in the absence of the state. The Federation of American Scientists refers to these groups as "para-state actors."[13] Regardless of the terminology, the absence of a state presence or a deeply corrupted state presence should not be construed as a lack of a functioning government.

This definition allows for a critical distinction, still relatively undeveloped in current literature, between nations where the state has little or no power in certain areas and may be fighting to assert that control, and nations where the state in fact has a virtual monopoly on power and the use of force, but turns the state into a functioning criminal enterprise for the benefit of a small elite.

The latter is similar to the "captured state" concept developed by Phil Williams,[14] but differs in important ways. Captured states are taken hostage by criminal organizations, often through intimidation and threats, giving the criminal enterprise access to some parts of the state apparatus. A criminal state, however, counts on the integration of the state's leadership into the criminal enterprise and the use of state facilities (for example, aircraft registries, facilitation of passports and diplomatic status on members of the criminal enterprise, accounts in the central bank, and End User Certificates to acquire weapons).

A further variation of the criminal state occurs when a functioning state essentially turns over or franchises out part of its territory to nonstate groups to carry out their own agenda with the blessing and protection of the central government or a regional power. Both state and nonstate actors share in the profits from the criminal activity.

Both of these models, but particularly the model of states franchising out their territory to nonstate actors, are growing in Latin America through the sponsorship of the "Bolivarian Revolution" (led by Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, including Evo Morales of Bolivia, Rafael Correa of Ecuador, and Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua) of nonstate armed groups. The principal criminal activity providing the revenues is cocaine trafficking, and the most important (but not sole) recipient of state sponsorship is the FARC.

alternatively governed spaces generally overlap into several states because of the specific advantages offered by border regions

The traditional four-tier categorization of states suffers from another significant omission. The model presupposes that "stateless regions" are largely confined within the borders of a single state. This is, in reality, hardly ever the case. Alternatively governed spaces generally overlap into several states because

Venezuela under Hugo Chávez fits model of criminalized state franchising its territory to nonstate actors such as FARC

Agência Brasil

of the specific advantages offered by border regions. The definition of a geographic "black hole" is useful in conceptualizing the use of border regions and the downward spirals they can generate in multiple states without causing the collapse of any of them: "A black hole is a geographic entity where, due to the absent or ineffective exercise of state governance, criminal and terrorist elements can deploy activities in support of, or otherwise directly relating to criminal or terrorist acts, including the act itself."[15]

For example, Latin America is almost absent from leading indexes of failed states. This is in large part because the indexes are state-centric and not designed to look at regions that spill over across several borders but do not cause any one state to collapse. For example, only Colombia (ranked 41) and Bolivia (ranked 51) are among the top 60 countries in the "Failed States Index 2009," published by *Foreign Policy* and the Fund for Peace.[16] Yet the governability of certain areas in the border regions of Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize; the Rio San Miguel border region between Ecuador and Colombia; the Guajira Peninsula on the Venezuela-Colombia border; most of the border regions of Central America; and many other regions clearly qualify as black holes. This proliferation of black holes in border regions can be explained because of the advantages offered by border regions.

As Rem Korteweg and David Ehrhardt state, terrorists (and the same thing is true for transnational criminal organizations):

> *seek out the soft spots, the weak seams of the Westphalian nation-state and the international order that it has created. Sometimes the territory's boundaries coincide with the entire territory of a state, as with Somalia, but mostly this is not the case. Traditional weak spots, like border areas, are more likely.*

> *Terrorist* [and criminal] *organizations operate on the fringes of this Westphalian system, in the grey areas of territoriality.*[17]

A 2001 Naval War College study insightfully described some of the reasons for the occurrence of cross-border black holes in terms of "commercial" and "political" insurgencies. These are applicable to organized criminal groups as well and have grown in importance since then:

> *The border zones offer obvious advantages for political and economic insurgencies. Political insurgents prefer to set up in adjacent territories that are poorly integrated, while the commercial insurgents favor active border areas, preferring to blend in amid business and government activity and corruption. The border offers a safe place to the political insurgent and easier access to communications, weapons, provisions, transport, and banks.*
>
> *For the commercial insurgency, the frontier creates a fluid, trade-friendly environment. Border controls are perfunctory in "free trade" areas, and there is a great demand for goods that are linked to smuggling, document fraud, illegal immigration, and money laundering.*
>
> *For the political insurgency, terrain and topography often favor the narco-guerrilla. Jungles permit him to hide massive bases and training camps, and also laboratories, plantations, and clandestine runways. The Amazon region, huge and impenetrable, is a clear example of the shelter that the jungle areas give. On all of Colombia's borders—with Panama, Ecuador, Brazil, and Venezuela—jungles cloak illegal activity.*[18]

In parts of Guatemala and along much of the U.S.-Mexico border, these groups have directly and successfully challenged the state's sovereignty and established governing mechanisms of their own, relying on violence, corruption, and largesse to maintain control. As the "Joint Operating Environment 2008" from the Joint Chiefs of Staff stated:

> *A serious impediment to growth in Latin America remains the power of criminal gangs and drug cartels to corrupt, distort, and damage the region's potential. The fact that criminal organizations and cartels are capable of building dozens of disposable submarines in the jungle and then using them to smuggle cocaine, indicates the enormous economic scale of this activity. This poses a real threat to the national security interests of the Western Hemisphere. In particular, the growing assault by the drug cartels and their thugs on the Mexican government over the past several years reminds one that an unstable Mexico could represent a homeland security problem of immense proportions to the United States.*[19]

Control of broad swaths of land—increasingly including urban territory—by these nonstate groups facilitates the movements of illegal products both northward and southward through the transcontinental pipeline, often through routes that appear to make little economic or logistical sense.

While the Venezuela–West Africa–Europe cocaine route seems circuitous when looking at a map, there are in fact economic and logistical rationales for the shift in drug trafficking patterns. West Africa offered significant comparative advantages; transiting illegal products

through the region has been, until recently, virtually risk-free. Many countries in the region are still recovering from the horrendous violence of the resource wars that ravaged the region in the 1990s through the early years of this century.

West Africa offers the advantage of having longstanding smuggling networks or illicit pipelines to move products to the world market

The fragile governments, immersed in corruption and with few functioning law enforcement or judicial structures, are simply no match for the massive influx of drugs and the accompanying financial resources and violence. Guinea-Bissau, the former Portuguese colony, has been dubbed Africa's first "narco-state," and the consequences have been devastating. Dueling drug gangs have assassinated the president, army chief of staff, and other senior officials while plunging the nation into chaos.[20]

In addition to state weakness, West Africa offers the advantage of having longstanding smuggling networks or illicit pipelines to move products to the world market, be they conflict diamonds, illegal immigrants, massive numbers of weapons, or conflict timber. Those controlling these already established smuggling pipelines have found it relatively easy and profitable to absorb another lucrative product, such as cocaine, that requires little additional effort to move. In addition, there is a long history in West Africa of rival groups, or at least groups with no common agenda except for the desire for economic gain, to make deals when such contacts are viewed as mutually beneficial.

To illustrate how criminal and terrorist networks operate for mutual benefit in a criminalized state, we turn to two related cases that shed light on the relationship among different actors in such an environment.

Taylor in Liberia

At the height of his power from 1998–2002, Charles Taylor allowed transnational organized crime groups from Russia, South Africa, Israel, and Ukraine to operate simultaneously in a territory the size of Maryland. At the same time, the terrorist groups Hizballah and al Qaeda were economically operational in Liberia, raising money for their parent organizations through associations with criminal groups. Most of the criminal activity revolved around the trade in diamonds (extracted from neighboring Sierra Leone) and in Liberian timber. In 2000, al Qaeda operatives entered the diamond trade, using Hizballah-linked diamond smuggling networks to move the stones and handle the proceeds. The relationship lasted until just before September 11, 2001.

This was possible largely because the Taylor government pioneered, to a level of sophistication, the model for the criminalized state in which the government is an active partner in the criminal enterprise. The president, directly engaged in negotiations with the criminal groups, authorized specific lines of effort for those actors, provided protection and immunity through the state, directly profited from the enterprises, and commingled those funds with other state revenue streams, erasing the distinctions among the state, criminal enterprise, and person of the president.

A key to the model was government control of points of interest to criminal organizations and others operating outside the international legal system for which they were willing to share profits. These included, among others, the ports of entry and exit, ensuring that those whom Taylor wanted to protect could

enter and leave unimpeded; the passport registry, giving access to issuing passports, diplomatic passports, and nonexistent government titles and the accompanying immunity, to those authorized to do business; control of law enforcement and the military inside the country to ensure that the volatile internal situation did not affect the protected business operations; and access to resources that could be profitably exploited without fear of violence or unauthorized extortion.

When he became president, Taylor, building on the extensive relationships that he forged during his years in the bush, developed ties to organized criminal groups and terrorist organizations that allowed him to procure hundreds of tons of weapons from a broad range of groups and individuals. He also enriched himself. According to a 2005 study of Taylor's finances, he generated about $105 million a year in extra-budgetary revenue to which he had direct access, some of which was moved through accounts opened in his name in New York banks and European financial institutions.

Taylor was, in effect, not president of a country but was controlling what Robert Cooper has called the "pre-modern state," meaning territory where:

> *chaos is the norm and war is a way of life. Insofar as there is a government, it operates in a way similar to an organized crime syndicate. The pre-modern state may be too weak even to secure its home territory, let alone pose a threat internationally, but it can provide a base for non-state actors who may represent a danger in the post-modern world . . . notably drug, crime and terrorist syndicates.*[21]

The same Hizballah operatives who aided al Qaeda's diamond buying venture in Liberia were able to acquire significant amounts of sophisticated weapons for Taylor and his allies through a series of transactions with Russian arms dealers based in Guatemala and operating in Nicaragua and Panama. The primary facilitator of the deals was a retired Israeli officer living in Panama, who had a personal relationship with the Hizballah operative seeking the weapons. Both had worked for Mobutu Sese Seku, the long-ruling head of Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The Israeli provided the dictator with security while the Lebanese operative moved his diamonds to the black market.

from the mid-1990s until his arrest in Thailand in 2008, Bout armed groups in Africa, Afghanistan, Colombia, and elsewhere

The ability of Hizballah financial handlers to deal with a retired Israeli officer who has access to weapons while their respective organizations were waging war against each other in their respective homelands demonstrates just how flexible the pipelines can become.

In addition to this arms flow, Taylor used his illicit proceeds to buy a significant amount of weapons from the former Soviet republics. These weapons were procured and transported by Viktor Bout, a Russian arms dealer dubbed the "Merchant of Death" by European officials.

Bout and the New World Order

Viktor Bout, a former Soviet military intelligence official, became one of the world's premier gray market weapons merchants, able to arm multiple sides of several conflicts in Africa, as well as both the Taliban and Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. But of particular

interest here is his relationship with Taylor and how he made that connection, and the different, interlocking networks that made that relationship possible.

Bout made his mark by building an unrivaled air fleet that could deliver not only huge amounts of weapons but also sophisticated weapons systems and combat helicopters to armed groups. From the mid-1990s until his arrest in Thailand in 2008, Bout armed groups in Africa, Afghanistan, Colombia, and elsewhere.[22]

Bout's relationship to Taylor and the West African conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone sheds light on how these networks operate and connect with criminal states, and the symbiotic relationships that develop.

Sanjivan Ruprah, a Kenyan citizen of Indian descent who emerged as a key influence broker in several of Africa's conflicts, introduced Bout into Taylor's inner circle, a move that fundamentally altered the supply of weapons to both Liberia and the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, Taylor's vicious proxy army that controlled important diamond fields. One of the favors Ruprah and Taylor offered Bout was the chance to register several dozen of his rogue aircraft in Liberia.

Ruprah had taken advantage of operating in a criminal state and used his access to Taylor to be named the Liberian government's Global Civil Aviation Agent Worldwide in order to further Bout's goals. This position gave Ruprah access to an aircraft and possible control of it. "I was asked by an associate of Viktor's to get involved in the Aviation registry of Liberia as both Viktor and him wanted to restructure the same and they felt there could be financial gain from the same," he has stated.[23]

Bout was seeking to use the Liberian registry to hide his aircraft because the registry, in reality run from Kent, England, allowed aircraft owners to obtain online an internationally valid Air Worthiness Certificate without having the aircraft inspected and without disclosing the names of the owners.[24]

Through his access to aircraft whose ownership he could hide through a shell game of shifting registries, and weapons in the arsenals of the former Soviet bloc, Bout was able to acquire and transport a much desired commodity—weapons—to service clients across Africa, Afghanistan, Colombia, and elsewhere. The weapons—including tens of thousands of AK–47 assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, tens of millions of rounds of ammunition, antiaircraft guns, landmines, and possibly surface-to-air missiles—were often exchanged directly for another commodity, primarily diamonds, but also columbite-tantalite (Coltan) and other minerals.

Bout mastered the art of leveraging the advantages offered by criminal states, registering his aircraft in Liberia and Equatorial Guinea, purchasing End User Certificates from Togo and other nations, and buying protection across the continent. For entrée into the circles of warlords, presidents, and insurgent leaders, Bout relied on a group of political fixers such as Ruprah.

The exchange of commodities such as diamonds for weapons moved illicitly in support of nonstate actors was largely not punishable because, while the activities violated United Nations sanctions, they were not specifically illegal in any particular jurisdiction. This vast legal loophole remains intact.[25]

Changing Landscapes

While the commodity for weapons trade was lucrative to the participants and costly in terms of human life and the financing of criminal and terrorist organizations, recent

developments in the criminal-terrorist nexus have radically altered the historic equation of power and influence of nonstate actors and criminal states. The driving force in this reshaping of the landscape is the overlap of the drug trade, which increases by orders of magnitude the economic resources available to criminal operatives and their allies.

The numbers are striking. The "blood diamond" trade at the peak of the regional wars in West and Central Africa was valued at about $200 million a year, and was usually significantly below that. Timber added a few tens of millions more, but it is probable that the total amount of the illicit products extracted and sold or bartered on the international market was less than $300 million during peak years, and normally was substantially less. Yet it was enough to sustain wars for more than a decade and destroy the fabric of society of an entire region.

In contrast, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conservatively estimates that 40 to 50 tons of cocaine, with an estimated value of $1.8 billion, passed through West Africa in 2007, and the amount is growing.[26] U.S. Africa Command and other intelligence services estimate the amount of cocaine transiting West Africa is at least five times the UNODC estimate.[27] But even using the most conservative estimate, the magnitude of the problem for the region is easy to see. Using UNODC figures, the only legal export from the region that would surpass the value of cocaine is cocoa exports from Côte d'Ivoire. If the higher numbers are used, cocaine would dwarf the legal exports of the region combined, and be worth more than the gross domestic product of several of the region's nations.[28]

These emerging networks, vastly more lucrative with the introduction of cocaine, undermine the stability of entire regions of great strategic interest to the United States. The threat is posed by the illicit movement of goods (drugs, money, weapons, stolen cars) and people (illegal aliens, gang members, drug cartel enforcers) and the billions of dollars that these illicit activities generate in an area where states have few resources and little legal or law enforcement capacity.

As Antonio Maria Costa, the UNODC head, wrote, this epidemic of drugs and drug money flooding Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and elsewhere has become a security issue: "Drug money is perverting the weak economies of the region. . . . The influence that this buys is rotting fragile states; traffickers are buying favors and protection from candidates in elections."[29]

Given this history, the broader dangers of the emerging overlap between criminal and terrorist groups that previously did not work together are clear. Rather than working in a business that could yield a few million dollars, for these groups the potential gains are now significantly more.

The new revenue streams are also a lifeline to Latin American nonstate actors that merge the criminal and the terrorist. The two principal beneficiaries are the FARC, now estimated as the world's largest producer of cocaine, and the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico, with the world's largest distribution network. Both pose a significant threat to regional stability in the Western Hemisphere and are direct threats to the United States.

U.S. and regional African officials state that members of both groups have been identified on the ground in West Africa and that the money used to purchase the product for onward shipment to Europe is remitted primarily to these two groups, often through offshore jurisdictions via European financial institutions.

Wikipedia

Enormous revenue potential from cocaine trade means alliances between criminals and terrorists are likely to grow

This means that even as the U.S. cocaine market remains stable or shrinks modestly, these nonstate actors will continue to enjoy expanding financial bases as the European, African, and Asian markets expand. For the first time in the history of the drug war, the U.S. market may not be the defining market in the cocaine trade, although much of the proceeds of the cocaine trade will continue to flow to organizations wreaking havoc in the Western Hemisphere.[30]

The FARC, Venezuela, and Iran

While the transnational trafficking and financial operations of the Sinaloa Cartel are important, FARC alliances and actions offer an important look at the use of nonstate criminal/terrorist armed groups by a criminalized state. The well-documented links of Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution, led by President Chávez, to both Iran and the FARC, as well as the criminalization of the Venezuelan state under Chávez point to the evolution of the model described above in which a criminalized state franchises out part of its criminal enterprises to nonstate actors.

More worrisome from the U.S. perspective is the growing evidence of Chávez's direct support for Hizballah, along with his ties to the FARC. These indicators include the June 18, 2008, U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designations of two Venezuelan citizens, including a senior diplomat, as Hizballah supporters. Several businesses were also sanctioned. Allegations included coordinating possible terrorist attacks and building Hizballah-sponsored community centers in Venezuela.[31]

OFAC has also designated numerous senior Venezuelan officials, including the heads of two national intelligence services, for direct support of the FARC in the acquisition of weapons and drug trafficking.[32]

The Chávez model of allying with state sponsors of terrorism such as Iran while sponsoring violent nonstate terrorist organizations involved in criminal activities and terrorism strongly resembles the template pioneered by Hizballah. In fact, the military doctrine of the Bolivarian Revolution explicitly embraces the radical Islamist model of asymmetrical, or fourth generation, warfare and its reliance on suicide bombings and different types of terrorism, including the use of nuclear weapons. This is occurring at a time when Hizballah's presence in Latin America is growing and becoming more identifiable.[33]

The main book Chávez has adopted as his military doctrine is *Peripheral Warfare and Revolutionary Islam: Origins, Rules and Ethics of Asymmetrical Warfare* by the Spanish politician and ideologue Jorge Verstrynge.[34] Although Verstrynge is not a Muslim and his book was not written directly in relation to the Venezuelan experience, it lauds radical Islam (as well as past terrorists such as Ilich Ramírez Sánchez, better known as "Carlos the Jackal")[35] for helping to expand the parameters of what irregular warfare should encompass, including the use of biological and nuclear weapons, along with the correlated civilian casualties among the enemy. Chávez has openly admitted his admiration for Sánchez, who is serving a life sentence in France for murder and terrorist acts.[36]

Central to Verstrynge's idealized view of terrorists is the belief in the sacredness of the fighters to sacrifice their lives in pursuit of their goals. Before writing extensively on how to make chemical weapons and listing helpful places to find information on the manufacture of rudimentary nuclear bombs that "someone with a high school education could make," Verstrynge writes:

> *We already know it is incorrect to limit asymmetrical warfare to guerrilla warfare, although it is important. However, it is not a mistake to also use things that are classified as terrorism and use them in asymmetrical warfare. And we have super terrorism, divided into chemical terrorism, bioterrorism (which uses biological and bacteriological methods), and nuclear terrorism, which means "the type of terrorism* [that] *uses the threat of nuclear attack to achieve its goals."*[37]

In a December 12, 2008, interview with Venezuelan state television, Verstrynge lauded Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda for creating a new type of warfare that is "de-territorialized, de-stateized and de-nationalized," a war where suicide bombers act as "atomic bombs for the poor."[38] Chávez liked the book so much that he had a special pocket-sized edition printed and distributed to the officer corps with express orders that it be read cover to cover.

Chávez maintains his revolutionary credentials in the radical axis comprised of leftist populists and Islamic fundamentalists, primarily Iran

While there is only anecdotal evidence to date of the merging of the Bolivarian Revolution's criminal-terrorist pipeline and the criminal-terrorist pipeline of radical Islamist groups (Hizballah in particular) supported by

the Iranian regime, the possibility opens a series of new security challenges for the United States and its allies in Latin America.

What is clear is that Iran has greatly increased its diplomatic, economic, and intelligence presence in Latin America, an area where it has virtually no trade, no historic or cultural ties, and no obvious strategic interests. The sole points of convergence of the radical and reactionary theocratic Iranian government and the self-proclaimed socialist and progressive Bolivarian Revolution are an overt and often stated hatred for the United States and a shared view of the authoritarian state that tolerates little dissent and encroaches on all aspects of a citizen's life.

transnational criminal organizations and terrorist networks have proven themselves resilient and highly adaptable

Such a relationship between nonstate and state actors provides numerous benefits to both. In Latin America, for example, the FARC gains access to Venezuelan territory without fear of reprisals, to Venezuelan identification documents, and, perhaps most importantly, to routes for exporting cocaine to Europe and the United States while using the same routes to import quantities of sophisticated weapons and communications equipment. In return, the Chávez government can keep up military pressure on its most vocal opponent in the region, the Colombian government—a staunch U.S. ally whose government has been the recipient of significant amounts of military and humanitarian aid from the United States.

In addition, Chávez maintains his revolutionary credentials in the radical axis comprised of leftist populists and Islamic fundamentalists, primarily Iran. Perhaps equally important, his government is able to profit from the transit of cocaine and weapons through the national territory at a time when oil revenues are low and the budget is under significant stress.

Conclusion

The trend toward the merging of terrorist and criminal groups to mutually exploit new markets is unlikely to diminish. Both will continue to need the same facilitators, and both can leverage the relationship with the other to mutual benefit. This gives these groups an asymmetrical advantage over state actors, which are inherently more bureaucratic and less adaptable than nonstate actors.

Given the fragile or nonexistent judicial and law enforcement institutions in West Africa, the state tolerance or sponsorship of the drug trade by Venezuela and quiescent African states, and the enormous revenue stream that cocaine represents, it is likely such loose alliances will continue to grow. The human cost in West Africa, as recent past spasms of violence have shown, will be extraordinarily high, as will the impact on what little governance capability currently exists.

Europe and the United States will face a growing threat from the region, particularly from radical Islamist groups—those affiliated with al Qaeda and those, such as Hizballah, allied with Iran. Yet given the current budget constraints and economic situation, it is highly unlikely that additional resources from either continent will be allocated to the threat.

There are few options for putting the genie back in the bottle. Transnational criminal organizations and terrorist networks

have proven themselves resilient and highly adaptable, while governments remain far less so. Governments have also consistently underestimated the capacity of these disparate and non-hierarchical organizations.

Human intelligence, perhaps the most difficult type to acquire, is vital to understanding the threat, how the different groups work together, and what their vulnerabilities are. A major vulnerability is the dependence of the Latin American drug traffickers on local African networks. To make the necessary alliances, cartel operatives are forced to function in unfamiliar terrain and in languages and cultures they do not know or understand. This creates significant opportunities for penetration of the operations, as the Liberian case shows.

Another element that is essential is the creation of functioning institutions in the most affected states that can both investigate and judicially prosecute transnational criminal organizations. The most efficient way to do this is through the creation of vetted police and military units and judicial corps that are specially trained and who can be protected from reprisals.

The almost universal mantra of judicial and police reform is valid, but it can only be realistically done in small groups that can then be expanded as time and resources permit. Most efforts are diluted to the point of uselessness by attempting to do everything at once. The Colombian experience in fighting drug trafficking organizations and the FARC is illustrative of this. After years of futility, the police, military, and judiciary were able to form small vetted units that have grown over time and, just as importantly, were able to work together.

Vetted units that are able to collect intelligence and operate in a relatively controlled environment, which can be monitored for corruption, are also vital and far more achievable than macro-level police reform. These are small steps, but ones that have a chance of actually working in a sustainable way. They do not require the tens of millions of dollars and large-scale human resource commitments that broader efforts do. And they can be easily expanded as resources permit.

But human intelligence and institution-building, operating in a vacuum, will have limited impact unless there is the will and ability to match the transnationalization of enforcement to the transnationalization of crime and terror. These groups thrive in the seams of the global system, while the global response has been a state-centric approach that matches the 20th century, not this one.

Without this type of human intelligence able to operate in relative safety through vetted units, the criminal and terrorist pipelines will continue not only to grow but also to develop the capacity to recombine more quickly and in ever more dangerous ways. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] Benjamin Weiser and William K. Rashbaum, "Liberian Officials Worked with U.S. Agency to Block Drug Traffic," *The New York Times*, June 2, 2010.

[2] These typologies were developed and discussed more completely, including the national security implications of their growth, in Richard H. Shultz, Douglas Farah, and Itamara V. Lochard, *Armed Groups: A Tier-One Security Priority*, Occasional Paper 57 (U.S. Air Force Academy, CO: U.S. Air Force Institute for National Security Studies, September 2004).

[3] Drug Enforcement Agency Chief of Operations Michael Braun, speech to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, July 18, 2008, available at <www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC07.php?CID=411>.

[4] While much of Operation *Titan* remains classified, there has been significant open source reporting in part because the Colombian government announced the most important arrests. See Chris Kraul and Sebastian Rotella, "Colombian Cocaine Ring Linked to Hezbollah," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 22, 2008; and "*Por Lavar Activos de Narcos y Paramilitares, Capturados Integrantes de Organización Internacional*," *Fiscalía General de la Republica* (Colombia), October 21, 2008.

[5] "Manhattan U.S. Attorney Charges Three al Qaeda Associates with Conspiring to Transport Cocaine through Africa for the FARC," PR Newswire, December 18, 2009.

[6] Philip Sherwell, "Cocaine, Kidnapping and the al-Qaeda Cash Squeeze," *Sunday Telegraph*, March 7, 2010.

[7] Jamie Doward, "Drug Seizures in West Africa Prompt Fears of Terrorist Links," *The Observer*, November 29, 2009.

[8] "Quito y Buenos Aires, Ciudades preferidas para narcos nigerianos," *El Universo* (Guayaquil, Ecuador), January 3, 2011.

[9] See, for example, Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators," *Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, January 2003).

[10] Ibid.

[11] Anne L. Clunan et al., *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 3.

[12] Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[13] The Federation of American Scientists lists 385 para-state actors across the globe; list available at <www.fas.org/irp/world/para/index.html>.

[14] See Bill Lahneman and Matt Lewis, "Summary of Proceedings: Organized Crime and the Corruption of State Institutions," The Inn and Conference Center, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, November 18, 2002, available at <www.cissm.umd.edu/papers/files/organizedcrime.pdf>.

[15] Rem Korteweg and David Ehrhardt, "Terrorist Black Holes: A Study into Terrorist Sanctuaries and Governmental Weakness," Clingendael Centre for Strategic Studies, The Hague, November 2005, 26.

[16] See "The Failed States Index," *Foreign Policy* (July–August 2009), 80–93.

[17] Korteweg and Ehrhardt, 22.

[18] Julio A. Cirino et al., "Latin America's Lawless Areas and Failed States," in *Latin American Security Challenges*, Newport Papers 21, ed. Paul D. Taylor (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2001). *Commercial insurgencies* are defined as engaging in "for-profit organized crime without a predominant political agenda," leaving unclear how that differs from groups defined as organized criminal organizations.

[19] U.S. Joint Forces Command, "Joint Operating Environment 2008: Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force," November 25, 2008, 34.

[20] Author interviews with U.S. law enforcement officials. See also James Traub, "Africa's Drug Problem," *New York Times Magazine*, April 9, 2010.

[21] Robert Cooper, "Reordering the World: Post-Modern States," The Foreign Policy Centre, April 2002, 18.

[22] For details of Bout's global operations, see Douglas Farah and Stephen Braun, *Merchant of Death: Money, Guns, Planes and the Man Who Makes War Possible* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2007). In November 2010, Bout was extradited to the United States to stand trial for allegedly planning to sell weapons to a

designated terrorist organization. See Chris McGreal, "Viktor Bout, Suspected Russian Arms Dealer, Extradited to New York," *The Guardian*, November 16, 2010.

[23] Ruprah, email to author for *Merchant of Death*, 159.

[24] Farah and Braun, 159; and United Nations Security Council S/2000/1225 paras., 142–143.

[25] Farah and Braun.

[26] Antonio L. Mazzitelli, regional representative, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Regional Office for West and Central Africa, presentation at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, May 28, 2009.

[27] Peter D. Burgess, Counter Narcotics Project Officer, U.S. Africa Command, presentation at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, May 28, 2009.

[28] Extrapolated by the author from UNODC and U.S. Africa Command data.

[29] Antonio Maria Costa, "Cocaine Finds Africa," *The Washington Post*, July 29, 2008, A17.

[30] Author interviews with U.S. and African counternarcotics officials, December 2010 and January 2011.

[31] One of those designated, Ghazi Nasr al Din, served as the charge d'affaires of the Venezuelan embassy in Damascus, and then served in the Venezuelan embassy in London. According to the OFAC statement in late January 2006, al Din facilitated the travel of two Hizballah representatives of the Lebanese parliament to solicit donations and announce the opening of a Hizballah-sponsored community center and office in Venezuela. The second individual, Fawzi Kan'an, is described as a Venezuela-based Hizballah supporter and a "significant provider of financial support to Hizbollah." He met with senior Hizballah officials in Lebanon to discuss operational issues, including possible kidnappings and terrorist attacks.

[32] Among those designated were Hugo Armando Carvajal, director of Venezuela's Military Intelligence Directorate, for his "assistance to the FARC, (including) protecting drug shipments from seizure"; Henry de Jesus Rangel Silva, director of Venezuela's Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services, for "materially assisting the narcotics activities of the FARC"; and Ramón Emilio Rodriguez Chacín, at the time Venezuela's minister of interior and justice, described as "the Venezuelan government's main weapons contact for the FARC."

[33] In addition to Operation *Titan*, there have been numerous incidents of operatives directly linked to Hizballah being identified or arrested in Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala, Aruba, and elsewhere in Latin America.

[34] Verstrynge, born in Morocco to Belgian and Spanish parents, began his political career on the far right of the Spanish political spectrum as a disciple of Manuel Fraga, and held several senior party posts with the Alianza Popular. By his own admission, he then migrated to the Socialist Party, but never rose through the ranks. He is widely associated with radical antiglobalization views and anti-U.S. rhetoric, repeatedly stating that the United States is creating a new global empire and must be defeated. Although he has no military training or experience, he has written extensively on asymmetrical warfare.

[35] It is worth noting that Chávez wrote to Ramírez Sánchez in 1999 expressing his admiration for the terrorist, signing off, "with profound faith in the cause and in the mission—now and forever." The letter set off an international furor. See "Troops Get Provocative Book," *Miami Herald*, November 11, 2005.

[36] Ian James, "Chavez Praises Carlos the Jackal," Associated Press, November 21, 2009, available at <www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/chavez-praises-carlos-the-jackal-1825135.html>.

[37] Jorge Verstrynge, *La guerra periférica y el Islam revolucionario: Orígenes, reglas y ética de la guerra asimétrica* [*Peripheral Warfare and Revolutionary Islam: Origins, Rules and Ethics of Asymmetrical Warfare*] (Barcelona: El Viejo Topo, 2005), 56–57.

[38] Mariáno César Bartolomé, "*Las Guerras Asimétricas y de Cuarta Generación Dentro Del Penasmiento Venezolano en Materia de Seguridad y Defensa* [Asymmetrical and Fourth Generation Warfare in Venezuelan Security and Defense Thinking]," *Military Review* (January–February 2008), 51–62.

Criminal Insurgency in the Americas and Beyond

BY ROBERT KILLEBREW

Even before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the global context for American security policy was changing. While the traditional state-based international system continued to function and the United States reacted to challenges by states in conventional ways (for example, by invading Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11), a cascade of enormous technological and social change was revolutionizing international affairs. As early as the 1990s, theorists were writing that with modern transnational communications, international organizations and corporate conglomerates would increasingly act independently of national borders and international regulation.[1] What was not generally foreseen until about the time of 9/11, though, was the darker side: that the same technology could empower corrupt transnational organizations to threaten the international order itself. In fact, the globalization of crime, from piracy's financial backers in London and Nairobi to the Taliban and Hizballah's representatives in West Africa, may well be the most important emerging fact of today's global security environment.

Transnational crime operates on a global scale, and the criminal networks that affect national security include actors ranging from Russian mafias to expanding Asian drug-trafficking organizations in U.S. cities. Without discounting their importance, this article focuses on illegal groups native to this hemisphere and particularly Latin America, those identified by the Department of Justice as posing the most significant organized criminal threat to U.S. security. Two factors related

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to human mobility—demographics and geography—combine to make Latin American instability very close to us today. Latin American criminal cartels and their allies are not simply a crime problem anymore, but a growing threat that is metastasizing into a new form of criminal insurgency.

To be clear, the cartels and the criminal culture that accompanies them are not yet a direct national security threat to the United States. As one U.S. official put it, they are now a threat to the national *welfare*—but are spreading in such a way as to become a potential threat to national *security*. For other nations in the hemisphere, though, the cartels already constitute a direct security threat. Only Colombia has thus far begun to turn back the lawlessness and violence associated with the cartel insurgency.[2]

new communications technologies have led to new criminal business models of widely distributed, constantly shifting networks of personal contacts and fleeting alliances

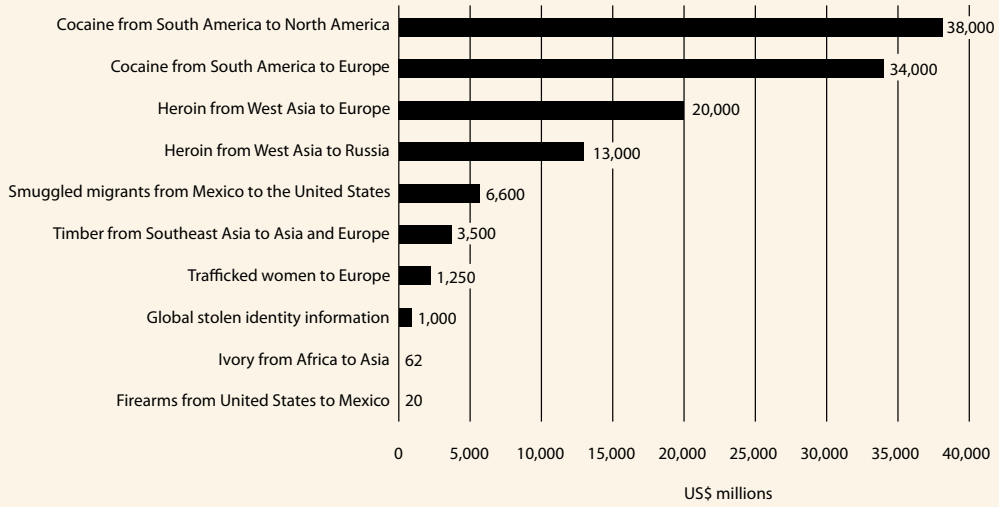
Meeting the cartels' challenge will require, first, that we recognize the broad and varied scope of the new face of violent crime in this hemisphere, from Venezuela's support of narcocrime to gang recruitment in our own schools and neighborhoods. Second, we must see the problem for what it is: a criminal insurgency contrary to the foundations of our own society and those of states such as Mexico, Colombia, and others in between. "Profit" can now be added to motivations for insurgency, along with religion, ideology, nationalism, and other causes. Finally, we must step up, and shift the focus of, our decades-long "war on drugs" to lead a broad-based, hemisphere-wide, and long-term effort focused on defeating the criminal cartels and their networks of gangs.

Organized Crime in the 21st Century

Crime is part of the human condition—crooks, pirates, and smugglers have always been around. However, the collapse of colonialism after World War II, the fall of the Soviet empire in 1991, and the simultaneous explosion of global networking technology have all supported a period of unprecedented expansion and transformation of international crime. New communications technologies have led to new criminal business models of widely distributed, constantly shifting networks of personal contacts and fleeting alliances to produce, market, transport, or distribute illegal trade—sometimes drugs, sometimes human beings, sometimes extortion, kidnapping, counterfeiting or whatever activity turns a profit. Although the majority of criminal networks are operated by thugs, they should not be underestimated; to survive, they have to be intelligent, clever, and ruthless. Their outreach also embraces white-collar criminals in banking or legitimate businesses throughout the world, including banks and other institutions in the United States. As a rule, the networks operate globally and clandestinely, laundering huge sums of illicit profits—virtually unlimited flows of cash—through the "black economy" in such large amounts that they can even threaten the stability of the international economic order. One expert has observed:

> *Ultimately it is the fabric of society that is at stake. Global illicit trade is sinking entire industries while boosting others, ravaging countries and sparking booms, making and breaking political careers, destabilizing some governments while propping up*

Figure 1. Estimated Values of Selected Transnational Trafficking Flows, 2008



Source: UNODC

> *others. At one extreme are countries where the smuggling routes, the hidden factories, the pilfered natural resources, the dirty-money transactions can no longer be distinguished from the official economy and government. But comfortable middle-class lives in wealthy countries are far more connected to trafficking—and to its global effects—than most of us care to imagine.*[3]

Fragile states struggling to control their territories, support the rule of law, and develop civil societies are in many cases losing. Worldwide, the number of fragile states is increasing. In 1996, for example, only 11 states were judged to be "failing" around the world. By 2006, the number had increased to 26, and the number of "not quite failing" states with weak governments and "ungoverned spaces" continues to grow.[4] Douglas Farah has pointed out the contradiction between increased global trade and a trend toward growing social and political disintegration as weaker states buckle under the strain of corruption, illegal weapons, population pressure, and technology.[5]

The Globalization of Crime

The worldwide black economy is fluid and difficult to gauge accurately; practically all global criminal organizations shift from one illegal market to another as necessary to maximize profits and avoid law enforcement. Figure 1 estimates the magnitude of some of the most significant trafficking flows in 2008.

Criminal Networks. Almost all of the illicit cartels and gangs discussed in this article organize in various forms of networks, facilitated by widely available communications technology and protected from interception by cellular structures, layered "cores" of leaders, intimidation, and other means. The various forms of network organization can range from semiformal, hierarchical models to handshakes and the exchange of cash or merchandise on the street. Cartel networks have extensive reach, crossing borders and jurisdictional lines with impunity. Two leading authorities in the field of network analysis and the theory of "netwar," John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, argued in a RAND study in 2001:

> *The capacity to cross national borders creates several advantages for criminal networks. It enables them to supply markets where the profit margins are largest, operate from and in countries where risks are the least, complicate the tasks of law enforcement agencies that are trying to combat them, commit crimes that cross jurisdictions and therefore increase complexity, and adapt their behavior to counter or neutralize law enforcement initiatives.*[6]

Criminal States. A relatively new development on the modern scene, different from weak or struggling countries, is the emergence of criminal states. These states are in effect descendants of the Barbary pirate states of old, acting in contravention of international law and supporting extremist organizations that attack other states. U.S. policy and law require the Department of State to designate "those countries that have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism" as state sponsors of terrorism, a status that includes a number of legislated and regulatory restrictions and bans.[7] Currently, Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Syria are listed as state sponsors of terrorism. For decades, the State Department has labeled Iran as "the most active state sponsor of terrorism" because it routinely provides safe haven, resources, and guidance to terrorist groups allied with Iran's foreign policy objectives.[8] The designation, however, is subject to political calculations within the U.S. Government. North Korea, for example, despite clear evidence of support for terrorist activities, was taken off the list in 2008 as an inducement to negotiations. Venezuela, despite clear ties to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Hizballah, and Iran, is not designated.

Selected Theaters

The United States. As the largest drug market in the hemisphere, the United States is a magnet for the cartels and their allies. Mexican cartels dominate the wholesale distribution of drugs throughout the Nation, as recognized by the Department of Justice and summarized in the *Wall Street Journal*:

> *Mexico's cartels already have tentacles that stretch across the border. The U.S. Justice Department said recently that Mexican gangs are the "biggest organized crime threat to the United States," operating in at least 230 cities and towns. Crimes connected to Mexican cartels are spreading across the Southwest. Phoenix had more than 370 kidnapping cases last year, turning it into the kidnapping capital of the U.S. Most of the victims were illegal aliens or linked to the drug trade.*[9]

So far, the violent impact of the cartels and gangs in the United States has not risen to

the level it has elsewhere in the hemisphere.[10] American political culture supports honest law enforcement and does not tolerate the levels of corruption found historically in Mexico and other countries in the hemisphere. Public officials are more difficult to corrupt, the public less tolerant of lawbreaking, and the general culture unfriendly to the kinds of murder and intimidation the cartels employ elsewhere. Additionally, so far the more effective policing power of various U.S. law enforcement organizations—local and state police, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and others—has, by and large, deterred cartels and gangs in the United States from the kind of large-scale intimidation and criminality—kidnapping, extortion, murder—seen in Mexico and elsewhere.

The U.S.-Mexico border region has become a significant geographical flashpoint between the two countries. One resident reported: "One week before the murder [of an Arizona rancher] Bob and his brother Phil . . . hauled a huge quantity of drugs off the ranch that they found in trucks. One week before that a rancher near Naco did the same thing. Two nights later gangs broke into his ranch house and beat him and his wife and told them that if they touched any drugs they found they would come back and kill them."[11]

Accurate assessments of the magnitude of "spillover violence" are difficult, partly because of cartel and gang success in blending into local environments, and political pressures from local governments—some locals play down violence to avoid stigma, while others overplay it. The number of kidnappings in U.S. cities near the border has ballooned in recent years as large populations of immigrants have been infiltrated or targeted by cartels or splinter groups of small-time thugs. Cartel operations have become so extensive, and associated gang culture has spread so rapidly in the Nation, that all major U.S. cities and most smaller cities are feeling the cartels' impact as their influence spreads.[12] While few top cartel leaders travel to the United States because of fears of arrest, law enforcement personnel arrest hundreds of lower ranking cartel members every year. As an example, after a 2-year investigation that spanned three countries—the United States, Mexico, and Colombia—the DEA arrested 755 people in California, Florida, and Maryland, seized over $59 million in cash, tons of assorted drugs, 149 vehicles, 3 aircraft, 3 maritime vessels, and over 150 weapons; the operation also disrupted Canadian cartel operations. The arrest of so many operatives indicates that foreign cartels are increasing their operations in the United States and linking up with local and transnational gangs here.

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Transnational Gangs. The growth of transnational gangs in the United States, which act as the "retail" arms of the cartels, is a relatively new and dangerous phenomenon in American crime. The gangs represent networks of ruthless and sometimes random killers, deeply embedded in violent and amoral cultures that extend the reach of the cartels far into American civic society. For example, one Atlanta news organization reported:

> *The brutality of the Atlanta drug trade has raised concerns that it is at the first step in a violent evolution that has already turned Phoenix into a major kidnapping capital. In that city, drug gangs are so well armed and trained in military tactics that witnesses have mistaken their attacks for police SWAT raids.*[13]

The big international gangs now on the scene are different from local gangs in their organization and inclination to violence outside their ethnic or economic group. They may include more traditional nationalist groupings such as the Russian mafia, but the particular gangs from the Western Hemisphere of interest here are the primarily Latino gangs such as MS–13 (*Mara Salvatrucha*), the 18th Street Gang, and other groups such as the Mexican Mafia or its Texas branch, the Mexikanemi. MS–13 and 18th Street count an estimated 6,000–10,000 and 30,000 members, respectively, in the United States alone, with thousands more in Central America (primarily El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala), where they challenge local authorities for control of streets and towns.[14] The Latino gangs are distinguishable by their closed natures and tight discipline, by body tattoos, and by frequent use of extreme violence. They have an international reach, running from South and Central America into the United States and Canada. Recruits in some cases have prior Central American military training or combat experience, and their criminal enterprises run the gamut from illegal drugs, extortion, murder for hire, theft, and other activities. Beatings, rape, murder, and mutilation are commonly used to recruit gang members and to enforce discipline.

Latino gangs have an international reach, running from South and Central America into the United States and Canada

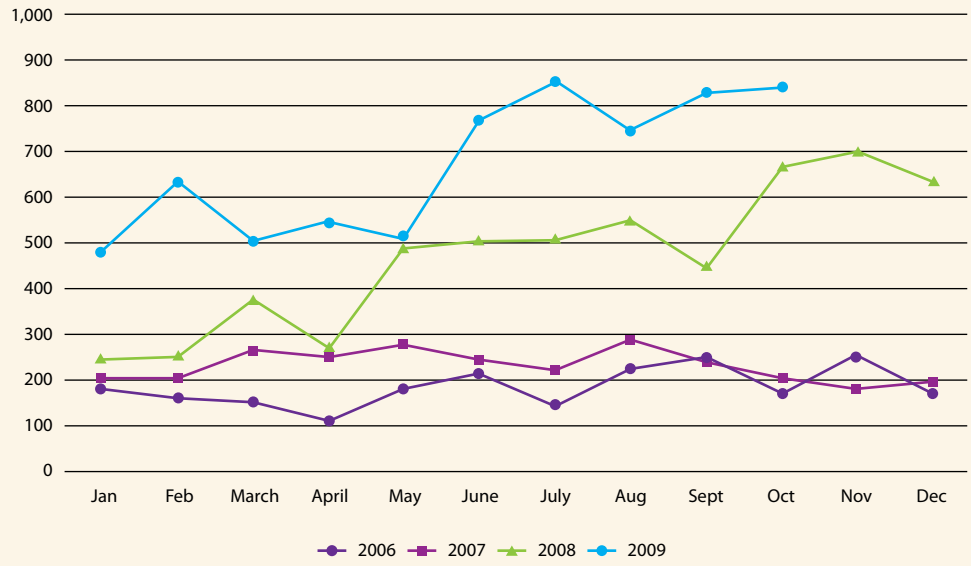
Large immigrant communities of Latin Americans, which for a variety of reasons may be reluctant to approach the police, inadvertently provide shelter for Latino gangs (and are often their first victims). A conference of law enforcement officers with extensive gang experience recently concluded that:

> *The extensive pool of illegal immigrants in the country bolsters the influence of Latino gangs in the United States. Poor socio-economic conditions and reliance on strong social networks make gangs seem desirable. In addition, the current status of immigration law makes many immigrant communities fearful of cooperating with police, thus depriving law enforcement of critical human intelligence. Even when an individual is a legal immigrant, close ties to undocumented aliens raises fears of attracting attention to a particular community.*[15]

Mexico. No state in this hemisphere is more important than Mexico to the security of the United States. It is our second-largest trading partner (after Canada) and has strong ties to the United States; over 500,000 Americans live in Mexico, while over 11 million Mexicans, or Americans of Mexican origin, live in the United States, comprising 6.5 percent of the total U.S. population.[16]

Although a strong state otherwise, Mexico for decades tolerated high crime rates, particularly in Mexico City, and high levels of corruption in government circles, especially among law enforcement officials at the federal and local levels.[17] The state's war against the cartels has

Figure 2. Drug-related Executions, 2006–2009



Source: EMPRA, based on statistics from *Milenio* newspaper

not only cost the lives of tens of thousands of Mexican citizens, but also has challenged Mexican law enforcement officials to find and weed out corrupt police at every level of government, from low-ranking policemen to cabinet-level law enforcement professionals. Partly for that reason, the Mexican army, which has heretofore enjoyed high levels of public respect and was regarded as less corrupt than the federal and local police forces, was deployed against the cartels in 2007. When deployed, the Mexican army had had little or no training in domestic policing or counterinsurgency as it would apply against the cartels. Results have been mixed, but may have bought time for the government to train or retrain special police forces.[18] Cartel violence has affected everyone from high-profile government officials to innocent bystanders, who are increasingly caught in the crossfire. As a result, there have been more than 30,000 deaths tied to drug trafficking in recent years (see figure 2).

The narcotics industry is now a significant component of the Mexican national economy: estimates of annual profits from illicit drug sales range from $25 billion to $40 billion, or up to 5 percent of Mexico's gross domestic product—twice the value of remittances by Mexican migrants.[19] According to the U.S. Department of State, as of 2009, cartels and gangs employed about 450,000 people in the cultivation, processing, and sale of illegal drugs. Of this number, approximately 150,000 were directly involved in processing and selling. The remainder—approximately 300,000 persons—engaged in crop growing and harvesting.[20] Profits from drug cultivation far outstrip profits from legitimate agriculture; while a kilo of corn can sell for 40 cents, a kilo of opium can sell for $1,000.[21] Unemployment, public

sector budget cuts, and decreasing remittances to Mexico from immigrants in the United States increase monetary incentives for rural dwellers to participate in the drug trade.

But it is not only about drugs. Kidnapping, extortion, and other kinds of crime have long been staples of cartel operations, even reaching across the border into U.S. cities. Recent U.S. assistance to the Mexican government in the form of the Merida Initiative and the relative prosperity of U.S. businesses in Mexico and along the border increase the probability that cartels will be directed at U.S. targets.

The Mexican cartels in their present form are examples of 21st-century criminal insurgent movements, attacking the state from within through corruption and violence, and seeking to establish areas of influence in which they can operate without restriction. John Sullivan has pointed out:

> *Mexican cartels have employed psychological operations, fomented anti-government protests, attacked both police and military in infantry-style assaults, assassinated political officials, journalists, beheaded and maimed their victims, to amplify the strategic impact of their attacks, and co-opted and corrupted the military, police and political officials at all levels of government. The result is extreme brigandage, and a set of interlocking "criminal insurgencies" culminating in virtual civil war. As a consequence, some Mexican cartels, like La Familia, have embraced high order violence, religious and cult symbols, and political action to assert their control over the mega-turf they seek to dominate. They also seek community legitimacy, cultivating a folk perception that they are social protectors.*[22]

cartels are managed from "corporate offices" in countries where they are based, often in locations made secure with the complicity of local officials

Mexico's criminal cartels are complex, networked organizations that combine flexible, task-focused sophistication with an inclination to family-based, almost tribal leadership structures. However, while they may still center on the same family group as they did a decade ago, the constant attrition of leadership has led over time to a more decentralized operational model.[23] Drug cartel membership is growing increasingly younger and is more horizontally organized. Cell phones, computers, and other technologies enable cartel members to rapidly transmit orders, organize and reorganize, and replace losses. As a rule, cartels are managed from "corporate offices" in countries where they are based, often in locations made secure with the complicity of local officials. Below corporate headquarters are command and control cells that manage daily activities. A certain group of unit members may deal specifically with the intimidation and coercion of rural populations to enlist them in the drug trade.[24] Another may focus on killings, as used to be the case with *Los Zetas*, the hired mercenary group of ex-military members at the service of the Gulf Cartel until they struck out on their own. Today, many of the cartels have a specific group of *sicarios* (hit men) on call to provide lethal services.

Colombia. The staunchest U.S. ally in the Andean Ridge, Colombia continues its successful fight back from the brink of becoming the world's first narcostate even as it remains the primary source of cocaine in the world. The concept of narcoterrorism was born in Colombia in the 1980s and 1990s, when cocaine traffickers[25]

began using terrorist tactics—car bombs, massacres of civilians, executions of political candidates, and other attacks against both law enforcement officials and civilians—to fight extradition of convicted drug traffickers to the United States.[26] At the same time, the FARC was making major gains in the countryside. For a time, Colombia seemed to be on the verge of anarchy; in 1999, for example, civilian deaths were averaging 20 a day, and kidnappings were occurring at a rate of 200 a month.[27] Today, while the major cartels have been defeated and the FARC driven back into the jungle, the government is moving on to the complex task of adapting its strategies to ensure gains remain permanent.[28]

The United States has actively supported Colombia's struggles for decades. U.S. aid against drug cartels began in the 1990s, though with initial restrictions against its use to fight guerrillas, but these restrictions became moot as the FARC turned into a cocaine-producing narcoterrorism organization in the late 1990s and was classed by the United States as a terrorist organization.

Although the government now has momentum in its fight to restore the rule of law in the state, conflict in Colombia is far from resolved. While security was restored along the main population corridors, many Colombians are still at risk of armed violence.[29] According to the Colombian Defense Ministry, the conflict claimed the lives of 20,915 people between 2002 and March 2010, including 13,653 members of "subversive groups," 1,611 members of "illegal self-defense groups," 1,080 members of "criminal gangs," and 4,571 members of Colombian security forces on duty.

The FARC remains the world's main cocaine-producing organization. It occupies a central role in the Western Hemisphere's drug trade, linking cocaine production in Colombia to cartels for onward movement to Mexico and North America. The FARC became involved with high-profile crime and cocaine-trafficking groups during the 1980s to finance its fight against the Colombian state. After the defeat of Colombia's big drug cartels and the demobilization of the right-wing *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* in 2003, the FARC became the dominant player in illegal drugs.[30] The movement's original ideological motivation has receded over time. Although the leadership retains an ideological core and conducts periodic purges, the focus now is on drug profits to fund weapons, recruits, and corrupt officials that enable it to continue its perpetual struggle against the state. The FARC has also evolved from the traditional insurgent-guerrilla model to a highly decentralized, networked narcoterrorist organization. Today, there are approximately 7,000 to 8,000 armed combatants in the movement, in numerous geographically based "blocs" and "fronts" operating primarily out of the jungles of the southern and eastern regions of the country. At present, the FARC is no longer an existential threat to the Colombian state, but as it has withdrawn into the jungles and rest camps on the borders of Ecuador and Venezuela, it has become harder to finish off. In addition to cocaine production and shipment on an international scale, it is still capable of kidnappings, raids, and terrorist acts, such as the kidnapping and assassination of the governor of Caquetá in December 2009. The Caquetá killing led then–Defense Minister Gabriel Silva to caution that the FARC is "neither vanquished nor in its death throes."[31]

The FARC has extensive international links with other narcoterrorist organizations, including Hizballah. Operation *Titan*, a 2-year investigative endeavor culminating in October 2008 and led jointly by U.S. and Colombian authorities, resulted in more than 130 arrests and the seizure of more than $23 million and 360

kilos of cocaine.[32] Of the individuals arrested, 21 were in Colombia, and 3 of these were of Lebanese or Jordanian descent.[33] Among them was Lebanese-born Chekry Harb, who under the alias "Taliban" led a money-laundering ring that funded Hizballah activities through a network of militants and drug traffickers extending from Panama to Hong Kong, and included the FARC as a primary producer and exporter.[34] The FARC's Sixteenth Brigade in particular supplies cocaine to not only the Arellano Felix Organization in Mexico but also Brazilian cartels like the one run by Luiz Fernando da Costa.[35] According to Sergio Jaramillo, FARC finance chief Oliver Solarte acted as a primary linking contact for both organizations. In 2001, famous Brazilian kingpin Fernandinho Beira-Mar was arrested in Colombia as he attempted to execute a guns-for-cocaine transaction with the FARC.[36] At least one of the FARC's "fronts" (the 48th) has connections with the Tijuana Cartel dating back to the 1990s, and the various FARC fronts and smaller Colombian cartels often engage in joint ventures. More recently, officials have uncovered cooperation between the FARC and traffickers belonging to al Qaeda in the Maghreb and other gangs in the Sahel region of Africa.[37] Other drug production and trafficking groups remain in Colombia, either as "mini-cartels" or as armed groups in lawless parts of the country. Some of these emerging groups are remnants of right-wing militias that did not demobilize when called on to do so by the government, but instead fell into organized crime; others include individuals with no previous relationship with the paramilitaries who joined criminal groups to profit from drug trafficking.

Venezuela. Hugo Chávez was elected president of Venezuela in 1998, was subsequently reelected in 2000 and 2006, and won a national referendum to lift term limits for the presidency in 2009.[38] His confrontational and often erratic approach to relations with the United States, support of anti–U.S. governments in Bolivia and Nicaragua, and high-profile alliance with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran are parts of a campaign to raise Venezuela's—and his—impact on the hemisphere and on global affairs. Some recent foreign policy initiatives, for example, included supporting the overthrown president of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, claiming sovereignty over Guyana, and joining Muammar Gaddafi to condemn the United Nations Security Council, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and other perceived manifestations of imperialism.[39]

Even as its economy struggles, Venezuela has embarked on a significant arms buildup. Along with other South American countries, Venezuela recently increased defense spending so that it now ranks third in the region behind Brazil and Colombia. The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency estimates that Venezuela spent approximately $4.3 billion on weapons between 2005 and 2007. Russian arms sales to South America increased by approximately 900 percent from 1999 to 2008, mostly as a result of increased transfers to Venezuela.[40] These transfers included 100,000 assault rifles, 15 helicopters, and a license to produce Kalashnikov rifles (AK–103s, similar to the AK–47 model) in Venezuela itself.[41] In addition, Venezuela has acquired naval patrol units from Spain.[42]

The relationships among Chávez, his advisors, and the FARC and cartels throughout the region are personal and complex and constitute some of the most important alliances in the region. He has long supported the FARC in Colombia, with which the Venezuelan state has had a number of long-running disagreements, though not until recently ones sufficiently serious to suggest war.

Chávez personally has had a long association with the FARC, particularly with Raul Reyes, a former deputy commander who was killed in a Colombian raid on a base in Ecuador in 2008. Computer material captured from rebels, reviewed by INTERPOL and intelligence agencies from various countries, spelled out what had long been rumored: deep collaboration between the FARC and high-ranking Venezuelan officials involved in providing weapons and resources. The "Reyes files" implicated Venezuelan officials at the highest levels of government who helped the FARC safeguard their operational areas, obtain weapons, and ship illegal narcotics through Venezuela to other destinations.

In 2008, the U.S. Treasury Department indicted two senior Venezuelan officials, Hugo Armando Carvajal Barrios, director of Venezuela's Military Intelligence Directorate, and Henry de Jesus Silva, Director of the Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services, and one former official, Ramón Emilio Chacín, for "materially assisting" FARC narcotics trafficking activities.[43] A statement by Treasury points out that these officials "armed, abetted and funded the FARC, even as it terrorized and kidnapped innocents."[44]

In December 2004, Rodrigo Granda was kidnapped by bounty hunters while attending the Second Bolivarian People's Congress in Caracas. As FARC "foreign minister," it had been Granda's duty to liaise throughout Latin America, gathering support for his group's activities. When he was taken, he had been living in Caracas for 2 years after having been granted Venezuelan citizenship by the Chávez government.[45]

In July 2009, the government of Sweden pressed Venezuela to explain how Swedish-made weapons ended up in the hands of FARC rebels. As a clear violation of end-user licenses, the finding compromised the future of Swedish weapons sales to Venezuela and further strained the already tense relationship between Caracas and Bogota.[46] More recently, an indictment by a prosecutor of Spain's High Court implicated high-ranking members of the Chávez regime in cooperation between the FARC and Spain's *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (Basque Homeland and Freedom) to exchange know-how in terrorist tactics and even plan abductions of officials like Colombia's ex-President Andrés Pastrana.[47]

Ties between Venezuela and Iran are gaining increasing attention as a potential threat to U.S. and regional security. According to Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, "Nobody is focused sufficiently on the threat of the Iran-Venezuela connection."[48] Secretary of Defense Robert Gates also expressed concern in a January 2009 statement on Iranian international activities.[49] Chávez and Ahmadinejad are both vociferously hostile to the United States, invoking the need to "save humankind and put an end to the U.S. Empire."[50]

Lax Venezuelan-Iranian immigration controls have alarmed U.S. officials, who point out that Venezuelan passports are apparently widely available to all comers, and have been issued to a number of travelers from Syria, Yemen, Iran, and other Middle East states that have been known to harbor terrorists. In November 2008, Turkish authorities intercepted 22 shipping containers labeled "tractor parts" bound for Venezuela from Iran that contained bomb-making chemicals and laboratory equipment.[51] "What they contained," one Turkish official was quoted as stating, "was enough to set up an explosives lab."[52] Likewise, in September 2006, Rodolfo Sanz, the Venezuelan Minister for Basic Industries, announced that "Iran is helping us with geophysical aerial probes and geochemical analysis" in its search for uranium in a promising area near the border with Guyana.[53]

The Venezuelan connection is useful to Tehran for a number of reasons. First, it provides an opportunity for Iran to break out of its increasing international isolation and to project power in Latin America. Chávez has facilitated growing Iranian commitments to other ideological partners in Bolivia and Nicaragua, where diplomatic openings have been swiftly followed by trade agreements and other ties.[54] Then–U.S. Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair maintained in February 2009 congressional testimony that Venezuela "is serving as a bridge to help Iran build relations with other Latin American countries."[55]

Iran uses Venezuela to circumvent U.S. and United Nations economic sanctions and to launder illicit funds to support Iranian weapons programs, including its nuclear program

Second, Venezuela's entrepot to Latin America provides a base of operations located, as Ahmadinejad stated, at America's backdoor. Iran's support for terrorist or criminal organizations that attack or weaken the United States would be in keeping with the Iranian understanding of "asymmetric warfare"—and ours, too, for that matter. One expert has testified that "Iran has expanded its influence, albeit in a limited capacity, into the Latin American backyard of the United States. It is suspected of seeking to develop rudimentary retaliatory capability against the United States throughout Latin America should Iran be attacked or invaded."[56]

Since about 2006, Iranian military advisors have been serving with the Venezuelan army, joining a strong contingent of Cuban military officers.[57] The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, including members of the elite Quds Force, operates in Venezuela in both a military and civilian role, managing a number of Iranian-owned and -controlled factories in remote areas in Venezuela.

Third, Iran uses Venezuela to circumvent U.S. and United Nations economic sanctions and to launder illicit funds to support Iranian weapons programs, including its nuclear program. In January 2008, Iran opened the International Development Bank in Caracas under the Spanish name Banco Internacional de Desarrollo C.A., an independent subsidiary of the Export Bank of Iran. In October of that year, the U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control imposed economic sanctions against both banks for providing financial services to Iran's Ministry of Defense and its Armed Forces Logistics, the two military components charged with supporting Iran's nuclear program.[58] In April 2009, the Iran-Venezuela Bank was established, with each country making an initial investment of $100 million.[59] One expert stated that:

> *All of this activity is designed to facilitate the funding of . . . terrorist organizations . . . and to circumvent financial sanctions imposed by the United States, the European Union and the United Nations. The Iranian Development and Export Bank has now opened a branch in Quito (Ecuador). The Treasury Department has sanctioned the Iranian banks and various individuals, but so far has not sanctioned any Venezuelan bank.*[60]

Policies and Strategies

International. Essentially, the United States faces external and internal challenges in reorienting to more effectively fight the cartels and their allies. Refocusing U.S. policy from a "war on drugs" to a more comprehensive fight

against the cartels and gangs is essential if the United States and its allies are to prevail. Since the basis of the cartels' survival lies in the control of regions where governmental control is nonexistent and populations may be impoverished and alienated, successful counter-cartel strategies are fundamentally counterinsurgency strategies developed by the concerned states themselves and supported by the United States. Counter-cartel strategies must first be political strategies, integrating military and police activity into a broader political approach that emphasizes the rule of law as an alternative to the rule of force. Four aspects of a Western Hemisphere counter-cartel strategy follow.

First, step up the direct attacks on the cartels. Over the past decades, U.S. law enforcement professionals have developed successful operational techniques that cartel leaders fear: partnerships with effective local police (often with U.S. training), expertise with judicially approved wiretaps and electronic surveillance, rewards programs that make criminal bosses vulnerable to betrayal, and, above all, when local laws permit, extradition to U.S. courts and prisons. The United States and its allies should increase the capability for multiagency field operations in all these dimensions, as well as the professionalization of host country military forces for operations requiring holding ground while the rule of law is reinstituted by other national agencies. DEA already operates throughout the region and has solid relationships with counterpart agencies; additionally, the agency has worked closely with U.S. combatant commands, notably U.S. Southern Command, where its powerful extraterritorial jurisdiction authority supplemented the military's own programs to help U.S. allies in the region. DEA should continue to advise and assist host country police and counternarcotics forces, but the size of the agency must be greatly increased. With 5,500 agents spread over the hemisphere—including the United States—the agency that plays such a key role in the ongoing war with the cartels is spread too thin.

Second, the U.S. and its allies must continue to attack the cartels' financial networks and money-laundering capabilities—a key strategy that requires more resourcing at Treasury. Cartel leaders fear U.S. indictments and extradition to American courts; extradition, exposure, and seizure of "dirty" money from criminal operations are all effective strategies that identify kingpins and threaten them with trials in U.S. courts and long terms in U.S. prisons. The United States has learned to use financial analysis and indictments as weapons against the cartels, even when they are beyond the immediate reach of U.S. law. Their use should be expanded.

Third, help our neighbors build more functional state institutions, particularly courts, and stimulate economic growth. In terms of the U.S. role and our assistance to allies, our understanding of security assistance must be broadened to include effective assistance to police and courts. For example, as part of Plan Colombia—a Colombian-developed counter-cartel strategy—the United States provided the Colombian National Police (CNP) with telecommunications-intercept equipment and, working through the Department of Justice, helped the CNP build a judicial process to support wiretap investigations. The result was a powerful tool that assisted indictments against cartel leadership and extraditions to the United States for prosecution. Likewise, assisting host nations to build strong, noncorrupt judicial systems is critical to assisting or restoring stable governments in areas threatened by cartel or other insurgent violence; courts, appellate courts, and efficient prisons are key pieces.

Other U.S. agencies and contractors can provide other materiel assistance, training, partnership, and, when authorized, direct help in specified areas such as the collection of certain kinds of strategic intelligence. The U.S. Department of Defense can provide advisors and trainers on the Colombia model to supplement local military and law enforcement efforts, and occasionally direct aid in the form of helicopter transportation and naval support.[61]

U.S. efforts should have a minimal footprint appropriate to political considerations in the area. Models are the U.S. assistance effort in the Philippines and long-running Special Forces advisors in Colombia. U.S. military planners should consider other kinds of low-key integration of military advice and capabilities into host country security systems, and—in light of likely future challenges worldwide—consider updating present counterinsurgency doctrines to include the selection and training of military advisors.

Domestic. The domestic response to the challenge of the cartels and gangs falls into two categories. The first is the challenge to public order posed by the cartels themselves and their associated gangs; they must be confronted, indicted, and prevented from consolidating their criminal "businesses" as they do farther south. Second, the United States must prosecute simultaneous campaigns to reduce drug consumption as a way to attack the gangs, treat abusers, and roll back the effects of local gangs on communities and, importantly, recruitment in schools.

Enhance support to local law enforcement. Local police departments, backed up by state and Federal assistance, are the front line against cartels and gangs. Many police departments have already adapted to the gang challenge in inventive and effective ways. Most urban departments now have detectives and policemen who either specialize in gangs or have been sensitized to them. Most have some form of intelligence staff that focuses on gangs, though those staffs may ebb and flow depending on local tax dollars and Federal grants. Cross-jurisdictional coordinating bodies and local information-sharing arrangements are common among police departments.

But intelligence-sharing among various law enforcement organizations has been a key issue. Progress has been made, but more work is required. On the front lines, local police departments struggle to exchange and analyze data on a regional and national basis, competing with criminal cartels and gangs that have no practical limit on funds, mobility, or access to modern electronics. Federal legislation passed after 9/11 mandated the development of a law enforcement "information-sharing environment" and an Information Sharing Council, which in turn led to the establishment by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security of a nationwide network of 58 "fusion centers" to synthesize and share law enforcement–related information and intelligence to agencies that voluntarily participate. Some feedback from the field, however, is that fusion centers remain underfunded and undermanned—and participation is voluntary across jurisdictions.

Also, in addition to information-sharing, local police departments need access to better analysis of data, either produced by their own analysts in their own departments, or aggregated data pushed down to the cop on the beat from Federal levels. DEA and FBI assistance is invaluable, but more can be done. The Department of Justice's El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) has the potential to become a national "super" fusion center, although its analysis capability at present is uniquely specific to certain areas. EPIC analysis capability should be expanded, and it should be joined to

an enlarged and more inclusive national fusion center network. Access to the Homeland Security Data Network should be expanded, and continued progress in standardizing data processing languages and programs should be encouraged and Federally resourced.

Support community knowledge-sharing of counter-gang strategies. While police and other law enforcement agencies are the "thin blue line" that deals with the substance of crime, widespread community effort is needed to prevent or moderate gang-related culture in local neighborhoods. Federal assistance to communities in the form of knowledge-sharing, gang analysis, and community development should also be available on an as-needed or lessons-learned basis. A Federally facilitated program to help communities and towns learn lessons from others who have successfully defeated gangs would be valuable to establish networks of towns and cities—and even rural counties—hostile to the establishment of gang infestation.

Provide treatment for drug abusers to reduce the level of illicit drug use. One of the ironies of the Nation's struggle with illegal drugs is that it already knows how to decrease drug use. In fact, under one U.S. President, drug use was actually reduced; in 1972, Richard Nixon established a national program that combined enforcement and effective treatment centers that lowered drug use nationwide.

However, the picture of drug abuse as a public health problem rather than as a criminal act eventually eroded in the political wars that followed the Nixon resignation. As drug use became more widespread, a backlash against treatment grew—and endured—among the voting public and their representatives. The Obama administration's recently published National Drug Control Strategy seeks to restore the general balance of treatment and punishment, as well as other shifts, and a national drug treatment program, open to abusers at all levels and ages, should be started as a necessary part of the war against the cartels.

Begin a consistent, long-term national campaign to reduce the attractiveness of gang culture, including illegal drug use, to American teenagers. Often, there is an absence of elite leadership in programs to discourage the connected pathologies of gang culture and illegal drug use. In fact, it sometimes appears that elite opinion finds both activities to be exciting and fashionable. At one of the conferences supporting this article's findings, an experienced police officer specializing in gangs stated, "We have national campaigns to stop smoking and to use our seat belts. Why can't we have a national campaign to get our kids to stop thinking gangs are cool?"[62]

gangs of all types actively recruit in public and private schools using a variety of techniques—positive incentives, Facebook and other social media, and intimidation

Fight for our schools. Gangs of all types actively recruit in public and private schools at all levels—high, middle, and elementary schools—using a variety of techniques—positive incentives, Facebook and other social media, and intimidation. Despite various state laws against recruitment, gangs continue to attract students at increasingly younger ages. A 2009 survey by the National Gang Crime Research Center reported that over a third of public schools surveyed reported gang recruitment in the previous year.[63] Gang recruitment of the next generation of American children should be addressed as a national challenge.

Federally finance local "drug courts." Many states now operate unique and highly effective drug courts that bring together intervention teams of treatment, education, law enforcement, and court probation personnel to aggressively deal with first-time offenders. Under the direction and close supervision of a drug court judge, a person arrested on drug possession charges passes through a rigorous court-managed intervention program that typically lasts for several months. If the subject successfully completes the intervention program, charges are dismissed, and the arrest record is expunged. When used, these courts have low recidivism rates.[64] These programs are subject to the pressures of local budgets, competing with schools, police departments, and other municipal services for funding. With their detailed intervention programs, drug courts are relatively expensive—and effective.

No subject is liable to be more controversial than the question of whether to legalize drugs in the United States. The often repeated belief that legalization would defeat the cartels breaks down on the data. As stated previously, the drug cartels have reached a stage of development that would ensure their continued operation during any transition to legalized drugs on the part of the United States and beyond. It is highly unlikely that the legalization of drugs—some or even all drugs—in the United States would end the threat from these organizations. The cartels and other drug trafficking organizations are multifaceted criminal enterprises dedicated to making profits from any activity that brings in money. Although the majority of their income comes from illicit drugs, they also engage in other violent and white-collar crimes. The assorted cartels—the Mexican cartels, the FARC, and other organizations—are a new kind of transnational criminal organization, taking advantage of the global black economy not only to move drugs, but also to support human trafficking, prostitution, identity theft, arms trading, illicit financial transactions, and so forth. They have powerful state sponsors in a global network of illicit commerce. For the United States to turn to legalization *as a primary strategy* against the cartels would be a shot in the dark, particularly when other strategies to decrease drug use have been effective.

Pass immigration reform. The large population of illegal immigrants in the United States provides unwitting cover for narcogangs and cartels. The overwhelming number of illegal immigrants living in the United States have proven to be law abiding and focused on making a living for themselves and their families.[65] Since the economic crisis, the Department of Homeland Security reports that over 1 million undocumented aliens have departed, leaving the United States with a remaining population of around 10 million.[66] The illegal immigrants who remain cannot safely return to their home countries, nor can they seek the protection of the law when preyed upon by gangs or cartels. Setting aside arguments regarding their contributions to society and to the national economy, stripping away the protective cover that their communities unwillingly provide is necessary to isolate and attack cartels and gangs who both lodge with, and prey upon, Latino immigrants. The presence in the Nation of a permanently alienated Latino community represents a serious strategic vulnerability that should be addressed by reform and assimilation as rapidly as possible.

Reform prisons. In a sense, prisons have become the "graduate schools" of gang life, and prison gangs play active roles in recruiting members and managing territories. Younger first-timers are often recruited into gangs while serving alongside more hardened offenders,

prisons often lack education or job training, and former inmates are released with little or no prospects for reentering society.[67] Lowering recidivism is dependent on training and education programs in detention facilities as well as effective reintegration of inmates into society, including securing a job or job training, an education, and so forth.[68] Finally, the ability of cartel and gang leaders to control their activities from prison should be curtailed, either by geographical space or some other method to prevent their communication with their organizations.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this article, I quoted Moisés Naím, the author of *Illicit*, who stated that ultimately, it is the fabric of society that is at stake in the struggle against global corruption. With no intent of sounding alarmist, I believe him to be correct—certainly, residents of Guatemala City, Tegucigalpa, Managua, or Barranquilla would agree.

The Mexican and Colombian cartels, and the corrupt government officials who export the FARC's products under the once-proud flag of Venezuela, though, are just the first wave of criminals to take advantage of the displacements of the early 21st century. There are now others around the globe; the Ukrainian and Russian mobs, Hizballah, and the Taliban are symptomatic of transnational criminal networks that weave in and out of states and governments, enabled by the latest technologies and unrestrained by laws or decency. The same forces that fight international drug cartels are also the forces that fight ideologically based terrorism and insurgents as well. Crime, terrorism, and insurgency differ mainly in scale, and distinctions are becoming less meaningful.

While the threat of war between states will always exist as long as there are states—and we need to keep strong forces in the field, aloft, and afloat to deter such a possibility—the field of major conflict now includes large-scale crime, or criminal networks that challenge the authority of states at the most basic levels—wholesale corruption, neighborhood intimidation, murder of government officials and candidates for public office, kidnapping of citizens.

To defeat the cartels threatening our neighbors and us, we must use our existing operational advantages as building blocks for new regional strategies. We have effective, paramilitary, global antigang forces in the DEA and some other agencies, and they know what to do. We know how to assist our allies when they request help, as in the case of Colombia. We know how to root out the cartels' minions in the United States, how to make our cities and schools unattractive to gangs, and how to decrease drug use in the United States. We have done it in the past. We know how to assimilate new immigrants and win them to lawful citizenship. We have done that, too. Now, the question is whether we, as a government and people, can put these things together to defeat the cartels that threaten security in the region. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] See Walter Wriston, *The Twilight of Sovereignty* (New York: Scribner, 1992), for an elegant discussion on this point.

[2] Definitions have been a problem because of the variety of networked criminal organizations. In economics, the term *cartel* refers specifically to an enterprise's conspiracy to fix prices, limit production, or both. The early Colombian drug cartels were proper cartels; current criminal drug organizations no longer strictly fit

the definition. Although law enforcement organizations in-house prefer the term *drug trafficking organizations* (DTOs), popular usage has stayed with cartels and so does this article, although DTO does appear from time to time.

[3] I am grateful to Moisés Naím for these and other insights. See *Illicit* (New York: Random House, 2005), 33.

[4] See "The Failed States Index," *Foreign Policy* (July–August 2007), 54–63.

[5] Douglas Farah, *The Criminal-Terrorist Nexus and Its Pipelines* (New York: Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation, January 2008), 3.

[6] John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime and Militancy* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 78. Though dated, this paper is fundamental for understanding theories of criminal networks.

[7] U.S. Department of State, *State Sponsors of Terrorism*, available at <www.state.gov/s/ct/c14151.htm>.

[8] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 2009).

[9] David Luhnow and Jose de Cordoba, "The Perilous State of Mexico," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 21, 2009, available at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123518102536038463.html>.

[10] Though in some jurisdictions, particularly in Southern California, antigang policing has come to resemble counterinsurgency. See, for example, Paul Harris, "Gang Mayhem Grips LA," *The Guardian*, March 18, 2007, available at <www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/mar/18/usa.paulharris>.

[11] Correspondence with rancher on border, May 2, 2010.

[12] Emilio San Pedro, "Atlanta Vice: A New U.S. Drugs Hub?" BBC News, May 2, 2009, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8014833.stm>.

[13] "Atlanta Reeling Under Mexican Drug Cartel Violence," March 10, 2009, available at <www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/atlanta-mexico-drug-gangs/2009/03/10/id/328722>.

[14] Celinda Franco, *The MS–13 and 18th Street Gangs—Emerging Transnational Threats?* Congressional Research Service (CRS), RL34233 (Washington, DC: CRS, January 30, 2008).

[15] Comments by gang-experienced law enforcement professionals at Center for a New American Security (CNAS) workshop, December 10, 2009.

[16] See <http://names.mongabay.com/ancestry/Mexican.html>.

[17] Barry McCaffrey, "After Action Report: Visit to Mexico," U.S. Military Academy Department of Social Sciences, December 29, 2008, 6.

[18] Mica Rosenberg, "Drug War Abuses by Mexican Army Rise Sharply," December 8, 2009, available at <www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5B804H20091209>.

[19] Ibid.

[20] U.S. Department of State, *2009 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, February 2009), available at <www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2009/index.htm>.

[21] Jorge Fernandez Menendez and Victor Ronquillo, *De Los Maras a Los Zetas: Los secretos del narcotráfico, de Colombia a Chicago* (Mexico City: Editorial Grijalbo, 2006), 66.

[22] John Sullivan, "Counter Supply and Counter-Violence Approaches to Narcotics Trafficking," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, March 12, 2010, 190.

[23] See, for example, John Bailey and Roy Godson, *Organized Crime and Democratic Governability: Mexico and the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 300.

[24] "*Narco echa raíces en tierras ociosas*," *Excélsior* (Mexico City), September 24, 2008.

[25] Coca is not a native plant to Colombia, but was "exported" when the Colombian cartels and FARC seized land and expanded their operations in the 1980s and 1990s.

[26] See the first report by the Colombian National Commission on Reparations and Reconciliation, *Disidentes, rearmados y emergentes: Bandas criminales o tercera generación paramilitar?* (August 2007).

[27] Patricia Bibes, "Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism—Colombia, a Case Study," *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 17, no. 3 (August 2001), 250.

[28] See, for example, International Crisis Group, "Ending Colombia's FARC Conflict: Dealing the Right Card," Latin America Report No. 30, March 26, 2009.

[29] Comments by Adam Isacson at CNAS roundtable, February 25, 2010.

[30] The *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* was a bigger cocaine producer than the FARC from approximately 1999 to 2003. See Douglas Farah, *Money Laundering and Bulk Cash Smuggling; Challenges for the Merida Initiative* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, May 2010).

[31] "Kidnappers Slit Colombian Pol Luis Francisco Cuellar's Throat; FARC Eyed in Assassination," Associated Press, December 23, 2009.

[32] Chris Kraul and Sebastian Rotella, "Colombia Drug Ring May Link to Hezbollah," *Seattle Times*, October 25, 2008, available at <http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2008309259_drugring25.html>.

[33] Ray Walser, *What to Do about Hugo Chavez: Venezuela's Challenge to Security in the Americas* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, February 2009), available at <www.heritage.org/research/latinamerica/bg2243.cfm>.

[34] Kraul and Rotella.

[35] Phil Williams, *Violent Non-State Actors and National and International Security*, International Relations and Security Network (Zurich: Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, November 2008).

[36] Steven Monblatt, "Terrorism and Drugs in the Americas. The OAS Response," *OAS E-zine*, February–March 2004.

[37] Tim Gaynor and Tiemoko Diallo, "Al Qaeda Linked to Rogue Air Network: U.S. Official," Reuters, January 14, 2010.

[38] Chávez won the referendum with a 54 percent to 46 percent victory.

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Law Enforcement Capacity-building in African Postconflict Communities

BY BRUCE BAKER

Postconflict is, unfortunately, not always a suitable descriptor of societies where a peace agreement has been signed and a transitional government installed. Violence does not stop on the day of the public signing of the treaty. Large numbers of unemployed and (in the short term) unemployable youths, often armed or with access to arms, loiter on the streets. They have had little opportunity to gain education in the preceding years, but have learned that violence is the key to accessing resources and status. The former security forces or informal armed groups and militias that they have been part of have, over many years, provided a whole range of roles: social support group, family, employer, provider, escape ladder from rural poverty, and source of status. Hence, whether these groups are officially disbanded or not, the youths look to their former general-patron and their ex-fighting colleagues as their surrogate "clan" in times of trouble. Violence may well live on in their minds, dreams, responses to conflict resolution, attitudes toward women, and methods of securing resources. No wonder, then, that the crime rates escalate in the cities where they now live, and no wonder that some militias remain in the countryside, looting and robbing, despite the official end of the war.

In such a postconflict environment, I recommend that serious consideration be given to the role that nonstate law enforcement actors can have. I do so against a background of increasing interest by policy think tanks and donors in the role of local law enforcement groups in delivering safety and

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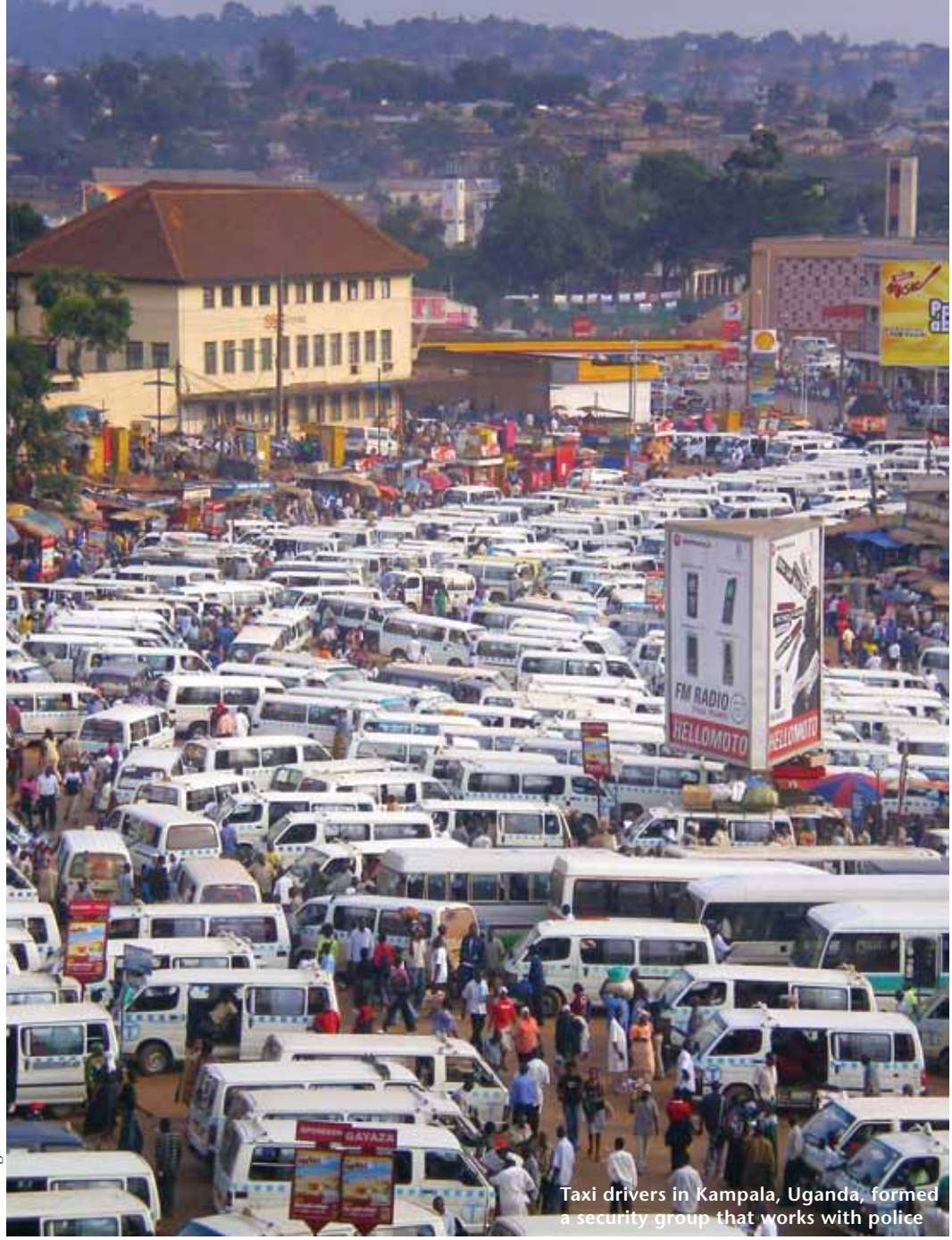

Felix Fong

Taxi drivers in Kampala, Uganda, formed a security group that works with police

justice for the poor.[1] When I mention *nonstate actors*, the first thing that comes to mind for many is the young men whose militias and armed groups originally created the insecurity. The response is a quick dismissal of the idea that such people could provide law enforcement and defend the new order. But this is not what is being suggested.

In the immediate aftermath of conflict, the main security issues for most people will not be armed groups murdering people and burning property, but rather criminals robbing people, raping women, and committing similar crimes. The chief concerns in surveys of postconflict societies are invariably criminal issues that require police, not insurgency issues that require self-defense

forces. For instance, a survey of "security-related problems" by the North-South Institute in Southern Sudan found that in 2009, 4 years after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, people's biggest concerns were theft (59 percent), burglary (22 percent), and abduction of girls and women/forced marriage (22 percent).[2] Likewise in Liberia, statistics from the United Nations Mission in Liberia indicate that robbery (including armed robbery), murder, and rape constituted the most pervasive crimes.[3]

When I suggest, therefore, that nonstate actors might have a part to play in crime prevention and investigation in the postconflict state, those under consideration are not militias and self-defense units. I have in mind using local law enforcement groups. Typically, a wide range of local policing and law enforcement entities are found in postconflict developing countries. In Africa, at least, there are likely to be private citizen groups organized on a voluntary, ad hoc basis (locally called *vigilances* or *vigilante groups*, though these terms do not necessarily have the negative aspects conveyed in the West); security groups organized by and for the benefit of trading communities such as markets and taxi drivers; security structures at the village or city neighborhood level authorized by the police to provide everyday policing; customary chiefs who prevent or resolve civil and criminal cases; religious police (especially Islamic) overseeing moral conduct; and restorative justice community-based organizations.

Let me give two illustrations. First, let us consider the Uganda Taxi Operators and Drivers Association (60,000 members with 10,000 minibuses), which polices the bus parks noted as crime hot spots. In Kampala, it has a 100-member-strong traffic warden department that works with the police and has responsibility for resolving disputes between drivers or between drivers and passengers, preventing pickpocketing, enforcing traffic regulations by taxi drivers, and assisting the police in directing traffic at rush hour. Second, let us take a peace monitoring nongovernmental organization (NGO). In Sierra Leone, some communities in the south have established mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Bo Peace and Reconciliation Movement is a coalition of 11 community groups working on peacebuilding, reconciliation, and crime prevention in the Bo district. Its 20 local Peace Monitors resolve hundreds of conflicts each year, such as family matters, fighting, land cases, and leadership issues. Their work has reduced community conflict and litigation cases in the local courts and has helped many ex-combatants reintegrate into communities.

a wide range of local policing and law enforcement entities are found in postconflict developing countries

These are the sorts of groups that arise (or rise again) from the ashes of war to undertake law enforcement and justice services. They are active in urban areas off the tarmac road where the police rarely go. They are also active in rural communities that are miles from the nearest police station. Though their motives may be mixed, a significant element of their motivation comes from a desire to assist their own communities. It is the success or failure of *these* groups that will determine the level and quality of law enforcement and justice for most people in the generation following conflict.

Many imagine that nonstate policing is always autonomous and lawless. This is far from the case; such groups may in fact be

linked to the state, either formally or, more likely, informally. In other words, state and nonstate law enforcement and justice are not always clearly separated and distinct. It is true that there are plenty of examples of nonstate policing agencies acting without any reference points—whether the state, chiefs, or local community. However, it is equally true that there are many examples of law enforcement and justice activities that are shared across the state/nonstate boundary. Some law enforcement groups realize that there is much to gain from tapping into the knowledge, skills, resources, and prestige of others so as to achieve their own agendas. The recognition of capital in others draws providers together into law enforcement and justice networks. It is no surprise, then, that many instances can be found at the local level of state and nonstate actors carrying out joint patrols and operations or exchanging information about crime and criminals.

state and nonstate law enforcement and justice are not always clearly separated and distinct

There are also cases of community-based groups and state police sharing and dividing security requirements according to whose modus operandi is best suited for a particular task. The state may provide nonstate law enforcement groups with equipment or training, or it may grant them formal recognition, which determines their role and authority as chiefs or elected law enforcement officials in their locality. The boundary between state and nonstate/local is blurred and is repeatedly negotiated and revised. The term *nonstate groups*, therefore, does not fully characterize those that are so called. In fact, many do have some degree of authorization by certain levels of the state and do undertake the state's law enforcement business. The thread running through such groups is not so much that they have nothing to do with the state, but that they are *local* law enforcement and justice providers enforcing the locally prevailing defined order and using locally recruited volunteers.

These local providers differ from militias in important ways. They are for the most part unarmed (and if not, should be required to be so); they are local rather than regional in their area of operation; they are narrow in their focus, tackling the everyday disputes and disturbances that affect the neighborhood or workplace; they tend to be more homogenous than militias and thus more cohesive, stable, and predictable; and, being small, they rarely attract takeover by a "big man" with serious regional or national political ambitions. Together, these factors mean that they are less prone to commit serious violence and crime, less likely to be able to ignore their local communities' wishes, and less vulnerable to manipulation for political/ethnic ends.

It is these groups that offer law enforcement and justice for the next generation (or longer), during which time the underresourced state will be struggling to establish a nationwide state policing and justice alternative. Supporting them is not about privatizing security so that it is turned over to major commercial security companies, or about backing gross human rights abusers. It is about helping those civic-minded groups who are active on the ground providing services for their own communities for little or no reward. It is about supporting providers who do not have expensive training and equipment needs and who

refuse to fail because resources were not available from the central government to sustain them. It is about assisting those who, for all their failings to live up fully to international standards (as the police forces of their own country), are often, nevertheless, to a degree supported by and accountable to most of their communities (otherwise, it would be difficult to operate).

No one suggests that all local groups are worth engaging. Everyone has a horror story of a vigilante group that abused the local people that it said it was defending. The challenge is to distinguish between the "reformable" and the "beyond reform" and to discover those who do offer potential for support. This means a mapping of the law enforcement groups in an area, an assessment of their characteristics, an evaluation by users, and a stakeholder analysis to determine potential winners and losers from any intervention. Following those processes, an initial selection process might short-list groups that are locally acceptable (to a majority of all sectors of the community), nonexclusionary (especially in regard to minorities), not perceived by the local community as criminal/extortive, and open to dialogue about change.

To consider supporting nonstate law enforcement and justice groups entails remembering that a public good is not to be thought of as a synonym for a good provided by the state or one available nationwide. A public good can apply to a nonexclusionary service provided to all within a more localized context. Public goods and services can be and are provided by nonstate actors to their communities. Too often, the public/private service divide is seen as, on the one hand, services provided free by the state to all citizens according to certain standards; and, on the other, services offered to those who can pay since they are for the profit, and in the interest, of the providers. *Public* is assumed to be universal and free; *private* is seen to be localized and costly, thus excluding the poor. This is a travesty of reality in law enforcement and justice in most of the world. No one who knows anything of African police forces would describe their services as offered to all citizens and made available freely without discrimination or favor. And an objective account of nonstate law enforcement and justice providers would not find them all self-regarding and serving only private and largely elite interests. Rather, many would be found to be universally available to their local public irrespective of status and power and offered at minimal or no cost to the user.

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Another objection to supporting nonstate actors is that it would promote fragmentation, inconsistency, problems with control, loss of economies of scale, and conflict between rival groups. To "let a thousand flowers bloom," it is said, would lead to every hamlet having its own form of policing. Though it is acknowledged that heterogeneity is a problem for the centralizing state and its ruling class, it is not so problematic to the local people on the ground, according to a recent report on Southern Sudan.[4] The study argues that the strength and popularity of local law enforcement and justice stem from the fact that they are "tailored to the perceptions and needs" of local people. The variation not only between localities but also within localities is exactly what makes it

successful in the eyes of Sudanese users: "Each case is negotiated, argued and bargained out to come to a conclusion that is by no means predictable on the basis of the bare bones of the case."[5] In an adversarial context, where there are winners and losers according to statutory law, such uncertainty sounds threatening. But in a context where people are seeking a reasonable settlement in a given situation, looking for compensation, and perhaps wanting an appropriate punishment in the circumstances, it makes eminent sense. It is a desire that law enforcement and justice agents understand the individual circumstances and timing of events and the customs *that apply locally*. Individualized justice and security is shaped according to context and the need of the individuals concerned.

To make the actual providers of local law enforcement better at their task, I suggest five strategies.

leadership is something that can be strengthened from outside through encouragement, example, a little practical assistance, and perhaps training

Developing leadership. Trying to eliminate from nonstate/local groups all those who have committed human rights abuses in the preceding conflict is unrealistic. Most, if not all, eligible local young men are likely to have taken part in abuses by the state security forces or the armed groups and militias. And any vetting process requires local knowledge and the unlikely assumption that people have not moved around during the war. But leaders of local law enforcement and justice groups that are seeking to serve the community of their locality or workplace are not fools. Illiteracy does not equal incompetence. They do not want "hoodlums" and drunks patrolling with them or adjudicating cases with them. These leaders know who they are recruiting, and they are the ones who have to be trusted to discipline their recruits. As men with smaller ambitions than militia leaders, these leaders seek local recognition and status. If they want the support of the locality that they claim to be serving, they will have to rein in the delinquents. Thus, much depends on having the best possible leadership in place.

Leadership is something that can be strengthened from outside through encouragement, example, a little practical assistance, and perhaps training. First, leaders can be made aware of constitutional and legal requirements (for example, regarding the proscription of violence). Second, they can be given accreditation and practical rewards (for example, flashlights) for learning, achieving, signing an undertaking not to use violence, and offering the local community regular meetings to report back and listen. This is a strong motive for those who are more interested in recognition than equipment. When asked what sort of help would he like to pursue his justice work, one chief in Southern Sudan requested a bicycle and a sash to cover his torn T-shirt—in other words, primarily, he wanted no more than official recognition that his efforts to serve so many different villages was appreciated. Third, consistency could be helped by gathering leaders into an association or at regular conventions to compare approaches (for example, the chiefs of a given area could compile customary law precedents in casebooks that would be used by all). This practice could also facilitate the development and adaptation of customary law. Fourth, nonstate actors are often good at conflict

UN (Staton Winter)

Liberian flag hangs at entrance of magisterial court in Nimba County

resolution, but some might value specific training in conflict/dispute resolution. Last, performance would be enhanced by regular visits to leaders and their communities by an association of their own or by a state agency for the purpose of monitoring/answering questions (and a phone hotline for both, as long as the lines are properly resourced in terms of response).

Though training is the regular staple of most leadership programs, a word of caution is needed. There needs to be clarity as to what skills the leaders wish to acquire. Literacy may be a vital skill for the Western-style policing techniques involving witness statements, reports, directives, guidelines, and the like, but it is not so crucial in an oral tradition. Nor must the illiteracy of local law enforcement leaders be read as inadequacy; they may be excellent at negotiation, discernment, judgment, conflict resolution, and the other social skills often associated with local law enforcement. In other words, they may be well educated in the local values and skills necessary for catching thieves, bringing them to justice, and settling disputes in a way that brings resolution, whether through compensation, restoration, or punishment. Where they may need help is in understanding the limits of the constitution and law on their methods of arrest and investigation and records. The Uganda Taxi Operators and Drivers Association is trained in relevant driving/vehicle laws and methods of arrest by the police. Likewise, leaders can be trained to provide legal information and guidance or to improve their mediation and conflict resolution skills for civil disputes (as has been done in Sierra Leone with paralegal NGOs).

Resolving intergroup disputes. Typically, nonstate providers operate in small areas, which means disputes and crimes are sometimes likely to cross borders and bring groups face to face

with neighboring providers. At the ethnic level, this is potentially dangerous, and one ethnic group's perpetrator can become another group's victim—justice to one group might be discrimination to another. Given that law enforcement and justice groups have no fixed boundaries regarding geography or roles, conflict with other groups is a real possibility. In such a case, some intergroup dispute resolution mechanism would help as a forum for exchange of information, standardization of procedures, and screening of members.

In cities, at least, rarely are there simple, clear divisions along ethnic lines. Prolonged conflict mixes together ethnic groups through flight and migration. Old ethnic/clan enclaves are eroded. Yet heterogeneous communities may then lead to heterogeneous solutions of social organization. It may be that inevitably, the patrol of young men at night is mixed, or that inter-ethnic disputes are resolved by ethnically mixed panels. In Southern Sudan, I observed a case referred to the County Customary Court of "fighting" between an "Arab northerner" and a "southern Sudanese." Because the case was politically sensitive, the mixed court was deemed better suited than the magistrate's court to resolve the conflict according to the values of the complainants and involved communities. The key is that there is a mechanism in place that can resolve disputes between individuals that cross boundaries or disputes between neighboring or competing policing groups.

encouraging state-nonstate links also guards against that autonomy that allows agencies to misbehave and underperform

Strengthening existing links between state and nonstate. In advocating support to nonstate actors providing an acceptable service that has local backing, I am not advocating abandoning the state providers. Both should be supported to work to their strengths. In fact, the best entry point to supporting nonstate actors may well be where they have existing links with the state. I say this because that speaks of mutual recognition and respect and overcomes potential rivalry. It also addresses the point that neither state nor nonstate should be expected to do it all, and each can benefit from the resources and skills of others. Encouraging state-nonstate links also guards against that autonomy that allows agencies to misbehave and underperform. It makes sense to help those who know how to work together and share intelligence and resources. There are examples in the field of a degree of successful collaboration of local informal policing and state policing. For example, in Malawi and Sierra Leone, nonstate paralegals are linked to and supervised by lawyers and monitored by community boards. They tackle legal issues by themselves or by working with customary chiefs. In Kenya, to curtail cattle rustling, two communities decided to form a joint security system. With the help of some NGOs and in collaboration with the local leaders, they selected a commandant and an assistant and resolved to hire five Kenyan police reservists. Donors provided a jeep, uniforms, boots, radios and batteries, and even a small salary. The reservists work alongside troops employed by large-scale ranchers to repel cattle raiding. Attacks by Samburu and Isiolo have declined markedly. Because they are well provided for, the Home Guards have not been tempted to use their arms to raid the community but instead to protect it. The police also have a

radio connection with the Home Guards, and the government provides daily monitoring of the guns and ammunition issued them.

Several methods to strengthen links might be considered:

- Nonstate policing groups might have a dedicated police officer assigned to them as a link/mentor.
- Successful groups could entertain members of other groups to demonstrate methods.
- Independent local forums could be established that bring police and courts together with vigilance groups, taxi associations, customary chiefs, police forums, and local security providers (and perhaps users as well) to share problems and solutions concerning crime/disorder and relationships between law enforcement and justice actors.
- Justice links would be more beneficial if nonstate actors registered and recorded decisions reached and there was a mechanism and right of appeal to higher courts, which may be either state or nonstate.

Should links be forged where they do not already exist? The concept of sharing and cooperation is positive, but motivation fueled by mistrust and suspicion is to be avoided. Local people quickly report whether the local policing provider is misbehaving—in Rwanda, they readily responded, using a telephone hotline. It must be remembered that local groups are visible and find it hard not to be locally accountable to some degree. What might be more relevant is to keep an eye on any police unit charged with "supervising" local actors. Forced links can have their problems.

Building Area Networks. From strengthening links, the next step is to consider integration into a security network (so-called nodal governance).[6] This brings together the multiplicity of authorizers and providers of policing. Given the experience of Community Police Forums in Africa where police show a preference for dominating and not taking as credible recommendations from the public of crime priorities, it might be worth thinking carefully before allowing the police to chair such networks.

the concept of sharing and cooperation is positive, but motivation fueled by mistrust and suspicion is to be avoided

An example of an area network in practice is Cape Town, South Africa. The Cape Town Partnership is an organization established and controlled by the city council and business community to provide policing in the city's central business district. Private security guards patrol the area and secure public spaces in the city center. They maintain contact with the city police control room by radio and also supervise the area's closed circuit television. Though the example involves commercial security, it is possible to duplicate the principles across the noncommercial sector.

Integrating disparate groups into a single network is, of course, problematic because issues regarding skills, roles, availability, authority, legality, legitimacy, and coordinating processes abound. Everywhere in the world, real police treat with contempt the amateur

local/metropolitan cops. Herbert Wulf identifies two key issues facing mixed networks.[7] The first is the problem of legitimization, given the competitive nature of legitimation. Second is the problem of apportioning authority so as to avoid disputed sovereignties and yet to achieve a clarity of functions. His solution is to hold fast to two principles—namely, subsidiarity for practice and supremacy for norms. The *subsidiarity principle* means that for any task, the lowest level should be the starting point. Only when that level is not capable or suitable should a higher state level undertake the task. Concerning supremacy in norm setting, it should be top-down, so that norms of a higher level prevail over those of a lower level.

only as nonstate and state raise their standards will both sides increase their respect for, and trust in, one another

As regards assigning roles within networks, the principle might well be specialization. Too often the state police face overload. They have taken on additional roles within the community (for example, problem-solving and mediation) to the point where their limited numbers are stretched even further and the skills required of them multiply. A minimalist policing approach calls for the police to intervene only when there is criminal (or perhaps only serious criminal) activity and then to do so using their legal powers and the criminal justice system—in other words, confining police to what they are trained and resourced to do (and want to do).[8] The rest can be outsourced to local/nonstate providers drawing upon their expertise of local knowledge and conciliatory processes and upon their local availability and legitimacy. The focus of this approach is clarifying roles according to skills so that all in the network are clear about what they can individually contribute and what they can realistically expect from others. Ken Menkhaus calls it a "negotiated division of labor."[9] When providers concentrate on what they do best, it only furthers their legitimacy.

Establishing Oversight Framework. A degree of predictable and uniform practice could be achieved through establishing universal standards and practical assistance with oversight to see these standards are upheld. It is important to develop an overarching framework of security and justice standards to guide the performance, procedures, jurisdictions, and interventions of nonstate actors. There needs to be a shared model of regulation and accountability. Only as nonstate and state raise their standards will both sides increase their respect for, and trust in, one another and will both gain the support of the people.

Like leaders, groups also can be included in accreditation programs that recognize demonstrable knowledge and skills. It could offer a degree of legitimacy to the nonstate actors and opportunities to monitor and improve their performance—such as occurs in Malawi and Sierra Leone, where nonstate paralegals are supervised by lawyers and monitored by community boards.

Accredited nonstate groups that sign up to a framework of standards could also be held accountable by citywide structures. Across an area/city, a central policing and justice authority could play a supervisory and coordinating role. It would receive reports of threatening activity, request a response from the most suitable/available policing group, and monitor it to see if the response is

adequate or whether there is a need for a more specialized response that the state police might be able to offer.

The postconflict environment is one of a disrupted social order and a severely depleted (and probably discredited and historically corrupt) state police. In Liberia in 2003, for instance, efforts to locate former police officers proved difficult, and most of those who were located were deemed to be too old or undereducated or to have unacceptable human rights records. When the process was over, Liberia had only 786 police officers, and the authorities were forced to call for volunteers. Again, in Rwanda following the genocide and civil war, it was found that the police had been largely swept into the Congo forests and their material resources largely destroyed.

Commonly, states and donors have worked together to seek to reform the police into a democratic and efficient agency, with varying results. This approach is understandable, but it does not address the central problem that even if the reform is successful, the emerging state police force is rarely going to be provided the financial and human resources to provide a nationwide law enforcement service. Against this background, there is a strong case for reviewing the role that nonstate law enforcement may be able to offer alongside the state agencies. Too often, it has been assumed that all such groups are violent and discriminatory and beyond reform, or that they constitute a group of actors that are unprogrammable.

This article has sought to argue that developing law enforcement capacity in postconflict communities is achievable. It is *not* achievable by expecting the state to provide the entire service; there has to be the use of nonstate actors. This is not straightforward. They hold risks, but they also hold potential. Done in the right way, acceptable nonstate actors can have their performance enhanced to the benefit of all. They are as reformable as the state law enforcement services. They should be utilized if we are serious about providing fair and sustainable justice and security for all. **PRISM**

Notes

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U.S. Air Force (Brian Ferguson)

Afghan children surround Soldier at site of future park in Qalat

International Support for State-building

Flawed Consensus

BY STEPHEN D. KRASNER

State-building—external efforts to influence the domestic authority structures of other states—is arguably the central foreign policy challenge of the contemporary era. The principal security threat of the last several centuries—war among the major powers—is gone, primarily because of nuclear weapons. At the same time, the relationship between underlying capacity and the ability to do harm has become attenuated because of the actual and potential proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. North Korea, with a fraction of the gross domestic product of any one of its neighbors, could kill millions of people in China, Japan, or Russia. Biological or nuclear weapons could fall into the hands of transnational terrorist organizations. Anxiety about the relationship

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between failed or malevolent states and transnational terrorism will not disappear despite the recognition that there can be training camps in Oregon as well as Kandahar. Perhaps more than at any point in the several-hundred-year history of the modern state system, policymakers are confronted with the uncertainty—not a specific known risk—of the small probability of a bad outcome. It is an uncertainty that they cannot ignore, and state-building will be part of the program.

There is a consensus about state-building in the current policy-oriented literature. This consensus implicitly relies on the view that the most important challenge for state development is the creation of effective institutions and that the major role of external actors is to enhance institutional capacity. This perspective is deeply flawed. It assumes a final endstate, a fully Weberian state, that is unrealizable for most polities that are the target of state-building, fails to take account of the incentives for local leaders to impede better governance, and does not explicitly address the ways in which external actors might most constructively contribute to local governance because of a rhetorical commitment to local ownership and conventional sovereignty rules.

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Theories of State Development

How Denmark got to be Denmark is the master question of political science, or perhaps the social sciences more generally. There is no agreed-upon answer, but there are three candidate perspectives: modernization theory, institutional capacity, and rational choice institutionalism. All three have sought to understand how democratic functioning states have evolved. None has much to say directly about state-building. Modernization theory and rational choice institutionalism have dominated academic discussions of state development. While approaches focusing on institutional capacity have attracted less attention in academia, this orientation has dominated policy discussions of state-building.

Modernization theory contends that political transformation and democratization result from social change and economic growth.[1] Urbanization, higher levels of literacy, and industrialization lead to social mobilization, attitudinal change, and a larger middle class. A larger middle class is more tolerant, more accepting of diverse political perspectives, more willing to compromise, and more likely to reject extremism. Modernization makes individuals more capable of self-expression and anxious to engage in political activities. Greater wealth makes it possible for even those at the lower rungs of the economic ladder to adopt a longer time horizon. In a more complex social and political environment inhabited by a better educated population, cross-cutting cleavages become more important. Class conflict is mitigated. Democracy is not the result of some special set of cultural attributes possessed only by the West, but rather a product of social and economic transformation.[2]

For analysts emphasizing the importance of institutional capacity, the critical distinguishing feature of polities is their ability actually to govern. Thomas Hobbes is the source for this line of argument. Samuel P. Huntington famously wrote in the opening sentence of *Political Order*

in Changing Societies, "The most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government."[3] For Huntington, social mobilization without political institutionalization would result in political decay. Without order, development of any kind would be impossible, and order would be impossible without strong institutions. More recently, Francis Fukuyama has noted that a key feature of many countries in the developing world is the gap between the formal claims of state authority, which mimic patterns in the advanced industrialized democracies, and the actual capacity to govern.[4]

Rational choice offers a third perspective on the trajectory of political and economic development. Rational choice sees economic growth and effective governance as the result of decisions taken by key actors. These decisions are always self-interested. They reflect material incentives. Most, but not all, rational choice analyses point to the importance of institutions that facilitate the conclusion of mutually beneficial bargains by solving commitment problems. Institutions are created to make sure that actors honor the commitments that they have made. Institutions might, for instance, provide information so that parties know that cheating will be identified, or they might provide for third party adjudication if parties disagree about how an agreement should be interpreted. In contrast with institutional capacity theory, however, rational choice advocates understand institutions as mechanisms that can make political bargains stable and enduring, rather than as structures that concentrate power and authority. For those focusing on institutional capacity, the concentration of power is essential; for rational choice institutionalists, it is fatal.[5]

State-building has not been part of the discussion about state development. Representatives from all three schools of thought have recognized that the external environment might affect state development, but they have not paid specific attention to state-building. For modernization theory, technological change, which operates across the globe, is the prime mover. New global technologies make possible urbanization and industrialization, key drivers for the creation of a large middle class with attitudes compatible with democratic development. For at least some prominent advocates of institutional capacity theory, external threat has been a primary driver for the creation of stronger state institutions. The historical sociologist Charles Tilly argued that war makes the state and the state makes war; the most successful European states were those that could concentrate capital and coercion.[6] Some rational choice institutionalists have also pointed to the importance of external threat and the need to secure adequate capital. They have argued, however, that the key to success is the ability of the state to create institutions that allow it to make credible commitments to potential lenders. A state's strength comes from its ability to limit its own freedom of action.[7]

State Development and State-building

The three major ways of understanding state development provide a framework for organizing the work of state-building. For policy-oriented work, institutional capacity theory is by far the most important approach.

There is a small body of work consistent with modernization theory involving cross-national studies of the impact of foreign assistance on governance. The tacit assumption is that a lack of resources is the major impediment to development. With adequate funding, poorer states could get on the modernization escalator.

The findings mirror the literature on foreign aid and economic growth. Some studies have found small positive relationships between aid and institutional change. Other studies have found none.[8]

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Rational choice approaches have informed some of the academic work associated with peacekeeping. The basic finding has been that peacekeepers do have a positive impact on peace. Their most important contribution is not the actual resources (guns and money) that they can bring to bear, but rather that they solve a number of information and commitment problems. Peacekeepers can monitor violations and determine whether they were incidental or calculated. They are a signal to belligerents that external actors are seriously committed. Peacekeepers can help to prevent security dilemma spirals by monitoring disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs.[9]

The need to develop institutional capacity, however, has either implicitly or explicitly informed most of the policy-oriented work on state-building. Building state capacity could involve technical assistance, training, and aid for bureaucratic infrastructure. Three projects illustrate an institutional capacity approach. *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, the RAND project led by James Dobbins, assesses the success of state-building efforts in the post–World War II period by both the United States and the United Nations.[10] *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*, published by the United States Institute of Peace and U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, describes itself as a "comprehensive review of major strategic policy documents from state ministries of defense, foreign affairs, and development, along with major intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations . . . around the world."[11] *Fixing Failed States* by Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart is a study by two prominent practitioners.[12]

The consensus that emerges from these documents is that external actors must focus on restoring and building core state functions. Aside from recognizing that security is a priority, there is no consensus on sequencing. Aid efforts, Ghani and Lockhart contend, have to address 10 functions: rule of law, monopoly over the legitimate use of force, administrative control that operates under clear and predictable rules, public finances, health and education services, infrastructure, citizen rights, market creation and industrial policy, management of public assets, and public borrowing.[13] *Guiding Principles* is organized around the need to restore state capacity in five "technical sectors": security, justice and reconciliation, governance and participation, economic stabilization and infrastructure, and humanitarian assistance and social well-being.[14] Dobbins argues that there are five state-building tasks that must be viewed as a hierarchy but can all be addressed simultaneously if resourcing is adequate: security, humanitarian relief, governance, economic stabilization, and democratization. The first priority must be security; development and democracy come later.

The fundamental conclusion of the RAND study is that more is better. Better outcomes have been associated with situations in which

external actors had more authority, operated over a wider range of activities, and committed more resources. Dobbins and his colleagues recognize that many factors influence the success of nation-building, including economic development, ethnic homogeneity, and prior democratic experience, but the most important factor that external interveners can control is the amount of time, manpower, and money that they commit. The conclusion to the volume *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* states that:

> *What distinguishes Germany, Japan, Bosnia, and Kosovo, on the one hand, from Somalia, Haiti, and Afghanistan, on the other, are not their levels of economic development, Western culture, or national homogeneity. Rather, what distinguishes these two groups is the levels of effort the international community has put into their democratic transformations. Successful nation-building . . . needs time and resources. The United States and its allies have put 25 times more money and 50 times more troops per capita into post conflict Kosovo than into post conflict Afghanistan. This higher level of input accounts, at least in part, for the higher level of output in terms of democratic institutions and economic growth.*[15]

The RAND study insists that state-building will be easier in small countries than in large ones and will only be fully successful if intervening parties are strongly committed and therefore willing to commit money and men.

Ghani and Lockhart are critical of external actors for not focusing on state capacity as opposed to other objectives and for allowing projects to be driven by donors rather than directed by national authorities. They call for aligning the policies of external and internal actors. *Guiding Principles* avers that successful stabilization and reconstruction require recognition of the importance of a political settlement, government legitimacy, unity of effort for both external and internal actors, the primacy of security, and regional engagement. State-builders must recognize that everything is connected to everything else, that there must be cooperation across different bureaucracies, that priorities must be set and flexible, and that sequence and timing are context-specific.[16]

If there is any consensus at all in the thinking about postconflict reconstruction, it is that policy-oriented work, which primarily reflects an institutional capacity approach to state development, assumes that the goal is to create a functioning Weberian state. This state will have a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, maintain public order, generate employment, stabilize the economy, and provide essential services. External actors engaged in state-building are more likely to be successful if they commit more resources and coordinate their activities.

Missing Pieces

The Empty Space: What Is Between Chaos and Denmark? The current policy-oriented literature on state-building provides no specification of intermediate political situations between being one step removed from civil conflict and a fully functioning Weberian state or even a fully functioning liberal democratic Weberian state. State-building efforts, however, will generally involve states unlikely to achieve the Weberian ideal. Historically, the only exceptions have been Germany and Japan after World War II. Specification of some intermediate condition, better than civil strife

but short of a fully functioning modern polity, would make state-building efforts more tractable and coherent.

The Douglass North, John Wallace, and Barry Weingast book *Violence and Social Orders* provides one way of thinking about this problem.[17] They begin with a basic distinction between open and closed social orders. The ideal is an open order in which everyone has the right to form organizations and access the legal system. In closed orders, these rights are limited. North, Wallace, and Weingast distinguish three closed orders: fragile, basic, and mature. Most state-building efforts involve fragile closed orders in which there are no durable organizations and few shared expectations. A warlord society such as Somalia or the Democratic Republic of the Congo would be an example, a Hobbesian state comprised of loosely organized warring groups. A realistic objective for state-building might be to create a "basic" closed order in which there are some durable institutions and shared expectations, and in which violence is better controlled even though there is no monopoly over the legitimate use of force.[18] Feudal Europe offers an example from the past; Iraq, with different and quasi-independent security organizations, offers an example in the contemporary world. China is an example of a mature closed access society; there are enduring organizations and shared expectations, but the Communist Party controls access to many spheres of activity, most notably politics.

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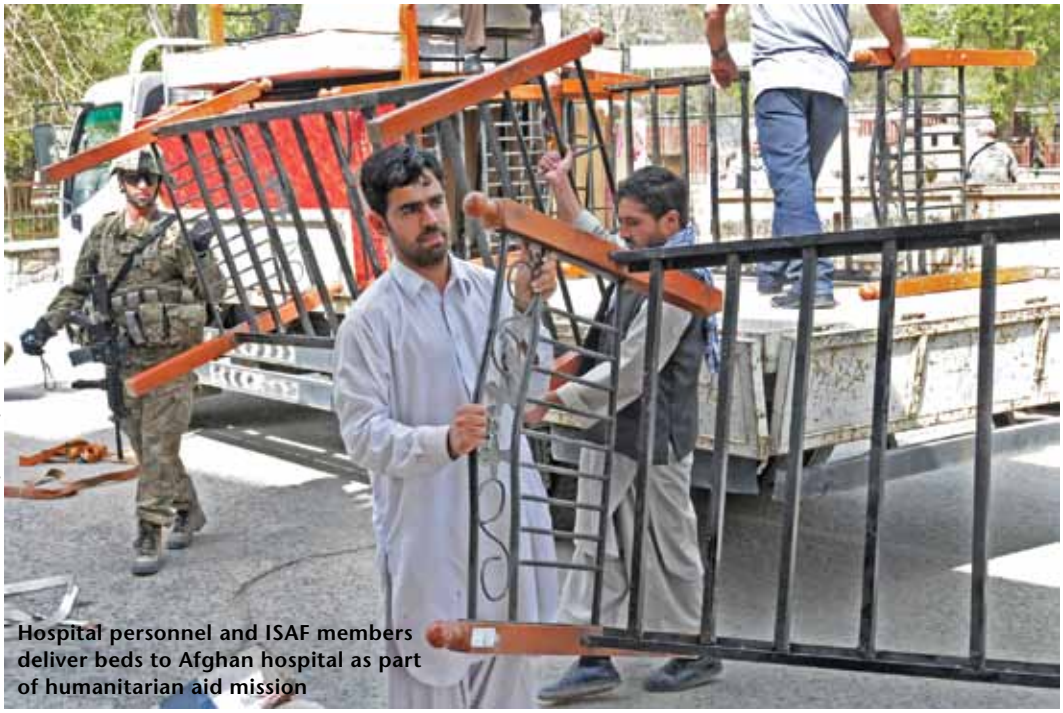
Incentives: Why Would Local Leaders Want Better Governance? The classic literature on state capacity emphasizes the importance of external threats. In Tilly's discussion, national states triumphed over both empires and city-state leagues because at least some states were more effective at accumulating capital and coercion; material resources that could be translated into military force were the key to survival in Europe.[19] Those states that ultimately triumphed were able to develop effective civilian and military bureaucracies that could fight external enemies and control domestic space. The natural disposition of leaders to encourage rape and pillage, internally as well as externally, was checked by the recognition that such exploitative behavior would make the state vulnerable to its external enemies.

The contemporary policy-oriented work on state-building, which is informed by a focus on building institutional capacity, has no comparable discussion of incentives. The threats to the state are no longer external. The high percentage of state resources coming from external actors creates incentives for corruption rather than building institutional capacity, a problem evident in Afghanistan and Iraq. Even if capacity is increased through training and technical assistance, it is not clear why that capacity would be committed to more effective governance rather than to self-serving behavior. Will a well-trained military in Iraq support a democratic state or create a military dictatorship? Any answers to this question require an analysis of the incentives facing military leaders. Such analyses are completely absent from the contemporary policy-oriented state-building literature.

Transitions, Shared Sovereignty, Codes, and Norms. The rhetoric of contemporary policy-oriented work on state-building emphasizes the importance of country ownership and the



U.S. Air National Guard (Jordan Jones)

Hospital personnel and ISAF members deliver beds to Afghan hospital as part of humanitarian aid mission

transition to full country control. The reality is that this goal is unachievable. Contemporary state-building is an exercise in organized hypocrisy. External actors must, in their words, honor conventional notions of sovereignty, especially the idea that the national government exercises final authority. In their actual behavior, external actors act independently because indigenous institutions do not function. It is inescapable that state-builders say one thing and do another: organized hypocrisy. There is a decoupling of logics of appropriateness from logics of consequences. Logics of appropriateness for state-building are dictated by conventional notions of sovereignty. Fully sovereign states ought to enjoy international legal sovereignty (full recognition by other states and participation in international organizations), Westphalian/Vattelian sovereignty (an absence of external influences over domestic authority structures), and domestic sovereignty (the ability to govern effectively within the state's formal borders). Logics of consequences in postconflict environments, however, dictate the need for substantial external involvement in domestic governance, involvement that frequently requires violations of Westphalian/Vattelian sovereignty.

The most promising path for lessening the tension between logics of consequences and logics of appropriateness is to rely on contracting between domestic authorities and external actors for the provision of governance. Voluntary acceptance of external engagement in domestic authority structures is a frequent, although largely unnamed, phenomenon in the contemporary international environment. The most dramatic example is the European Union, whose member-states have used their international legal sovereignty, their right to sign contracts, to gut their domestic autonomy. David Lake has pointed to many instances of hierarchy in international relations in which states

have outsourced the provision of their external security in exchange for protection provided by a global or regional hegemon.[20] States have, at times, contracted for the provision of specific services, such as customs collection or health care. A small advisory unit of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Partnership for Democratic Governance, has documented many of these kinds of arrangements.

Given the tension between external service provision and conventional understandings of sovereignty, it may be an advantage to avoid giving these activities a name. If, however, an appellation is required, *independent service providers* is superior to *shared sovereignty*. Shared sovereignty invokes anxiety for recipient countries. For those groups within the country that are opposed to external service provision, shared sovereignty offers a rhetorical bat that can be used to pummel those within and without the country that support contracting out. Paul Collier's designation of international service provider is politically more palatable because it is so anodyne.[21]

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Norms, standards, and codes may also be useful mechanisms for legitimating the activities of external actors. It is clear, however, that formal adherence to codes of conduct has no automatic impact on the actual behavior of states. There is no straightforward correlation, for instance, between human rights behavior and signing onto international human rights treaties.[22] International codes and standards may even be used to mask problematic behavior. Azerbaijan was the first country to fulfill all of the requirements for certification by the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), yet it ranked 143[d] out of 168 countries in the 2009 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. While the revenues to the Azeri government from oil production may be transparent, expenditures are opaque. By signing on to the EITI, one of the most prominent international codes of conduct, Azerbaijan got some favorable points from the international community without altering its behavior.

Codes of conduct may be more consequential if they involve external service providers and third parties. The work of Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse has focused on the provision of governance and services in badly governed states.[23] In many instances, services are provided by external actors, not just nongovernmental organizations and aid agencies but even multinational corporations. Automobile assemblers in South Africa, for instance, have been providing AIDS drugs for their workers. These external actors may be held accountable—not by the host state but by third parties, and the specific terms of accountability may be the result of international codes of conduct or the national laws of their home countries.

Conclusion

Despite the large role that external actors must inevitably play in the provision of services in many poorly governed states, the policy-oriented state-building and postconflict stabilization literature aims for a Weberian ideal in which a fully autonomous state effectively governs its own territory. This ideal is unattainable. A possible alternative would be one in which state authorities have contracted out the provision of government services to external actors.

Such contracting out might not be permanent but it could last for a very long time. Political leaders might find such contracts attractive, especially if they are threatened with internal chaos, as was the case leading to the creation of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), or if external actors have exceptional leverage, as was the case in Liberia leading to the establishment of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program. The leaders of the Solomon Islands, threatened with chaos in 2003, initially asked for support from Australia. At Australia's insistence, the mission was broadened to include the members of the Pacific Islands Forum. RAMSI has executive authority in areas related to policing, the judiciary, and finance. In Liberia, levels of corruption were so high under the interim government in 2005 that the international donors insisted on cosigning authority in major ministries and parastatals. More specific goals, such as the need for a reasonably honest customs agency, which led Indonesia to contract out customs services in the mid-1980s, could also make external service provision attractive. International codes of conduct could be consequential for external contracting, not because they impact the behavior of host countries but because they could increase the accountability of third party providers. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] For the seminal statement of the modernization thesis, see Seymour M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (March 1959), 69–105.

[2] Modernization theory has been subject to extensive empirical investigation. The most compelling findings are those from Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Przeworski and his coauthors found, contra modernization theory, that there was no relationship between transitions from dictatorship to democracy and levels of per capita income. Higher levels of per capita income do not guarantee a transition to democracy. They did, however, find a strong positive relationship between the longevity of democratic regimes and per capita income, a finding consistent with modernization theory.

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

[4] Francis Fukuyama, *State Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[5] For two examples of rational choice institutionalism, see Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); and Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallace, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[6] Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990* (Hoboken, NJ: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

[7] Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast, "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England," *Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989), 803–832.

[8] For positive findings, see Arthur A. Goldsmith, "Donors, Dictators and Democrats in Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 39, no. 3 (September 2001), 411–436; and Steven E. Finkel et al., *Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building: Results of a Cross-National Quantitative Study* (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, 2006). For negative assessments of aid and governance, see Stephen Knack, "Does Foreign Aid Promote Democracy?" *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 10 (March 2004); and

Raghuram Rajan and Arvind Subramanian, "Does Aid Affect Governance?" *American Economic Review* 97, no. 2 (May 2007), 322–327.

[9] Barbara Walter, "Designing Transitions from Civil War: Demobilization, Democratization, and Commitments to Peace," *International Security* 24, no. 1 (Summer 1999), 127–155; and Virginia Page Fortna, "Interstate Peacekeeping: Causal Mechanisms and Empirical Effects," *World Politics* 56, no. 4 (July 2004), 481–519.

[10] James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003).

[11] United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and United States Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (USA PKSOI), *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: USIP, 2009).

[12] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[13] Ibid., chapter 7.

[14] USIP and USA PKSOI, 1–6.

[15] Dobbins et al., conclusion.

[16] USIP and USA PKSOI, chapters 3, 5.

[17] Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[18] Scott Handler, "Towards a Theory of Self-Enforcing Stability: An Elite-Centric Approach to Counterinsurgency," unpublished paper.

[19] Tilly, 78–173.

[20] David Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

[21] Paul Collier, *Wars, Guns and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 217.

[22] Oona A. Hathaway, "Do Human Rights Treaties Make a Difference?" *The Yale Law Journal* 111, no. 8 (June 2002), 1935–2042. For a more complex discussion relating the impact of treaties to variations in domestic politics and structures, see Beth A. Simmons, *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[23] See Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, "Governance Without a State: Can It Work?" *Regulation & Governance* 4, no. 2 (June 2010), 113–134.

Irregular Conflict and the Wicked Problem Dilemma

Strategies of Imperfection

BY FRANKLIN D. KRAMER

Irregular conflict is neither neat nor fair. Definitionally, it is hard to describe, including as it does conflicts ranging from Somalia to Bosnia to Sierra Leone to Colombia to Iraq to Afghanistan (to say nothing of Sudan, the Philippines, or Yemen). *Hybrid*, *counterinsurgency* (COIN), *stability operations*, *counterterrorism*, and *civil war* have all been utilized as descriptions, often in combination. But if defining irregular conflict is difficult, even more difficult is knowing how to respond, especially for an outside intervener like the United States. Doctrine has now been developed, but in practice the context of an irregular conflict is generally so complex and contradictory that it is difficult to put the full doctrine effectively into practice.

Successful resolution demands strategies that take account of the interdependent, evolving, and multistakeholder nature of irregular conflicts—factors that make such conflicts so-called wicked problems[1]—and can produce satisfactory results despite imperfections in motivations, capabilities, and techniques. This article proposes to engage in that discussion—how to implement successful strategies of imperfection in the face of the wicked problem set of issues that irregular conflicts regularly generate.

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Current Strategy and Its Challenges

The development of doctrine for irregular conflict has a substantial historical background, ranging from Carl von Clausewitz's chapter on the people's wars[2] to the U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual of the first half of the 20th century[3] to David Galula's nonpareil Counterinsurgency Warfare.[4] In the last 6 years, however, energized particularly by the requirements of Iraq and Afghanistan, a large body of doctrinal analysis has been developed—and it is useful to set forth the key tenets of that doctrine so as to understand why successful resolution of irregular conflicts has proved so difficult.

Much of the analysis has been undertaken in the context of counterinsurgency—not surprisingly, since Iraq and Afghanistan presented such problems. Three very capable efforts are those set forth in the U.S. Department of Defense Counterinsurgency manual; the "Lessons Learned—Counterinsurgency Programming" set forth by the Office of Transition Initiatives, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), "Working Effectively in Conflict-affected and Fragile Situations." Each of first two efforts underscores the importance of governmental legitimacy; security for the populace; unity of effort in multiple activities, including security, governance, and economics; and long-term commitment. Sensible tactical requirements are also addressed, including the need for granular intelligence, the proper use of measured force, and the importance of putting the host nation in the lead. The third DFID effort reflects the broad approach undertaken by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) including, among other points, the need to align with local priorities and the value of shared understanding and effective coordination. All of these are very sensible propositions—but despite their general good sense, it nonetheless often has proved difficult to achieve adequate success in irregular operations.

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The analysis that follows suggests that the inability regularly to achieve satisfactory results—a difficulty that we would deem unacceptable in so-called conventional combat—results from a combination of factors, including unarticulated assumptions, substantial deviations between doctrine and practice, and significant gaps in capacities that are often glossed over in planning and execution. Frequently, problems are defined too narrowly, motivations of critical stakeholders misperceived, and complex interdependencies oversimplified. Recognizing that there is a problem, there is a strong inclination to take action and put programs in place despite these limitations—but then the programs and actions fail precisely because of those limits. The thesis of this article is that taking real-world imperfections into account will allow for the use of strategies designed to compensate for these imperfections. Such an approach will be more contextually granular and more multifaceted and time-phased than often is now the case. "Successes" will also incorporate the concept of imperfection and be more attuned to the context of the conflict at issue.

Afghan citizens use road while U.S. Marine Corps combat engineers make road repairs in Helmand Province

U.S. Marine Corps (Daniel H. Woodall)

Problems of Doctrine. To understand the difficulties caused by the limitations of doctrine, a good place to begin is to look briefly at the efforts of the Counterinsurgency manual, the USAID principles, and the DFID approach. Though other militaries are significantly engaged in irregular operations, when the United States is involved it will generally lead the military effort, and so the Counterinsurgency manual offers useful insight into the current developed world military approach. In the civil arena, by contrast, the United States may not always be the most significant player, but it usually is substantial, and it has developed a civil doctrine for counterinsurgency that is reflected in the USAID analysis. The DFID effort, as noted, reflects the general OECD approach, so it is a useful surrogate for non-U.S. analyses. However, as experienced as the practitioners are who wrote these analyses, even these excellent approaches fall prey to the traps of assumptions, deviations, and capacity gaps.

The Counterinsurgency manual sets forth multiple lines of operation for the U.S. military in the field, including security, governance, economics, and strategic communications.[5] The manual assumes competency in, among other areas, the ability to collect useful intelligence, the ability to train host nation forces, and the ability to have a unity of effort. However, it gives virtually no consideration to the problems of corruption, limitations on host nation human capacity, and difficulties of eliminating sanctuary. Overall, the manual includes thoughtful analyses, but it nonetheless falls prey to a number of fundamental traps. The difficulties of unity of effort are understated. The impact of capacity gaps is understated or overlooked, including the difficulty of useful intelligence collection, the history of multiple ineffective training efforts, and the competition for what are often very limited human resources. The full set of problems of an irregular

conflict is too narrowly defined (for example, the often divergent interests between the host nation and its neighbors).

The USAID Lessons Learned seeks to identify practical obstacles—for example, singling out "Corruption is a killer."[6] However, inherent to the USAID analysis seems to be the assumption that, as a result of the identification of problems, the problem will be solvable. For example, the Lessons Learned suggests the need to restore trust in "credible local institutions" and the importance of "flexibility to change course and scale up and/or down operations depending on changing security and the political situation."[7] In reality, often it is precisely the absence of credible institutions and of flexibility in programming that undercuts well-intentioned efforts. Once again, the full nature of the problem is understated because of unarticulated assumptions.

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The DFID approach is sensibly cautionary. However, it, like the USAID effort, seems to assume that identification of the problem will allow for resolution. Alignment of interests is a key point. In an irregular conflict situation, it is not at all clear that all participants share the interest in ending the conflict or in making the state effective or, to the extent that they do, that they have a shared approach to that end. Similarly, it is one thing to desire coordination or to avoid harm and quite another to accomplish those ends.

The coordination point deserves emphasis. Coordination does not come easily, and this limitation becomes even more obvious when it is recognized—as the DFID effort points out—that coordination is required at a broader multilateral level among the United States, the host nation, and the intervener community, each of the latter having multiple elements. The absence of a generally agreed doctrine essentially means that for each irregular conflict, the United States and its allies and partners must reinvent organizational and other working arrangements, at a minimum slowing and most often undercutting the achievement of effective results.

This last point raises specifically, as do each of the publications discussed above, the much broader and highly critical element of what might be called the "assumption of implementation." That assumption is pervasive. Although it has received only limited notice,[8] the United States has published a "U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide."[9] Much akin to the Counterinsurgency manual, it calls for a "whole of government" approach, with security, governance, economics, and information elements. But while it sensibly describes the goals of each such effort, its discussion of implementation is extremely limited,[10] even though it is the very issue of effective implementation that is at the heart of the problems of irregular conflict.

Problems of Practice. The problems of doctrine discussed above would not be particularly consequential if the counterinsurgency campaigns (or other irregular conflict responses) were more effective. But the practice of counterinsurgency is not filled with obvious success. One recent study, reviewing 30 counterinsurgency efforts during the years 1978 to 2006, found 22 failures and only 8 successes by the counterinsurgents.[11] There are many reasons for this, and a look at recent U.S. activities, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, illuminates

some of the significant difficulties. Here are some important considerations.

The center is broken. Irregular conflicts arise for reasons, and the failure of central political institutions to meet the requirements of the citizenry is generally at the heart of the problem. That failure may arise from incapacity or unwillingness or a combination of the two. The general approach of the United States to irregular conflict strategy, however, is to seek to work with the central government. But the degree of incapacity or the unwillingness to establish the degree of "legitimacy" we would deem appropriate is often not acknowledged. A central government that either cannot or will not pursue an effective irregular conflict strategy makes for a very difficult partner. It is that type of partner, however, that the United States finds itself paired with quite regularly.

Key leaders have divergent goals from the United States. In an important memorandum to President George W. Bush at a pivotal time in the Iraq conflict, National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley wrote: "We returned from Iraq convinced we need to determine if Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is both willing and able to rise above the sectarian agendas being promoted by others. Do we and Prime Minister Maliki share the same vision for Iraq?"[12] In Afghanistan, similar questions have been directed toward President Hamid Karzai.[13] Host nation leadership will, however, be a key factor in the resolution of an irregular conflict. As the Counterinsurgency manual states, "viable local leaders"[14] are required elements of success. But, importantly, what makes a host nation leader viable from a political perspective may not fit well with the U.S. strategy for the conflict. Those differences need to be advertently considered.

Provincial and local government is ineffective. A natural inclination in irregular conflict, where the center is often ineffective, is to look to lower level governance, at the provincial and/or local level. The concept is sensible—local officials may have much better ties with the population, and certain important services, such as police or sewage, need to be delivered at the local level. The concept often founders on the limits of human capital at the local level or on the absence of resources. One frequent result of irregular conflict is a diaspora of some of the more talented and educated citizens of the host country, thereby compounding the problem of limited human capital.

a central government that either cannot or will not pursue an effective irregular conflict strategy makes for a very difficult partner

Corruption is pervasive and blocks productive action. Corruption often exists throughout the host nation governing structures. In Afghanistan, there are multiple stories headlining "pervasive graft, starting at the top" and saying that "predatory corruption . . . is rampant at every level of Afghan society."[15] At higher levels, multiple senior officials are said to be engaged.[16] At the lower levels, police and other governmental officials can be the problem. For example, in March 2007, the Canadian former deputy commander of the combined training command stated that the "last thing people want to see is the police showing up. They are part of the problem. They do not provide security for the people—they are robbers of the people."[17] Robert Perito of the United States Institute of Peace has written:

> *For many Afghans, the police were identified with demands for bribes, illegal taxes,*

> *and various kinds of human rights violations. They were also known to use house searches as an opportunity to shake down the occupants and steal their possessions. Corrupt police practices were felt most directly by the poorest members of society: taxi and truck drivers, traders, small businessmen, and farmers.*[18]

Building a strategy when corruption is substantial adds to the degree of difficulty—but failure to consider corruption means that the problem is being understated.

Criminal enterprises and other groups undercut legitimate structures, including through the use of violence. In many irregular conflict situations, criminal enterprises have occupied a significant place in the functional economy and social structure. They are among the nonstate actors with significant capabilities for organized violence. Other such "nonstate security actors" include warlords, militias, and private security firms. Sometimes, these latter even provide protective services to the government or in the economy, but their fundamental characteristics are that they have effective immunity from governmental control.[19] Perhaps even more importantly, they often benefit from the continuation of the conflict rather than its resolution. Once again, the critical point is that any strategy has to recognize these issues.

building a strategy when corruption is substantial adds to the degree of difficulty—but failure to consider corruption means that the problem is being understated

Insurgents receive sanctuary and support from outsiders, and this allows them to maintain their efforts even after military setbacks. The importance of outside support to insurgents is hardly a new issue. The United States has been on both the receiving and the giving side of this issue—in Vietnam, where the support came from the North and from outside countries, and in Afghanistan in dealing with the Soviet Union, where the United States provided much of the support in cooperation with Pakistan. More recent examples of the importance of outside support and sanctuary include Iranian support to Hizballah and sanctuary in Pakistan for the Taliban. The larger point is that understanding the role sanctuary can play will always be key to developing an effective strategy.

The outside interveners lack good understanding of the host nation and have poor intelligence capabilities. The clearest statement of this deficiency has come from the U.S. military intelligence chief in Afghanistan. In a now well-known public article, Major General Michael Flynn wrote:

> *Eight years into the war in Afghanistan, the U.S. intelligence community is only marginally relevant to the overall strategy. Having focused the overwhelming majority of its collection efforts and analytical brainpower on insurgent groups, the vast intelligence apparatus is unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which U.S. and allied forces operate and the people they seek to persuade. Ignorant of local economics and landowners, hazy about who the powerbrokers are and how they might be influenced, incurious about the correlations between various development projects and the levels of cooperation*

among villagers, and disengaged from people in the best position to find answers—whether aid workers or Afghan soldiers—U.S. intelligence officers and analysts can do little but shrug in response to high level decision-makers seeking the knowledge, analysis, and information they need to wage a successful counterinsurgency.[20]

Intervener training often does not produce effective host nation security forces. The training effectiveness problem can be a result of multiple issues. Resource limitations can be a key causal factor; a clear statement on this point came from the current head of training in Afghanistan. In his recent report, Lieutenant General William Caldwell stated, "Before November 2009 there were insufficient resources to properly conduct the [training] mission."[21] A second factor can be the design of training itself. In an earlier interview, General Caldwell was a little more colorful, saying with respect to police training, "We weren't doing it right. . . . It is still beyond my comprehension."[22] In Iraq, a review group led by General James Jones found the Iraqi Police Service and the national police to be incapable and ineffective; relevant factors included underresourcing, sectarianism, and the dysfunctional nature of the Ministry of Interior under which they served.[23] Of course, training can produce effective units—General Caldwell has become more positive concerning Afghan forces, and General Jones had concluded that the Iraqi military was becoming more effective, which subsequent events further demonstrated—but progress is all too often quite slow. The larger point is the need to take account of all factors when designing training, not just to assume that any effort will be effective.

Civil coordination is often limited, undercutting the accomplishment of key tasks. The civil coordination problem is illustrated by the discussion in the September 2010 White House report on the Afghanistan/Pakistan strategy, which stated that "important international efforts to improve coordination and align activities have not progressed. The Post Crisis Needs Assessment designed to assess the needs of the conflict-affected areas in the northwest [of Pakistan] and establish a plan for reconstruction has stalled due to U.N. [United Nations] and World Bank disagreements over its scope."[24]

training can produce effective units but progress is all too often quite slow

What emerges from this discussion is that irregular conflicts are difficult for different types of reasons. On the one hand, there are problems of capacity (for example, broken center and training failures), motivations (leader differences with interveners, desire of some groups like criminal enterprises to profit from prolonging conflict situation), and organization (such as ineffective coordination among interveners and with host nation groups). Each of these may have a specific linear solution, but there are two related problems that make achieving those solutions more difficult. The first is to understand the full scope of the overall issues related to any particular problem of capacity, motivation, or organization. The second is to understand the full irregular conflict context, and, in particular, that individual difficulties often interact with one another, combining to add to the overall difficulty of achieving adequate resolutions. Those issues—understatement of

the problem set and the multifaceted interactive nature of the problem—are characteristic of wicked problems, as further discussed below.

Reconceptualizing Irregular Conflict as a Wicked Problem

Understanding Wicked Problems. The discussion of the problems of doctrine and of practice suggests, as it should, the degree of difficulty in achieving successful resolution of an irregular conflict. Complexity is obviously a factor, but as suggested above and for the reasons more fully discussed below, the issues go beyond complexity and into the realm of even more difficult types of problems deemed "wicked problems." The distinction between complex problems and wicked problems has been set forward as follows: "[C]omplex problems [are problems for which] problem solvers agree on what the problem is, [but] there is no consensus on how to solve it. . . . In [the wicked problem] instance, there is no agreement on the problem or its solution."[25] While there are multiple definitions of the elements of a wicked problem, one useful analysis in the governmental context put forward by the Australian Public Service Commission includes the following as key elements:

- difficult to clearly define
- many interdependencies and often multicausal
- attempts to address often lead to unforeseen consequences
- often not stable, problem keeps evolving
- have no clear solution, may never be solved
- solutions not right or wrong but rather better or worse or good enough
- socially complex, involve multiple stakeholders
- hardly ever the responsibility of one organization
- involve changing behavior, necessary to motivate individuals.[26]

an important issue in the handling of wicked problems is avoiding dealing too narrowly with them

An important issue in the handling of wicked problems is avoiding dealing too narrowly with them. The Australian Public Service Commission analysis stated: "There is a variety of ways that organisations try to tame wicked problems by handling them too narrowly. The most common way is *locking down the problem definition*. This often involves addressing a subproblem that can be solved."[27] But, as the commission noted, that often leads to a failure of the overall solution:

> *The handling of wicked problems requires holistic rather than linear thinking. This is thinking capable of grasping the big picture, including the interrelationships between the full range of causal factors and policy objectives. By their nature, the wicked issues are imperfectly understood, and so initial planning boundaries that are drawn too narrowly may lead to a neglect of what is important in handling the wicked issues. It is in this unforeseen interconnection that policy problems grow and policy failures arise. "There is an ever-present danger in handling wicked issues that they are handled too narrowly."*[28]

As the foregoing suggests, one of the most critical aspects of a wicked problem is that

U.S. Air Force (Rylan K. Albright)

Servicemembers with Provincial Reconstruction Team gather information on needs of residents in Farah Province, Afghanistan

resolution requires a different approach to dealing with problems: as one analysis stated, "Experts voice warnings that traditional linear methods of problem solving (e.g., specify the problem, gather and analyze data, formulate a solution, implement solution) do not seem to be working."[29] The Australian Public Service Commission analysis expanded on this point:

> *The consensus in the literature, however, is that such a linear, traditional approach to policy formulation is an inadequate way to work with wicked policy problems. This is because part of the wickedness of an issue lies in the interactions between causal factors, conflicting policy objectives and disagreement over the appropriate solution. Linear thinking is inadequate to encompass such interactivity and uncertainty. The shortcomings of a linear approach are also due to the social complexity of wicked problems. The fact is that a true understanding of the problem generally requires the perspective of multiple organisations and stakeholders, and that any package of measures identified as a possible solution usually requires the involvement, commitment and coordination of multiple organisations and stakeholders to be delivered effectively.*[30]

Irregular conflicts generally will merit the description of a wicked problem. Such conflicts are often multicausal, unstable, and present problems that keep evolving. They are socially complex, involving multiple stakeholders and many interdependencies. They often have no clear solution, and, in any event, solutions often are not right or wrong but rather better or worse or good enough. Frequently, solutions require changing behavior, where it is necessary to motivate individuals,

and attempts to generate solutions can lead to unforeseen consequences. Finally, it is hardly ever the responsibility of one organization to provide solutions.[31]

that wicked problems are difficult with no clear solutions does not mean that they cannot be resolved

Resolving Wicked Problems. That wicked problems are difficult with no clear solutions does not mean that they cannot be resolved. *Resolution* in this context means a strategy that reasonably copes with the issue and halts enough of the antagonistic and destructive behaviors in which parties are engaged to be deemed "good enough." A useful analysis by Nancy Roberts set forth three such coping mechanisms, which she called "authoritative," "competitive," and "collaborative." As will be further discussed, each has drawbacks and will have to be adapted to fit the irregular conflict context.

Authoritative strategies involve putting "problem solving into the hands of a few stakeholders who have the authority to define a problem and come up with a solution."[32] As Roberts points out, authoritative solutions have drawbacks for wicked problems: "Authorities and experts can be wrong—wrong about the problem and wrong about the solution."[33]

Competitive strategies are a second way of coping with wicked problems. Roberts states: "Competitive strategies have a long history. Whether they have been played out on the battlefield, in politics or in the market, stakeholders following this strategy assume a 'zero-sum game.' If my opponents win the right to define the problem and choose the solution, then I lose. If I win the right, my opponents lose. A win-lose mind-set thus permeates interactions."

Roberts notes that the value of competitive strategies depends on the ability to achieve a significant degree of power:

> *Central to the pursuit of competitive strategies to deal with wicked problems is the search for power. To the extent a competitor can build a power base larger than his opponents, using whatever tactics his ethics and morality permit, he can increase his chances to win and define the problem and solutions in a way he sees fit. Power, after all, is the ability to get what one wants against resistance. . . . When a player wins out over the competition and can sustain those wins over time, then power is concentrated in his hands. Concentration of power, as noted earlier, enables him to resort to authoritative strategies instead of dissipating his resources in the competitive fray.*[34]

Of course, if each of the various stakeholders has enough power, then the competitive approach only will cause the problem to continue.

Roberts's third strategy is called collaborative:

> [C]*ollaboration is premised on the principle that by joining forces parties can accomplish more as a collective than they can achieve by acting as independent agents. At the core of collaboration is a "win-win" view of problem solving. Rather than play a "zero-sum game" that seeks to distribute "pie shares" based on winners and losers, they assume a "variable sum game" that seeks to "enlarge the pie" for all parties involved. Alliances, partnerships, and joint ventures are all*

variations of the theme as they find expression in government, business, and international relations.[35]

Roberts notes that collaborative solutions can have difficulties:

Disadvantages of collaboration also are well known. Adding stakeholders to any problem solving effort increases "transaction costs." There are more meetings, more people with whom to communicate and get agreement—interactions that can take a great deal of effort. Sorting out which operating procedures and whose norms of conduct will prevail takes time. As the number of stakeholders grows, so does the difficulty of achieving synergy. Skills of collaboration are limited, too, especially among people who work in a traditional bureaucracy with a strong hierarchy that limits participation and team-based approaches to problem solving and decision making. Collaboration requires practice; it is a learned skill. If members do not have these skills, they need to acquire them and that takes additional time and resources. Then in the worst case, collaboration can end poorly. Dialogue can turn into debate and debate into protracted conflict with little to show for the hours of preparation and meetings. Positions can harden making agreement even more difficult to attain in the future. There are no guarantees that the outcomes of collaboration will be satisfactory to everyone.[36]

Roberts was not analyzing in the context of actual conflict. As suggested above, however, a judicious combination of each of these strategies can allow for the prospect of resolving irregular conflicts. The key to success will be to blend authoritative, competitive, and collaborative strategies to achieve the "good enough" solution. But the content of the concepts must be fitted to the demands of irregular conflict. Collaborative strategies will involve the negotiation between and among initially opposing interests with no trust and no sense of "win-win." Competitive strategies will try both incentives and coercion, including force, to change the calculus of stakeholders. Authoritative strategies will most often be a penultimate result arrived at from a mix of actions, rather than an early agreed common approach. The discussion following analyzes how such strategies have been applied in irregular conflict contexts.

irregular conflicts, like wicked problems in general, have the characteristic that they lack clear real-world solutions

How Have Irregular Conflict Winners Succeeded?

Irregular conflicts, like wicked problems in general, have the characteristic that they lack clear real-world solutions—a key point being that different stakeholders look at the problem differently and have different desired outcomes, yet influence one another and affect and evolve the ongoing situation. Despite that degree of difficulty and there have been irregular conflict problems that have resulted in at least tenable solutions from the U.S. perspective. As a rough categorization, Bosnia, El Salvador, Iraq, and Colombia could be included in the positive balance. As the discussion below demonstrates, those efforts succeeded because of an

ability to be adaptive—to change strategies and methods of implementation—and to be able to combine strategies over time so as to meet the wicked problem conundrum.

Bosnia is a good starting place. The fighting and destruction, including several hundred thousand deaths, continued for approximately 3 years. The Croatian military was then able to score significant military victories, and this military effort was enhanced by North Atlantic Treaty Organization airpower. Changes in military position were also accompanied by a significant exhaustion of some of the parties—that is, a desire to step back from the demands of conflict and a feeling that conflict no longer provided a way forward. The Dayton Accords, which brought together relevant stakeholders under the leadership of the United States, were able to create a political agreement after which there was no significant violence.

Bosnia remains a problem today because there has not been sufficient progress beyond Dayton

The Bosnia resolution was very much military driven and was followed by very effective negotiations. It was not a "clear, hold, build" effort. Good governance, economics and development, and strategic communications did not play major roles in the resolution. Bosnia remains a problem today because there has not been sufficient progress beyond Dayton—but its resolution has been good enough for it not to be on the list of significant U.S. concerns. In wicked problem terms, there was a competitive approach—fighting—followed by collaboration—negotiations—followed by an authoritative solution—the Dayton Accords.

El Salvador shares many of the characteristics of Bosnia. El Salvador was a situation where, first, there was an intense security contest resulting for the most part in a standoff. Over time, there was improved governance and an improved security position by the government, including greater focus on protection of the population. Exhaustion of the contending parties was also a factor. Ultimately, there was a negotiated settlement, brokered by the United Nations, that provided for the insurgents to have involvement in the governing structures but that more generally favored the government.

El Salvador is a good example of adaptation and persistence. The changes in approach by the government to security and governance, utilizing better practices for each, were certainly valuable. The willingness to continue the effort through years of conflict was important. Ultimately, however, there was a reconciliation of all stakeholder interests through the negotiated settlement. In wicked problem parlance, there was first a competition, then collaboration in terms of the negotiations, and then an authoritative solution accepted by the parties.

Iraq is not a finished situation, but it appears headed toward a "good enough" resolution so that U.S. military forces have significantly drawn down and are likely to be very much further drawn down by the end of 2011. While the current situation in Iraq is far from perfect, certainly the circumstances there are far better than they were at the height of the insurgency in 2007. While there are differences of view in precisely how this came about—multiple volumes have already been written on the key elements—all seem to agree that a combination of events was important,

and there seem to have been seven interdependent and important factors. Those are the surge of U.S. forces; the decision of the tribes in Anbar Province to work with the United States and the subsequent expansion of that approach with the Sons of Iraq effort; so-called high value targeting of senior insurgent leaders; the ability of the Iraqi government, and particularly Prime Minister Maliki, to become more effective; the decision of Moqtada al Sadr to stand down his efforts; the improved capability of the Iraqi security forces; and the exhaustion from, and dislocations caused by, the sectarian killings.

Iraq started as a highly competitive situation, and the multiple factors at play made it all the more difficult. While the competition continued, two key collaborative decisions changed the landscape—the Awakening/Sons of Iraq decisions to work with the United States, and the Sadr decision not to actively provide armed opposition. Finally, the willingness of at least portions of the contending parties to turn to the political process as a source of decisionmaking has meant the use of an authoritative process toward a mechanism for what may turn out to be a "good enough" resolution.

Finally, Colombia may be the best example of a solution through competitive actions. Colombia can reasonably be thought to be an example of the "clear, hold, build" strategy[37] utilizing all elements of national power. Over time, this effort has significantly reduced, though not eliminated, the adverse effects of the irregular conflict. As the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found in 2008:

> *Since 2000, U.S. assistance has enabled the Colombians to achieve significant security advances in two key areas. First, the government has expanded its presence throughout the country, particularly in many areas formerly dominated by illegal armed groups. Second, the government, through its counternarcotics strategy, military and police actions, and other efforts (such as its demobilization and deserter programs) has degraded the finances of illegal armed groups and weakened their operational capabilities. These advances have contributed to an improved security environment.*[38]

The Plan Colombia efforts were not simply security focused. The overall thrust of the program, reducing illicit drug operations, did not have the desired results.[39] However, in the social and economic areas, there were also positive efforts. Again, per the GAO:

> *Since fiscal year 2000, the United States has provided nearly $1.3 billion for nonmilitary assistance to Colombia, focusing on the promotion of (1) economic and social progress and (2) the rule of law, including judicial reform. To support social and economic progress, the largest share of U.S. nonmilitary assistance has gone toward alternative development, which has been a key element of U.S. counternarcotics assistance and has bettered the lives of hundreds of thousands of Colombians. Other social programs have assisted thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and more than 30,000 former combatants. Assistance for the rule of law and judicial reform have expanded access to the democratic process for Colombian citizens, including the consolidation of state authority and the established government institutions and public services in many areas reclaimed from illegal armed groups.*[40]

In sum, without overstating, the Colombia effort was a multivector approach with positive results, even though all objectives were not achieved.

The most immediate conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing is thoroughly in line with both intuition and longstanding practice: there is no single way to resolve irregular conflicts. Violence, persistence, exhaustion, and negotiation (both internal and external) all played important roles. That fits with the concept of irregular conflict as a wicked problem—and the necessity of taking into account the difficulties, interdependencies, and "good enough" approaches that will lead to parties coming to an adequate resolution. A second lesson is that in Bosnia and El Salvador, a long period of competitive violence was precedent to the willingness to undertake a collaborative approach. Likewise, in Iraq, the Awakening was precipitated at least in part by the violence of al Qaeda against the tribes. Accordingly, if that analysis is accepted, the conclusion follows that the "clear, hold, build" approach, which is a competitive effort, may need to be buttressed by a focus on collaborative and authoritative actions, but reaching a collaborative situation is not an immediate process. This leads to the question of what causes the willingness to collaborate or to accept authoritative decisionmaking processes. The analysis below reviews key elements of generating such changed behavior, which thereby expands the elements of resolution.

solutions need to involve changing behavior, and to do so, it is necessary to motivate individuals, groups, and various types of entities

Expanding the Elements of Resolution: Changing Behaviors

Internal Groups and Strategies. A fundamental characteristic of irregular conflict is the difference of view regarding both the nature of the problem and the appropriate solution held by multiple parties. In an excellent analysis, Kenneth Menkhaus made the distinction between governments that were willing but lacked capacity to deal with irregular conflicts and those that were unwilling whether or not they had the capabilities.[41]

However, as suggested above, a full analysis of the difficulties of irregular conflict must be broader and more granular than simply a focus on host nation governmental capacities and intent. The analysis must be broader since the insurgent groups and the neighboring countries, among others, must be taken into account. They are critical stakeholders who will have significant sway on how the conflict may be resolved. The analysis also must be more granular, since within the host nation, multiple power centers exist. Not only the central government, but other governmental levels as well as nongovernmental entities—ranging from individuals to social institutions to businesses to ethnic/tribal units to warlord/militias/criminals—are of consequence, and often in multiple configurations.

Thus, while the distinction between willing and unwilling is a useful start, the real question becomes how to move the unwilling into the willing column and how to include enough of the different power groups to bring about a resolution. This is part of the wicked problem—solutions need to involve changing behavior, and to do so, it is necessary to motivate individuals, groups, and various types of entities. The existing doctrinal

analysis suggests that the straightforward aspects of improved security, economics, and governance would be sufficient to generate adequate motivation. But that approach assumes a fairly homogeneous, aligned, and linear view of the world—and such commonality, alignment, and linear causality are generally absent in a wicked problem situation and almost always absent in an irregular conflict context.

Instead of an assumption, then, what will be necessary will be a more complex strategy. While contexts will cause varying specifics, the factors discussed below will be important to behavior changing and to building an interactive structure that can achieve resolution. Some of these are highly dynamic and imply further change over time based on shifting interdependence. They involve approaches to designing both the structures and the interactions among stakeholders. It is important to underscore, however, that this discussion of changing behaviors assumes a significant, persistent security effort. In each of the situations examined, security efforts were extensive. They were not sufficient to cause a satisfactory outcome—but they were necessary. With that critical understanding, at least five additional factors deserve consideration.

First, in building a strategy, it is important to find a favorable group and build on it. This is, of course, David Galula's famous advice[42]—and it is probably the single most significant piece of advice ever offered in the irregular conflict context. Such action does a number of things. It starts with a group at least somewhat inclined in the right direction. It gives a base on which to build capacity. It puts a local face on the conflict, which can help reduce antagonism to the outside intervener.[43] It allows insight into at least one group of stakeholders so plans are based on a more realistic set of considerations. It implicitly starts internal negotiations among groups, which is part of the collaborative process of resolving wicked problems.

Second, it may be important to utilize multiple structures. The task of the outside intervener will be to generate some overall resolution, and while the initial favorable group will be one key element, it is unlikely that there will be a simple one-size-fits-all "expanding oil spot" spread of common resolution throughout the competing arena and among contending parties. "Oil spot expansion" is a good approach, but it may have to be generated in multiple areas for multiple parties by multiple approaches. The Iraq example is instructive. The clear/hold strategy in some areas, such as Anbar Province, was built around the Sunni tribes, while in others, such as Basra, it was built around the governmental forces. Of course, there is tension when multiple, sometimes competing, structures exist—but that tension is reflective of the underlying tensions of the wicked problem and cannot be wished away. Rather, what is being undertaken when a structure is built to be utilized by important stakeholders is a step in changing behavior, and the key will be to then take the multiple structures and use them to generate further steps toward a collaborative resolution. It should also be noted that, when properly balanced, multiple and sometimes competing structures can be stabilizing and frequently are used in building governance structures.[44] Ultimately, an integrated approach is the end

changing behaviors assumes a significant, persistent security effort

goal; phased along the way, however, multiple structures may be valuable.

Third, and as a corollary of the second factor, bring spoilers into structures if and when possible. Almost every irregular conflict will have its version of warlords, militias, and private security entities. All of these exert power in some fashion. By engaging them in structures that are being generated or enhanced, there is some prospect of arriving at a collaborative solution. It is absolutely correct that such entities can take advantage of the imprimatur of state power and become excessively destructive. But the high likelihood is that they will be destructive if left alone. The goal is to first interact, then limit, then control, and then perhaps integrate or eliminate. It may be true that one or more of the groups is sufficiently destructive that it will be worse to include them, and it may be that an initial strategy is that it is best to fight with them. However true that may appear in the immediate context, it should not be forgotten that wicked problems change dimensions, and as they do, a shift from fighting to interaction can be in order. Again, in Iraq, the shift regarding the Sadr forces is illustrative.

wicked problems change dimensions, and as they do, a shift from fighting to interaction can be in order

Fourth, not only groups but also individuals need to considered, and the factors that will affect their decisions should be taken into account. In this regard, it is particularly worthwhile to give specific attention to the considerations of the youthful part of the demographic, especially the young men who may be the best source of recruitment for the opposition. In many societies, it will be the youth who take most seriously the calls for change and who are willing to undertake violence in its support. While economics can be a factor and providing employment, including for low-skilled persons, can reduce opportunities for opposition recruitment, there is often more to opposition than just money.[45] Taking into account cultural and societal factors and establishing structures and efforts that meet those considerations can be invaluable. As an example, participation in an insurgent group may give an individual a sense of self and place in society; bringing the individual into a structured entity that provides similar psychological benefits, such as a local defense force under governmental control, may be important to generating separation from the insurgency.

Finally, managing hatreds is likely to be part of the task. That is not so easily done. But if it is not understood to be part of the problem, success is even more unlikely. Two obvious and overlapping but necessarily fundamental points will be how to deal with ethnic or similar identities that have come to dominate not only perceptions but also actions, including the use of significant violence, and how to institutionalize political structures that will allow contending stakeholders to achieve adequately acceptable results. In dealing with these issues, pragmatic sequencing of actions that focus on issues of value to multiple contending stakeholders can be important. One useful study stated:

> *There are situations in which the trauma of recent violence is still so deep that, instead of addressing the sources of strife, conflict management has to be pragmatically oriented toward avoiding its new manifestations. . . .* [G]*iven that memories of*

> *violence carry such a potential for renewal of conflicts, questions can be asked about the right sequencing of steps. . . . It may be rational to start by working on issues that . . . are equally important for all groups in a local community.*[46]

Another thoughtful analysis pointed out the value of not creating institutions that "are built on an assumption of intransigence—an assumption that the nature and intensity of ethnic divisions are beyond transformation."[47] From an implementation perspective, this means that structures that require representation on an ethnic or similar basis may perpetuate rather than eliminate a conflict situation. One can, however, conceive of how an adaptive approach that does provide for such representation for a time and then changes to a more general approach might fit certain contexts.

The critical point that each of the studies makes is that actions can be sequenced and structures created that make it more likely that contending stakeholders will engage in behavior that is different from the actions and perceptions that led to the conflict situation.

Economics and Corruption. It is a common-sense perception and part of the generally accepted wisdom in dealing with irregular conflicts that economics are an important factor. For that reason as well as the economic destruction that often accompanies irregular conflict, developmental efforts usually become major activities. But the role that such actions should play in irregular conflict deserves closer review for reasons discussed below—and the analysis will show that developmental actions need to be included in the wicked problem approach—as carefully planned and integrated as military activities—and that there are important reasons to look very closely at type, structuring, timing, and impact of economic and social efforts in the context of counterinsurgency.

As a useful starting point, it should be recognized that expectations of success of economic projects in irregular conflict situations should not be overinflated. A recent study on what explains aid project success in post-conflict situations stated, "[P]rojects started in a post-conflict environment have lower chances of success than projects implemented in a countries at peace."[48] While that difficulty of successfully implementing projects should hardly come as a revelation, the study draws two more important conclusions.

First, it stated that "it is implementation rather than design that matters for the success of projects in [a] post-war environment," but that the "main consequence of civil war . . . is a severe lack of skills," which reduces the prospect of effective implementation.[49] The study also differentiates the success rate among types of projects. Projects focused on roads and transport as well as urban development had the most success, while engineering, mining, and education had higher probabilities of failure. One can infer—the study itself did not do this—that one reason for the differential is that road building and urban development generally allow for a greater use of unskilled labor, while engineering, mining, and education will require a greater percentage of more highly skilled persons to be effective.

structures that require representation on an ethnic or similar basis may perpetuate rather than eliminate a conflict situation

But even if there is a greater success rate in certain types of projects, there is reason to doubt that most are very useful in the context of reaching an adequate resolution of an irregular conflict. A recent analysis asked, "Does . . . development-based strategy work?"[50] The more specific question was whether developmental aid in Iraq had reduced violence. The conclusion, based on statistical analysis for the period 2004–2008, was twofold. First, "much of the reconstruction aid in Iraq has not helped reduce violence," and "spending on large projects and projects carried out primarily by foreign contractors . . . appears to have had no violence-reducing effect."[51]

Second, by contrast, of the overall $25.3 billion of reconstruction programs in the period, the $3.1 billion spent on the military's Commander's Emergency Response Program and USAID's Community Stabilization Program had violence-reducing effects because "reconstruction money works when projects are small, troops have a good working relationship with noncombatants, projects are chosen in consultation with local officials, programs are administered by local contractors, and a provincial reconstruction team is nearby to provide guidance."[52]

There are, therefore, two very important conclusions to consider. First, absorptive capacity as correlated with skill sets will be a key factor in determining success. Projects should be undertaken only as necessary skills are reasonably available, and it should not be expected that they will appear by magic in a war-torn environment.

Equally if not more importantly, a critical element of review prior to undertaking major efforts should be to determine if they will themselves contribute to problems, and significant thought should be given to the actual impact of the supposed benefits. Uncontrolled project spending can often be a gateway for creating corruption as various persons and groups seek to divert monies from intended uses. High pay scales utilized by outside interveners can undercut the local economy through wage scale differentials. Such differences can create competition for skilled persons so that few or no projects have enough, and capable host nation individuals can be diverted away from critical governmental and host nation businesses to pursue high wages outside intervener projects. In short, putting large amounts of money quickly into an underperforming or broken economy can create undue and unfulfilled expectations and thereby undercut the legitimacy and/or competency of both the host nation and the outside interveners. Another way to say this is that while any individual line of effort might be thought to be positive, its synergistic impact needs to be considered, rather than its standalone consequences.

The corruption point needs especially to be considered. It is one thing to have projects that simply do not work. But it is quite another when corruption skews the motivations of important actors. When the state is seen as a resource provider fundamentally subject to corrupt manipulation, multiple actors will have greater motivation to maintain the unsatisfactory state of the continuing conflict than to move toward a solution that will provide less economic incentive for them. The practical conclusion is that, in the context of an irregular conflict, economic projects presumptively should generally be smaller in scale and locally led and implemented. Large-scale projects and projects led by foreigners are likely not to contribute to stability and even to be counterproductive. The presumption should therefore be against their

use unless and until the benefits can be clearly defined, the implementation scheme clearly set forth so that the prospects of success are reasonably high, and the types of problems described above have been considered and a determination made as to how to overcome them or to deal with such consequences.

That conclusion raises the important issue of the role of economics as an element in the resolution of irregular conflict. Key to this evaluation, as is implicit in the discussion above, will be the necessity of distinguishing among different types of conflicts and especially among different phases during a conflict. There is already a reasonably well-accepted understanding that "policy in the post-conflict phase needs to be distinctive" and to "show features which need to differ systematically from those appropriate for equally poor countries that are not post-conflict."[53] However, recent work has started to distinguish stable postconflict situations from those where violence is ongoing. The value of economic aid differs substantially among such circumstances: "We find that aid is significantly positive in post-conflict situations; however, in violent post-conflict situations aid is negative."[54] On the other hand, there are also important findings that technical assistance "is highly cost-effective," especially given the "severe shortage of the [host nation] people qualified to implement reforms."[55]

To put all this together, an important conclusion can be drawn: there is no gainsaying the value of economic growth—both as an obvious benefit to individuals and as a factor preventing return to conflict. It is a critical element in dealing with irregular conflict. But large outside aid programs undertaken during significant violence appear often to be less beneficial (and potentially negative) than technical assistance and policy and structural economic reform. Larger amounts likely will be better spent once violence has decreased and the capacity for appropriate use of funds and accountability for their expenditure has developed. The market can and should be developed as promptly as possible and should be encouraged through reform and technical assistance. Local projects through local institutions can have enormous value; but there should be great caution on large aid projects until appropriate governance institutions have been put in place.

Sanctuary. The importance of outside support to insurgents is hardly a new issue. As noted above, the United States has been on both the receiving and the giving side of this issue—on the receiving side in Vietnam, where the support came from the North and from outside countries, and on the giving side in Afghanistan, where the United States, in responding to actions of the Soviet Union, provided much of the outside support in cooperation with Pakistan.

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This critical role of outside support in irregular conflict recently has been buttressed by a historical study of factors affecting success in counterinsurgency, which highlighted sanctuary as the one key factor that seems to have consequences disproportionate to all others. Specifically, the study found that the "ability of the insurgents to replenish and obtain personnel, materiel, financing,

intelligence and sanctuary (tangible support) perfectly predicts success or failure in the 30 COIN cases considered.[56] The study recognized that such support could be internal (from the population) or from external sources and therefore "suggested an important caveat to population-centric COIN approaches: The population is the center of gravity if the population is the primary source of insurgents' tangible support. When insurgents' tangible support needs are being met elsewhere, a successful campaign will require additional areas of emphasis."[57]

the population is the center of gravity if the population is the primary source of insurgents' tangible support

Accordingly, the study concluded that when "insurgents' support comes from external actors . . . then approaches explicitly targeting that supply chain are necessary, along with efforts to win over the population."[58]

As a practical matter, there will always be an inclination to utilize military means to shut off outside support. While there are obvious reasons for this, neither the Vietnam nor the Soviet Afghanistan case gives much support for the overall efficacy of this approach—nor, as a further example, does the current situation in Afghanistan. As complicated as they may be, diplomatic efforts may also help reduce outside support—and the wicked problem issue of negotiations with an entity presumably holding a very different view of the circumstances of the irregular conflict should be advertently considered.[59] Most specifically, regional diplomacy on multiple vectors may be crucial to getting the supplying states to reduce their support. While there may be circumstances where an announced negotiating table can be useful, classic quiet diplomacy utilizing bilateral efforts as well as those of allies, partners, and entities with common interests—some of which may not be governmental—all can have important roles to play.

Strategies of Imperfection

In dealing with irregular conflicts, it is easy enough to say what might be a highly desirable outcome, including which specific elements of the outcome are most sought after from a normative point of view, but the more important questions are what will work when the desirable is not obtainable—at least not in the short or medium term—and which elements are mutually supportive and which may actually undercut one another.

Absence of Legitimacy. A good way to begin this analysis is to consider the concept of legitimacy in an irregular conflict. The Counterinsurgency manual states that "legitimacy is the main objective."[60] At one level, this hardly can be disagreed with. But even a short reflection generates recognition that if there is an irregular conflict, some entities must consider the government illegitimate; otherwise, the conflict would not occur. Thus, the real question becomes what the government must do to resolve the conflict when it is considered illegitimate by important stakeholders. The discussion above should have made clear that this is a complicated endeavor because there likely will be disagreements as to what legitimacy means in the context of the conflict and how best to achieve it. Furthermore, even if there were general consensus that some type of model would be legitimate, often the conflict has occurred because the government was far from achieving that model—and, to

reiterate, often there is no such consensus on the proper model.

Strategies of imperfection have to recognize the absence of consensus on even such basic goals as determining what constitutes legitimacy and yet move forward from there. What has been suggested up to now is that this type of problem fits the definition of a wicked problem and will require a combination of efforts to achieve success. While those efforts have largely been discussed above, it is useful to group them together to underscore what a strategy of imperfection consists of in the context of an irregular conflict. Fundamentally, it will require a multiphased approach involving thoughtful goal-setting and sophisticated execution of an interplay of substantive capabilities, resolution techniques, and behavioral concepts.

Multiphased Approach. Faced with the problem of an irregular conflict, policy decisionmakers will be required to make choices with consequences in the real world. Viewing such conflicts as wicked problems will cause the decisionmaker to understand that the right approach will be adaptive and continuing, and that it is imperative to take as broad a view as possible of the issues, recognizing the very different interests of the relevant stakeholders and expecting that the nature of the conflict and the particular solutions will change over time. It will still be important to deal with issues such as security and governance—as discussed above, to focus on those issues that led to "good enough" success in several irregular conflicts. But it will also be important to go beyond a linear and additive view of those subjects, and to instead pay great attention to the entirety of the problem, including its interdependencies and evolution as well as the continuing need to focus on changing behavior. An integrated approach of combining thoughtful goal-setting with sophisticated implementation of substantive capabilities, resolution techniques, and behavioral concepts will enhance the prospects of achieving "good enough" resolutions. The elements of such an approach are set forth below.

Goal-setting—Understanding "Good Enough." Goal-setting is both critical and highly complicated in irregular conflict. Two interlocking considerations make this true. First, while the ideally desirable is easy enough to understand, real-world constraints generally make such resolutions highly improbable. Second, the multifactored nature of irregular conflicts generally means that important stakeholders will have conflicting goals. The policy decisionmaker nonetheless needs to set sensible goals that give definition to the strategy. Without this, operations will have little strategic direction, and guidance will be lacking for the employment of necessarily limited resources. If, for example, a broad strategy simply seeks good security, governance, and economics, virtually any action can be justified under the rubric of effective implementation.

the policy decisionmaker needs to set sensible goals that give definition to the strategy

One good way for policymakers to undertake goal-setting in an irregular conflict is to look at multiple goals. An external intervener needs to consider what the impact will be outside the area of the conflict that is desired (for example, reducing international terrorism) and

in the host nation (which needs to control most of its territory), what the host nation sees as its goals (a particular type of state, certain types of relations with neighbors), and what the opposition and other relevant stakeholders seek. It is important to state very clearly

for historical and efficiency reasons, bureaucracies tend to be stovepiped

that the fact that there will almost certainly be conflicting goals—in a sense, that is the definition of an irregular conflict—does not mean that a policymaker has to accept a lowest possible denominator resolution. What it does mean, however, is that determining what an acceptable resolution is needs to take account of the interplay of goals, and that will affect how a strategy of multifactored elements will be put into play.

Synergy and Multiple Resolution Techniques. Analysis and history accordingly suggest that the different elements of an irregular conflict strategy can operate in a supportive fashion so that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. The benefits of synergistic actions in an irregular conflict context have been described in a prior Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) study:

> *Governance, security, economics, and reconciliation are intertwined in ways that cause outcomes to flow across all four areas simultaneously. Unless we fully understand the ways in which activities and decisions in one area influence, and are influenced by, those in the others, we run the risk of building programs that are internally inconsistent and fundamentally flawed. Alternatively, if we can develop an adequate understanding of the relationships between and among the areas, we can sequence and prioritize activities to optimize outcomes in a holistic and synergistic way.*[61]

The importance of such synergistic efforts as the CNA analysis was recently reinforced by the historical study, noted above, which found "COIN forces that realize preponderantly more good than bad practices win, and those that do not lose."[62] That study did not review as broad a set of factors as discussed herein—for example, not specifically discussing reconciliation or reintegration or negotiations. Nor did it weight the various factors. Nonetheless, while the study did not cover all aspects, its conclusion underscores the concept that a combination of factors is the right way to plan and implement irregular conflict efforts.[63] This is, of course, what wicked problem analysis teaches. And what the discussion in this article has shown is that a very broad set of multiple resolution techniques will be important to irregular conflict resolution.

First, it will be important to fully understand the problem and not to artificially limit it. For historical and efficiency reasons, bureaucracies tend to be stovepiped. Going "outside its lane" is generally looked upon as a bureaucratic failure, and protecting the bureaucracy's "equities" is often deemed a success. Those actions run counter, however, to the need for a holistic look at an issue and an ability to devise solutions that meet the full problem. Importantly, resources follow bureaucratic lanes, and even when the need for a holistic solution is recognized, it often is the case that resources cannot be easily transferred to where they would have the greatest impact.

Second, in undertaking to generate "good enough" resolutions, keeping in mind the

competitive, collaborative, and authoritative aspects of a solution will allow for greater flexibility and more effective approaches. An irregular conflict often switches among competitive, collaborative, and authoritative solutions—thus, popular media analysis notwithstanding, changes in approach can be as much a sign of success as an indication of failure. Governance-building can be both collaborative and competitive, even simultaneously so, and yet be making overall progress. Collaborative actions such as negotiations can lead to agreement on authoritative techniques such as elections. Given the multiple stakeholders that likely will be involved in an irregular conflict, it seems probable that effective resolutions will involve the use of all three approaches.

Third, the problem of changing behavior is the critical element of resolving irregular conflict. Strategies that are directed to such behavior changes need to be advertently undertaken, keeping in mind the multiple divergent views that stakeholders bring to the problem. In this regard, there will be few, if any, strategies that do not include some risks. By way of example, outsider intervention itself often will generate host nation resentment and struggles for control; use of force and related techniques can generate population backlash since there inevitably will be civilian casualties; economic efforts, not properly calibrated, can lead to significant corruption; and the list can be extended. But despite the risks, steps need to be taken to cause stakeholders to change behavior so a resolution is possible. Affecting motivation is not easy, and it may be necessary to undertake, at least for a period, approaches that are in apparent conflict but that will change views so that a longer term resolution becomes possible. The long-term concepts of persistence and exhaustion also are important to generating changed behavior. Ultimately, irregular conflict involves stakeholders with varying degree of power—and causing changed behavior that allows those different elements to converge on an overall acceptable resolution—likely not perfect from any single perspective—is the essence of generating strategies of imperfection to resolve the wicked problem set proposed by irregular conflicts. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] "Wicked problems" are problems made difficult because of, among other things, contradictory and changing requirements, complex interdependencies, multiple stakeholders, solutions that are neither right nor wrong, and conditions where the effort to solve one aspect of the problem may reveal or create other problems.

[2] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 578–584.

[3] United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual* (1940).

[4] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International Paperback, 1964).

[5] See generally Field Manual 3–24, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency* (2006).

[6] USAID Office of Transition Initiatives, Lessons Learned, Counterinsurgency Programming (2009), 2.

[7] Ibid., 1. See also USAID, *A Guide to Economic Growth in Post-Conflict Countries* (2009).

[8] See Raphael S. Cohen, "A Tale of Two Manuals," *PRISM 2*, no. 1 (December 2010), 87–99.

[9] *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* (January 2009).

[10] Ibid., 46–47. In a 50-page text, the section labeled "Implementation" is 5 lines long—and in the longer section on planning, there is only the statement that there should be "detailed descriptions" of the "Major mission elements and essential tasks (the 'how' for COIN operations)."

[11] Paul, Clarke, and Grille, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* (Santa Barbara, CA: RAND, 2010), xvi.

[12] Stephen J. Hadley memorandum to the President (November 29, 2006), accessed at <www.nytimes.com/2006/11/29/world/middleeast/29mtext.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1>.

[13] See, for example, "As U.S. Assesses Afghan War, Karzai a Question Mark," *The Washington Post*, December 13, 2010, A1.

[14] Counterinsurgency manual, 1–26.

[15] *The New York Times*, December 3, 2010, A1.

[16] Ibid., A10.

[17] Quoted in Chatterjee, "Policing Afghanistan: How Afghan Police Training Became a Train Wreck," March 21, 2010, accessed at <www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/03/22/opinion/main6321401_page2.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody>.

[18] Perito, "Afghanistan's Police" (August 2009), 7.

[19] See Dempsey, "The Role of Non-state Security Actors in Security Sector Reform," and Metrinko, "Non-State Actors and Security in Afghanistan," in *Civil Power in Irregular Conflict* (2010).

[20] Flynn and Pottinger, *Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan* (2010), 7.

[21] NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan, *Year in Review* (November 2010), 3.

[22] "Program Aims to Rebuild Afghan Police Force, Repair Its Image," *The Washington Post*, March 10, 2010.

[23] *The Report of the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq* (September 2007), 8–10.

[24] White House report (September 2010), 14.

[25] Nancy Roberts, "Wicked Problems and Network Approaches to Resolution," *International Public Management Review* 1, no. 1 (2000), 1.

[26] Commonwealth of Australia, "Tackling Wicked Problems: A Public Policy Perspective," *Australian Public Service Commission* (October 25, 2007), 3–4, available at <www.apsc.gov.au/publications07/wickedproblems.htm>.

[27] Ibid., 12.

[28] Ibid., 11–12.

[29] Roberts, 2.

[30] Commonwealth of Australia, 11.

[31] There is no dearth of practical examples. For one good short description, see, for example, Shuja Nawaz, *Pakistan in the Danger Zone: A Tenuous U.S.-Pakistan Relationship* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 2010).

[32] Roberts, 4.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 5.

[35] Ibid., 6.

[36] Ibid., 7.

[37] The Colombian government called it "clear, hold, consolidate." Government Accountability Office, "PLAN COLOMBIA: Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance" (2008), 13.

[38] Ibid., 22.

[39] Ibid., 17; "Plan Colombia's goal of reducing the cultivation, processing, and distribution of illegal narcotics by targeting coca cultivation was not achieved."

[40] Ibid., 46.

[41] Kenneth J. Menkhaus, "State Fragility as a Wicked Problem," *PRISM* 1, no. 2 (2010), 97.

[42] Galula, 77. He called it the "favorable minority."

[43] Of course, the groups not chosen will have concerns.

[44] For example, divided government under the U.S. Constitution.

[45] Sarah Ladbury, *Testing Hypotheses on Radicalization in Afghanistan* (2009); see Franklin D. Kramer et al., "Succeeding in Irregular Conflict: Effective Civil Operations," in *Civil Power in Irregular Conflict* (Washington, DC: CNA, 2010), 28.

[46] Nenad Dimitrijevic and Petra Kovacs, "Managing Hatred and Distrust: Changes from the Bottom and the Top," in *Managing Hatred and Distrust: The Prognosis for Post-Conflict Settlement in Multiethnic Communities in the Former Yugoslavia*, ed. Nenad Dimitrijevic and Petra Kovacs (Hungary: Open Society Institute, 2004), xxiv.

[47] Simonsen, "Addressing Ethnic Divisions in Post-Conflict Institution-Building," *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 3 (2005), 298.

[48] Chauvet, Collier, and Duponchel, "What Explains Aid Project Success in Post-conflict Situations?" 12.

[49] Ibid., 12, 14.

[50] Berman, Felter, and Shapiro, "Constructive COIN," *Foreign Affairs* (June 1, 2010), available at <www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66432/eli-berman-joseph-h-felter-and-jacob-n-shapiro/constructive-coin>.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid. There are important questions whether CERP projects generally or under what conditions have carry-over economic benefits, as opposed to their value in violence reduction—but the violence reduction benefits would be good reasons to undertake them.

[53] Paul Collier, "Post-Conflict Economic Recovery," International Peace Academy, April 2006, 1, available at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~econpco/research/pdfs/IPA-PostConflictEconomicRecovery.pdf>.

[54] Hoeffler, Ijaz, and Billerbeck, "Post-Conflict Recovery and Peacebuilding," October 2010, 22.

[55] Collier, 8.

[56] Paul, Clarke, and Grille, xxii.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid., xxvi.

[59] It is notable neither the Counterinsurgency manual nor the current U.S. Afghanistan/Pakistan unclassified strategic documents explicitly discuss the outside support problem. There is no doubt that U.S. leaders are well aware of such issues both generally and in the Afghanistan/Pakistan context, and the Afghan government has regularly identified Pakistan sanctuary for the Taliban as an issue that needs resolution. The broader point is that dealing with sanctuary needs to be part of the full spectrum of considerations under the wicked problem analysis.

[60] Counterinsurgency manual, 1–21.

[61] Kramer et al., 29.

[62] Paul, Clarke, and Grille, xxii.

[63] Ibid., xvii. The study considered the following three categories of "good practices":

- COIN force—sufficient intelligence; sufficient strength to keep insurgents as guerrillas; air dominance; avoid collateral damage; used strategic communications; sought positive relations with population; established and then expanded secure areas; provided or ensured basic services in areas it controlled; significantly reduced tangible insurgent support
- Government—legitimate; at least partial democracy; competent; short-term investments, improvements in infrastructure or development, or property reform in areas controlled by COIN force
- Population—perception of security created in area controlled by COIN force; majority of population in conflicted areas supported or favored the COIN force.

Three Lessons

from Contemporary Challenges to Security

BY MAX G. MANWARING

There are well over 100 small, irregular, asymmetric, and revolutionary wars ongoing around the world today.[1] In these conflicts, there is much to be learned by anyone who has the responsibility of dealing with, analyzing, or reporting on national security threats generated by state and nonstate political actors who do not rely on highly structured organizations, large numbers of military forces, or costly weaponry—for example, transnational criminal organization (TCO)/gang/insurgent phenomena or politicized gangs. In any event, and in any phase of a criminal or revolutionary process, violent nonstate actors have played substantial roles in helping their own organizations and/or political patrons coerce radical political change and achieve putative power.

In these terms, TCO/gang/insurgent phenomena can be as important as traditional hegemonic nation-states in determining political patterns and outcomes in national and global affairs. Additionally, these cases demonstrate how the weakening of national stability, security, and sovereignty can indirectly contribute to personal and collective insecurity and to achieving radical political change. These cases are also significant beyond their uniqueness. The common political objective in each diverse case is to control governments and/or coerce radical change in discrete political-social-economic systems.

Examples of these phenomena range from Mexico's convoluted combination of drug cartels, enforcer gangs, and the private army of *Los Zetas*, to Central America's notorious maras, that is, *Mara Salvatrucha* 13 (or MS–13) and *Mara* 18, or the 18th Street Gang, to Colombia's devolving criminal or warrior bands (bandas criminales) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) criminal insurgents, to the resurgent Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) insurgents of Peru, and to Argentina's loosely networked but gigantic 300,000-person *piquetero* propaganda-agitator organization bought and paid for by the Argentine government. This article, however, confines itself to three other quite diverse components of the TCO/gang/insurgent phenomenon operating in Latin America and Europe: the Jamaican posses, Brazilian Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), and the 28-member al Qaeda gang responsible for the bombing of the Madrid train station in March 2004.

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The various Jamaican posses are relatively homogeneous, violent, and ubiquitous. Interestingly and importantly, the Jamaican posses have also become a special set of social actors. They are making a social investment in the neighborhoods that they control by performing some of the functions of the failing Jamaican "welfare state." In contrast, one of the largest and most powerful gangs in the world, the 65,000- to 125,000-member PCC, is not as interested in the well-being of the people that it controls as it is in neutralizing and making the Brazilian state irrelevant. Achieving that political objective would give the PCC the freedom of movement and action that would provide the organization with the virtually unlimited commercial self-enrichment it seeks. The third case, the al Qaeda gang that bombed the Madrid train station, illustrates the dramatic political-psychological effectiveness of a small but well-disciplined and well-led gang.

the Jamaican government no longer has the income to provide public services in a welfare-type state

Posses in Jamaica

Similar to other countries in the Circum-Caribbean and elsewhere, Jamaican posses (gangs) are the byproducts of high levels of poverty and unemployment and lack of upward social mobility. Among other things, the posses represent the consequences of U.S. deportation of Jamaican criminals back to the island and, importantly, of regressive politics in Jamaican democracy.[2] Unemployment and criminal deportation speak for themselves, but the political situation in Jamaica requires some elaboration.

Given the shift from the production of commodities toward knowledge-based products and services and the reduction of the costs of transport, goods, and labor under economic globalization, the Jamaican government has experienced a loosening of control of its traditional resource bases. As a result, the Jamaican government no longer has the income to provide public services in a welfare-type state. When the government provides public assistance, it has tended to outsource delivery of services to private and semiprivate organizations. Under these conditions, local posses have taken on "social investment" in the areas they control. An important part of the posses' program of action is called "shared government, with a welfare aspect." As a result, gang-controlled communities in Jamaica are considered among the safest in the country, and the posses are helping the people in their "jurisdictions" with education, public health, and employment problems. Thus, as the state has reduced its legitimizing security and service functions, the gangs have stepped in to fill the vacuum and have become—among other types of social actors—social workers.[3] Nevertheless, the Jamaican posses remain deeply involved in serious intergang rivalry and violence. Their actions reflect on Jamaica not as a failed state, but as a failing state in the process of reconfiguration. Thus, Jamaica appears to be slowly moving toward something like a "criminal state" or a "narco-state."[4]

Organization. It is estimated that there are at least 85 different posses operating on the island with anywhere between 2,500 to 20,000 members. Each posse operates within a clearly defined territory or neighborhood. The basic structure of a Jamaican posse is fluid but cohesive. Like most other gangs in the Americas,

it has an all-powerful don or area leader at the apex of the organization, an upper echelon, a middle echelon, and the "workers" at the bottom of the social pyramid. The upper echelon coordinates the posse's overall drug, arms, and human trafficking efforts. The middle group manages daily operational activities. The lowest echelon performs street-level sales, purchases, protection, and acts of violence as assigned. When posses need additional workers, they prefer to use other Jamaicans. However, as posses have expanded their markets, they have been known to recruit outsiders, such as African Americans, Trinidadians, Guyanese, and even Chinese immigrants, as mules and street-level dealers. They are kept ignorant of gang structure and members' identities. If low-level workers are arrested, the posse is not compromised and the revenue continues to come in.[5]

Program. Jamaican posses are credited with being self-reliant and self-contained. They have their own aircraft, watercraft, and crews for pickup and delivery, and their own personnel to run legitimate businesses and conduct money-laundering tasks. In that connection, posses have expanded their operations into the entire Caribbean Basin, the United States, Canada, and Europe. The general reputation of Jamaican posses is one of high efficiency and absolute ruthlessness in pursuit of their territorial and commercial interests. Examples of swift and brutal violence include, but are not limited to, fire-bombing, throat-slashing, and dismemberment of victims and their families. Accordingly, Jamaican posses are credited with the highest level of violence in the English-speaking Caribbean and 60 percent of the crime in the region.[6]

This example of gang activity fits into the typological description of gangs evolving toward politicized gang status. They are organized for business and commercial gain, but must confront government and security organizations to achieve their self-enrichment objectives. Beyond that, the Jamaican posses have a more hierarchical leadership structure than other more politically oriented, security-conscious, and flatly organized advanced TCO gangs. Members tend to focus on drug trafficking, with market protection a first concern and market expansion second. They use the level of violence they consider necessary to protect markets and control competition. Violence is their political interface to negate law enforcement efforts directed against them by police and other security organizations. And as they seek to exploit their "social investment" and control or incapacitate national and international security institutions, they dominate community life, territory, and politics.

Jamaican posses are credited with the highest level of violence in the English-speaking Caribbean

Posse domination of respective turf in Jamaica makes constant cooperation and negotiation with other gangs, TCOs, and the state difficult for generating the degree of stability necessary to conduct profitable business. That kind of cooperation was demonstrated in May 2006 with a month-long series of civic activities called the Safe Communities Campaign. Launched on reggae icon Bob Marley's birthday, its purpose was to assist selected communities—and the posses in them—to think and act in terms of Bob Marley's message of "love, peace, and unity."[7] When these kinds of efforts fail, however, the results are conflict and a level of violence commensurate with the level of importance of the issue(s) involved. In that

context, we see the rise of private, don-controlled enclaves that coexist in delicate, often symbiotic, relationships with the Jamaican government and its security institutions. Thus, as one kind of authority has withdrawn from a given turf, another has moved in to fill the vacuum. That, in turn, blurs the line between criminal and political violence and gives the posses increased immunity to state intervention and control.[8] As other consequences, the effective sovereignty of the state and the personal security of citizens are being challenged daily, and the posses' commercial motives for controlling people and territory are, in fact, an implicit political agenda.[9]

the modern global world is much too interrelated, complicated, and dangerous to advocate a strictly law enforcement solution

The Jamaican case is a classic example of first- through third-generation gang activity and development.[10] The generic evolution of urban street gangs illustrates that this is a compound-complex issue with implications at three different levels of analysis. First, all three generations of gangs generate serious domestic instability and insecurity. Of course, as gangs evolve, they spawn more violence and instability over wider sections of the political map and create regional instability and insecurity. Second, because of their internal (intrastate) criminal activities and their international (transnational) commercial and political alliances and actions, they exacerbate the confusion regarding traditional distinctions between police law enforcement functions and military national security functions. Thus, little that is effective or lasting has been done to control or eliminate them. Third, when first-, second-, and third-generation gangs or parts of gangs dominate a country's political stage at one level or another, they erode the security and effective sovereignty of the nation-states within and between which they operate.[11]

Response. Within the context of that frustration, some contemporary civilian, military, and police leaders appear to have recognized that the modern global world is much too interrelated, complicated, and dangerous to advocate a strictly law enforcement solution—or even a strictly military solution—to provide any viable response to local and regional security, stability, and sovereignty threats. The argument is that what is required is a unified civil-military (whole-of-government) effort to apply the full human and physical resources of the nation-state, as well as the international community, to generate effective multilateral solutions to transnational issues.[12] A good example of such a holistic, multidimensional, and multilateral approach is the cooperation for security that was achieved between and among the English-speaking states in the Circum-Caribbean during the April–May 2007 world cricket matches.[13]

Apart from the personal and collective security provided by the cooperation of the international community at those sporting events, however, the Organization of American States (OAS), the United States, and various Caribbean governments have been unable or unwilling to effectively deal with the gangs that permeate the region. The OAS affirmed in 2003 that gang-related "threats, concerns, and other challenges are cross-cutting problems that may require hemispheric cooperation" and that "the traditional concept and approach [to security threats] should be

English-speaking Circum-Caribbean states achieved whole-of-government cooperation to provide security during 2007 World Cup cricket final

Magnus Manske

expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats." The final result of this affirmation was the condemnation of "transnational organized crime, since it constitutes an assault on institutions in our states and negatively affects our societies."[14] Even so, the OAS has been reluctant to go beyond its diplomatic "condemnation." The United States has not done much more. To be fair, however, it must be noted that in 2006, the United States put $10 million into the ongoing antidrug and anticrime efforts outlined in the Third Border Initiative (that is, the U.S. "third border" that includes the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean areas) and is providing other benefits under the Caribbean Basin Initiative.[15] Given the entire scope of the issue, this level of funding is clearly not enough.

Conclusions. The democratically elected governments in the Caribbean argue that criminal gangs, such as the Jamaican posses, have profited from their globalized operations and have succeeding in placing themselves beyond the reach of most of the mini-countries in the region to destroy them or even seriously disrupt their operations. Today, it is estimated that any given gang-cartel combination earns more money annually from its illicit activities than any Caribbean country generates in legitimate revenues. Thus, individual mini-state governments in the region are simply overmatched by the gang phenomenon. The gangs and their various allies have more money, better arms, and more effective organizations than the states. And gangs are gradually supplementing the brute violence of previous generations with the brainpower of a new generation of members who are computer savvy and business school–trained with advanced degrees. Additionally, many of this younger generation of gang members, like the older generations, are recipients of an education from North American and/or other prison systems.

In all, increasing gang effectiveness, violence, and impunity have fueled doubts among the Jamaican citizenry about the problem-solving abilities of their elected leaders. Given the reality of the posses' combination of power and beneficial social welfare activities, citizen support and allegiance tend to go to the posses that deliver consistent services and security rather than to the government, which appears unable or unwilling to honor the social contract.[16]

Primeiro Comando Da Capital in Brazil

The great city of São Paulo, Brazil—the proverbial locomotive that pulls the train of the world's eighth largest economy—was paralyzed by a great, if not divine, surprise in mid-May 2006. Practically nothing moved for 5 days. More than 293 attacks on individuals and groups of individuals were reported, hundreds of people were killed and wounded, and millions of dollars in damage was done to private and public property. Buses were torched, banks were robbed, personal residences were looted and vandalized, municipal buildings and police stations were attacked, and rebellions broke out in 82 prisons within São Paulo's penal system. Transportation, businesses, factories, offices, banks, schools, and shopping centers were shut down. In all, the city was a frightening place during those days in May.[17]

increasing gang effectiveness, violence, and impunity have fueled doubts about the problem-solving abilities of elected leaders

During that time, the PCC demonstrated its ability to coordinate simultaneous prison riots; destabilize a major city; manipulate judicial, political, and security systems; and shut down the formal Brazilian economy. The PCC also demonstrated its complete lack of principles through its willingness to indiscriminately kill innocent people, destroy public and private property, and suspend the quality-of-life benefits of a major economy for millions of people. Beyond security forces—which were reportedly as involved in extrajudicial killings as the criminal perpetrators of the chaos—the violence and chaotic conditions made any effort to assert governmental authority or conduct essential public services virtually impossible.

Organization and Motives. The PCC has an estimated 65,000 to 125,000 full- and part-time dues-paying members and is led by a brilliant and uncompromising career criminal named Marcola (Marcos Williams Herbas Camacho). Although analysts believe that not more than 6,000 active PCC members are in Brazil's prison system, they know that the PCC has extended its influence into the *favelas* (ungoverned slums) in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and the other major cities of Brazil. This has been accomplished through a long series of carefully negotiated, sometimes forced alliances with other gangs and favela chiefs (*chefes da favela*). As a result, at any given time, Marcola controls at least 60,000 PCC members in the prisons and favelas of the country. And, notably, the May surprise in São Paulo was initiated, orchestrated, and terminated by one person—Marcola—from the safety of a maximum security prison, using a mobile telephone.[18]

Ostensibly, this turmoil and retribution were triggered by prisoners who were being transferred to a maximum security prison that was not equipped to allow the inmates to watch the much-anticipated World Cup soccer matches on television. Thus, an ambitious, prisoner-initiated

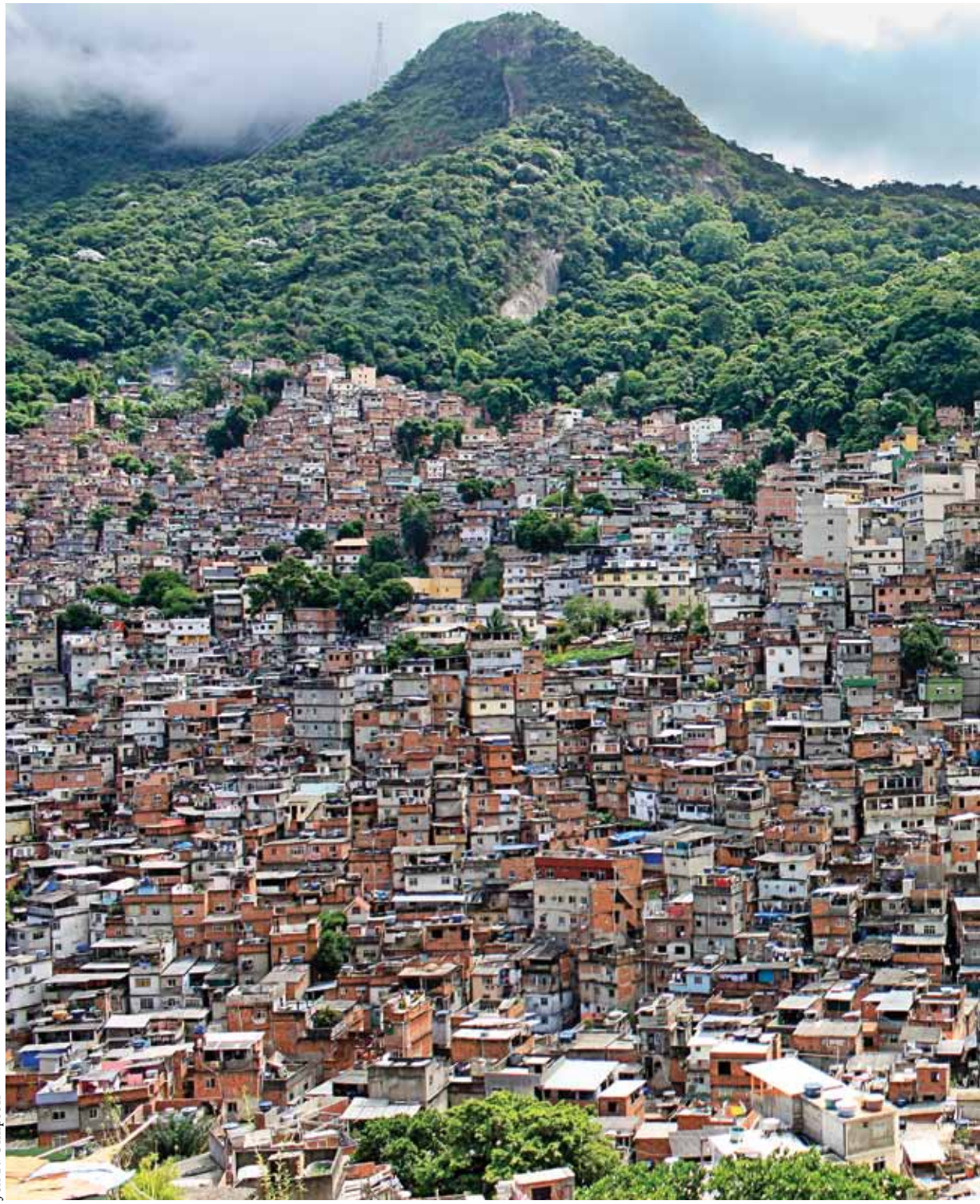
"prison rights" agenda was the motive for the rebellion. But, at its base, consensus has it that the surprise May explosion was really a show of force by the largest criminal gang in the Western Hemisphere. The primary intent was to announce to the state and federal governments that the PCC and its allies in the favelas were strong enough to compel the negotiations of terms of state sovereignty vis-à-vis that organization. Given that Marcola got everything he wanted out of the negotiations to end the chaos, it is probably safe to say that the PCC and the *chefes*, or barons of the favelas, have grown more powerful, and the state relatively more constrained.[19]

Program of Action. Favelas are the bases of the PCC's extended power. In the favela, traffic is everything, and the territory each controls is critical. The PCC, like other criminal gangs, is deeply involved in murder, kidnapping, robberies, extortion, and the trafficking of drugs, arms, and humans. To maintain momentum and expand markets, the organization has increasingly adopted an offensive mode with tactics appropriate to urban guerrilla war, in which it looks for confrontations with rival gangs, police, and military forces. PCC members and temporary "soldiers" from the favelas carry out their tasks armed with automatic weapons, machineguns, hand grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, antipersonnel mines, and crudely armored vehicles. Command and control is provided primarily though an efficient communication network based on mobile telephones. This takes us back to Marcola and his cell phone. In areas controlled by the PCC or in areas that might be invaded by PCC-controlled units, one has a choice: to pay dues, mentally submit, and physically contribute to the organization, or *subir al cielo* (to die).[20]

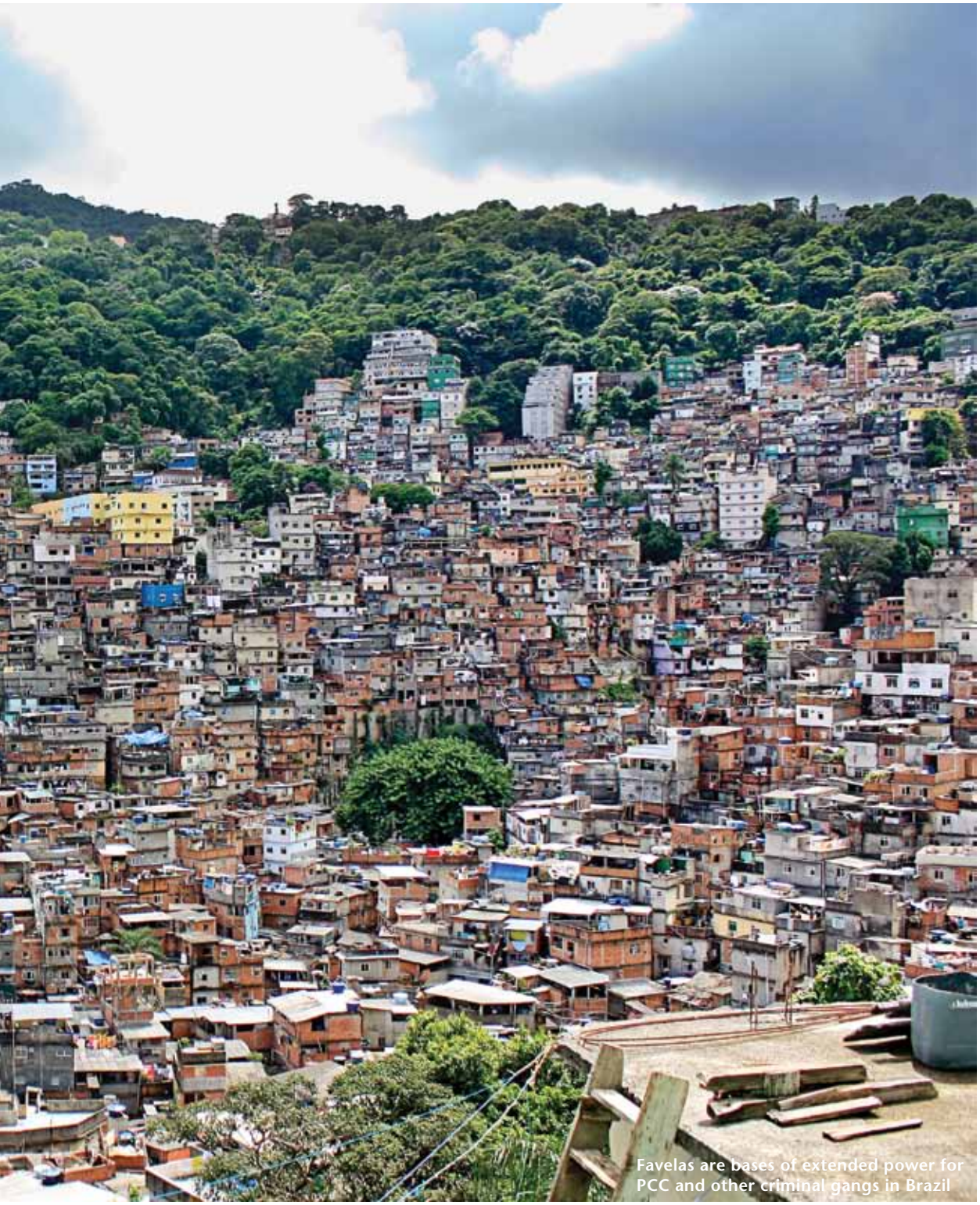
In addition to its violent turf-controlling efforts and illicit trafficking activities, the PCC pursues more than a casual, self-serving criminal rights agenda. The organization has 18 to 20 lawyers who work full-time. They act as not only advocates for gang members, but also mentors for young gang members. One of the great successes of the PCC has been to infiltrate or "colonize" the governmental organizations that administer the entrance examinations necessary to enter Brazilian public service. The job of the PCC lawyer-mentor is to ensure that young gang members (and children of the convicts) who have the ability and desire to enter public service can and do get the necessary education and pass the appropriate examinations. As a consequence, the PCC is putting its own people into bureaucratic positions that it considers important in the Brazilian system. Thus, in addition to controlling slums in the major cities of the country, the third-generation members of the PCC appear to be slowly but surely extending their influence into public service. The logical conclusion regarding this effort would be, simply, that Marcola is deliberately leading his organization to infiltrate and neutralize the state. This, of course, would be an important objective in the process of securing freedom of movement and action and in moving Brazil toward criminal-state status.[21]

the PCC is putting its own people into bureaucratic positions that it considers important in the Brazilian system

Response. It would appear that the São Paulo state government and the Brazilian federal government were not particularly concerned with the specific issues that brought on the May 2006 crisis. The official São Paulo response to the violence and chaos was simply: "I say to our people that



Jeff R. Simpson



Favelas are bases of extended power for PCC and other criminal gangs in Brazil

the police are still in the streets, they [the people] can go out and have fun this weekend."[22] This business-as-usual approach to the gang problem is similar to that expressed not too long ago when a high-ranking federal official stated: "Not to worry. Brazil will grow out of this."[23]

On the positive side of this dilemma, the unfortunate São Paulo surprise brought to light socioeconomic-political-psychological problems—poverty, corruption, penetration of the political system, and impunity—that should be debated sooner rather than later. It is hoped that such debates will result in more than simply tough talk. In that connection, the people of Rio de Janeiro have demonstrated their displeasure with the business-as-usual (official lassitude, inefficiency, and outright corruption) approach to dealing with the PCC, other criminal gangs, and the favelas. For instance, reportedly, citizens of Rio de Janeiro (*cariocas*) rejoiced as the usual hectic pace of murder, assault, and theft slowed to almost negligible proportions when President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva responded to public pressure and announced that 75 percent of the military and police equipment brought into Rio during the Pan American games in July 2007 would remain in the city. How that equipment will be used over time remains to be seen, but cariocas have been reminded of how it feels to live in a safe city.[24] Thus, in Rio, preparations to host the World Cup games in 2014 include a serious effort ("preparations for war") to gain control of the various criminal gangs and the favelas.[25] On the negative side of this dilemma, vigilante militias in both Rio and São Paulo are violently beginning to impose their own "peace" in favelas the police do not control.[26]

vigilante militias in Rio and São Paulo are violently beginning to impose their own "peace" in favelas the police do not control

Conclusions. The 2006 surprise organized by Marcola and the PCC from a maximum security prison in São Paulo illustrates that loosely governed countries and ungoverned territories within them are attractive venues for gangs and other nonstate actors who seek to avoid the reach of criminal justice systems and evade the rule of law for their own advantage. Ironically, Marcola and his fellow PCC prisoners have found safe places for conducting their unprincipled self-enrichment activities. The May 2006 incident is a prime example of a new "urban jungle," within which gangs and their drug baron patrons and insurgent cousins can find political space from which to conduct their illicit commercial enrichment operations.[27] This mixing of political and commercial interests is a lethal combination that exemplifies a real and significant threat to the security, stability, and effective sovereignty of the Brazilian state.

Al Qaeda in Spain

Before and shortly after March 11, 2004, al Qaeda's asymmetric global challenge appeared ad hoc and senseless. Nevertheless, a closer look at the ruthless violence in Spain reveals some interesting and important lessons. On March 11, 10 rucksacks packed with explosives were detonated in 4 commuter trains at Madrid's Atocha train station. That terrorist act killed 191 people and injured over 1,800 more. It was considered the most violent attack in Western Europe since the 1988 bombing of Pan American Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people. Despite its length, the 1,470-page official summary of the investigation of the Madrid bombings provided little information. It indicated that 29 men were

involved in the attack, including 15 Moroccans, 9 Spaniards, 1 Syrian with Spanish citizenship, 1 Syrian, 1 Algerian, 1 Egyptian, and 1 Lebanese. The summary also indicated that the accused individuals were members of a radical political group active in North Africa and that al Qaeda exercised only an inspirational influence. Moreover, the official summary indicated that these terrorists might have learned their bomb-making skills not from al Qaeda but from the Internet.

Subsequent investigations of terrorist attacks in Western Europe provided considerable additional information regarding the March 2004 bombings in Madrid and the 29-man organization responsible. Those investigations indicated more than a casual relationship with al Qaeda. Four of the bombers were al Qaeda veterans from the base organization that provided leadership and expertise. Most of the nonveterans involved were operating as part of a lower third ring of the base organization and were involved in criminal gang activities such as drugs-for-weapons exchanges, providing false documentation (passports, other personal identification, and credit card fraud), and jewel and precious metals theft.

Additionally, the nonveterans were involved in disseminating propaganda and recruiting Spanish Muslim fighters to join Iraqi and other al Qaeda–sponsored insurgencies. The intent of these day-to-day activities was to help support and fund regional and global al Qaeda jihadi operations.[28] In this instance, the normal criminal gang activities of the group were interrupted so that they could take on the mission of bombing the Madrid train station.[29] Not until the bombing, then, did this particular gang transition from an implicit political agenda (that is, recruiting personnel and criminally generating financial support for al Qaeda's political-military operations in the Middle East, North Africa, and elsewhere) to an explicit political challenge to the Spanish state and the global community. Therefore, that was the point at which these delinquents became militants. The purpose of the action was not to achieve any military objective, and it was not a random act. Instead, the bombing was intended to generate strategic level political-psychological results. (Nevertheless, the militancy continued to be treated as both a social and a law enforcement issue.)

What This Effort Demonstrated. Since March 2004, al Qaeda has demonstrated that it can skillfully apply irregular, asymmetric war techniques to modern political war and has done so with impunity. Indeed, its actions were executed in a way that made virtually any kind of Spanish, Western, or U.S. military response impossible. After over 3 years of investigation and the trial, the Spanish court acquitted 7 of the 29 defendants and found 21 individuals guilty of involvement in the bombings. (One of the accused had been previously convicted on charges of illegal transporting of explosives. Also, 4 of the 29 accused committed suicide 3 days after the bombing.) Two Moroccans and a Spaniard were sentenced to 42,924 years in prison. Nobody else was sentenced to more than 23 years in prison. Of great importance is the fact that the men accused of planning and carrying out the attack were not convicted for the train bombing; they were found guilty of belonging to a terrorist group or for illegally transporting explosives.[30]

The Madrid attack also sent several messages to the Spanish people, the rest of Europe, the United States, and Muslim communities around the globe. The various messages went something like this:

- It is going to be costly to continue to support the United States in its global war against terrorism and in Iraq.
- Countries not cooperating with al Qaeda might expect to be future targets.

- Understand what can be done with a minimum of manpower and expense.
- Al Qaeda is capable of moving into the offensive against European and other Western enemies, should the organization make the political decision to do so.
- Al Qaeda demonstrated that the Madrid, London, and other subsequent bombings were deliberately executed in a way that made any kind of Western or U.S. military response impossible.
- Al Qaeda stood up against the United States and its allies—and succeeded.[31]

As a result, the publicity disseminated throughout the Muslim world has been credited with generating new sources of funding, new places for training and sanctuary, new recruits to the al Qaeda ranks, and additional de facto legitimacy.[32]

Additional Results. Even though the information gathered throughout Western Europe from the investigations and trials connected with the March 2004 bombing was treated cautiously and without alarm, the results achieved by the gang were dramatic and significant. The sheer magnitude and shock of the attack changed Spanish public opinion and the outcome of the parliamentary elections that were held just 3 days later. In those elections, the relatively conservative, pro-U.S. government of Prime Minister José Maria Aznar was unexpectedly and decisively defeated. That defeat came at the hands of the anti-U.S./anti–Iraq War leader of the socialists, José Luis Rodriguez Zapatero. Prior to the elections, the Spanish government had been a strong supporter of the United States, its policy regarding the global war on terror, and the Iraq War. Shortly after the elections, Spain's 1,300 troops were withdrawn from Iraq, and Spain ceased to be a strong U.S. ally within global political and security arenas.[33]

Conclusions. These political-psychological consequences advance the intermediate and long-terms objectives of political war that Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda have set forth. The most relevant of those objectives, in this context, are intended to erode popular support for the war on terror among the populations of America's allies and to gradually isolate the United States from its allies. All that—along with the messages noted above—was accomplished by a small gang, at a cost of only $80,000.[34]

Final Conclusions

These lessons are intended to help civilian and military leaders to understand the potential power and capability of the gang phenomenon to generate widespread political-social disequilibrium. At the same time, these vignettes demonstrate the power of "phantom groups" all around the world to influence public opinion and transform domestic, foreign, and defense policy. Strategic leaders must think about and deal with these destabilizing problems from multiple angles, on multiple levels, and in varying degrees of complexity. The alternative is to watch the global security arena become further engulfed in a chaos of violence, vice, corruption, and a lack of legitimacy. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] John P. Sullivan cites data to the effect that "several hundred private armies operate in over 100 nations, on six continents, generating over $100 billion in annual revenues." See "Terrorism, Crime, and Private Armies," *Low Intensity Conflict & Law Enforcement* 11, no. 2–3 (Winter 2002), 239–253.

[2] "Bubba, Bobo, Zambo and Zeeks—Domestic and International Issues Fuel Gang Violence in the Caribbean," *The Economist*, November 4, 2004; John T. Fishel and Mary Grizzard, *Countering Ideological Support to Terrorism in the Circum-Caribbean*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, discussion paper 05/52, September 2005; Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean: Sovereignty Under Siege* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997); William J. Olson, "International Organized Crime: The Silent Threat to Sovereignty," The Fletcher Forum (Summer–Fall 1997), 75–78; and John Rapley, "The New Middle Ages," *Foreign Affairs* (May–June 2006), 93–103.

[3] Ibid.

[4] David C. Jordan, *Drug Politics: Dirty Money and Democracies* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

[5] "Out of the Underworld: Numerous, Mysterious, and Now Spreading Fast in the United States," *The Economist*, January 5, 2006, 26.

[6] Ibid.; also see Fishel and Grizzard; Griffith; and Rapley.

[7] "Anti-crime Community Initiative to Be Launched," *Jamaica Gleaner*, February 6, 2006.

[8] Rapley.

[9] Ibid.

[10] *First-generation gangs* concentrate mostly on turf protection and petty cash operations; *second-generation gangs* tend to focus on drug trafficking and market protection over large geographical areas and act as mercenaries for larger, more prosperous criminal organizations; and *third-generation gangs* move into broader drug-related markets and morph into sophisticated transnational criminal organizations with ambitious political and economic agendas.

[11] Rapley.

[12] Ibid.

[13] "Beyond a Boundary: Hopes for a Legacy from a Cricket Field," *The Economist*, February 22, 2007, 45.

[14] "Draft Declaration on Security in the Americas," approved by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States at its regular session, Mexico City, Mexico, October 22, 2003, 1, 3, 8.

[15] U.S.–CARICOM Update, "Secretary Rice Meets with Caribbean Officials to Discuss Democracy, Trade, and Security," March 24, 2006.

[16] Olson.

[17] Jack Chang, "Gang Kicks Around Political Clout," *The Miami Herald*, May 31, 2006; "The Mob Takes on the State," *The Economist*, May 20, 2006; and Julio A. Cirino, "*Marcola, el jefe del area urbana fuera de control*" [Marcola: The Boss of Out of Control Urban Areas], *Investigación*, May 24, 2006.

[18] Abandoned by the state, favelas are city-states within the major cities of Brazil. They are feudal in nature and structure, and are noted as such in Rapley, 93–103. At the same time, a *jefe da favela* may be considered roughly equivalent to a feudal baron.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Cirino; *subir al cielo* is translated as "go up; into heaven."

[21] Ibid.

[22] Police Colonel Elizeu Éclair, reported by BBC News, May 20, 2006, available at <news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/Americas/4999906.stan>.

[23] Author interviews.

[24] "Fight in the Favelas," *The Economist*, August 2, 2007, 34.

[25] See Diana Renee, "Rio de Janeiro: Preparations for 'War' Unfold Live on TV," November 25, 2010, available at <www.monstersandcritics.com/news/americas/features/article_1601556.php/Rio-de-Janeiro-Preparations-for-war-unfold-live-on-TV-Feature>.

[26] Peter Muello, "Militias Clean up Rio Slums," *The Miami Herald,* April 30, 2007, 8A.

[27] Jennifer M. Taw and Bruce Hoffman, *The Urbanization of Insurgency: The Potential Challenge to U.S. Army Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1994).

[28] Ibid.; also see Victoria Burnett, "Spain Arrests 16 North Africans Accused of Recruiting Militants," *The New York Times*, May 29, 2007.

[29] Author interviews in Madrid, Spain, July 5–8, 2006, and September 14–21, 2008. Also see Lorenzo Vidino, *Al Qaeda in Europe: The New Battleground of International Jihad* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2006), 291–335.

[30] Jane Barrett, "Court Finds 21 Guilty of Madrid Train Bombings," Reuters, May 27, 2008. Also see Javier Jordan and Nicola Horsburg, "Mapping Jihadist Terrorism in Spain," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28, no. 3 (June 2005), 174–179.

[31] Ibid.; also note author interviews in Madrid, Spain, July 5–8, 2006, and September 14–21, 2008.

[32] Michael Scheuer, "Al Qaeda Doctrine for International Political Warfare," *Terrorism Focus* 3, no. 42 (October 2006); Scheuer, "Al Qaeda's Insurgency Doctrine: Aiming for a 'Long War,'" *Terrorism Focus* 3, no. 8 (February 2006); and Thomas Renard, "German Intelligence Describes a 'New Quality' in Jihadi Threats," *Terrorism Focus* 5, no. 7 (February 2008).

[33] Author interviews.

[34] Ibid.; also see Scheuer, "Al Qaeda Doctrine."

Five Missteps in Interagency Reform—

And What to Do About Them

BY JAMES JAY CARAFANO

Carved into the base of a statue at the National Archives are some of the most important words in Washington, DC: "What is past is prologue." This phrase succinctly states the intent behind the laws requiring that the U.S. Government record and interpret its history. Such laws are in place not only to illuminate the past but also to provide insights and observations to inform future decisionmaking. No government activity demands more reflection than overcoming the obstacles to conducting effective interagency operations. In the past decade, the United States has done more than enough wrong to learn some lessons on how to do things right.

It is generally recognized today that whole-of-government or interagency operations (where more than one agency or authority combines efforts to address difficult and complex challenges) are essential to successful governance. The attacks of 9/11, the troubles in Iraq and Afghanistan, the global effort to combat transnational terrorism, the response to Hurricane Katrina, the Gulf oil spill, the task of responding to climate change—after each new challenge emerges, the chorus gets a little louder. It would be unfair to say that Washington has done nothing to answer the cries for reform. But it is fair to say that the government has gotten more wrong than right when it comes to instituting feasible, suitable, and acceptable change. Five of the most prominent missteps and some ideas about how to fix them make this point pretty well.

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Soldier provides security on Forward Operating Base Lane in Zabul Province, Afghanistan

U.S. Army (Tia P. Sokimson)

Misstep 1: Know Yourself—We Don't

There is no magic formula for whole-of-government operations. How governments work is a reflection of their tradition, laws, culture, economy, history, geography, environment, and demographics. The U.S. Government, in fact, has a long history of dealing with interagency challenges—a legacy filled with epic successes, monumental failures, and everything in between.

In the years after World War II, for example, the United States faced many of the same challenges that it experienced in dealing with Iraq and Afghanistan. American forces administered long-term occupations in Trieste, Germany, Austria, Japan, and South Korea, operations that required the Defense Department, State Department, and other agencies to work together. At home, the national response to the massive Alaska earthquake of 1964 was a model for national disaster response and recovery efforts in the wake of catastrophic natural disasters. In Vietnam, U.S. intelligence, defense, and aid agencies also had to work hand in hand. Washington treated each of these challenges, and most every other major interagency challenge, as a unique experience. Responses were created ad hoc and then forgotten.

One of Washington's biggest missteps is that it has no official history of whole-of-government activities. Establishing a corps of interagency professionals, as well as the doctrine and policies necessary to implement whole-of-government solutions, requires a professional historical foundation.

The lack of historical-mindedness is stunning, especially since it is embedded in almost every other Federal activity. Many agencies, from State to Defense to the Central Intelligence Agency and National Park Service, maintain history offices, many of which are established

by statute. These offices are funded out of the agency's annual appropriation. Federal historians are government employees, though in some cases private historians write official histories under contract to the agency historians. History offices and each agency's official historian are often charged with a range of duties. In addition to writing the official history of the organization and annual historical summaries, many undertake case studies to inform ongoing policy questions or answer queries from Congress and government officials on historical matters.

Federal historians also provide a foundation for academic historians and public policy analysts who use the historical materials as a starting point and guide for their research. For example, the State Department's Office of the Historian collects, edits, and produces the Foreign Relations of the United States. This series, begun in 1861 and continued to this day, publishes the official documents that explain major foreign policy initiatives by the United States. The volumes have been used as a primary source by countless historians and other scholars.

No Federal activity requires a more solid grounding than operations involving multiple agencies, requiring great coordination. The capacity of agencies to act collectively has become a core competence of government. Today, however, few individuals in government have the skills needed to create national enterprise solutions to national problems.

Congress should establish a National Historian of the U.S. Government and a Federal interagency office. This office should work independently of any single agency and be charged with writing the official history of interagency operations as well as producing cutting-edge analysis and case studies that inform the thinking and development of a corps of interagency professionals. Among his key duties, the Federal interagency historian should report annually on the state of Federal history and records management programs and their impact on preserving and writing interagency history. This would ensure that there are documents so that a large community of practice, from academe to think tanks and all government agencies, can access the data needed for studying interagency operations.

Misstep 2: We Need a Playbook—We Don't Have One

Typically, discussions of whole-of-government reform start with wiring diagrams, organizational charts, and debates over roles, missions, responsibilities, and authorities. These ruminations could not be more ill-suited to establishing systemic reforms. Washington continues to focus on reorganizing, creating czars, writing new rules, or establishing new programs because that is what Washington does best—not because that is the kind of reform that is really needed.

Washington is addicted to linear thinking and linear solutions. Linear systems are symmetrical and proportional. Inputs and outputs can be defined and quantified. Small inputs have a small impact; they hardly move the system or only gradually have an impact over time. Big inputs make big changes. Linear systems can be broken down into component parts. The parts can be analyzed and then reassembled to understand the performance of the macrosystem. The whole is literally equal to the sum of the parts. The problem is that most complex government challenges do not look like this at all. Wars, natural disasters, transnational terrorism and crime, climate change—none of these are linear affairs.

Most interagency challenges are challenging because they are symptomatic of what analysts call "wicked problems," or complex systems. Complex systems are nonlinear. It is difficult to

map cause-and-effect relationships. Complex environments do not yield easily to control by hierarchical systems and linear authorities.

Washington's first priority should be to adopt doctrine and planning processes that will serve as the lifeline of a guiding idea—informing how to adapt organizations and practices to the realities of governing rather than organizing government and hoping its structures and methods of operation will serve to meet the tasks that have to be addressed.

What Washington needs is a doctrine of *practice*, rather than a doctrine of *phenomenon*—in other words, a body of common knowledge and understanding that informs how government should think about solving complex problems rather than a rule book telling people what to do. One element of this doctrine might be suggested by the work the Army has done on the concept of operational design, schooling planners in how to interpret and understand the environment in which operations will be conducted so that they can formulate planning processes, operations, and organizations suited to the particular mission and the conditions under which it must be accomplished.

the capacity to decentralize operations permits organizations to be highly adaptive and flexible

Sound doctrine and planning processes are particularly advantageous for dealing with complex environments. A common body of knowledge, a standard operational language, and a uniform manner of understanding problems facilitate trust and confidence between leaders and followers. That allows for decentralized execution. In turn, the capacity to decentralize operations permits organizations to be highly adaptive and flexible, a vital attribute in responding to complex conditions often associated with wicked problems.

Washington's misstep is that it has started and stopped attempting to organize an interagency planning process and to establish doctrinal knowledge a number of times over the last several decades. Under President Bill Clinton, the White House initiated a new planning process. A system was developed under Presidential Decision Directive 56 (PDD–56), which established an interagency process to respond to complex contingencies overseas, such as providing assistance to foreign countries after earthquakes and hurricanes. Agencies chafed under a formal process that required them to define an endstate, allocate resources, articulate a plan, and then jointly monitor execution. President George W. Bush scrapped PDD–56. Then, under President Bush, the Department of Homeland Security undertook an ambitious program to push interagency doctrine and planning for domestic operations, only to largely abandon the initiative under President Barack Obama. Until the requirement for interagency doctrine and planning takes root in the Federal Government, Washington will always be playing catch-up with the next big thing that confronts it.

Addressing misstep 2 harkens back to the importance of correcting misstep 1. History is a key component of building common knowledge, developing critical thinking skills, and understanding the complexities of public policymaking.

Misstep 3: Value Human Capital—Washington Doesn't

The skills, knowledge, and attributes of the leaders tackling complex problems are far more important than the formal organization and processes of government. Preparing competent leaders starts with adequate doctrine, but

doctrine alone is not enough. Having a shared body of common knowledge and practices is one thing. Doctrine does little good unless it is taught—and taught to people who are capable of and practiced in executing it.

The White House's after action report on the national response to Hurricane Katrina highlighted the shortfalls in government ability to manage large-scale interagency operations. Numerous studies have documented similar problems in managing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. To avoid the pitfalls that have hobbled many past interagency operations, the professionals leading interagency efforts must have three essential skills:

- familiarity with a number of diverse disciplines (such as healthcare, law enforcement, immigration, and trade) and practice in interagency operations, working with different government agencies, the private sector, and international partners
- competence in crisis action planning and long-term strategic planning
- a sound understanding of federalism, free-market economy, constitutional rights, domestic government, and international relations.

Indeed, without this foundation of professional skill, running interagency operations always becomes a futile exercise. This is the most important lesson learned from Pentagon efforts to address jointness. The military achieved improved cooperation among the Armed Forces by creating a joint professional development program that included activities involving more than one Service and requirements for joint education, assignments, and accreditation. In other words, it built a professional development program to ensure that it had leaders who could master the challenges of joint operations.

The Bush administration took an admirable stab at starting a national security professional development structure that would have addressed many of the requirements for interagency operations. The initiative was started late in the Presidency. It now sits virtually moribund. To address this misstep, the Obama administration must sell Congress on a plan to address education, assignment, and accreditation.

Overcoming misstep 3 also goes back to fixing misstep 1. History is part of the foundation of any sound professional education and development program. Developing a body of interagency history would create a foundation of knowledge on which to establish the interagency ethos—just as military history is central to building joint military professionalism. Official histories of U.S. interagency operations would provide a rich depth of insight into understanding the opportunities and obstacles in whole-of-government operations.

Misstep 4: Operators Can't Operate

Addressing missteps 1 through 3 will give Washington what it really needs—leaders who can lead in interagency operations. History, doctrine, and professional development all contribute to developing an indispensable skill: leaders with wisdom. And leaders who deal with complex problems must above all have wisdom.

University of Bristol's Professor of the Learning Sciences Guy Claxton defines *wisdom* as "good judgment in hard cases." Hard cases appear:

> *Where important decisions have to be made on the basis of insufficient data; where what is relevant and what is irrelevant are not clearly demarcated; where meanings and interpretations of actions and motives*

> *are unclear and conjectural; where small details may contain vital clues; where the costs and benefits, the long term consequences may be difficult to discern; where many variables interact in intricate ways.*[1]

Such wisdom is the essence of decision-making for complex activities like whole-of-government operations.

We have been fixating on how Washington organizes for complex operations since World War II, and there is not much more to be wrung out of the system. Too often, those interested in interagency reform focus on the highest levels of government: those who make high policy and the organization of the White House staff. That is nonsense. The White House and a handful of Cabinet secretaries cannot manage the world—no matter how much information, wisdom, and power they have.

At the policy level, agencies in Washington reach broad agreement on what each will do to support an overall U.S. policy. Here, the United States is actually not too bad. Trying to systematically deal with interagency policy is really an invention of the Cold War. It is difficult to look at the U.S. Government at any period before in its history and point to an enduring, formal process for interagency policy cooperation that produced anything significant. In the years between World Wars I and II, for example, the State Department refused to participate in war planning or issue political guidance to Army and Navy planners because it believed that such coordination would be inappropriate and an intrusion of the military into the civilian sphere of government. That changed at the outset of the Cold War with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, creating the National Military Establishment, which later became the Department of Defense (eventually organizing all of the Services under this single Federal department), National Security Council (NSC), and Intelligence Community. These entities, particularly the NSC, instituted a process of policy coordination that endures today.

Arguably, the United States has the policymaking process down pretty well. Critics can rail against decisions made regarding everything from the Iraq War to the Gulf oil spill, but the main problem was not the process, but instead qualitative judgments made by decisionmakers. No process reform can guarantee better high-level decisionmakers—these individuals are determined largely by the results of elections.

While Washington can always dabble at the fringes on how it organizes itself—such as establishing the Department of Homeland Security—there are clear left and right limits. These are established by the U.S. Constitution, particularly regarding the principle of federalism; the division of checks and balances of exercising sovereign power among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches; and freedom of the President in organizing and running the office of the White House and exercising executive power in general. These limits in how the Federal Government functions are fundamental to the exercise of American democracy. They should not be tinkered with unless good reason is given. The fact that Washington cannot herd its cats well is not a good enough reason.

Furthermore, even if Washington was supremely well organized and all knowing, it does not follow that whole of government would work flawlessly. Washington is only one player in the complex process; much of the success or failure of an operation will turn on how well those executing White House policies can adapt, innovate, and adjust to conditions on the ground.

It is at the intermediate level—the operational level—where the U.S. Government

undertakes major operations and campaigns, and where agencies in Washington have to develop operational plans such as coordinating recovery operations after a major hurricane, that the United States often struggles most. This is where interagency cooperation is the weakest. This is a legacy of the Cold War. There was rarely a requirement for Federal agencies outside of Washington to do that kind of integrated planning to contain the Soviet Union. Agencies generally agreed on the broad role each would play. There were few requirements under which they had to plan to work together in the field to accomplish a goal under unified direction. Washington has never had an enduring formal system to make things happen at the interagency level outside of the Capital above the level of an individual Embassy.

Today, coordination of major interagency operations in the field is often troubled. Reconstruction activities in the wake of the invasion of Iraq are a case in point. The military, the Coalition Provisional Authority, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) all undertook major projects. There was no shared vision, no common operational planning, and no integrated contracting or human capital management process. As a result, these organizations learned lessons on the job and adapted, but they did not keep up with the changing security environment in the country, and after spending billions of dollars, there was little to show for the investment.

If there is a problem that needs to be fixed, it is this: the ability to coordinate major interagency challenges outside of Washington, away from the offices of Cabinet secretaries and staffs, whether it is coordinating disaster relief over a three-state area after a hurricane or conducting the occupation of a foreign country.

It should come as no surprise that operational interagency activities have been found wanting. They are flawed by design. There are many factors that contribute to that.

Tradition. The divide between civil and military spheres is part of a U.S. tradition that has always placed a premium on civilian control of the military. In the 19th century, it was thought appropriate to "firewall" military activities from civilian functions. Even today, military and civilian officials are cautious about "straying out of their lane."

Operational Organization. Every Federal agency has its own distinct operational organization. The U.S. military, for example, has a system of regional commands established under the Unified Command Plan (UCP). It does not match the State Department's regional system, which, in any case, functions nothing like the military combatant commands. Federal agencies are always reluctant to support interagency headquarters outside of Washington for fear that they will usurp policymaking authorities from the department secretariats.

Capacity. Outside the Department of Defense, Federal departments have limited capabilities to conduct operational activities. Most Federal agencies, for example, do not have effective means to mobilize and deploy personnel.

organizations learned lessons on the job and adapted, but they did not keep up with the changing security environment in the country

Inspectors General. Interagency operations require effective oversight. This is problematic for a Federal inspector general corps that aligns with individual agencies. In Iraq, for example, a Special Inspector General for Iraq had to be established to oversee activities involving multiple agencies.

U.S. Air Force (Jacob N. Bailey)

Soldier with Joint Task Force supporting Federal Emergency Management Agency relief efforts scans streets of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina

Politics. Many politicians are rightly uncomfortable with the notion of big government. They are concerned that creating a more effective interagency process would empower government to the point that it might lead to abuse, encouraging Washington to take on missions that are not appropriate.

Operational Models. There are no good operational models on how to undertake major interagency activities outside of Washington. The most common is the lead agency model, in which one Federal agency is responsible for leading a response or planning effort. Where the lead agency has the preponderance of responsibility and resources, usually other departments act like bystanders—primarily interested in doing as little as possible. Where the departments all have major equities in the process, usually everyone simply agrees to do what they are already doing.

The key to improving interagency operations is to focus on the most pressing problem—and that is *not* in a Cabinet secretary's office. The answer is not reorganizing the Federal Government or redistributing Federal responsibilities. We need to focus on how to make the interagency process more responsive in the operational environment.

This leads to the next misstep. The United States lacks good operational structures of managing interagency activities. That is particularly a problem regarding overseas operations where the Pentagon's UCP simply is not effective as a cornerstone for whole-of-government operations.

The UCP is still primarily organized to provide global command for the last war. In addition, while each of the geographic commands contains a joint interagency coordination group to organize regional

activities, in practice, there is little cooperation or planning with outside organizations or departments. Furthermore, combatant commanders tend to compete with the Ambassador (and the Ambassador's Country Team, which incorporates all civilian, military, and intelligence personnel assigned to the Embassy) in each country in the commander's area of responsibility. Nor can combatant commanders partner with the State Department at the regional level because the State Department's regional desks cover different geographical areas than UCP areas of responsibility.

To the Pentagon's credit, the combatant commands have tried their hands at herding cats. U.S. Southern Command undertook a number of initiatives, and U.S. Africa Command was stood up with the idea of becoming a model for interagency cooperation. Sadly, none of these initiatives has proven wholly satisfactory.

There are alternative models. A possible structure for the UCP might go as follows: There is still a need for permanent military commands under the direction of the Pentagon; however, the number of combatant commands should be reduced to three. In Europe and Northeast Asia, the United States has important and enduring military alliances, and there is a continuing need to integrate the U.S. military commands with them. To this end, U.S. European Command and U.S. Pacific Command could be replaced by a U.S.–NATO command and a U.S. Northeast Asia headquarters. U.S. Northern Command might remain as the military command responsible for the defense of the United States. In addition, three Joint Interagency Groups (InterGroups) could be established. Joint interagency task forces have already been used effectively on a small scale to conduct counternarcotics operations in Latin America, the Caribbean, and off the Pacific coast of the United States. They might incorporate resources from multiple agencies under a single command structure for specific missions. There is no reason that this model could not be expanded in the form of InterGroups to cover larger geographical areas and more diverse mission sets.

Misstep 5: Congress Is AWOL—It Can't Be

Capitol Hill is ill-suited to promote cooperation among Federal agencies. It appropriates funds for operations of individual departments. The jurisdiction of committees that oversee the government dovetails with the departments they oversee. In some cases, that is not even true. In the case of the Department of Homeland Security, through its insistence on creating the department committees, Congress refused to give up jurisdiction over the agencies folded into the new department.

Misstep 5 is that Congress has done almost nothing to move the ball of interagency reform forward. There are at least three areas where the Hill needs to act.

First, Congress needs to consolidate oversight on the key enablers who will make interagency integration happen—overseeing the education, assignment, and accreditation standards for whole-of-government professional development to a single committee in each chamber. In particular, accreditation and congressional involvement are crucial to ensuring that these programs are successful and sustainable. Before leaders are selected for critical (nonpolitically appointed) interagency positions, they should be accredited by a board of professionals in accordance with broad guidelines established by Congress. Congress should require creation of boards that encourage the establishment of educational requirements and accredit institutions that are needed to teach national security and homeland security, screen and approve

individuals to attend schools and fill interagency assignments, and certify individuals as interagency-qualified leaders.

Second, Congress needs to set broad rules on how interagency operations will be conducted, particularly with regard to exercising unity of command. The nature of the task should define who should be in charge. When dealing overseas, there are three critical tasks. They have been described in various ways as justice, security, and well-being; or governance, security, and essential services. Planning occupations after World War II, the military planners called it the "disease and unrest" formula—preventing humanitarian crises, establishing a legitimate, functioning government, and ensuring the existence of competent domestic security forces to support that government.

Who should be in charge depends on which of the three missions has priority at the time. In a postconflict environment, for example, the military should be in charge of interagency operations until a stable security environment is in place. Where crisis response is the priority (and security is not a major issue), a civilian agency should take the lead. Where governance is the issue, building up the capacity of government to be honest and efficient and to promote economic growth and strong civil society (again, when security is adequate), a civilian agency should be in charge. This organization might be something more like USAID, but independent from the State Department, using instruments more like the Millennium Challenge Account and focusing on measures such as those listed in The Heritage Foundation and *The Wall Street Journal Index of Economic Freedom*.

Third, Congress needs to set better rules on how to fund interagency operations. Developing the capacity for all Federal agencies and nongovernmental agencies—and private sector contractors, for that matter—to provide the people and services needed has to be a priority. There is a simple solution for cutting the Gordian Knot of the thoroughly knotty problem of who pays. Congress could appropriate money to the agency that will provide leadership for the operation, and that agency would negotiate with other agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and private sector contractors to determine what it needs to support what needs to be done. For planning, training, education, and exercises, the lead agency would pay other agencies to participate out of an annual appropriation provided by Congress. For operations, it would pay for the supporting agencies to provide personnel and services (and the salaries of personnel to backfill those deployed for operations) out of supplemental appropriations provided by Congress.

The Way Forward

In Washington, the urgent typically crowds out the important. When it comes to mastering interagency operations, however, Congress must make an exception. Fostering the practice of whole-of-government operations will never rise to the level of a vital national issue. It will only be in the aftermath of some great future disaster that our politicians will stand up and cry out, "This all could have been avoided if we had acted." That is an avoidable tragedy. Instead, Washington could act now and correct the missteps that have kept the U.S. Government from setting the standard for interagency operations. **PRISM**

Note

[1] Quoted in Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz: A New Approach to* On War (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 119.

Stability Operations

From Policy to Practice

BY JAMES W. DERLETH AND JASON S. ALEXANDER

The 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* led to a number of bureaucratic and policy changes. In 2004, the Department of State established the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). It was charged with coordinating the Nation's postconflict and stabilization efforts. In 2005, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) created an Office of Military Affairs. Its mission was to serve as the agency's focal point for civilian-military planning and interaction with the Department of Defense (DOD) and foreign militaries. On November 28, 2005, DOD published Directive 3000.05, which established stability operations as a core U.S. military mission with the same priority as combat operations. Over the next few years, DOD also issued new military doctrine—Field Manual (FM) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency*, and FM 3–07, *Stability Operations*. The latter defines *stability operations* as the "various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe, secure environment, provide essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief."[1]

Complementing changing military doctrine, in 2009 the United States Institute of Peace and the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute offered a civilian perspective on reconstruction and stabilization operations with its *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*.[2] As with most doctrine, this document is broadly framed to give units flexibility in dynamic and complex environments. While useful at the strategic level, *Guiding Principles* does not help field practitioners beyond the theoretical understanding of counterinsurgency or stabilization. American experiences in unstable environments such as Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, the Philippines, Somalia, and Haiti demonstrate the difficulty in effectively conducting stability operations.[3] There are numerous reasons for this situation. Although addressing these issues requires strong leadership and a willingness to take on

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the formidable task of changing bureaucratic structures and procedures,[4] there are some challenges that can be quickly mitigated.

Since both civilian and military practitioners have little or no stability operations training before they deploy,[5] they rely on previous experience or narrow technical education. As an illustration, the vast majority of USAID Field Program Officers (FPOs) in Afghanistan are either humanitarian or development specialists. This means that their previous experience was focused on resolving human development challenges. Military practitioners also rely on their experience and assumptions. For example, many commanders believe proficiency in core combat skills gives Soldiers and Marines the ability to conduct stability operations effectively. This could not be further from the truth. Training in identifying sources of instability, developing missions and activities to mitigate them, and creating indicators for measuring local stability are just a few of the critical tasks required to conduct effective stability operations. Without the requisite training, military units fall back on what they know best—enemy-centric operations. As a brigade staff officer stated, current U.S. "doctrine and training requirements do not support stability operations."[6]

priority grievances are matters a significant percentage of locals—not outsiders—identify as important to the community

Military units trained to work with the population (for example, Civil Affairs) share many of their civilian counterparts' biases. They believe that if they improve the level of development in an area, the area will become more stable. Often, one of the first things that Civil Affairs advisors do when they arrive in an area of operations is conduct a "needs assessment."[7] While a traditional needs assessment may foster development in a stable environment, research clearly shows that this is not the case in unstable environments.[8]

It should come as no surprise that mistaken assumptions lead to ineffective programming. When we asked one FPO what stability programming meant, he replied, "Good development in an unstable environment." This is patently wrong. Research shows development programming in unstable environments often fosters more instability. At a recent international aid conference, which looked at the effectiveness of development aid in Afghanistan, practitioners from numerous development agencies concluded:

- Aid seems to be losing, rather than winning, hearts and minds in Afghanistan.
- Development and counterinsurgency policies should acknowledge the potentially destabilizing effects of aid.
- Less is more—too much aid can be destabilizing.
- Donors should differentiate between stabilization and development objectives.[9]

Programming

Effective stability operations programming requires a methodology focused on identifying and diminishing any local sources of instability, *not* addressing the perceived needs of the population. Most developing countries have myriad needs. Extremists/insurgents do not usually build roads, provide health care, or dig

wells. Yet they are able to gain support in the population. How? Extremists/insurgents are able to ameliorate the priority grievances of the population because they understand the local community.

Priority grievances are matters a significant percentage of locals—not outsiders—identify as important to the community. Examples include security, justice, or conflict resolution. Priority grievances can be needs. The differences are who assesses the situation based on common development models; and second, whether a significant percentage of the population identifies the issue as a priority. For example, in Afghanistan the Taliban gained support because they provide sharia courts to deal with crime and local disputes, both of which are major grievances in the country.[10] As one member of the Afghan parliament noted: "People go to them [Taliban] because their justice is quick and seen as more effective than normal justice."[11]

Therefore, to stabilize an area, practitioners must be able to identify, prioritize, and diminish sources of instability (SOI), which are usually a small subset of priority grievances. They are SOIs because they directly undermine support for the government, increase support for insurgents, or otherwise disrupt the normal functioning of society. For example, in a conflict between two tribes, one tribe could ally itself with the insurgents because the rival tribe controls the local government (resources, patronage). Moreover, insurgents could take advantage of a priority grievance (land conflicts) to gain/expand influence in the community by resolving the land conflicts.

This subset must be identified through an analytical process. Of note, field analysis often determines the actual source of instability one or more steps removed from a grievance cited by the community. For example, although locals cite water as a problem, analysis might show the underlying source of instability that created the water issue is competition between two tribes over a borehole.

SOIs usually cannot be addressed by a simple infrastructure project, such as a road. Although a road may be a part of the solution, it is the process of cooperating to build the road that is important. Another example: if the government's failure to maintain a district irrigation system is being turned into an SOI by insurgent propaganda, a project that simply brings in an outside contractor to fix the canals will not necessarily increase support for the government. Why? If the government cannot maintain the repaired canals, then it will continue to be seen as ineffective, fostering increased popular frustration. Instead, the project should be conducted by the community—with government support—to increase the government's and/or society's capability and capacity to maintain the canals. Again, the goal of stability programming is identifying and targeting the local sources of instability. Once an area is stable, practitioners can address needs and priority grievances through traditional development assistance.

The District Stabilization Framework

U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq generated an extensive range of stability operations literature, which generally falls into two categories: broad strategic policy and tactical "best practices" based on an individual's or unit's experience. Only a few publications, such as David Kilcullen's "28 Articles"[12] and Army FM 3–24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*,[13] attempt to provide a coherent set of tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) for units. These attempts notwithstanding, there is an

overwhelming need for a simple, standardized methodology to conduct stability operations. While some field personnel have created tools and processes that helped them stabilize an area, most have not been as successful. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive framework that allows civilian and military practitioners to identify local sources of instability, create activities to mitigate them, and measure the effectiveness of the activities in stabilizing the area is crucial. The USAID Office of Military Affairs led an effort that created the District Stabilization Framework (DSF). The DSF is based on the idea that in order to increase stability in an area, practitioners must first understand what is causing instability. This understanding is based on four factors:

the DSF identifies sources of instability, designs programs to mitigate them, and measures the effectiveness of the programming in stabilizing an area

- Instability results when the factors fostering it overwhelm the ability of the government or society to mitigate them.
- A standardized methodology is necessary to identify the sources of instability.
- Local population perceptions must be included when identifying causes of instability.
- Measures of effect (impact) are the only true indicators of success.

Through a five-step process, the DSF identifies sources of instability, designs programs to mitigate them, and measures the effectiveness of the programming in stabilizing an area.

1. Collection and Situational Awareness. The first step is to gain a stability-focused understanding of an environment. Four types of information are required in order to understand local conditions: operational, cultural, instability, and stability factors.

2. Analysis. As anyone who has been to a doctor knows, until a malady is diagnosed, the doctor cannot prescribe an effective treatment. Similarly, to conduct effective stability operations, we need to understand what is causing instability. The analysis phase of the DSF compiles the four streams of information gathered in the collection phase and analyzes them to identify and prioritize the local sources of instability. This is accomplished through a series of worksheets. Practitioners not only identify the population's priority grievances, but also, more importantly, attempt to discern whether and how these grievances are sources of instability. This process is very different from identifying impediments to development or locating enemy forces.

3. Design. After identifying the sources of instability, the next step in the DSF process is to design activities to mitigate them. This is accomplished through a series of "filters." The first filter is stability fundamentals. This means an activity must measurably increase support for the government, decrease support for spoilers, and increase institutional and/or the community's ability to solve societal problems. If a proposed activity fulfills these three fundamentals, the next filter, stabilization principles, is applied.[14] These are widely accepted best practices for designing international programs. They include local ownership, capacity-building, sustainability, selectivity, assessment, results, partnership, flexibility, and accountability. The goal of the design phase

is to create effective projects that mitigate local sources of instability. Too often practitioners implement "feel good" projects or, even worse, projects to show they did something during their deployment. Unless activities are designed to mitigate sources of instability, at best they will have no effect on stability. At worse, they will increase instability.

4. Implementation. Even if practitioners identify the local sources of instability and design appropriate mitigating activities, how the activities are implemented plays a crucial role in determining whether an activity will foster stability. For example, giving projects to one faction in a community will cause resentment in another, fostering instability. Funneling money through the wrong contractors or corrupt officials may contribute to instability. Large influxes of cash can cause inflation and corruption, which hurt the poor. The lure of inflated salaries may also draw farmers from their land, teachers from their schools, and doctors from their clinics—leading to more instability when the projects end.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation. To determine effectiveness in stabilizing an area, practitioners must be able to measure not only whether their activities were successful, but also whether their activities stabilized the area. Therefore, it is necessary to track three levels of evaluation:

- Measure of performance (MOP) identifies whether activities have been completed. For example, if the objective was to "increase police support in the community," an activity might include police training. The MOP for this activity would be "police trained." Note that this simply determines if an activity has been completed, not whether the police have more support in the community.
- Measure of effect (MOE) assesses whether the stability program objective has been achieved. Continuing the police example, an MOE might be more information provided to the police by the population.
- Overall stability helps determine whether the net effect of *all* activities has improved stability in the area.

A basket of standardized stability-focused indicators—which can be augmented by a few context area specific indicators—gives practitioners a good idea if an area is becoming more or less stable. DSF stability indicators currently being used in Afghanistan include:

- civilian night road movement
- government legitimacy
- population citing security as an issue
- population movement from insecurity
- enemy-initiated attacks on government security forces
- civilian casualties
- acts of intimidation against government officials.

Note that the number of indicators is not as important as what is being evaluated.[15] Since the support of the population is the goal for both the government and insurgents forces in a stability operation, the metrics must focus on whether the population believes stability is improving; if their actions reflect their perceptions; and if insurgents are operating in the area.

Criticism

Critics of the DSF believe that the framework does not improve the effectiveness of stability operations because:

- It is difficult to collect local perceptions.
- It does not provide a better understanding of the local environment than traditional tools.
- It takes too much time to collect, analyze, and disseminate DSF data.
- The DSF methodology cannot be properly executed in violent environments.
- It is not linked to a higher level campaign plan and its measures of progress.

One concern is that the DSF is too difficult to implement. Common complaints include that the Tactical Conflict Survey (TCS) is used too much within a small population without doing anything to address the sources of instability (sometimes called "interlocutor fatigue") and that soldiers cannot gather accurate information because the population tends to tell soldiers only what they want to hear. The first issue is the result of a lack of training. Survey saturation is not a weakness of the DSF methodology; it is a shortcoming of those applying it. As for soldiers being unable to gather accurate information from locals, two small trials in southern Afghanistan using soldiers, foreign nationals, and local nongovernmental organizations to conduct the TCS found no statistical difference in the responses gathered by each group.[16]

improving the ability of the population to communicate led to an increase in the number of tips about improvised explosive devices and insurgent movement

Another criticism is the DSF does not provide a better understanding of the local environment than traditional tools and processes. The difference between the DSF and traditional tools is that the latter are focused on either identifying the needs of the population or identifying the enemy. In other words, they are not focused on pinpointing and diminishing sources of instability. The DSF gives practitioners an analytical process, TTPs to implement it, and metrics to evaluate effectiveness. Using the DSF in the Nawa District of Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines in 2009 learned that the lack of cell phone coverage was one of the local population's principal grievances. Following up with the "why" question of the TCS, the unit discovered phone coverage fostered a sense of stability because it allowed people to quickly find out about the security situation in neighboring areas and/or if attacks had injured family members. Based on this information, the battalion and its Afghanistan National Security Forces partners started providing security for the local cell phone towers. Improving the ability of the population to communicate led to an increase in the number of tips about improvised explosive devices and insurgent movement. Even more significantly, it increased the number of people who believed the area was stable. Battalion commander Lieutenant Colonel Bill McCollough noted, "This is something we had never thought about, as we considered phones a luxury. Without using DSF . . . we would never have known about this concern, understood why it was a concern, or done anything about it."[17]

In East Paktika, Afghanistan, 3d Battalion, 509th Infantry also used the DSF to identify sources of instability. According to the commander of Bravo Company, the DSF process "allowed me to streamline operations . . . and

Afghan boy injured by insurgent rocket calls his mother from coalition medical facility

U.S. Army (Matthew Minkema)

prioritized where to focus my efforts with what resources I had and it ensured some things that are not quick fixes (most things actually) were not forgotten." The battalion's operations officer noted that the DSF allowed "all of our platoon leaders, staffs, company commanders, battalion staff and battalion commander to have a good idea of the sources of instability in East Paktika. The simplicity, scalability and clarity of the system [DSF] are unmatched."[18] Because of the utility of the framework, for the first time the 509th was able to effectively target the identified and prioritized sources of instability in its area of operations.

Another concern is that the DSF takes too long to implement. Practitioners have only a limited time in theater, and there is a natural inclination to do as much as possible during deployment. However, implementing projects without first identifying sources of instability can foster the very instability practitioners were sent to diminish. Army FM 2–0, *Intelligence*, stresses that "intelligence drives operations." This is true for both lethal and nonlethal operations. If practitioners have been educated and trained in the DSF, they can quickly identify local SOIs. Using the DSF during their deployment in Afghanistan, the British 52d Infantry Brigade was able to identify the key sources of instability—which differed throughout the area of operations—within a month of their arrival in theater.

Targeting these SOIs, 52d Brigade was able to see the effects of its actions to diminish them (for example, increasing support for the Afghan government and decreasing support for insurgents, within 3 months). This improvement in stability was identified both qualitatively—through changes in people's perceptions garnered with the TCS—and quantitatively (people moving back

to their villages, more civilian road movement, decreased security incidents, and so forth).[19] While a paucity of data makes it difficult to discern whether this was causation or correlation, no other unit that we are aware of can show any direct link between identifying sources of instability, targeting them, and measuring effect.

Critics of the DSF also believe practitioners cannot employ the methodology in violent environments where insurgents have a strong foothold and are thus still capable of attacking and intimidating the local population. While traditional collection methods may need to be discarded, there are still numerous ways in which to collect public perceptions. One way is simply to query returning soldiers who conduct routine patrols and converse with the local population. Practitioners may also seek out local nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and various other local partners to gather their perspectives on the drivers of instability in the area. In short, creativity and flexibility are required for collecting local perceptions in unstable environments.

Another criticism of the DSF is that while it might measure the effectiveness of activities in fostering local stability, the DSF is not linked to higher level strategy and measures of effect. Noteworthy, the vast majority of higher level measures are not MOEs, but rather measures of performance, also referred to as outputs. As noted above, MOPs do not measure whether an area is becoming more stable; they simply indicate if an activity has been implemented. The answer to the larger question of how to link local activities to a higher level strategy is in the creation of a flexible strategy that provides a broad outline rather than detailed programmatic goals and their corresponding metrics. Units can then prioritize activities based on elements of the strategy relevant to their area of operations instead of being forced to conduct activities across a broad spectrum. The Military Decision-Making Process states that decisions should be based on "top-down guidance and bottom-up refinement." In Afghanistan, there has been little or no bottom-up refinement. One reason for this phenomenon is the lack of a common interagency methodology that identifies local causes of instability for incorporation into national level strategies. The DSF provides this capability.

if there are 95 main efforts, in reality there is no main effort

A related issue is the importance of having stability-focused metrics rather than a plethora of irrelevant output indicators. In 2009, S/CRS led a process to create an Integrated Civilian-Military Support Plan for Afghanistan. It includes 11 Transformative Effects that, if attained, suggest Afghanistan will be stable. To measure progress along the way, each Transformative Effect has a series of measurable Main Efforts (95 in total) at the community, provincial, and national level.[20] If there are 95 main efforts, in reality there is no main effort. In addition to taking a significant amount of staff time and field resources to gather the requisite data, most of the Main Efforts are output indicators (MOPs) and do not measure whether an area is more stable. There are two main reasons for this situation. First, many people do not understand the difference between impact (MOE) and output measures. Second, sources of instability are local.[21] None of the higher level plans for stability operations that we examined attempted to identify local sources of instability before developing lines of operations or stability MOEs.[22] Consequently, the lines of effort

Provincial Reconstruction Team member looks on as workers dig foundation for hospital expansion, Zabul Province, Afghanistan

ISAF (Brian Ferguson)

(LOEs) determine the sources of instability rather than the sources of instability determining the LOEs. This is a recurring problem as plans and indicators are often created either by people who do not understand stability operations or by policymakers, leaders, or practitioners who conflate their values and experiences with what locals consider important.

Most criticism of the DSF comes from those who have not been trained in the DSF or who tried to implement it from PowerPoint presentations. While the DSF is not a "silver bullet," it is the only tool that systematically collects the perceptions of the population, integrates them into a comprehensive sources of instability analysis, designs activities based on this analysis, and measures the effect of the activities in both diminishing the SOIs and stabilizing the area.

Benefits

The District Stabilization Framework was designed by practitioners to help practitioners mitigate challenges to conducting effective stability operations. Consequently, the use of the DSF improves the ability of practitioners to conduct stability operations by:

- enabling them to distinguish among needs, priority grievances, and sources of instability
- fostering unity of effort—through its focus on identifying and mitigating the sources of instability, the DSF gives all actors in an area a common view of sources of instability
- improving programming—because it provides a common view of the sources of instability, the DSF helps practitioners prioritize activities based on their relevance to stabilizing an area rather than the practitioners' specific "cylinder of excellence"

- measuring stability—since the DSF creates a baseline using standardized population-centric evaluation criterion, it allows practitioners to assess their progress in stabilizing an area
- improving continuity—since the typical stability operation lasts 10 to 15 years, it is crucial to have a process that fosters continuity between deployments. Because the DSF identifies the sources of instability and the effectiveness of programming to diminish them, it relieves practitioners from having to "reinvent the wheel"
- empowering field personnel—by using an analytical process to identify the local sources of instability, DSF data give practitioners an opportunity to influence higher level planning and decisionmaking
- reducing staff time and resources devoted to planning—DSF allows staff to focus on what is really important: stabilizing an area rather than conducting fruitless operations and/or implementing ineffective projects
- improving strategic communications—because the DSF identifies the issues that matter most to the population, it helps identify strategic communication themes that resonate with the population.

Overall, the DSF improves the effectiveness of stability operations because it is based on knowledge of the local environment rather than dubious assumptions.

Summary

As with any theory or doctrine, the District Stabilization Framework does not tell field personnel how to conduct stability operations in specific situations. That is the responsibility of field personnel. However, it does help overcome the natural tendency of practitioners to rely on their own experiences, which may or may not be relevant in the current environment. In addition, implementing a detailed, population-centric process greatly improves the chances of successfully stabilizing an area because it is the local population who directly experiences instability and will continue to live in the area long after foreigners depart.

To stabilize an area, two simultaneous processes must occur. First, the sources of instability must be identified and mitigated. Second, societal and/or governmental capability and capacity to mitigate future sources of instability must be fostered. Simply stated, practitioners must diminish the sources of instability while building up the forces of stability. This process is the underlying foundation of the District Stabilization Framework. Although providing guidance for his forces in Afghanistan, the words of a former commander of the International Security Assistance Forces apply anywhere in the world: "Understand the local grievances and problems that drive instability and take action to redress them."[23] The DSF gives practitioners a tool to accomplish this mission. **PRISM**

Notes

[1] *The U.S. Army Stability Operations Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual* No. 3–07 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), viii.

[2] United States Institute of Peace (USIP), *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: USIP, 2009).

[3] Patrick Stewart noted, "The United States is still struggling to craft the strategies, mobilize the resources, and align the policy instruments it needs to help reform and reconstruct failing, failed, and war-torn states." See "The U.S. Response to Precarious States: Tentative Progress and Remaining Obstacle to Coherence," Center for Global Development, July 2007, available at <www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/14093/>.

[4] These include training shortfalls, short-deployment cycles, inappropriate programming resources, and misguided measures of success.

[5] Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *U.S. Civilian Uplift in Afghanistan Is Progressing but Some Key Issues Merit Further Examination as Implementation Continues* (Washington, DC: SIGAR, October 26, 2010), 12.

[6] U.S. Army major, interview by James A. Derleth, October 2008, Bagram, Afghanistan.

[7] This assessment is called SWEAT–MSO (sewer, water, electricity, academic, trash, medical, security, and other). See Field Manual (FM) 3–24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, April 2009), 7–21.

[8] Edwina Thompson, *Winning "Hearts and Minds" in Afghanistan: Assessing the Effectiveness of Development Aid in COIN Operations*, report on Wilton Park Conference 1022, March 11–14, 2010, available at <www.eisf.eu/resources/library/1004WPCReport.pdf>.

[9] Ibid., 2–3.

[10] Alissa J. Rubin, "Expanding Control, Taliban Refresh Stamp on Afghan Justice," *The New York Times*, October 7, 2010, available at <www.nytimes.com/2010/10/08/world/asia/08taliban.html>; or Emma Graham-Harrison, "Weak Afghan Justice Bolstering Taliban," Reuters, December 17, 2010, available at <http://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-53620620101216>.

[11] Karim Talbi, "Shadow Taliban Government Rules Afghans' Lives," Agence France-Presse, January 26, 2010, available at <www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gWl9u3ZojrsONNK4l9tiX5TViJyA>.

[12] David Kilcullen, "28 Articles: Fundamentals of Company Level Counterinsurgency," Joint Information Operations Center, January 14, 2007, available at <www.au.af.mil/au/awc/info-ops/iosphere/iosphere_summer06_kilcullen.pdf>.

[13] FM 3–24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*.

[14] The term *stabilization principles* was coined by former USAID administrator Andrew S. Natsios. See Andrew S. Natsios, "The Nine Principles of Reconstruction and Development," *Parameters* 35, no. 3 (Autumn 2005), 4–20.

[15] David Kilcullen, "Measuring Progress in Afghanistan," unpublished manuscript, 2009, 7.

[16] This might be unique to Afghanistan: 30 years of instability have acclimatized the population to seeing soldiers. However, even if there were a bias against soldiers in parts of the world, civilian foreign nationals or local nationals could implement the TCS.

[17] Bill McCollough, email to James A. Derleth, May 2010.

[18] Patrick Altenburg, 3d Battalion, 509th Infantry, email to James W. Derleth, May 2010.

[19] Richard Wardlaw, "52 BDE's Use of TCAPF," presentation at Quantico, VA, October 2008. Wardlaw was in charge of reconstruction and stabilization for the British 52d Infantry Brigade during their November 2007–April 2008 deployment in Afghanistan.

[20] Karl W. Eikenberry and Stanley A. McChrystal, *United States Government Integrated Civilian-Military Campaign Plan for Support to Afghanistan*, August 10, 2010, available at <www.comw.org/qdr/fulltext/0908eikenberryandmcchrystal.pdf>.

[21] Tip O'Neill would certainly agree. He used to note that "all politics is local."

[22] For example, Eikenberry and McChrystal note that the mission of tactical District Support Teams is "primarily execution focused," 30.

[23] Stanley A. McChrystal, *ISAF Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance*, August 25, 2009, available at <www.nato.int/isaf/docu/official_texts/counterinsurgency_guidance.pdf>.

Gangs, Netwar, and "Community Counterinsurgency" in Haiti

BY DAVID C. BECKER

After his tumultuous on-again/off-again administration, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's sudden departure from Haiti in 2004 left the country in chaos. The economy was in shambles, tourism and investment had flatlined, and an armed band marched on the capital with the support of large parts of the population. Other elements of the population violently protested Aristide's departure while looting what they could. While the Haitian government always was most notable for its absence, Aristide managed to politicize the police force while reducing it to a fraction of its original size. Society was more polarized than ever.

Early on, Aristide resorted to distributing weapons to youth groups (known as *bazes* or bases) in exchange for their support.[1] Weapons provided to defend Aristide also gave the groups the wherewithal to commit crimes and dominate neighborhoods. With his departure, these gangs (which at that point were fully involved in criminal activity) quickly established control over parts of Port-au-Prince and zones in other cities such as Cap Haïtien, Gonaïves, and Jacmel. Even as late as 2006, 2 years after the arrival of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), there were still several recognized zones (mostly slums or low-income neighborhoods) scattered around the country where the government was not present and was actively resisted.

The situation was volatile, and the continued inability of the government or the United Nations (UN) to establish more than nominal stability in many urban neighborhoods left open the question of who was really in charge. Violent crimes and kidnappings were increasing precipitously in 2006, despite

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efforts of the international community to rebuild the police and the use of UN forces to patrol the streets. The problem was not that criminal gangs were so strong but rather that the Haitian state was so fragile. After years of chaos and upheaval, in many parts of the country there were virtually no government representatives and certainly no government services.

No international intervention succeeds unless a legitimate government is restored to the point that it can provide real services, especially security. If not, both state and people will remain hostage to those political or criminal forces willing to use violence to achieve their ends. Likewise, organized criminal groups, just like insurgencies, may appropriate functions of the state, de facto replacing it in peripheral and even central cities, towns, and neighborhoods. While the problem may be a "sovereignty gap"[2] where the state is not present, the question is how best to fix it.

Haiti Stabilization Initiative and Cité Soleil

The Haiti Stabilization Initiative (HSI) was a multiagency U.S. effort to bring security and economic improvements to some of the most difficult and dangerous neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince. An unusual effort from the beginning, HSI was the first proposed use of funding provided by the Department of Defense (DOD) under Section 1207 of the Defense Authorization Act of 2007, permitting transfer of military funds to the Department of State for projects that would help in stabilization, with a goal of preventing (expensive) DOD interventions in the future. One advantage was that HSI funds were not tied or stovepiped to any one agency, and the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization designed a program with a full range of interventions across security, development, rule of law, infrastructure, and government sectors. An additional unique improvement was that State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) assigned staff dedicated to the program rather than adding the program as collateral duties to existing portfolios. This staff was present for virtually the entire 3-year program, critical to understanding the environment and analyzing and reanalyzing results.

HSI required a number of compromises from the outset. A budget cut from $85 to $20 million in 2006 meant rescaling the project downward. Rather than spreading funding across several sites, planners made a decision to focus on Cité Soleil, on the edge of Port-au-Prince, as the hardest of the hard targets and a hot spot of rapidly growing notoriety inside and outside Haiti. A vast shantytown of mostly informal housing and businesses with an estimated population of 300,000 or more, Cité Soleil represented 10 percent of the entire urban population of the national capital.

Not only was state presence nonexistent in Cité Soleil, but also public authorities that had been present were considered illegitimate. The police who had worked there up until 2003 were widely despised for their repressive and abusive policing style and were considered by residents as an occupying force. During the chaotic final year of Aristide, the gangs, whom he had armed, ran the remaining police out of Cité Soleil, destroyed the one police station, and declared the zone under their control.

Physical layout and demographics of Cité Soleil played a central role in shaping contemporary urban violence. Cité Soleil grew without planning or government services as a huge population shifted from the impoverished countryside to the capital, increasing the urban population by 30 percent (nearly 1 million)

in just 10 years. The poorest and most desperate migrants ended in Cité Soleil, a vacant swampland without value, but close to Haiti's only industrial zone. Due to chaos, instability, and international sanctions, Haiti suffered a 40 percent loss of per capita gross domestic product from 1995 to 2005, making the poor even poorer just as the state became less and less able to provide basic services.

This unstoppable population growth made Cité Soleil the third largest city in the country when Aristide granted it autonomy from Port-au-Prince in 2003. Haiti's Cité Soleil was the equivalent of Chicago for the United States—but a Chicago without government presence and virtually ungovernable, ruled by criminal organizations. A city where average income was under a dollar a day, there was little public water, few paved roads, and no electricity; moreover, gangs controlled access and walked the streets visibly armed. There was one public school and one public high school for the 75,000 children. Few teachers would work there.

Poor people live all over Haiti, of course. But Cité Soleil's strategic location was a threat to national integrity. A U.S. military study called it "decisive terrain,"[3] bordering Haiti's only industrial zone and international seaport, straddling the main north-south road out of the capital, and within walking distance to the international airport and the national palace. The gang leaders repeatedly demonstrated that they could mobilize mobs on short notice to loot nearby factories not paying them off, or march downtown to protest (and loot) for the political issue of the day.

Complex Systems Theory

To understand the stabilization focus on gangs and the areas they control, it is important to recognize that gangs are not strictly a "criminal" problem in Haiti. For gangs, it was never only about making easy money; Haiti has a long tradition of powerful political elites deploying unofficial paramilitary adjuncts to control the population and wage armed actions against other political groups. From the *Tonton Macoutes*, armed thugs of the François Duvalier and son Jean-Claude Duvalier dictatorships, to the self-named *attaches* of the right-wing military after the fall of the Duvalier family, up to the *chimères* (that is, gang members) who were a manifestation of Aristide's willingness to use illegitimate force to remain in power, informal armed groups play a strong role in Haitian political ambitions.

Even with Aristide gone, there were regular rumors about competing political entrepreneurs financing one or another gang for illicit activities (including targeted kidnappings or "rent-a-riot" options), and keeping them on a string for the next election cycle. When tied (albeit loosely) to a political movement, gang members could think of themselves as legitimate "soldiers" rather than simply criminals. Even better, they would be able to represent themselves that way to their fellow slum dwellers.

gangs are not strictly a "criminal" problem in Haiti

One way to consider the challenge facing the international community in Haiti is to look at the gang issue through the lens of system of complex systems theory. In Haiti, as elsewhere, gangs are self-organizing units that are self-supporting, grow if unopposed, and operate especially well within the permissive environment of a weak state. As with any complex system of systems, the gangs operate within some basic rule sets: they are "violence entrepreneurs,"[4] taking advantage of a situation to make money,

Laurence Kent Jones

gain power through that process, and gain more adherents. Adherents could even include political benefactors who recognize their ability to "get out the vote" or get others not to vote.

The evolutionary trajectory of gangs in Haiti followed a relatively linear progression. Gangs needed to defend turf from others, so they could operate with impunity. Once well established in a zone, they had a base for even greater activity, especially kidnapping. Groups consolidated their authority easily since they met strong needs for a social support network for those who were members, something important in the context of Cité Soleil. There were few alternatives to gang membership for unemployed youth. Those who joined the gangs were in many senses the most motivated; they were the risk-taking entrepreneurs of their generation. Although there were losses, there were still more recruits.

Beyond the basic rules, they operated inside more interconnected and varied networks. The

Cité Soleil, a vast shantytown with estimated population of at least 300,000, represents 10 percent of entire urban population of Port-au-Prince

gangs had much support from the population, at least at first—locals saw them as defenders of the population from a government that provided no services except abusive police. They were a local recourse for swift justice, although they were also brutal in their dispensation of justice. Not unlike such groups in Brazil, Jamaica, or Trinidad, the gangs actually supported a number of basic social services: food distribution by certain nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) was seen as tied to their influence and permission, and they sometimes handed out funds or food directly. Indeed, gang membership provided benefits and upward mobility where such possibilities were scarce.

The gangs were not sophisticated and far-reaching "third generation" gangs such as Colombian drug lords or Jamaican "posses" that operate illicit networks across several countries.[5] They were at best "second generation" gangs—established nationally, but not internationally. They were ruthless, but also closely tied to their

community—preoccupation with turf was an indicator of the importance of community. At the same time, their strength (or acceptance by the population) in Cité Soleil was indirectly due to the fact that compared even to other slums around Port-au-Prince, the population in Cité Soleil was more transient. HSI surveys revealed that a large proportion of the population had lived there for only 5 to 6 years. If one had the means, one moved out. But other slum neighborhoods such as Bel Air had generations of poor who stayed in the same neighborhood. Even Martissant, another famous gang neighborhood, had clear middle-class roots and an educated population mixed in with urban poor. Turnover in Cité Soleil meant societal norms were not clearly defined. It was the Wild West of Haiti.

because there were few if any educated people in Cité Soleil, there was little contact with the rest of society

By 2004, Cité Soleil had become quite isolated. Being from Cité Soleil carried a stigma: the assumption was that a resident was a gang member, or at least a supporter. Because there were few if any educated people in the slum, and only the most micro of small businesses, there was little contact with the rest of society through other economic or social channels except handouts and unskilled pickup labor. This made it easier for comparatively young (but relatively well financed) gang leaders to establish and maintain their dominance. The gangs were still part of the larger fabric of Cité Soleil, however, and many members had family in the neighborhood. Local residents often tapped these gang disciples for loans or handouts, and some gang chiefs played the "Godfather" role to the hilt. Other members were orphans or virtually orphans, and Cité Soleil was the only home they knew. There were complex interlocking systems of communication (no rumors travel faster than in Cité Soleil), trust, and (self-reinforcing) benefit connecting all aspects of life in Cité Soleil. The youth were both members of gangs and of Cité Soleil.

Confronting Gang Networks

In 2004 and 2005, when the gangs began kidnapping business leaders and political leaders (rumors suggested some were targeted for their political beliefs, not just their money), there was an increasing outcry for a public response. In 2006, when they began kidnapping schoolchildren and wives from the best neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince and stashing the victims in safe houses in Cité Soleil, the pressure for action became intense. With continued failure of negotiations for the gangs to turn in their weapons, President René Preval authorized UN peacekeeping forces to take more vigorous action.

Learning from an early series of unsuccessful raids that resulted in civilian casualties in 2004 and 2005, MINUSTAH planned an operation in late 2006 jointly with the partly reconstituted Haitian National Police (HNP). Following a series of sharp urban firefights, UN forces (led by Brazilian contingents) moved into Cité Soleil and established permanent posts in and around the municipality. With regular patrols, some gang leaders were killed or arrested. The situation facing the United Nations at the end of 2006 was not unlike that facing any large hierarchical force that is targeting a loose coalition of independently financed urban guerrilla groups. The parallels with Sadr City or Fallujah are obvious: small, loosely organized groups able to swarm a target and hide among the population quickly have the advantage.

As of mid-2007, there were still 300 to 600 gang members in Cité Soleil, operating underground with support and protection of some residents, or at least everyone's tacit silence. UN patrols were present, but Brazilian soldiers did not speak adequate Creole, nor would anyone have talked to them if they did. Things were still tense, and there was little or no economic activity on the street—even the ubiquitous Haitian "tap-tap" buses did not enter Cité Soleil for fear of robbery or worse.

The gangs were not even interested in opposing the UN directly, so they had little reason to expose themselves to a military reaction. They were operating outside Cité Soleil through robbery and kidnapping, extortion, and other activities while using Cité Soleil as a safe base. The UN and police could not be everywhere at once protecting everybody in an urban zone of 3 million, yet gang impunity made both the UN and the government look weak, spawning rumors among the population of special influences and arrangements. Police *were* very weak, with few officers, little mobility, and little experience. The United Nations was hampered by lack of training, proper equipment, and a mandate that gave them no arrest or police investigative authority.

UN and government attempts to control gangs came apart because of one key problem: the gangs were not a single organization. There were multiple small groups, representing different neighborhoods inside Cité Soleil. Each group was capable of allying itself with any other group, but the usual state was wary peace or else turf battles between different gangs inside Cité Soleil, except when united facing a larger UN force. When the UN moved in aggressively, they hurt some gangs but left others virtually untouched. The remainder simply moved into the new spaces available. Shifting leadership was often hard to pin down, and as groups were self-funded, it was impossible to cut supply lines. After initial firefights, gangs quickly learned to avoid head-to-head confrontations with UN forces; they could continue their criminal activities with minimal interruption by merely staying out of the way of the larger but slower forces. They faded into the population. They knew the alleys and narrow streets far better than UN forces; they lived there, and the UN forces were on a 6-month rotation.

This cat-and-mouse game between the UN and gangs could go on for years. If the gangs were good at it (and they showed signs of innovation and adaptation), they would look better and better in the eyes of the community until the UN simply gave up, or the government fell from its own weight and incompetence. To an outside observer, this was a classic guerrilla versus occupation force problem from counterinsurgency theory, but with guerrilla tactics applied by a criminal insurgency. Looked at through a systems theory lens, this was a dynamic environment with constantly shifting social connections that the UN simply did not have a way to substantially affect with the limited budget and personnel assigned. The Haitian government was doing no better.

Another facet of this complex problem related to the legal challenges associated with catching and holding a suspect. As this was not a combat situation, minimum force was required, and when arrests were made authorities needed some standard of proof that arrestees had committed a crime. One possibility was to be caught in the act of committing a crime—something extremely difficult for Brazilian UN patrols to accomplish. In the limited circumstances of Haitian justice, there was no ability to collect or use forensic evidence. Grounds for arrest meant that someone had to file a complaint, identify his attacker, and agree to testify in court—a potential death sentence for a witness. Worse, complaints against gang leaders were lost or

charges dropped for reasons never explained (but assumed by the public to be nefarious).

Neither was the UN particularly popular nor trusted by local residents. They were seen as an occupying power, and with inevitable civilian casualties during firefights in narrow sheet metal shack alleys, there was a lot of resentment. Many presumed the raids conducted were intended to target civilians in an attempt to undermine support for President Aristide's party, *Fanmi Lavalas*, which was particularly strong among urban poor and strongest in Cité Soleil.

Although Brazilian forces had done the first step in the classic counterinsurgency strategy of "clear-hold-build," they had a problem. The Haitian state was simply not ready to work on the "hold" or the "build" steps. The police in particular were not interested in returning to Cité Soleil. Now that the Brazilians had taken over the zone, the police attitude was that they could keep it. From a police perspective, there were far too few police anyway, and other parts of Port-au-Prince needed them more. Staying out was better than trying to keep a lid on a dangerous slum inhabited by residents who had killed police in the past and supported gangs. Besides, there was no defensible police station in Cité Soleil, and police leaders insisted that several stations (that is, forts) would have to be built. Exposing the few police to daily risk and the threat of being overrun was not worth it in the eyes of HNP leadership. International NGOs and donors were not far behind in their estimates that the situation was still too dangerous to justify more funding and risk implementation staff. Civilian ministries were blunter: no police in Cité Soleil, no civilian staff even for visits (and even then, maybe not).

The Brazilian force commander, General Santos Cruz, described the Cité Soleil situation to HSI staff in an August 2007 meeting: "We are sitting on a boiling kettle, unable to get off the lid. We need to do something different before it all blows up again." He stated his extreme disappointment that development organizations had not come in behind the Brazilian forces in February to change the dynamic in the community.

Stabilization Versus Development

Given the lack of state support and even international support for stabilization efforts in Cité Soleil, HSI approached the gang problem from a different angle. *Stabilization*, as we defined it, was not development. Making people richer or healthier would not necessarily improve the short- to medium-term situation. Indeed, such objectives—while important—were simply not feasible in the prevailing climate of insecurity. Gang members would still be dominant, and they were unlikely to be bought off with a new health clinic. Instead, HSI would use whatever tools were available to change the social dynamic in the community in such a way that the first programs would support each other and not rely on state or international assistance, which might be a long time coming.

Of course, over the longer term, we were in Cité Soleil to calm the situation enough that regular government services could be provided and the usual myriad NGOs and international funding would provide development programs already funded elsewhere in the country, but not in Cité Soleil due to the risk. For perspective, in late 2007, HSI calculated USAID was spending about $18 per capita per year on assistance in Haiti, but virtually nothing for the 3 percent of the Haitian national population in Cité Soleil. Other donor portfolios looked similar. (In the end, HSI spent about $22 per capita per year over 3 years, only 20 percent more per person) HSI would have to change the situation before the money would flow.

Netwar: Network Versus Network

Rather than deal directly with the gang leaders as equals or legitimate stakeholders, or use more force to take them out, the HSI approach was to marginalize gangs.[6] HSI would co-opt the community by building local groups dedicated to positive ends, empowering popular informal local leaders who were not beholden to gang leaders or political patrons. This would indirectly peel away the gang support base and leave gang leaders more exposed to possible police responses. Gangs were strong because they were organized, small, flexible, and numerous. We would fight fire with fire by building a network of networks that would undermine or recruit from their networks.

We were clear about our goals within the large development community in Haiti. We were not a development project. We were there to change the community from within, not by creating an objective needs-based assessment of the obvious and numerous problems of poverty, but by using our various activities to weaken violence entrepreneurs and empower social entrepreneurs. We were using development tools, but for stabilization purposes. Within Cité Soleil, we were admittedly not explicit about our goal of marginalizing gang leaders (and implicitly setting them up for arrest), but we never hid our intention to build a social network that would do more for Cité Soleil than gangs ever could. This was in effect a (somewhat discreet) political intervention to tilt the system in favor of some and against other actors.

The program was an integrated effort to shape the environment and rules of the game in the community.[7] Although HSI had multiple facets—large infrastructure projects, workforce training, support for private investment, or rule of law and governance aspects—perhaps the most crucial part of the anti-gang effort was a program of small grants offered via a USAID contract to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Working through IOM, we offered small projects in Cité Soleil to improve neighborhoods. We did not specify what kind of project, although it did have to be relatively inexpensive and simple.

We worked through IOM because there were no government ministries with either the personnel or will to take the risks entailed in working in the community. IOM had established good contacts in the community while working in 2005 in Cité Soleil with a USAID bureau, the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). OTI had funded 20 projects through a similar procedure, but funding had ended, and later crime and violence spiraled out of control. With the advent of UN forces, there was space to risk something again. This time we would combine a critical mass of projects, rather than a single faceted effort, and integrate police assistance as well.

Learning the Lessons of Community Counterinsurgency

HSI was sometimes controversial. We were admittedly putting the population at risk with our offers of assistance. We were offering an opportunity for virtually anyone to come forward and propose a project. For funding approval, they had to hold a large and public meeting with neighbors to decide what project was needed, and then organize the neighbors to do the labor. Retaliation by a gang leader for usurping his power or turf was always a potential response.

To sweeten the deal and overcome some objections and risks, HSI paid labor from the community, so projects served to inject funds into the community quickly, proving that reaching out and cooperating with outsiders paid off. Approval was fast, less than 30 days, and contracting and hiring was done quickly. However, someone had to stand up and offer to

serve on a steering committee. By doing so, he was raising his profile inside Cité Soleil.

Participation was voluntary, and residents had to make their own estimates of the personal risk. However, quick turnaround meant that they could be delivering jobs and a neighborhood improvement in 30 days, an expedited time span when compared to most NGOs or the government, which would still be passing around the original proposal. This was for small and local areas at first—1 or 2 blocks, 100 to 200 inhabitants. People knew their neighbors, and knew who could be trusted. They also knew who had gang affiliations, and rarely did IOM have to worry about gang infiltration of a steering committee. In any case, we had no objection to gang members laboring on projects alongside the community, as long as there was no special treatment.

Growth was natural, not forced by timelines or output objectives. There was a positive feedback loop built into this small and local approach. If one neighborhood took the leap and tried a project, soon nearby volunteers would organize and request one for their neighborhood too. As word spread, more and more groups approached IOM for funding, to the point that we had to become somewhat selective in not funding too many projects in one small area, although we did discreetly favor projects in areas where there was still known gang dominance. We explicitly rewarded success. If a project went well, we offered funding for a second project. If it went badly (corruption, gang extortion), we were perfectly willing to drop the project and fund something in another neighborhood.

Local selection of development projects was essential. There are clear health, education, nutrition, and other needs in Cité Soleil. Any normal professional development program starts with a survey of needs based on evidence of malnutrition, illiteracy, unemployment, and so forth. As stabilizers, we found those needs irrelevant, and resisted outside groups advocating spending money on specific areas or sectors. The community decision process was what was important: the process was more important than what residents selected. In a slum dominated by gangs, there was a need for inhabitants to begin to take charge of their own lives, and getting together in a meeting and hashing out priorities and selecting informal leaders was crucial.

At one point after about the first 75 small projects had been administered, HSI came in for considerable criticism from some residents of Cité Soleil, as well as some organizations from outside, because we were "wasting" all our funds doing no more than paving every alley and mud street in Cité Soleil, neglecting other aspects that were more important. The observers were quite right; 80 percent of the funds *were* going to small road construction. What was not clear to outsiders was the significance of pavement to these extremely poor communities.

First, a cement paving stone project was extremely labor intensive compared to other choices, providing the maximum employment to the neighborhood and injecting cash into the extremely depressed community. Second, every road had engineer-designed drainage included. Cité Soleil had developed on a garbage-filled flood plain, so proper drainage was valuable. Third, most of the residents lived in shacks that were smaller than an American SUV. According to surveys, the average family size in Cité Soleil was six people. In those conditions, residents do not live inside their shack; they merely sleep there. We were paving living rooms and kitchens as much as we were paving roads. Fourth, with a decent space in front of each house, women immediately used their wages to set up businesses, selling everything

Newly paved streets in Cité Soleil allowed food vendors to open or reopen businesses

David C. Becker

from charcoal to fruit, often restarting businesses long abandoned due to instability. Fifth and most subtly, by building well drained common areas for slum blocks, the projects naturally increased community cohesion, not only through the joint building effort but also because everyone was now outside their homes watching out for everyone else. In other words, while inappropriate from a developmental perspective, small road projects were perfect from a stabilization perspective, creating another positive feedback loop.

Repeatedly, the local choice proved to be the right choice.

This was the beginning of our "swarm the gangs" strategy: building active groups to change the dynamic on the street. As more communities started coming for projects, and more groups began returning for a second tranche, another phenomenon developed: Local informal leaders began to talk to the new grassroots leaders who were working on projects a block or two or three away. In a slum torn apart by gang rivalries, where crossing the wrong street could end in murder, this was significant. IOM encouraged exchanges by offering group leadership training sessions, or suggesting meetings to discuss larger issues, inviting contacts from the now 20 to 30 groups. As representatives discovered common agendas, they became emboldened, and eventually began to touch on the need for police presence in the community. At the same time, various local representatives, with the tacit support of their neighborhoods, began to provide information to the United Nations about the activities of the gang leaders, leading to some arrests. None of this was explicitly pushed or forced by HSI; everything developed

as an integral part of the overall development of groups who naturally tended to be antithetical to the gangs.

At the same time this was developing, HSI was reinforcing the police, following an agreed-upon plan with police and UN leadership. Funding construction of a large, defensible—even imposing—police station was a slow contracting process through the State Department. (We did hire locals for construction labor, however, giving successful teams from small projects a shot at something bigger.) Fortunately, the UN Civil Affairs unit contributed $25,000 to rehabilitate a corner of the building that UN forces had occupied to convert it into a small police post inside the UN base. Despite concerns, 25 apprehensive police moved in, mostly because the local commander realized long before the national leadership that the community was ready to support police. Emphasizing a "community policing" model, HSI-funded contractors worked with HNP to develop a "Haitianized" national academy curriculum and training program. Community policing, as practiced in the United States, emphasizes police working with community groups to come up with answers together to problems that plague that community. HSI, through the State Department contract with DynCorp, funded one or two experienced U.S. police mentors who worked with the small unit every day on aspects of basic policing (some of the police had never attended the academy) and aspects of community policing. (Supporting our bias toward local solutions, we found mentoring in the station was more effective than formal training in the academy.)

With the advent of local community groups who were interested in cleaning up Cité Soleil and a police unit (no matter how undermanned) that was receptive, there were tremendous opportunities for synergy.[8] Combined with this was the work that we did supporting local justice efforts: rebuilding the destroyed offices of the local justices, providing training and equipment, and installing a case monitoring ledger system that provided accountability for judicial decisions. Part of our success was that we were not trying to solve every part of the legal mess that was the Haitian judicial system; we were merely working at the most local level to improve responsiveness to the public.

As with all strong networks, this was self-reinforcing; as each successful project built more cohesion and improved living conditions, the gangs began to seem like hindrances or outliers. The norms of the community changed. Our surveys from the period show that police were considered one of the best public institutions, even though there were only 25 in Cité Soleil, and (at first) they rarely patrolled unless accompanied by UN forces. The UN force image improved, but the clear preference in focus groups and surveys was for "our police" to come back in force.

Our greatest challenge was to come up with more police officers for the 300,000 population of Cité Soleil—eventually, following the HNP plan for construction, HSI built new police stations in Cité Soleil with a capacity of 200 to 250 officers, but HNP assigned only 25 to 35 officers (about 10 active per 12-hour shift). The full complement of 250 would provide a ratio of about 1 officer per 1,000 citizens, no higher than the rest of Haiti. Toward the end of 2009, an additional 50 arrived, but they were removed again shortly after the earthquake on January 12, 2010. Unfortunately, this police pullout coincided with the sudden infiltration of an estimated 300 escaped prisoners from the damaged national prison, most of them gang members picked up in the previous 3 years of efforts.

After the Earthquake

Surprisingly, while crime and violence are certainly up since the earthquake, things are not nearly as bad as might be expected from the influx of gang members and general destruction, by all reports.[9] (All projects constructed by HSI were undamaged by the quake, testament to the IOM technical assistance.) Even in the face of such a tremendous shock, there appears to be resilience in this new community of communities. Other neighborhoods and displaced camps have suffered more from gang violence and rapes. At the same time, private investment in the area (encouraged by HSI's infrastructure investments and by the changes in the community leading to improved security) has continued post-earthquake, with a recent $59 million power plant finished on one edge of Cité Soleil[10] and a new $25 million industrial park under construction on another edge. There should be 25,000 new jobs in Cité Soleil in a few years, which was always our best exit strategy. Beyond that, community leaders created a community forum made up of a great number of different organizations representing a broad swath of the population (with some indirect assistance from HSI working through a Haitian NGO, the Interuniversity Institute for Research and Development). It continues to operate, another key success story. Small community projects represented only about 25 percent of the total funding, but if we were to start over we would recommend even more money in a small-projects pot and less in other parts of the overall program.

Different from Standard Theory?

Much of this self-reinforcing network of networks system commentary would be recognized by any development expert versed in community-led development. This program was specifically aimed at dealing with the dynamic of violence and criminal domination, using a community-led approach to tamp it down, not simply come in after the government has completely wrested control from an opponent. As stated, this was using development tools for stabilization purposes.

We were deliberately not fighting a criminal network with force, even targeted force; we took an indirect approach to gang violence. We were not even capable of protecting the population as much as counterinsurgency theory suggests is needed. There was really nothing stopping the gangs from making a deadly visit to any tin shack at night. Rather, we were simply offering (tough) choices to the population, letting them decide what was feasible and how to approach security problems. Later, police were able to carry out intelligence-driven arrests, but it was probably just as well that they were not there in the early stages before the community was willing to cooperate. They might have created more resentment than success, blundering around blind.

What the continual policing shortage did prove was how far one can go with a stabilization strategy even without a major police presence. By the end of 2009, 18 months into the program, the police were reporting that crime rates in Cité Soleil were lower than some other areas of the city. Ironically, this good news made it harder to lobby for more police. The Catch-22 response was that more police were obviously not needed. UN forces were important, but the key was strengthening local community. The head of HNP police operations summed it up when he admitted to a visiting delegation in October 2009 that their greatest mistake was assuming that all citizens of Cité Soleil supported the gangs.

There were many threats on the lives of the community representatives, but none consummated. We would not have been surprised at

killings, but again, the program was voluntary. We presumed that attacks would be damaging, but not disastrous. If the leaders/representatives were willing to assume risks, we were willing to back their funding requests. We were not there to decide for others what was safe or not safe, and we pushed the envelope only as far as locals wanted. Multiple projects built resilience into the system in case of threats or violence. As noted earlier, we were there to build a critical mass that could continue regardless of counter-efforts.

Quickness was its own reward. Most community-led development programs spend a great deal of time creating a council or electing the right representatives, teaching how to run a project and manage a budget before funding anything. While we would have liked to spend more time on this process, we needed to build credibility quickly in the unpredictable environment. It was more important to show that something was happening in order to justify the risk taken by the community in working with outsiders. Project selection and local buy-in through a community meeting was key; less important was working out the details and training. Instead of many community meetings and training sessions, only one or two took place before the individual project decision. Over time, as things stabilized, IOM spent more effort training and encouraging local efforts to the point of creating skilled job crews employed by other construction operations in the area. However, early on, speed was the need.

development efforts are at the mercy of those who control the locals

Another difference was HSI willingness to walk away from a failing project. Most development efforts become invested in the success of each community. They cannot admit failure, or they do not want to give up on the locals. Of course, that means that development efforts are at the mercy of those who control the locals. By spreading our projects throughout the area with many different groups, we did not become overinvested in any single site. We approached each small project as a contract—we would fund it, they would defend it. Not from actual gunfire of course, but from extortion and corruption. If the contractor providing technical skills was threatened, or supplies stolen, or other problems developed, we would consult with leaders and locals, explain that this could not continue, and discuss solutions. If it did continue, we pulled the funds and continued work in other areas. Usually within a week or two, IOM would be asked back to a community meeting to hear that the problem had been resolved. This happened only a few times, but we planned for more. Proving we could walk away reinforced local accountability and attention to detail across many neighboring projects, once they heard the story.

Thus, our small group rule set matched or countered many of the gang rule sets. Our network began to undermine their network. The system of systems began to tilt in a different direction. There was an inevitability about the process once it was launched. Threatening the projects would bring payback on the gangs, yet allowing the groups to continue always led to the gangs losing influence and support from the community. As the groups grew in number, they grew in strength and in their willingness to work with the government. As it turned out, the gangs were a part of the community, and responded to community cues.

Can This Work Elsewhere?

This approach is not a panacea. Small projects alone are not a complete strategy for

counterinsurgency, fighting criminal gangs, or rebuilding governments. They are, however, a tool for situations that are perhaps far riskier than expected, in a gray area where military operations may be needed still, but before any real government services appear. Without UN forces this might not have worked at all. However, to make stabilization stick, a program like HSI is needed that pulls observers off the fence.

HSI was political, time-bound, and experimental. We could not have done it using normal U.S. aid channels. Effectively, it required that money not be stovepiped and divided up before arrival in country, something that is virtually impossible to do in today's U.S. funding environment. We had to mix and match security and development funding constantly across multiple, different agencies, another task that is always tough and almost impossible to do without dedicated staff. We did not look at "real needs" and almost entirely focused on local priorities, no matter how seemingly unwarranted. Most development agencies do not have the freedom to ignore objective requirements and timelines in favor of something vaguely defined. Even the Commander's Emergency Response Program used in Iraq and Afghanistan suffers from (sometimes self-imposed) requirements to spend money quickly in order to get more money, using units present for only a short while looking for instant "leaders" with which to work, and often founders on the distinction between community-constructed projects and community-*led* projects.

The HSI model presumes the guerrilla or criminal insurgent force is somewhat reliant on local tolerance to remain camouflaged in the population. A small terrorist organization, for instance, operates in small cells and so deep underground that it needs little popular support to survive. We were also fortunate that gangs never developed an ideology beyond support for Aristide. They had nascent ties to international drug trafficking organizations, but did not have the opportunity to fully exploit those contacts for financial advantage. With ideology or outside financing, they would have been harder to undermine. Nevertheless, criminal organizations often rely on community tolerance for their activities, and even organizations as well funded and terroristic as Colombia's FARC depend on local support. Even if it looks impossible, a donor needs to make a "leap of faith" to allow locals to determine whether a program is viable. Offer the choice publicly, often, and loudly, but be sure it is a true choice where locals pick timing, location, project type, and approach. The locals will know best how to balance risks, and outside interests will neatly align with inside interests.

A temptation is to overload the project structure: when things are going well it seems easy to begin to try to be more directive, orienting this wonderful speed and energy into health or education or other things by adding incentives, subsidies, or just suggestions. Be careful, for the more directive the program becomes, the more legitimacy it loses in the population. Legitimacy (that is, *local support*) is the project's (and the locals') protection.

Another way to overload is to attempt projects that are simply too big or complex. And if the size of the grant increases too much, major efforts to steal funds might occur. Because the project is larger or more complex, theft will not be so obvious to locals or advisors. Projects must be small to be accountable. Better to do three small quick projects than one big long one, even if the community asks for a big one. Once the program is deeply invested, it is hostage to all sorts of manipulation. Keep it small and walk away if necessary.

HSI suffered from the weakness of the state, just as the UN mission did. The central government was interested in the project only for the first 6 to 9 months. Once kidnappings and insecurity dropped off the radar, so did Cité Soleil, HSI, and transition planning. Our funds were not enough to attract attention. We joked that we were victims of our own success. The lack of police, traceable back to many problems, including an inability to vet officers, purchase ammunition, and budget for salaries, meant that the HSI project did not fully meet its security sustainability goal and that the UN must continue to patrol. We had a strong government-agreed-upon HNP plan for police presence, but the HNP could not maintain the recruitment and training schedule. Finally, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake and a million homeless, oddly enough, will distract a government and affect planning.

Limited funding means keeping an eye on maintaining a critical mass of projects. Doing one or two is acceptable at the beginning, but the synergy comes from working across many different groups, at many different social and economic levels. Community observers who are still on the fence will begin to feel that change is passing them by. This is a necessary image. Thus, while not expensive, this program cannot be done on the cheap either. Do it well, or do not start.

Local government was a difficulty. At first glance, the program would seem to support local government. In Cité Soleil, however, the only interest was in controlling projects in order to divvy up resources to hire favorites and reward allies. This is not unusual in these situations. We had to avoid working with the local government at first—we simply wanted to get moving and prove the concept. In a more patient world, we would have waited out the officials and brought them along eventually. Later, HSI became such a shining light that the mayor was supportive, but by then the population was virtually entirely opposed to the local administration. (Polarization of politics in Haiti has a long history.) We maintained our neutrality, which limited our ability to reinforce the population's ties to local government via the small projects, although that was our plan. We had to respect the desire of the local communities first. (USAID did have some separate efforts targeted on municipal administration.) Some of this elected versus informal leader conflict was overcome by the creation and growth of the Community Forum, which made a point of ensuring that the mayor or his representative were on the forum board and were invited to every meeting.

Some suggested the HSI transition strategy was undeveloped because the government did not pick up all services. However, success did not depend on the government suddenly arriving with a collection of social programs to assist in Cité Soleil. Haitian government is not capable of that even in the safest neighborhoods. Rather, we were aiming for at least regular police service, and an occasional school inspector visiting the private schools and reviewing teaching standards, or a functioning government health clinic with staff that felt safe enough to show up for work (this happened). More realistic for the medium term would be reputable internationally funded NGOs executing projects in Cité Soleil. (It is no accident Haiti is called "The Republic of NGOs.") Our real long-term exit strategy was private sector investment and the Community Forum. This mostly happened over the course of 3 years. The measure of transition that we most valued was survey data that showed inhabitants of Cité Soleil feeling better about their environment and their future—and that they were acting on this perception by joining groups, or

by successfully taking out micro loans, or doing other things that were impossible before.

HSI was closely tied to its environment; it was a political approach to network building. This meant a risk of elite capture, of a few somehow diverting project choices into personal benefits. In Cité Soleil, there were relative haves (those who earned $5 a day in a factory) among the mass of have-nots. We avoided some of that social conflict because we concentrated funds in a specific violent area and blanketed it. If we had tried to spread out over other neighborhoods, to do too much with too little, the risk of conflict over project choices would have been much higher. Yet we were at only about 20 percent more money than the United States already invested in other places.

We did receive criticism from parts of the city outside of Cité Soleil that they were not getting funding. We deflected some criticism and jealousy by pointing out that to get our kind of assistance, they had to do without police presence for years, be violently poor, stigmatized by the rest of the city, and do without the usual NGO assistance programs. However, as word spread of the success of the overall project, mayors from other towns as well as other slum neighborhoods began to ask for assistance along the same lines, rather than the sectoral needs-based assistance they usually got. That was the best kind of flattery.

Using This Approach

I can still remember the total disbelief of Haitians when they first heard of our program. They considered us either naïve or foolish to be working in an environment that for 20 years was famously nasty and brutish, and for 5 years was totally ungovernable. Outwardly, the small projects aspect was a recipe for gang extortion, or simply insignificant against the needs. To outside critics, we appeared to have no plan; we were just going to throw money into Cité Soleil in the hope something would stick. It unnerved some to see random small projects as the centerpiece of a $20 million project. Selling the vision and gaining credibility was the first challenge.

The key was to find counterinsurgency theorist David Galula's "favorable minority" and reinforce them without accidentally killing them with our embrace. From a systems perspective the catch was designing a program that could deal with the different systems (social, economic, and even psychological) working in Cité Soleil and, using incentives, nudge them into a different and positive feedback channel. How this worked provides lessons for counterinsurgency theorists as well as public security and social development experts.

the important part was what the community was building while they were building the projects

There were many other linked and integrated aspects of HSI, and this article deals only with one. We constantly looked for ways to magnify our impact across any sector, from the smallest (summer school for children, but only if the community found matching funds) to the largest (convincing the Inter-American Development Bank and the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Public Works to rebuild a seaport used by residents to bring in vegetables for the market). We were never the lead, yet always the lever.

Most important was the focus on supporting social entrepreneurs through flexible and speedy assistance so they could build networks of supporters and help reinforce and grow group

links and activities. We had the local population's adaptive ability and persistence working for us. All we had to do was stay flexible and more important, stay out of their way. The focus on projects was merely a means to an end—improving lives is only partly done by building water tanks, parks, roads, or drainage. The important part was what the community was building while they were building the projects. By facilitating choice to the community, we supported local action and local leaders despite the risks of retaliation, the linchpin that built successful resistance to violent elements in Cité Soleil. PRISM

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The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

BY ANDREW LEITH

The purpose of this article is not to provide a critical analysis of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) or a robust platform for lessons learned. Rather, it offers a general introduction to the country and an overview of a stabilization and reconstruction operation with a different framework than many of the operations that the United States has participated in during the post–Cold War period. RAMSI is an Australian-led intervention that deployed to the Solomon Islands in July 2003 to establish peace and security. Unlike the Australian-led Peace Monitoring Group, which deployed to Bougainville from May 1998 to June 2003,[1] and the ongoing commitment to East Timor,[2] RAMSI is led by a diplomat. It emphasizes policing and a "light" military presence.

One could argue that the lessons learned from recent interventions in fragile and conflict-affected countries such as the Solomon Islands are more relevant to future U.S. commitments than the plethora of lessons learned templates and volumes of doctrine that are being pieced together from the Afghanistan and Iraq experiences.

The Solomon Islands is the third largest archipelago in the South Pacific consisting of a scattered double chain of 992 islands extending 1,000 miles southeast from Bougainville in Papua New Guinea. With a population of approximately 560,000, the country has a diverse cultural mix across

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the nine provinces: Choiseul, Malaita, Western, Temotu, Central, Rennell and Bellona, Makira-Ulawa, Isabel, and Guadalcanal, where the capital city Honiara, governed separately as a capital territory, is located. Melanesians make up over 90 percent of the population, but there are substantial numbers of Polynesians, Micronesians, Chinese, and Europeans. Within the Melanesian group, there is an array of languages, clans, and tribal affiliations, which are made even more complex by the *wantok* system of obligation based on the same language group. It is a country renown for its remoteness, beautiful coral islands, and Melanesian hospitality, but apart from Honiara and the provincial centers, the archipelago has not changed much since the 1st Marine Division landed on Guadalcanal in August 1942.

the ability to bridge organizational stovepipes is due in part to the fact that Australia had already developed a wealth of experience in the practical integration of development and security agencies

However, the history of the Solomon Islands post-independence in July 1978 has been short and troubled. The violence that erupted in early 1998 was fueled by tensions in Guadalcanal where traditional landowners resented the immigrants from Malaita who had begun to settle lands as part of an urban drift toward better employment opportunities in Honiara. The Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army began to terrorize and kill rural Malaitans who were then forced to flee to Honiara or back to their home island. The Malaita Eagle Force was subsequently formed to protect the interests of the Malaitans; violence escalated, causing several hundred deaths. In October 2000, mediations by Australia and New Zealand resulted in the Townsville Peace Agreement signing with a general amnesty and disarmament of both factions agreed upon. By this stage, general lawlessness and violence had spread to other provinces, resulting in the collapse of an already fragile government and economy. Regionally, there was a general fear that the Solomon Islands could become a failed state, which for Australia was a strategic nightmare, given that within the "arch of instability" to its northeast, the events in East Timor were still unfolding and the Peace Monitoring Group was in the midst of concluding ceasefire-monitoring activities in Bougainville.

At the request of the government of the Solomon Islands, RAMSI was deployed in July 2003 to assist in the establishment of peace and security through support for law and justice, democratic governance, and economic growth. Unlike the commitments to Bougainville and East Timor, RAMSI was led by a diplomat sourced from within the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs. From the onset, there was a strong emphasis on policing with a light military footprint provided mainly by the Australian Defence Force,[3] which soon restored law and order. There were 15 contributing countries involved, including personnel from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Federal Police, Customs and Border Services, Finance, Treasury, and the Australian Defence Force. One of the key lessons learned from the initial RAMSI deployment is that it functioned effectively without the usual hurdles that normally plague the multiagency process and the first months of any operation.

Rob Maccoll / AusAID

Access to clean water reduces poverty and is a fundamental requirement for economic development

The ability to bridge what could have become the usual flight to the budgetary and regulatory security of organizational stovepipes is due in part to the fact that Australia had already developed a wealth of experience in the practical integration of development and security agencies. The caliber of personnel selected to deploy, individual relationships, and interagency networks established in Bougainville and East Timor certainly contributed to the initial successes, but much can be attributed to the 6 weeks prior to deployment where all key stakeholders discussed, workshopped, developed strategies, and defined roles structured around three phases: restoring security, restoring governance, and capacity-building.[4] This was followed up on the ground by the establishment of a single internal reporting system, twice-daily coordination meetings for senior agency representatives, external communications undertaken as a multiagency product, and coherent and cohesive support provided at the departmental and cabinet levels back in Canberra.

Since its establishment, RAMSI has made considerable efforts to work with the government of the Solomon Islands to improve the country's rule of law, machinery of government, and problem of urban drift driven by a youth bulge seeking better employment opportunities that eventually leads to the breakdown of infrastructure and traditional and community values. AusAID and the New Zealand Aid Programme have also worked hard to improve the fragile education and health care sectors—no different from the kaleidoscope of cultural, economic, and infrastructure problems that confronts most fragile and postconflict countries. Arguably, one of the reasons RAMSI

was able to function effectively from the onset was that the British colonial system left behind a Westminster-style bureaucracy, a judicial system based on English Common Law, and links to the Commonwealth. Thus, unlike many other recent interventions—where there has been a *terra nullis* approach and an egregious assumption that all things having to do with governance must be recreated in the image of "our own democratic institutions"—in the Solomon Islands, the majority of RAMSI staff who are sourced from Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific were able to commence work within a framework that they and their counterparts accepted as functional. Another legacy of the country's colonial past is that English is the official language, which makes it much easier to conduct business both regionally and internationally and for those tasked with capacity-building to interface with their counterparts. While many less educated Solomon Islanders are not able to converse in the Queen's English, most of them do speak or understand the Creole version called Pijin.

with the drawdown of the RAMSI commitment, it is not too difficult to envisage a country once again crippled by corruption and nepotism—with the inevitable outcome being a return to chaos

Over the next 3 years, there was a general belief among Solomon Islanders that life had been normalized after the ethnic tensions; however, the controversial elections in April 2006 saw the situation in Honiara rapidly deteriorate. Many believed that Snyder Rini had been able to gain power as the prime minister through funding provided by the Chinese business community. Despite the presence of RAMSI's security forces, the appointment of Rini resulted in 2 days of anarchy and rioting, with Chinatown and the Pacific Casino Hotel burned to the ground. Australia's response was to reinforce RAMSI, which quickly stabilized the security situation. Moreover, a no-confidence vote resulted in the resignation of Rini. The subsequent appointment of Manasseh Sogavare as prime minister brought calm to the capital and enabled RAMSI to continue with its mission.

Since April 2006, there have been a number of no-confidence votes and a general election in August 2010, and although tensions do occasionally bubble to the surface, most stakeholders appear committed to reconciling and maintaining peace across the archipelago. However, there are also a number of unresolved political, economic, and social issues that need to be addressed by the government of the Solomon Islands. Particularly with the drawdown of the RAMSI commitment scheduled to commence in mid-2012, it is not too difficult to envisage a country once again crippled by corruption and nepotism—with the inevitable outcome being a return to chaos.

Despite these concerns, the RAMSI mission has changed little since 2003 with the focus remaining on "helping the Solomon Islands to lay the foundations for long-term stability, security and prosperity—through support for improved law, justice and security; for more effective, accountable and democratic government; for stronger, broad-based economic growth."[5] In an effort to ensure that this translates into sustainable and realistic objectives for the country post-RAMSI, the

2009 Solomon Islands Government–RAMSI Partnership Framework was designed to provide objectives and targets for RAMSI's work in the Solomon Islands, with indicative timeframes linked to each objective. A number of these objectives have already been met, and the timeline for others has been adjusted as required by RAMSI's Performance Oversight Group in consultation with the Government's Forum Ministerial Standing Committee on RAMSI. However, other endemic problems created by corruption and government inertia have a huge impact on long-term objectives of RAMSI.

Support for Improved Law, Justice, and Security

In the short term, the goal of a "secure, safe, ordered and just Solomon Islands society where laws are administered fairly regardless of position or status giving due recognition to traditional values and customs" has been achieved. At the policing level, there has been considerable effort by RAMSI's Participating Police Force to capacity-build and subsequently audit the effectiveness of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF). However, efforts to implement a community policing program across the archipelago have not been successful mainly due to a lack of funding and an inability to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of unsworn community constables. When no official rule of law is present in the more remote areas, arbitration traditionally falls to the community and village chiefs, and most issues are resolved more than satisfactorily—much to the chagrin of the policymakers in Honiara.

Unlike the 18,000 or so law enforcement agencies that support the criminal justice, courts, and corrections systems in the United States, Australia has only seven state and territorial police forces and one federal entity tasked with enforcing the criminal law of the Commonwealth of Australia. Within the Australian Federal Police (AFP), there exists the International Deployment Group (IDG), which has a long tradition of involvement in international peacekeeping, policing, and capacity development in countries ranging from Cyprus to Somalia. The IDG has the capacity to provide officers for the Australian government's domestic and international stability and security operations and currently has an approved 1,200-strong staff. Within the IDG, there also exists the *Operations Response Group*, which provides highly skilled tactical policing capability for rapid deployment to unstable domestic and international operational situations. For personnel deploying in support of RAMSI, a 2-week predeployment course is conducted at the IDG facility just outside of Canberra for sworn and unsworn AFP members, state and territory police officers, and members of Pacific Island nation police services. RAMSI has drawn heavily on the IDG and its role in supporting the RSIPF to provide security in the Solomon Islands rather than the military components of the Combined Task Force.

endemic problems created by corruption and government inertia have a huge impact on long-term objectives of RAMSI

One of the criticisms of the existing policing system is that RSIPF personnel are not armed and are perceived by many to provide little more than local traffic control and limited community policing. The heavy lifting is still being undertaken by members of the IDG-staffed Participating Police Force, and

although transitional strategies are in place to assist the RSIPF in independently carrying out its mandated functions of maintaining law and order and targeting corrupt conduct in the Solomon Islands, there is some skepticism that once RASMI departs, the RSIPF will have the adequate training, logistics, communications, and budget to carry out its functions across the country's vast and diverse archipelago. The inability of the RSIPF to quell the riots in Chinatown in April 2006 did little to allay these fears.

without a commitment from the government of the Solomon Islands toward regulatory and economic policy reform, it is unlikely that living standards will improve

In terms of law and justice, RAMSI advisors and donors have worked hard to ensure that the Solomon Islands' judicial and correctional systems are functional and provide a strong, fair, and efficient system of justice. Challenges still facing the program are poor resourcing of the legal sector, inability to recruit and retain qualified legal staff, lack of engagement with traditional justice systems, and outsourcing much of the daily work to international staff rather than their Solomon Islander counterparts. Public trust and confidence in the country's judicial system has also been undermined by the decision of a hastily convened parole board in January 2011 to release the former Fisheries minister from prison after only serving 1 month of a 33-month sentence on charges of unlawfully wounding a person and assaulting a police officer in 2001 while he was a member of the Malaita Eagle Force.

Stronger, Broad-based Economic Growth

According to Paul Collier, former director of the World Bank's Development Research Group and author of *The Bottom Billion*, post-conflict countries with low income per capita have a 40 percent chance of returning to conflict within 10 years.[6] With the average daily income per capita being around US $3, there is some cause for concern, particularly as most of the wealth is centered in and around Honiara. The country faces a number of hurdles, including steep infrastructure and service provision costs, fractured internal markets, limited employment opportunities, undeveloped human capital, and vulnerability of the infrastructure to natural hazards such as cyclones, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The inability of the judicial system to effectively arbitrate traditional land disputes also deters both donors and foreign direct investment.

Since the end of the civil unrest in 2003, the economy has been driven by large increases in international aid and a rapid expansion of the forestry sector. However, stocks of natural forest are nearing exhaustion, and donor fatigue is likely to set in sooner rather than later. Without a commitment from the government of the Solomon Islands toward regulatory and economic policy reform, it is unlikely that living standards will improve. Moreover, there will probably not be opportunities for further domestic and international investment. The October 2010 World Bank Report on Solomon Islands Growth Prospects identifies a number of opportunities for growth, including a vibrant smallholder agricultural sector; tourism; natural resources such as gold and nickel; an international mobile workforce; and international

Reliable sanitation infrastructure is essential for improving public health, building communities, and strengthening regional stability

Rob Maccoll / AusAID

partnerships.[7] Without political support for such policies, it is more than likely that Collier's prophecy will come true.

More Effective, Accountable, and Democratic Government

In Transparency International's 2010 Corruption Perceptions Index, the Solomon Islands ranked 110 out of 178 countries, and on a scale from 10 (highly clean) to 0 (highly corrupt) was rated as 2.8 with much of the culture of corruption and cronyism directly attributed to the electoral and political process. In the national general elections conducted in August 2010, a record total of 508 candidates vied for 50 seats in parliament, with considerable time, effort, finances, resources, and allegedly donor funding used to obtain votes. A system of patronage is established through methods ranging from the provision of water tanks in a village to the reliance on the *wantok* system and assurances of future gain once a candidate is elected. The majority of candidates have no party affiliation, and without a national political platform, campaigns are conducted on promises of individual, village, and district sponsorship when the candidate gains power. Once 50 candidates are elected, several camps begin to form in the leading hotels in and around Honiara, where the stronger and more affluent cajole, bribe, or seduce others into joining their organization to form a majority.

Weak political parties and highly unstable parliamentary coalitions have traditionally characterized governments in the Solomon Islands. Each ministry is headed by a cabinet member, who is assisted by a permanent secretary, a career public servant. They are subject to frequent votes of no confidence, and government leadership changes often as a result. With a budgetary process that has little accountability, cabinet members essentially become project managers rather than policymakers, with the majority of their time spent allocating finances and resources to their *wantok*, fulfilling campaign promises, and maintaining political coalitions. For many Solomon Islanders in the more remote provinces and districts, this system of patronage is far more preferable than receiving no governmental support at all, and it is no wonder that despite the best efforts of RAMSI and many of the competent and dedicated senior bureaucrats within the government, the life of the average Solomon Islander has improved only marginally since 2003.

Conclusion

The old adage that "you can dress up a pig in a silk robe, but it's still a pig" can certainly be applied to the Solomon Islands, where no matter how much effort RAMSI, nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and donors put into laying the foundations for long-term stability, security, and prosperity, little will be achieved in the country until the electoral process and culture of political corruption, nepotism, and cronyism are no longer acceptable to the Solomon Islanders themselves. Until then, the country will always teeter on the brink of becoming a failed state. PRISM

Notes

[1] Opposition to mining development at the Panguna mine in Papua New Guinea's North Solomons Province led to the emergence of a secessionist movement on Bougainville in the late 1960s. By 1988, the

simmering anger of a group of militant landowners erupted in a campaign of sabotage and harassment of mine employees, which led to bloodshed, riots, and the introduction of Papua New Guinea Defence Force personnel to maintain law and order. Although a ceasefire was negotiated with the Bougainville Revolutionary Army in 1990, the situation remained unresolved until December 1997, when New Zealand established the Truce Monitoring Group. Following an agreement on a permanent ceasefire in April 1998, the government of Papua New Guinea invited Australia to lead the Peace Monitoring Group (PMG). The mission of the unarmed PMG was to conduct ceasefire monitoring activities, coordinate a weapons disposal program, and disseminate information about the peace process. The PMG was led by the Australian Defence Force and consisted of personnel from New Zealand, Fiji, and Vanuatu with support provided by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, Australian Agency for International Development, and Australian Federal Police. In accordance with the Bougainville Peace Agreement, the PMG was withdrawn in June 2003, and elections for the first Autonomous Bougainville Government were conducted in May and June 2005.

[2] Following the widespread post-ballot violence and destruction of East Timor in 1999, Australia organized and led the United Nations–authorized International Force in East Timor (INTERFET), which was mandated to help restore peace and order and facilitate humanitarian assistance. Regional contributions were provided by Fiji, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, the Philippines, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Thailand, Kenya, Canada, and the United States. (Although small in size, the U.S. Support Group East Timor did a sterling job coordinating infrastructure repair and humanitarian assistance, including dental and medical care for tens of thousands of East Timorese.) Following the withdrawal of the Indonesian military forces in October 1999 and the subsequent disbanding of militia groups, INTERFET handed over military operations to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in February 2000. UNTAET was an integrated civil-military mission mandated to maintain security and prepare the country for national elections and independence, which was achieved in May 2002. Political unrest caused by a nepotistic and dysfunctional government led to unrest in the capital, Dili, in April–May 2006. At the request of the government of East Timor, Australia deployed an International Stabilisation Force (ISF) consisting of military and police contingents from New Zealand, Portugal, and Malaysia to restore security. Australia and New Zealand continue to support a reduced ISF, which works with the United Nations Integrated Mission in East Timor to support the government in "consolidating stability, enhancing a culture of democratic governance, and facilitating political dialogue among Timorese stakeholders."

[3] Combined Task Force 635 is an infantry company commanded by an Australian army lieutenant colonel. Although the Australian army provides the largest contingent composed mainly of reservists on 4-month rotations, the task force also includes personnel from the New Zealand Defence Force, Papua New Guinea Defence Force, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, and Tonga Defence Services. It has a rapid response capability with the specific role of providing a stable environment to assist the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force to conduct policing duties. As was the case in April 2006, the Australian Defence Force has the capacity to deploy personnel at short notice from the 3d Infantry Brigade in Townsville, Queensland, about a 3-hour flight from Honiara.

[4] Karene Melloul, *Accidental Partners? Listening to the Australian Defence and Police Experience of the Security-Development Nexus in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States*, World Bank Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries Group Working Paper, October 2010.

[5] See Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, "What Is RAMSI?" available at <www.ramsi.org/about/what-is-ramsi.html>.

[6] Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (London: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5.

[7] Solomon Islands Growth Prospects, Constraints and Policy Priorities, World Bank Discussion Note, October 2010.

Learning While Fighting

Operational Knowledge Management That Makes a Difference

BY STEVEN MAINS AND GIL AD ARIELY

The advent of new technologies has spawned a number of predictions regarding how information will change the face of warfare. Some have predicted that we are undergoing a *revolution in military affairs* (RMA) characterized by complete battlefield knowledge, total knowledge of friendly force location and status, and possession of a "persistent stare" directed toward enemy forces. This hype of "information utopia" has often overshadowed the real and ongoing revolution regarding the availability and use of lessons and shared knowledge.

Operational lessons are available faster, over greater distances, and from more varied environments than ever before. The collection and use of lessons are neither a new phenomenon nor a new need. What *is* new is the quantity and velocity of current and historical lessons available to commanders and soldiers in near real time. Despite these recent advances, there is no indication that we have reached a plateau in our ability to collect and share lessons. The question is, "What does this mean for the future?" When looking into the future of leveraging knowledge on the battlefield, and

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in preparing the fighting forces to implement lessons and knowledge from the experience of other forces, it is wholly appropriate that we look into past efforts to learn and implement lessons in military and civilian organizations.

The need to learn quickly and adapt in a dynamic environment is seminal for both military and civilian organizations. Yet the military has developed methodological expertise and experience that may act as a frame of reference for civilian organizations developing similar lessons learned and operational knowledge management (KM) capabilities to accelerate learning and knowledge. This is of even greater value for civil-military cooperation, such as in a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), where commonality in lessons, processes, and culture would enable knowledge-sharing across organizational boundaries.

hard-won knowledge from the past is often relevant—but unknown or unavailable—to those who need it

This article examines operational knowledge management, or as Americans more often call it, *lessons learned*, through case studies drawn from different wars, militaries, and arenas. We try to exemplify the evolution in knowledge organization from "intuitive" attempts by "entrepreneurial" commanders to structured, deliberate efforts to collect knowledge, analyze it, and integrate it back into the forces—from permeating a lesson to raise situational awareness to changes in programs of instruction or training, or doctrinal adjustments. We use these historical vignettes to illuminate the trajectory and create a proposal for the future.

World War II

There were several efforts to collect and share combat lessons during World War II. Colonel Russell "Red" Reeder and S.L.A. Marshall wrote detailed accounts of battle experiences in the Pacific. Their work was published as bound books, which were distributed well after the action.[1] To rapidly share lessons across the front, the U.S. 12th Army Group, under Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, began distributing a knowledge newsletter entitled *Battle Experiences* immediately after D-Day. Development was centralized at Army level, but the focus was tactical, aimed at "enable[ing] units . . . to profit from the latest combat experiences of our troops now fighting the Germans."[2]

Distributed daily, each *Battle Experiences* newsletter was one page, printed front and back, allowing for quick dissemination and integration of the lessons, even with the time constraints of commanders in combat. The newsletters dealt with tactical issues—combined arms tactics, leadership, supply—containing both negative lessons for Soldiers to learn from and positive best practices to repeat and emulate. Most were immediately applicable to save lives through improved operations or self-protection. For example, one newsletter recommended adding an "extra armor plate on the bottom of M–8 armed car" to protect against buried mines and included instructions for its application.[3]

Not limited to what the U.S. Army was learning directly, the newsletters included lessons from Allies. Since Soldiers tended to remain in one theater for most of the war, they provided useful insights from other theaters to disseminate lessons across the force.

Interestingly, one of the lessons contained in *Battle Experiences* regarding urban warfare recommended going through walls to avoid the "beaten zone" of the streets. This lesson

U.S. Air Force (Manuel J. Martinez)

Soldier and military working dog jump from Chinook helicopter during Emerald Warrior 2011 exercise designed to leverage lessons learned from Operations *Iraqi Freedom* and *Enduring Freedom*

reappeared as a local innovation when the Israelis fought in kasbahs.[4] It is an aside to the World War II example, but central to the theme of this article that hard-won knowledge from the past is often relevant—but unknown or unavailable—to those who need it.

German *Merkblätter*

The German army sought to disperse and integrate knowledge within tactical levels at the same time, even implementing an approach similar to that of the Allies. The Wehrmacht dispersed knowledge in handouts called *Merkblätter*. These documents were centrally produced brochures or pamphlets, ranging from one to several pages in length. Less focused on novel lessons, the Germans reprinted selections from field or technical manuals to convey proper methods. They were doctrine-oriented to ensure common, established procedures and even discussed the role of "perception management" among soldiers to increase fighting spirit. For instance, to counter the perception that the new Soviet tanks were indestructible, *Merkblatt 77/3*, entitled *Der Panzerknacker* ("The Tank Cracker"), highlighted vulnerabilities to educate the German soldier and give him the confidence that he could destroy Soviet tanks.

A sort of learning competition is apparent in the newsletters as each army tried to gain the advantage by more quickly adapting to change.[5] The U.S. newsletters often contained a section on new "German tricks" that educated Soldiers on what the enemy was learning and disseminated countermeasures against these adaptations. These examples required development of an organization to enhance learning in order to adapt quickly; like many wartime innovations, however, these lessons in learning were quickly forgotten when peace came.

U.S. Army Postwar Efforts

Although some official efforts captured Korean War lessons and some enterprising officers published Vietnam War lessons, units in these conflicts usually had to capture their own lessons through formal and informal after action reviews.[6] The recognition of mistakes made in Grenada and the opportunity to capitalize on training at the National Training Center (NTC) convinced U.S. Army leaders to form the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) in 1985.[7] The CALL staff initially captured training lessons for a quarterly bulletin so more units could benefit from the experience of units undergoing training at NTC. The need to capture and integrate lessons into the Army became acute after Operations *Just Cause* and *Desert Storm*, but these efforts were reactive, after-the-fact collections of lessons, which missed the opportunity to impact the planning or conduct of the operations directly. CALL expanded quickly to collect and disseminate lessons from these operations, then shrank back to its training-focused establishment.

CALL is responsible for many adaptations that were flashed across the Army and adopted within hours or days

After 9/11, the U.S. Army recognized that it needed *real-time* analysis and dissemination of lessons to improve operations against an adaptive enemy. CALL again expanded to capture what units were doing across the U.S. Army and its allies so that units could learn from each other in real time without having to make discoveries for themselves. CALL now shares challenges encountered by the Army across its schools, training centers, organizations, and other units to locate solutions. If CALL identifies a problem where no ready solution exists, it notifies the appropriate agency so that it can work on a solution.

CALL links these analysts together in a collaborative network that enables them to quickly record lessons in a database and receive tailored alerts when captured lessons apply to them. The issue almost never is a lack of data, but rather making sense of the mountain of data available. By building this network, CALL has placed the soldier in Afghanistan or Iraq just "two handshakes" away from instructors, trainers, and doctrine writers in the United States. This setup assists in providing context required for sense-making. Also, instead of teaching soldiers about how things were done on previous deployments, instructors can discuss something that may have happened just the day before. The network provides proactive dissemination of lessons to commanders, soldiers, and schools, documenting lessons from actual operations by Active units that are just minutes or hours old and pushing them to the appropriate nondeployed units, schools, and training centers.

Although much of the collection and dissemination occurs through embedded analysts, CALL also actively gathers information on specific topics through collection and analysis teams constructed specifically for each mission. Issues are nominated by the Army leadership or identified through the Combined Arms Center commander's collaborative issues resolution process. They take an in-depth look at a specific issue, to identify its underlying cause and develop potential solutions, then disseminate their findings through the institutionalized lessons-sharing network.

The results of this integrated effort are well documented. CALL is responsible for many adaptations that were flashed across the Army and adopted within hours or days. The demand for CALL publications has continually increased, indicating that Soldiers find the over 120 articles and handbooks published annually useful.

Customers demand over 500,000 copies of these handbooks each year. Over 3,000 unique users from across the joint, interagency, and multinational communities log in to the CALL Web site each week to download information, handbooks for use in unit standard operating procedures, and "battle books." CALL answers about 1,000 formal requests for information each month as well as fulfilling countless walk-in requests daily.

CALL draws on this network to "market" knowledge to many different audiences simultaneously, providing lessons proactively and as users request them. Some examples of proactive knowledge dissemination to deployed and training units include:

- lessons gleaned from 2005 Iraqi and 2006 Bosnian elections that were pushed out ahead of the 2010 Iraqi and Afghan elections
- forward operating base handover lessons harvested from Vietnam War after action reports to inform handovers in Iraq
- "combat outpost in a box" instructions on how to build an outpost quickly seized initiative from the enemy
- "First 100 Days" series outlining what soldiers, junior leaders, staff groups, and Military Transition Teams must do to be successful from the beginning of their deployments.

These products were developed at user request to include recent combat lessons on similar types or regional operations that enable units to begin planning from a "higher step" as envisioned in CALL's initial charter.

Many other efforts are ongoing around the Army. Every unit has its own internal network over which to share lessons. Branch schools and centers have resource sites focused on their areas of responsibility. The CompanyCommand Forum, PlatoonLeader, and ArmyNCO networks grew from private Web sites to meet the needs of junior leaders who wanted to share their experiences and ideas.[8] These networks have become part of the Battle Command Knowledge System, which provides forums on a broad array of topics. U.S. Forces Command units provide "warfighter forums" to focus knowledge exchange on particular types of units.

Combat units, most notably the 25th Infantry Division, have experimented with operational KM structures, designating battalion, brigade, and division level lessons learned officers and then integrating them with the CALL networks.[9] This internal network facilitates learning; it trains and deploys with the unit, as well as connecting units both horizontally and vertically within the division and with adjacent units. It also links units temporally by contacting and providing updates to follow-on units, impacting their preparation and training. By connecting to the CALL network, the division network shares operational knowledge through Army schools and centers to provide a picture of the current operational environment and to leverage the knowledge and experience of the instructors and students to solve in-theater challenges. The experiment is ongoing, but there is already some empirical data to indicate that this distributed deployment of resources is useful.

Operational KM in the Israel Defense Forces

In 2000, a series of terrorist suicide attacks on Israeli civilians led to operational pressures that exacerbated the ongoing low-intensity conflict. During these operations, a "learning competition" occurred daily, so the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) used methods developed by CALL as a foundation

from which to evolve its own organizational knowledge dissemination.[10] This benchmarking of methods, structures, and procedures was a starting point for the IDF operational KM revolution. Although a foreign organizational construct imported in its entirety would not have fit well in this different organizational context, adapting operational KM methods from the U.S. Army, as well as experience in industry and academia, led to a useful array of methods, organizations, and techniques for the IDF. The purpose was similar, but the resultant structure was more decentralized and less technology based than the U.S. example. This can be traced to many reasons, including that the IDF lessons learned effort started in the special operating forces and migrated to general purpose forces, whereas the U.S. Army did just the opposite, and that a different cultural, geographical, and technological context exists in the IDF.

adapting operational KM methods from the U.S. Army, as well as experience in industry and academia, led to a useful array of methods, organizations, and techniques for the IDF

From 2001 forward, some IDF units used a "peer assist" approach. Officers were temporarily attached to similar units for training or operations to gain knowledge that they could carry back to their own formations. Candid "storytelling" of battle lessons by actual participants to units slated to conduct similar operations enabled a transfer of knowledge and an opportunity for inexperienced units to learn from more experienced ones. Adjoining battalions met in structured "learning synchronization sessions," personally led by their brigade commanders, whenever fighting lasted just a few days. These efforts were very labor and time intensive (and maybe only possible because of the deliberate pace of low-intensity operations), but through them, operational KM techniques became culturally entwined in the fighting forces. After action reviews became a way of life. Lessons learned repositories emerged at local levels. In many cases, learning and managing knowledge became an integral part of battlefield procedures. Units habitually checked to see which others had previously operated in the region not only to search for written lessons to learn, but also to connect people and exchange tacit operational knowledge. Out of this grew communities of practice to exchange best practices and pitfalls.

One best practice was the addition of a Knowledge Officer to formations at battalion level and higher. These officers acted as a core network among units, as well as bidirectional knowledge nodes to exchange information to and from the units about friendly and enemy innovations, freeing commanders from this full-time responsibility so they could devote their attention to operations.

The IDF Central Command brought commanders and Knowledge Officers together in an entrepreneurial effort using a trained KM facilitator similar to the U.S. Army's CompanyCommand community of practice. This was the thin edge of an organizational wedge that started in the middle of the organization, then spread upward into professional military education and downward to the lowest units. As a result of the interest gained in operational KM techniques, the IDF established a formal knowledge management branch in the Ground Forces Doctrine Department that codified the ongoing efforts into approved operational KM doctrine.

The Second Lebanon War erupted in 2006 after the abduction of three Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese border by Hizballah. In past wars, most of the learning took place before and after the war, but since the Second Lebanon War was neither predicted nor planned for on the Israeli

side, it was a test case for the operational KM methods developed during years of low-intensity conflict operations. The IDF needed real-time learning to shift rapidly from its low-intensity conflict mindset to one adapted to the hybrid type of warfare encountered.[11]

During the first days of the war, Ground Forces Command launched an ad hoc, real-time Center for Lessons Learned in the Northern Command training base. Every unit on its way to Lebanon received an operations update at the training base to fill any knowledge gaps, "fast-forward" training, an operational knowledge package, and a digest of lessons learned that was updated daily.

As the war continued, printed operational knowledge digests, similar to the one-page *Battle Experiences* handouts, were pushed to all commanders down to company level. These focused on skills required in Lebanon. Ground force commanders in contact and Knowledge Officers were able to collect lessons and sometimes conduct after action reviews during lulls in the fighting to collect and share lessons derived from evolving Hizballah tactics.

Hizballah's demonstrated ability to learn in short cycles intensified the need to learn while fighting. This need set up a learning competition between the two forces. In one example, after Hizballah attacks on IDF positions in individual buildings, Ground Forces Command issued an operational knowledge digest recommending that multiple buildings be secured together in a reinforced strongpoint with interlocking fires, which was implemented by the battalions within 24 hours. For its part, Hizballah studied this change and adapted their attacks within 48 hours to attack multiple house strongpoints simultaneously, which required further adaptation by the IDF.

The Knowledge Officers collected and disseminated critical information from the unit. In one example, the Paratrooper Brigade Chief Knowledge Officer described tactical problems when supplies were parachuted to his battalions. On the spot, the lessons were communicated by phone to the air logistics base, which quickly changed the procedures. Without this networked array of knowledge nodes embedded in operational units, such lessons might not have been transmitted or implemented until after the end of the war, perhaps emerging in postoperational reviews and thus being useful only for future operations.

The real-time learning devices implemented in the Second Lebanon War took the form of three building blocks:

- The IDF implemented a centralized Ground Forces Command Center for Lessons Learned to analyze and disseminate tactical lessons and a learning group focused on headquarters operational level lessons.
- Networked Knowledge Officers embedded in units were able to share lessons quickly and enable parallel learning.
- An after action review culture embedded in the units worked to focus critical thinking on how to improve the fighting force.

These efforts became doctrinal through a field manual and were tested once more during Operation *Cast Lead* in 2009, allowing the IDF to adapt quickly and learn faster than Hamas in encounters.[12]

Learning Civilian Lessons

While the focus of this article so far (and much of the experience of the global lessons learned community) is on the military environment and experience, the need for adapting

quickly to a dynamic environment and learning on the fly is also seminal in civilian organizations, the public sector, and government. The Department of State's inaugural Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review recognizes that "[we] have responded to successive events without learning lessons and making appropriate institutional changes to provide the continuity and support."[13] Considering the real-time adaptation required in response to events unfolding in the Middle East in 2011 confirms that it is essential at the strategic level to understand the urgent need for learning across the whole of government. Civilian government organizations have developed organizational structures in separate, local initiatives. The U.S. Agency for International Development, after years of attrition in the learning function, recently recommitted to lessons learned with the establishment of the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning, and the release of a new evaluation policy. Similar efforts in the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence are focused on their agencies' relevant lessons, sharing lessons between agencies informally.

In recent years, a more structured framework coordinating collection, analysis, and integration of lessons across civilian organizations started to emerge. A lessons learned function was mandated in Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56 and National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44.[14] PDD–56 called for U.S. Government agencies to institutionalize lessons and to develop and conduct interagency training programs. NSPD–44 designated the Secretary of State as the coordinator and lead integrator for governmental lessons. In response, State formed the State Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, which included a Division of Best Practices and Sectoral Experts. This division coordinated with expert, interagency counterparts in a whole-of-government effort to derive lessons and best practices. The lessons and best practices functions were incorporated into interagency working group tasks after 2008. It was obvious that the complexity of the operations and lessons learned requirements emerging in civilian organizations required coordination; thus, the Center for Complex Operations at the National Defense University was mandated to conduct research; collect, analyze, and distribute lessons learned; and compile best practices in matters relating to complex operations.[15]

The PRT is the best example where efforts would be futile without sharing of knowledge and lessons across organizational boundaries and domains of knowledge. Mistakes would be repeated and actions disjointed, allowing exploitation by adversaries. The differences in culture, structure, and goals among civilian organizations challenge cooperation. The existence of a lessons learned infrastructure can informally network disparate bureaucracies within the government, which is a main tenet of this article—that is, networking hierarchies.

Emerging Model of Operational KM

When examining these efforts to improve and adapt operations to the changing mission, a model emerges containing three parallel thrusts that differ in nature and time horizon but are similar in goal.

First, in fighting forces, commanders and staff peers must be connected to share knowledge. They must be supported by an array of lessons learned or Knowledge Officers as additional resources to connect them to the generating force through an established knowledge network. These resources become a decentralized device to help units learn in real time and maximize the value of existing organizational knowledge centers in units and schools.

Special Operations Soldiers fast-rope from Osprey aircraft during exercise Emerald Warrior 2011

U.S. Air Force (DeNoris Mickle)

This network has advantages for the military. It passes information across unit boundaries, and it changes the proliferation of information from a top-down, geometrically expanding, time-phased array to a multidirectional, simultaneous conduit. Many have argued that the Army should become a network to defeat adversary networks. We posit that developing networks *within the existing hierarchy* gains network speed and agility without losing the directive power inherent in a hierarchy. It is more accurate to state that *it takes a networked hierarchy to defeat a network*.

Second, an Army-wide lessons-sharing and after action review culture, developed during leader education and then reinforced through commanders and leader interaction at all levels, improves operations. For leaders to be successful, they must have the "adaptation gene" injected during their initial training, fortified through repeated applications in professional military education and constantly nurtured while assigned to units. This emphasis on continued learning, especially in professional education, enhances future commanders' abilities to adapt and cope with new complexities. Embedding operational knowledge management in professional military education provides the required conceptual framework, creates awareness, and promotes further research to maximize the ability to improve. We need to revise our operational learning approach and redirect it toward short learning cycles and educating commanders.

And third, a central clearinghouse with visibility across the force to identify emerging lessons from the field should be established. This center should coordinate with the other knowledge-based activities, historians, think tanks, schools, doctrine writers, training centers, and communities of practice. Working together, they can gather, analyze, and disseminate lessons, building a network of people and teams within the hierarchy. A center is also required to create a venue for the Army's senior leadership to prepare for emerging operational problems and track their subsequent resolution.

We should aim for a synergy in organizational activities, knowledge, and learning to create many channels that combine to form one coherent value stream supporting the fighting force. The Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth attempted to create such a structure in the Combined Arms Center–Knowledge (CAC–K), which included five existing Combined Arms Center organizations with complementary knowledge functions:

- Center for Army Lessons Learned leads lessons collection and knowledge analysis to integrate the lessons into the field.
- Battle Command Knowledge System fuses communities of practice.
- Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate institutionalizes knowledge in the form of doctrine.
- Combat Studies Institute entwines relevant historical knowledge.
- Military Review disseminates and helps test knowledge through the kind of dialogue best stimulated by a professional journal.

This effort leveraged knowledge as a resource for the fighting forces to enhance operational effectiveness. CAC–K never reached anything near its potential due to lack of direction and resources, but the concept was right. To address many issues, including increasing the ability to leverage knowledge at ever lower levels, the Mission Command Center of Excellence was formed, which included much of CAC–K. In addition, the Battle Command Knowledge System has been renamed Army Operational Knowledge Management and consolidated its forums with CALL. This organizational development is a step forward in fixing the knowledge integration problems identified in 2007 when CAC–K was formed.

KM Is Not Information Management

Knowledge is a complex and dynamic resource, and managing it is not the same as managing data or even information, contrary to some popular RMA narratives. Knowledge is often tacit and embedded in people: commanders, soldiers, units, and the society in which they operate. It encompasses history, lessons, real-time information, cultural awareness, and context. It is about people, not technology. While information is a building block, knowledge is interdisciplinary, touching areas such as information operations, media, and Civil Affairs.

An important impetus to change is our adaptive enemy. Modern terrorists and insurgents can act with greater autonomy than in the past. Off-the-shelf communications technologies allow them to operate with greater awareness of parallel efforts, while the ready availability of the tools of violence enables them to operate without direct state sponsorship. Thus, our adversaries have become complex adaptive systems, increasing the challenge of conducting warfare. This requires organizations to develop the ability to become complex adaptive systems, but in doing so it would be wrong to sacrifice the advantages inherent in a hierarchy, such as integrated planning, assignment, and deconfliction of objectives, leadership, and mutual support. It is equivalent to an American football team playing soccer against a street gang with the challenge to retain the superior planning, preparation, and equipment, without being handcuffed by a rigid framework of rules that may or not be appropriate to the changing conditions.

Assessing the Benefits

It is common to greet new ideas with questions, for example, "Will these ideas increase

efficiency, thereby paying for themselves through some sort of cost savings?" RMA theorists proposed that armor protection (or similar conventional capabilities) could be *traded off* to pay for the overall force protection afforded by improved situational awareness. To date, no such increased efficiency has been shown. The bottom line is that there is no free lunch, and if an organization wants to improve its capabilities, it has to pay the price. In the authors' combined half-century of service, we have seen plenty of initiatives, like CAC–K, which were strangled in their cribs by the cold hands of faint resources and command neglect. The benefit is not efficiency. The benefit is remaining effective against adversaries who are continually enhancing their effectiveness and adaptability.

Operational Security

Aside from funding, the constant threat to enhancing our ability to learn and adapt is the well-meaning but misguided attempt to apply Cold War security regulations to 21st-century technologies. We must make prudent tradeoffs between restricting our adversaries' ability to access and use our knowledge to their advantage and to putting our own and allied soldiers at risk by withholding knowledge from ourselves. This truth may seem self-evident to any military professional, yet the United States increasingly treats unclassified information as if it were classified by misapplying the classification rules or changing the rules for each situation. This is the antithesis of a lessons-sharing culture that encourages adaptation.

Governments must always safeguard information that will endanger operations or lives, but it is at least as important to share information that will defeat adversaries and empower allies in order to eliminate the danger to our people. Commanders and managers need to define the risk clearly and judiciously, balancing it against the benefits of sharing with the Soldier in the field, the Reservist preparing to deploy, and the ally standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States. This cultural shift is threatened by recent large leaks of classified information. We need to resist the bureaucratic temptation to swing the pendulum away from sharing information while we focus on better ways to safeguard secrets.

The Road Ahead

Because we have done much of our thinking and experimentation on operational knowledge management in Kansas, the metaphor of *The Wizard of Oz* seems appropriate. When Dorothy and her friends reached the Wizard, he helped them realize that they already possessed that which they sought. Like the Scarecrow who wanted a brain, professional militaries have the requisite knowledge within themselves. They need to retool their structures, processes, and schools in order to unleash the potential energy stored within.

The military has always been a learning organization. Militaries have the most incentive of any institution to use knowledge to adapt; those that do survive, and those that do not are overwhelmed. This article has proposed networking the existing hierarchical structure to enable it to become a complex adaptive system, adapting ever faster in a constantly changing environment. This proposition is empirically grounded in the experiences of Western armies fighting hybrid, networked adversaries. It takes insights from complexity theory to the battlefield recommending organizational structures and processes to learn in combat in real time. The fact that knowledge emerges from the bottom up in combat argues for embedding lessons learned or Knowledge Officers within units.

This approach requires the training and education base to teach and reinforce learning techniques to ensure the learning gene is

injected into and nurtured throughout the force. A central knowledge clearinghouse focused on organizational needs with the connections and resources to develop and disseminate required products is the third leg of the operational KM stool.

Treating knowledge as a resource and entwining the capability to learn and adapt to unfamiliar and changing situations into our structures and "institutional DNA" will unleash the true revolution in military affairs that the information revolution has portended for so long. **PRISM**

Notes

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[2] *Battle Experiences* #1, July 12, 1944.

[3] *Battle Experiences* #68, October 19, 1944.

[4] Thomas H. Henriksen, "Security Lessons from the Israeli Trenches: A Half-century of Counterterrorism," *Policy Review*, no. 141 (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, February 1, 2007), available at <www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/5859>.

[5] U.S. Army Field Manual 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army/Headquarters Department of the Navy, 2006); Gil Ad Ariely, "Knowledge Is the Thermonuclear Weapon for Terrorists in the Information Age," June 3, 2003, available at <www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/97/currentpage/11/Default.aspx>.

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[7] Gordon Sullivan and Michael Harper, *Hope Is Not a Method* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997).

[8] Nancy M. Dixon, Nate Allen, Tony Burgess, Pete Kilner, and Steve Schweitzer, *CompanyCommand: Unleashing the Power of the Army Profession* (West Point, NY: Center for the Advancement of Leader Development and Organizational Learning, 2005).

[9] Gil Ad Ariely, "Learning to Digest During Fighting—Real Time Knowledge Management," International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, November 9, 2006, available at <www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/229/Default.aspx>.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Frank G. Hoffman, "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges," *Joint Force Quarterly* 52 (1st Quarter, 2009).

[12] Gil Ad Ariely, "Learning While Fighting in 'Cast Lead' Operation," *Maarachot IDF Journal*, no. 425, 12–21.

[13] Department of State, *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2010), 123, available at <www.state.gov/documents/organization/153142.pdf>.

[14] Presidential Decision Directive/National Security Council 56, *Managing Complex Contingency Operations* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 1997); and National Security Presidential Directive 44, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization* (Washington, DC: The White House, December 7, 2005).

[15] For a more robust discussion of the mission and accomplishments of the Center for Complex Operations, see Melanne Civic and Bernard Carreau, "Building a Civilian Lessons Learned System," *PRISM* 1, no. 2 (March 2010), 133–140.

An Interview with David Petraeus

Recent polling shows that two-thirds of Americans do not believe the war in Afghanistan is worth fighting anymore. What makes you think it is worth fighting?

General Petraeus: 9/11. I think it is important to remember that the 9/11 attacks were planned in Afghanistan by al Qaeda when the Taliban controlled the bulk of the country and that the initial training of the attackers was carried out in Afghanistan in al Qaeda camps prior to them moving on to Germany and then to U.S. flight schools. And it is a vital national security interest for our country that Afghanistan not once again become a sanctuary for al Qaeda or other transnational extremists of that type.

In your prepared statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, you said that the core objective is to ensure that Afghanistan does not again become a sanctuary for al Qaeda. What makes you think that a Taliban-led Afghanistan would permit al Qaeda to return?

General Petraeus: First of all, they did it before. History does show that there is a strong connection between the Afghan Taliban, or the Quetta Shura Taliban, and al Qaeda. We know that there is a continuing relationship, and we think there is a strong likelihood—especially if al Qaeda is under continued, very strong pressure in its sanctuaries in the tribal area of Pakistan—that it is looking for other sanctuaries and that Afghanistan will once again be attractive to it.

Beyond denying Afghanistan to al Qaeda, what do you believe are our responsibilities to the Afghan people with respect to the kind of state we leave behind?

General Petraeus: To achieve our core objective in Afghanistan, we need to enable it to secure itself and to govern itself. It is up to

General David Petraeus, USA, is Commander of U.S. Central Command.

Afghanistan to determine how to operationalize those concepts, particularly with respect to governance, and I think we can be reassured by developments in that regard as reflected in their constitution—for example, the fact that there are 10 percent more women in their parliament than there are in the U.S. Congress, and that 37 percent of the 8.2 million students in Afghan schools this school year, this academic year, are female. By the way, that contrasts with virtually none during the Taliban time when there were less than a million in school overall. There are also many other areas in which there are progressive steps that have resulted from the new constitution and the new Afghanistan.

Do you believe that we have any ongoing commitment or responsibility to ensure that there is forward progress in democratic governance once we leave militarily?

General Petraeus: To be candid, I think that is probably a topic for the policymakers. Having said that, I do think that since stability comes from a government that is representative of and responsive to the people, we would like to see those characteristics resident in Afghan governance.

If counterinsurgency depends on legitimizing the host government, why do you think the Karzai government will endure our departure when it is largely perceived as corrupt, ineffective, and unable to effectively protect the civilian population?

General Petraeus: The Afghan government is developing the capability to secure itself, and it has made considerable strides in that regard over the course of the last year in particular. But, again, it has been working at this for a number of years. As I mentioned on Capitol Hill, it is only in the last 6 or 8 months that we've gotten the inputs right in Afghanistan to conduct the kind of comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency campaign necessary to help our Afghan partners develop the capability to secure and govern themselves. With respect to some of the other challenges that face the government, I believe that President Karzai is very focused on dealing with the issues of criminal patronage networks that threaten the institutions to which we will need to transition tasks in the years ahead. I have seen steps already taken in that regard, such as with the firing of the Afghan Surgeon General, the relief of the military chain of command of the National Military Hospital, the replacement of governors, chiefs of police, and so forth.

With respect to those illicit connections and patronage networks, do you think that continued access to substantial revenues from the poppy crop will compromise the accountability of the security forces to the state and government, as it provides them an alternative income source?

General Petraeus: In areas where there is Afghan governance and Afghan security, there has been considerably reduced poppy cultivation. The Afghan government is serious about reducing the poppy crop. It is serious about the illegal narcotics industry. It recognizes that there cannot be the establishment of rule of law if the major agricultural crop produces illegal export goods.

Can enduring stability and security be achieved in Afghanistan while the Taliban and Islamic extremists have relatively safe sanctuary in Pakistan?

General Petraeus: Clearly, anything that Afghanistan's neighbors do to reduce the activities of groups causing problems for Afghanistan is beneficial for the country. Having said that, there can be considerable progress made in Afghanistan, especially if reintegration of reconcilable insurgent members develops critical mass and sets off a chain reaction through the country, so that senior leaders sitting in Pakistani sanctuaries call up their cell phones and high frequency radios and don't get any answer from the fighters on the ground.

Do you think that you could do a better job in Afghanistan if you had the concurrence of Pakistani authorities to be able to engage in hot pursuit over the border?

General Petraeus: I don't think anyone is seeking the ability to conduct ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] ground operations or U.S.-only ground operations on Pakistani soil.

Unlike in Iraq, which has a reliable stream of revenue, do you see a need for long-term international financial support to maintain the Afghan security forces?

General Petraeus: As the Australian prime minister noted when she was in Washington, and as a number of other troop-contributing nation leaders have noted, Afghanistan is going to require sustained support even beyond the 2014 goals established at the Lisbon summit. Having said that, the levels of support should be substantially reduced and the character of support should substantially change in the years ahead.

What is needed in Washington and in the field to ensure unity of effort in a counterinsurgency operation? Do you have that in Afghanistan?

General Petraeus: I believe we do. What is needed is civil-military coordination, the achievement of unity of effort among all of those engaged in the effort, regardless of department or agency, or country for that matter. We have 48 troop-contributing nations active in Afghanistan, and some other major donors like Japan. There is a Civil-Military Campaign Plan in Afghanistan now that helps enormously to coordinate the activities of civil and military elements, to synchronize the effects that they are seeking to achieve, and so forth.

And are you getting today what you need from the civilian agencies of the U.S. Government?

General Petraeus: We are, although there has never been a military commander in history who would say that he wouldn't welcome additional civilian assistance, or frankly a variety of other augmentations and resources or funding authorities, bandwidth, as well as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

Do you think that we are going to need the kind of interagency capacity that we have developed over the past couple of years, in the post-Iraq/Afghanistan era?

General Petraeus: I do. I can't envision necessarily where we will employ it. There may be periods during which we need less of it than we need right now with the two major operations ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as some new endeavors unfolding. I definitely think that there will be a need for the kinds

of partnerships between civil and military elements that we have forged over the course of the last 10 years.

How do we ensure that the lessons learned in Afghanistan and Iraq this last decade are preserved and institutionalized and internalized for the future?

General Petraeus: You try to capture them by lessons learned organizations, in journals such as *PRISM*, in books and edited volumes and conferences, in schoolhouses, in doctrinal revisions, in leader development courses, and in the collective training centers—every component of the military term *DOTMLPF*: doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities.

So that's how to do it. Do you have any fear that we might not do that? That we might just recoil from this engagement the way that we did after Vietnam?

General Petraeus: No, I don't actually. I think there is a clear recognition that there will be a continuing need for capabilities to respond to efforts that require civil-military partnerships.

What impact does our ongoing commitment to Afghanistan have on our ability to respond to other challenges that may be of equal or even greater threat to our national security?

General Petraeus: I think that we've actually reconstituted reserves over time in the past year or so, as we've been able to draw down in Iraq, in particular, even as we have increased our forces in Afghanistan. We have expanded the pool of certain elements that are described as high-demand, low-density, as our forces have grown in endstate as well.

In the positions that you've been in over the last decade, what would be your advice to the civilian agencies right now, as they are looking at their future? The U.S. Agency for International Development, for example, or the State Department or Justice Department?

General Petraeus: It would be to get to know the appropriations committees on Capitol Hill even better than they already know them. PRISM

Book Review

How Wars End: Why We Always Fight the Last Battle

By Gideon Rose
Simon & Schuster, 2010
413 pp. $27.00
ISBN: 978-1-4165-9053-8

REVIEWED BY JAMES N. SOLIGAN

Ongoing engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq have resurrected one of the most important and challenging questions facing political and military leaders in the United States and other nations: how to set objectives, conduct operations, and terminate wars in a manner that achieves intended political outcomes. The collective track record leaves much to be desired, and results of even the most recent conflicts would argue that we have not yet learned the necessary lessons from wars in the 20th century to prevent making many of the same mistakes and suffering similar consequences in the 21st century.

Until now, there has not been an in-depth look at and comprehensive treatment of decisions influencing the termination phase of major conflicts. Providing a rigorous and thorough analysis of conflicts spanning from World War I to the ongoing war in Afghanistan, *How Wars End* presents key factors that have shaped U.S. decisions on how to conduct and terminate each conflict. It then provides an insightful look at factors surrounding and influencing these key decisions. Finally, based on lessons learned from previous wars, the author provides recommendations to help guide leaders through the endgame choices they are certain to face when terminating future conflicts.

How Wars End identifies several key factors that helped shape and explain American war termination decisions in each war. First, Gideon Rose draws on Carl von Clausewitz's definition of war as "an act of policy . . . simply a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means." He then notes that the United States, as a matter of practice, has often created a division of labor where civilians deal with political matters, military leaders deal with military matters, and control is handed off from the political leaders to the generals when the conflict starts and then back to the diplomats when the conflict ends. Rose states that this approach delineating a clear division of labor and a handoff between political and military decisionmaking is flawed because the decisionmaking related to political and military actions needs to be highly interactive before, during, and after the war. The second key factor shaping U.S. war termination decisions was that in addition to fighting *against* aggression, the U.S. effort was also fighting *for* a vision of a future international political and economic order. This influenced how decisionmakers interfaced with allies and adversaries during and after the conflict. A third key factor was how the freedom to choose between the various courses of action on terminating any specific war was enabled by the relative power of the United States—while

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at the same time, the freedom of action was constrained by the need to maintain political solidarity and a consensus with the other allies during the fighting and after the fighting had stopped. Finally, Rose postulates that the thinking of U.S. policymakers on how to terminate conflicts was often dominated by lessons drawn from recent wars, whether or not those lessons were appropriate for the challenges at hand. He cites several examples where U.S. leaders, concerned with not repeating past errors, improperly applied lessons from the last war, which often prolonged the conflict or resulted in unintended negative consequences.

Then, in a brilliant in-depth analysis of each conflict from World War I through the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, Rose explains the factors cited above as they relate to the complex political options being decided when the end of the fighting was in sight. For example, the consequences of agreeing to an armistice rather than unconditional surrender in World War I colored Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision to insist on unconditional surrender in World War II for both the European and Pacific theaters—even though an armistice with Japan, if reached, might have precluded the use of atomic weapons and ended the war prior to the Soviet entry into and seizure of additional territory in the Pacific theater. In a second example, the moral dilemma of forced repatriation at the end of World War II influenced Harry Truman's decision to insist on voluntary repatriation of all prisoners at the end of the Korean War. This decision extended the fighting for 18 months and resulted in an additional 25,000 United Nations casualties, while the final settlement on the ground was practically identical to their positions 2 years earlier. In a third example, Rose highlights that the lack of prior planning for the wars' aftermath tarnished the overwhelming military victories in both the Gulf War and the Iraq War. It is also clear from how Rose addresses the U.S. manner of terminating involvement in limited wars such as Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War that he portends potentially dire consequences for Iraq and Afghanistan unless the United States commits to the "secure, hold, and build" strategy used in Korea rather than extracting U.S. support and turning the "hold and build" responsibilities back to the host nation as was done in Vietnam and in Iraq during the Gulf War.

The author concludes by providing the following recommendations to inform both political and military leaders on key steps needed to ensure that the termination of future wars will be properly planned and executed:

Plan ahead and work backward. Political and military leaders should focus on the desired end result as the starting point for all war planning, with all supporting activities serving as building blocks and preparatory stages for the final outcome.

Define goals precisely and keep the ends and means in balance. To ensure that a war achieves its intended political purpose, policymakers should have a clear sense of what will happen on the ground when the fighting stops, what political and security arrangements will look like, who will maintain them, and how.

Pay attention to implementation and anticipate problems. This requires decision-makers to identify critical assumptions underpinning their plans and to develop a backup plan in advance on what to do if the assumptions prove invalid.

In summary, this is a masterful piece of research on the decisions and actions leading to war termination in each of the conflicts. It was clear that while the conditions and circumstances in each conflict were unique,

decisions on how to terminate prior conflicts often influenced the mindsets of politicians, the military, and the public on how to deal with terminating the conflict in hand. In many cases, with the benefit of hindsight, it is apparent that many of these decisions prolonged the conflict, resulted in additional casualties, or sowed the seeds of a repeat conflict between the same nations. The examples from each conflict need to be studied by political and military leaders alike. And while the political and military circumstances of each conflict will never be exactly replicated in future wars, we need to learn the core lessons that political and military actions should be planned and conducted with the end result in mind; that we need to have a plan to manage what happens on the ground after the fighting stops, and backup plans to address unanticipated events; and most importantly, that it is necessary to tailor individual approaches to war termination to the unique circumstances of each conflict. **PRISM**

CENTER FOR COMPLEX OPERATIONS (CCO)

Enhancing the U.S. Government's Ability to Prepare for Complex Operations

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- Serve as a feedback and information conduit to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and broader U.S. Government policy leadership to support guidance and problem-solving across the community of practice
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