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The Army

in Interagency Operations



Observations, Insights, and Lessons

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Introduction

The following collection of articles is focused on interagency operations as they relate to the U.S. Army and other joint forces. Current counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have underscored the importance of achieving unity of effort between military forces and the work accomplished by various agencies such as the Department of State, Department of Justice, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Agency, as well as nongovernmental and private organizations. The complexity of COIN operations and the reality of future conflicts require Soldiers to have a basic understanding of civil-military cooperation, roles and missions of interagency partners, and ways to improve leadership where it involves close coordination to ensure an integrated approach to mission success. The difficulty in achieving unity of command and unity of effort in military operations that include interagency players is compounded by education and training challenges for both Soldiers and interagency personnel alike. The articles in this newsletter cover a range of issues relating to military and interagency operations with a specific intent on establishing best practices and lessons learned that may mitigate some of these challenges. The articles should not be considered as all-inclusive. This is an effort to capture relevant articles published in recent professional journals and from the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) and other joint archives to inform Soldiers on relevant observations, insights, and lessons and provide an historical document for future reference.

In many instances, the ideas presented in these articles are personal opinion, and in some cases, not approved Army doctrine. The recommendations in these articles should always be validated with the latest approved Army and joint doctrine.

CALL acknowledges and thanks the professional journals and authors who permitted the reprinting of these articles, and in some instances, were personally involved in assisting CALL in the formatting process.

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The Interagency Abroad: The New Paradigm's Progress

Maj. G. J. David, U.S. Marine Corps

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While it has become common to invoke the term “interagency” to express a requirement for diverse capabilities in engagements abroad, applying the concept requires precise definition to avoid bureaucratic problems in the theater of operations. A wide variety of expertise is necessary to generate success in any conflict, but the need for many skills does not mean that we should diversify chains of authority. Unfortunately, the interagency process in its present form lacks cohesive leadership in the area of military operations. Federal agencies are not accustomed to permitting other agencies to direct their personnel and resources. Accordingly, planners would do well to consider the consequences of incorporating the term “interagency” into military doctrines and practices, and define precisely what resources are needed.

The Interagency

The term “interagency” implies a highly diverse group of actors operating independently in a theater of conflict. The idea that the interagency process needs to be part of U.S. military engagements abroad came about through a series of reports, investigations, and committees which examined responses to terrorism and American foreign endeavors in the last decade. They concluded that information sharing, diverse expertise, and variety in constructive capabilities are prerequisites for success in foreign engagements.¹ These skills are not found in any single government entity, but rather in many, and thus an interagency approach has become essential in foreign endeavors, especially those involving complex contingencies.

Conceptually, the necessity for an interagency process appears in documents as diverse as the U.S. Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025 (“The Corps leads Joint and Multinational Operations and enables interagency activities”),² and the National Defense Strategy 2008 (“We must consider further realigning department structures and interagency planning and response efforts...”).³ The “comprehensive approach” terminology in the broader context of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, for example, likewise carries with it the impression that multiple organizations (such as the various entities of the U.S. government’s executive branch) will be needed in NATO missions throughout the world.⁴ The UK Delegation to NATO notes, “Experience from NATO operations has demonstrated to Allies that coordination between a wide spectrum of actors from the international community, both military and civilian, is essential to achieving key objectives of lasting stability and security.”⁵

The formal distinction between those bureaucracies that have a role in conflicts and those that do not is evident in Title 50, U.S. Code, “War and the National Defense.”⁶ Yet, the interagency approach applies to all manner of non-Title 50 organizations which have been pressed into service during war and other conflicts. However, U.S. domestic bureaucracies, are generally designed, funded, and staffed to handle domestic issues in the United States. The expertise of their personnel may resemble that which is necessary in an overseas situation, but their detailed knowledge is tangential at best. For instance, the Department of Homeland Security sent several Customs and Border Protection agents to Iraq in 2005. While they were undoubtedly technically proficient, they had never encountered anything like the violent and parlous insurgents who operated along the more than 3,650 kilometers of land borders over which other Middle Eastern states supplied weapons, financing, and fanatical fighters and suicide bombers.⁷

Consider what it would take for U.S. federal law enforcement agencies to fight the Taliban in Afghanistan, a group engaged in killing, drug smuggling, weapons smuggling and transfers, trans-border illegal activities, and intimidation of senior Afghan leadership. Without the multi-billion dollar behemoth of the intelligence community, these issues would require the respective expertise of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Drug Enforcement Agency; Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; Customs and Border Protection; the Transportation Security Agency; the Secret Service; and U.S. Marshalls. Although some of these agencies are in Afghanistan, responding to their own priorities and chains of command, they are not designed to act in international affairs as do the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency, or Department of Defense, because they are meant to enforce U.S. domestic federal law.

It is one thing for bureaucracies to work independently and quite another to assume that outsiders will understand their operations and be able to collaborate with them or even approach these issues in the same manner as U.S. federal agencies do. The problem of competing organizations with converging priorities is not unique to federal law enforcement; it is a sign of bureaucratic organizations locked in a Hobbesian state of conflict where organizational imperatives counter integration. The idea is the same across government. Why should Afghan nationals, or for that matter other government agencies and non-governmental organizations, have to sort through confusing bureaucratic rules designed for use in Washington? The need to apply all elements of national power to a given conflict or armed confrontation does not mean that the U.S. should export all its agencies.

Principles of Armed Conflict

Conflict spans a spectrum from major conventional operations to security and structure-building under threat of violence. Without the threat of violence, there is no need for a military operation unless for the sake of pure massed logistics; and in that case, the operation no longer has to do with conflict per se. Arguably, the farther away on the conflict spectrum a confrontation or operation is from major conventional operations, the more likely it is to require diverse expertise to provide civil responses to various problems and to build civil structures. However, this does not negate the principles of armed conflict nor mean that they somehow cease to apply; they apply to terrorism, insurgency, or even counter-piracy, as well as conventional clashes.

United States Joint and service doctrines present the American principles of warfare. The nature of warfare has not changed, nor has the need for unity of command, simplicity, economy of force, leadership, speed and flexibility of decision, and a cohesive approach.⁸ While the need for rapid decision making may be greater as the conflict intensifies, the principles hold. Even the much-lauded counterinsurgency manual notes, “Warfare in the 21st century retains many of the characteristics it has exhibited since ancient times. Warfare remains a violent clash of interests between organized groups characterized by the use of force.”⁹ However much a hybrid of high- and low-intensity action a conflict may be, the fundamental nature of armed conflict remains unchanged.¹⁰ The attendant principles that determine how to apply a national effort to that conflict have also remained constant.

Using the interagency process in its current form in an operational theater ignores these principles. Neither the team leader in the immediate fire fight nor his commanding general control nonmilitary governmental agency personnel sharing the area of operations. Technically, the chain of responsibility for other than non-Department of Defense agencies converges with that of the military only at the office of the president. Indeed, many agencies and organizations of the U.S. government operating in conflict zones will avoid direct contact with the military for their own reasons. Most of the world, on the other hand, will view these other agencies,

their personnel, and their actions in a conflict zone as those of the U.S. armed forces, probably attributing the military for both the good and the harm done.

Failures in such areas as information or resource sharing in the face of a threat or crisis reflect not only the lack of common engagement, but also bureaucratic posturing to preserve the status quo. These self-seeking efforts show a propensity to act in accordance with bureaucratic imperatives, or as Secretary of Defense Gates put it, “a reluctance to change preferred ways of functioning, the attempt to run a war with peacetime management structure and peacetime practices, a belief that the current set of problems either was an aberration or would soon be over.”¹¹ To conclude that sending the same agencies to the next conflict will somehow alter their behavior as they compete for resources, talent, and credit is not reasonable.

Defining an Approach

In a conflict zone, we must carefully determine how the interagency process is applied to avoid creating more problems than we solve with government agency participation. Any conflict may include military forces from other nations, multinational organizations like NATO, international organizations like the United Nations, nongovernmental organizations, contractors, and transnational actors. Because of this complexity, a nation’s contribution in a conflict zone should be, at least in principle, as simple and cohesive as possible. During military operations, where lives are certain to be wagered on the success of the mission, even if that mission is to rebuild infrastructures in a hostile environment, the agency most competent by training, experience, and mandate must be given the designated lead and authority over other government agencies if we are to generate unity of effort and a common cause.

Designated lead. There are examples of success for this model of ceding resources to the qualified lead agent. Provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan, despite the evolution of the conflict there, have shown tactical success.¹² In Iraq, the convergence of General Petraeus’ and Ambassador Crocker’s personalities and the desperate outlook in 2007 during the surge produced unity of effort. Agencies send their members to a conflict zone for a constructive purpose. Once they find common goals, they can unify their efforts, even if only by the force of key leaders’ personalities and the good will of participants on the ground. The leadership should deliberately integrate the operational chain of command in the theater of conflict, rather than permit each disparate federal or contracted entity to act on its own.

Recent experience suggests that, to enable coordination and focus efforts, it is best to consolidate interagency personnel in an area of operations within or adjunct to military bases, and in some cases under the direct authority of the State Department and its ambassador, rather than in individual groups. In any conflict, the main effort is inevitably conducted by the military command, both by circumstance and by public perception. We should devise a system whereby (at least during Title 50-type conflicts) contributing U.S. government organizations must actually cede resources to those organizations accustomed to, and hopefully resourced for, conducting large-scale operations (often the military command present).

Specialized forces. The need for diverse expertise should cause the military to review its organizational design. The lethality of large-scale conventional conflict has driven the U.S. military to create and maintain pools of specialized forces for highly specific tasks. The threat drives conventional forces to construct qualifications and standards for a task-driven, specialized force across the board. It is like a military assembly line: each unit has its specified tasks that each unit member must perform to standard.

Using this mind-set, in order to construct a bridge, for example, one requires a unit of specialized engineers who build bridges. However, this provokes the question: in order to build a bridge, do we need a unit of bridge builders, or do we need a single bridge builder and a unit? The fact is that to construct a bridge, one does not need a unit of engineers. One only needs a single competent engineer and a unit that can execute whatever task it is given. The Romans did not cross the Rhine or the Ebro with legions of engineers; they crossed these rivers by the creativity and dedication of their regular legionnaires, following the instructions of a single competent engineer. Perhaps the best option would be a unit of engineers, but it is not the only option.

Today, even the most sanctified of specialized missions has shown that when “special” becomes “normal,” the only way to address many tasks is with large, conventional numbers. In Iraq and Afghanistan, the majority of U.S. military personnel engaged in training Iraqi and Afghan security forces to defend their own nation from internal threats are conventional. Training for foreign internal defense is, by definition, a core special operations task, and was once the most sacred of missions for special operations.¹³ Even special operations must be flexible, however, when the particular operation in question becomes less special and much more commonplace. Field Marshal Viscount Sir William Slim, who commanded the longest continuous allied campaign of World War II and under whose command large-scale special operations began in earnest, expressed the paradox thusly: “Any well-trained infantry battalion should be able to do what a commando can do; in the 14th Army, they could and did. This cult of special forces is as sensible as to form a Royal Corps of Tree Climbers and say that no soldier, who does not wear its green hat with a bunch of oak leaves stuck in it, should be expected to climb a tree.”¹⁴

The armed forces need to view their forces as military personnel first — personnel capable by virtue of their military culture of working efficiently together on a required task — and specialists second; or as the United States Marine Corps views itself: “Every Marine a rifleman.” Diverse expertise may consequently only mean a single source of this expertise, for example, one FBI agent working with an infantry unit, and a disciplined unit (that knows what it does not know and therefore knows what it needs) to be able to respond. The natural reluctance of governmental agencies to partner with military organizations is seen in domestic circumstances due to separation of powers, but this separation of power does not apply in the midst of a foreign conflict, and it is this environment that requires armed military personnel instead of domestic, federal police.

Likewise, the U.S. armed forces can look to historical examples for ideas on how to address today’s issues. For example, at one time the armed forces operated a school of military government in conjunction with the University of Virginia.¹⁵ This school provided the type of knowledge needed in June of 2003 in Iraq, where coalition forces were virtually the only capable, organized authorities extant and in contact with the populace. Conceptually, there are certainly a number of questions that imposing a military government on another nation rises as to modern interpretations of international law and the imposition of law. On the other hand, having a trained group of people who had studied in such a school might have helped an organization like the Coalition Provisional Authority in 2003.

Conclusions

Military planners must remain circumspect as to the application of the interagency process. If the Coalition Provisional Authority is the best recent conflict example, then the interagency process has a long evolution yet ahead of it to become useful. The dangers of using a relatively untested concept in conflicts are plain; the cost of mistakes is paid in lives. For this reason, U.S.

Joint Forces Command eliminated the more overweening aspects of effects-based operations, in which certain proponents claimed both a change in the nature of warfare and the ability to predict collective human behavior through staff planning.¹⁶ The doctrine has not been eradicated; rather, it has been redefined.¹⁷ Likewise, the time has arrived to define more specifically how we intend to apply the interagency process in conflict.

Because of the nature of warfare, those agencies most competent to the task must have overall charge of the mission. In most conflicts, this is the military, but in some, the State Department is the obvious lead element and military forces are in support. The Navy-Marine Corps team by its expeditionary nature, and often the Special Forces, are both quite accustomed to responding directly to an ambassador. In principle, especially during a conflict, interagency expertise should be placed within a unified chain of command in theater. The military in particular must have a more flexible view of appropriate tasks to make the best use of this expertise using the creative labors of its ordinary Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. Only in this form can the interagency process become an effective paradigm in the tools of the Nation.

Notes

1. See, for example, the 9/11 Commission Report, the Intelligence Commission Report, and the Robb-Silberman Report to the President.
2. U.S. Marine Corps, *United States Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO], July 2008), 17.
3. Department of Defense, *The National Defense Strategy of the United States 2008*, (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2008), 18.
4. See the NATO website for definitions, < www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-2ACD72B2-2ACFADED/natolive/topics_51633.htm > (27 May 2009).
5. Great Britain, The UK Delegation to NATO, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Comprehensive Approach, 2008-2009*, <<http://uknato.fco.gov.uk/en/uk-in-nato/comprehensive-approach>> (13 May 2009).
6. Reference to Title 50 is Title 50 U.S. Code, “War and the National Defense, 193, Subtitle A, Chapter 8, Defense Agencies and Department of Defense Field Activities.”
7. The Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Fact Book 2008*, at <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html#Geo>> (9 March 2009).
8. Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, incorporating chg. 1 (Washington, DC: GPO, 20 March 2009), I-3.
9. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: GPO, December 2006), 1-1, para. 1-1.
10. Frank Hoffman, “Hybrid Warfare and Challenges,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 52 (2009): 34.
11. Robert Gates, “A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age,” *Foreign Affairs* (January-February 2009). The secretary was referring to an earlier work during the Vietnam conflict by Robert Komer entitled *Bureaucracy Does its Thing*.
12. See, for example, Tucker B. Mansager, “Interagency Lessons Learned in Afghanistan,” *Joint Force Quarterly* (1st Qtr 2006); or U.S. Agency for International Development, “USAID PRT-QIP” at <<http://afghanistan.usaid.gov/en/Activity.91.aspx>> (27 May 2009).
13. JP 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, 17 December 2003) para. 4.
14. *William Slim, Defeat into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945* (New York, Cooper Square Press, 1956), 547.
15. See for example, Brent C. Bankus and James Kievit, “The Army and Marines and Military Government,” *Small Wars Journal online*, <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/bankuskievit.doc>> (28 May 2009).

16. BG David A. Deptula, USAF, *Effects Based Operations: Change in the Nature of Warfare*, Aerospace Education Foundation, Defense and Airpower Series, Arlington, VA, 2001.

17. General James L. Mattis, USMC, "Commander's Guidance for Effects Based Operations," *Joint Force Quarterly* (4th Quarter 2008), 105.

What is to be Done? Aligning and Integrating the Interagency Process in Support and Stability Operations

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Having Dean Acheson, Robert Lovett, and Paul Nitze in mind, [Senator] Jackson believed that people with experience and good judgment could surmount faulty organization, but not the reverse; no organizational gimmick could make up for the absence of public servants lacking these essential qualities.

—Robert Kaufman¹

Introduction: Defining the Problem(s)

Some authorities, like Senator Jackson in the epigraph above, posit a stark difference between the importance of effective organizations and that of effective people, as if they were polar opposite choices on a reform agenda. We shall argue here, however, that effective organization and effective people are coequal in their contribution to institutional endeavor. That is to say, no effective and efficient structure will make up for poor staffers, and no wise men, even the likes of Cold Warriors Acheson, Lovett, or Nitze, can enjoy the fruit of sound policy without sound implementing organizations. Starting with the assumption that “everything changed” as a result of the international terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland on September 11, 2001 (9/11), one of the U.S. Government priorities should be a heightened awareness of the need for large numbers of both effective people and organizations.

Wise policymakers and cabinet officers have always been needed, but in this age of globalization, information, CNN and Al Jazeera, non-state actors, catastrophic biological and nuclear terrorism, and the rest of the familiar litany of near-term security challenges — leadership solely from the top will never be sufficient given the range of tasks facing the United States in national and homeland security.² Rather, effective people at all levels working internationally and domestically in multiple public, private, and nonprofit organizations, are necessary, especially for effective interagency implementation of support and stability operations (SASO), the primary concern of this chapter.³ Management experts point out that the first step of complex problem solving is to define the problem, and they are absolutely right.⁴ To put it bluntly, without a consensus that the interagency and national security systems are broken, there will be no recognition that there is a problem to be solved, and the current unsatisfactory state of affairs will continue.

We Can Do Better: Aligning and Integrating Processes and Agencies

Aligning and integrating the work of U.S. interagency processes and agencies are indispensable to the creative design and effective implementation of national security policy and strategy. Interagency processes and long-range planning by the U.S. Government, to include coordinating the efforts of the National Security Council as well as Defense, State, and other cabinet departments, remain major shortcomings, as demonstrated in the case studies and analyses in

this volume. These studies and analyses also highlight the significance of public leadership and management, in terms of setting strategic direction, aligning and integrating the efforts of various domestic and international stakeholders, and emphasizing performance measures.

The connections among executive leadership, policy effectiveness, and government performance are the subject of continuing research in the public management literature. For instance, the book *Government Performance: Why Management Matters*, by Patricia Ingraham, Philip Joyce, and Amy Donahue, offers an insightful performance framework, finding that effective management leadership is indeed vital. The Ingraham et al. studies apply to performance management at all levels of government — federal, state, and local. The present volume extends the scope of public management research to emphasize interagency and international leadership. More specifically, it deals with military and civilian roles as policymakers and implementers, aligners, integrators, and results managers, or what Ingraham et al. call “grounded leadership.” It deals with the roles of the leaders and followers in charting the direction of and in implementing effective public policy.⁵ The public management research of Ingraham et al. stresses the vital role of strategic leadership and management for coordinating complex administrative systems across agencies and within government.⁶ Thus the present chapter extends the Ingraham et al. analysis from the federal government generally to the Washington node in particular and to the country team and international dimensions.

Ideas and Insights for Interagency Reform

Military and civilian public managers have to think more broadly about their domestic and international interagency responsibilities. What is to be done about the current problems facing leaders extending from the entry level all the way up to executive levels, and for managers in the new mix of public, private, and nonprofit organizations engaged in what the United Nations (UN) is addressing more broadly as governance and institution building issues?⁷ Below are five broad questions, along with ideas and insights in response, that address both the structural and personnel problems facing the United States and especially its interagency operations for counterinsurgency warfare. These questions and comments were compiled by members of the Bush School Capstone research seminar, the culminating seminar in a 2-year master’s degree program in International Affairs.⁸ This semester-long study addressed the topic of aligning and integrating military and civilian roles in stability operations by focusing on the key issues. Following are summary discussions addressing each of the five:⁹

1. What are the military and U.S. Government agencies’ historical roles and missions in stabilization and reconstruction efforts in counterinsurgency warfare (as drawn from case studies)?

The historical record reflects varying degrees of agency participation in stabilization and reconstruction. There was no evidence in the cases examined that, once the hot war ended, there was an automatic and immediate transition to civilian leadership and control of post-conflict support, reconstruction, or institution-building. For instance, in post-World War II Japan, the military ran operations for seven years in a hierarchical structure headed by General Douglas MacArthur. Some thinking about a transition to civilian control was discarded after early successes became institutionalized. In other cases, the guidelines on roles and missions were not clear. At times, an effort to be adaptable and flexible became a way to avoid addressing the difficult questions related to interagency as well as organizational responsibilities, accountability, and oversight.

Under ambiguous and dynamic circumstances, however, it is usual for the military, because of its organizational and resource capability, to fill the void. Especially in crisis situations, the tendency for existing routines and established relationships will become hard to change over time, regardless of prescribed agency roles and missions. For instance, in the case of Afghanistan provisional reconstruction teams, there were in place individual agency guidelines; yet, because of the ad hoc nature of team recruiting, lack of interagency training, and short-term deployments and operations, individual agency representatives were often unaware of their agency guidelines, responsibilities, and authority. At times, because of ongoing military conflict, civilian agencies were subsumed in actions by the better organized and resourced military components. Roles and missions under ambiguous conditions and in times of transition become especially difficult to sort out. Research did not find examples of planned transitions or orderly phasing from conflict to post-conflict to reconstruction activities.

Specific ways of providing incentives for aligning and integrating agency roles and missions may best be coupled with performance management techniques. For instance, in the evolution of provisional reconstruction teams, there were no apparent measures of success. In most cases, successful interagency operations resulted from the efforts of experienced leaders, such as military officers with Balkan peacekeeping service. Synchronizing diverse agencies would benefit from established performance standards, with systematic accountability, reporting, and oversight processes.

2. What are the recommended ways to improve leadership (for integrating and aligning roles and missions) in the interagency coordination of military-civilian operations?

A well-supported view is that training and education programs are needed, especially prior to deployment. Unfortunately, the nature of crisis action becomes an excuse for a lack of preparedness. In fact, however, the often sudden onset of crises demands a long-term, progressive system for preparing and certifying leaders and teams for complex contingency operations. The history of U.S. Government efforts in interagency education and training is not promising. For instance, where is the interagency equivalent to the military's national training centers? It may not be an overstatement to conclude that what is needed is a massive transformational effort to create a civilian agency training and education culture. A formal leadership development process would be evolved so as to explicitly link synchronized and progressive professional education, training, assignments, and promotions within a system providing opportunities to interact in diverse agency and international contexts.

In addition, there is a need for formal interagency knowledge management processes. The architecture for an interagency knowledge or learning system should include several components such as data bases, on-line learning courses, and simulation networks; pre-deployment training and certification systems; individual leadership development survey and planning instruments; subject matter networks; and an interactive center for interagency lessons learned.

At the same time, the Federal Office of Personnel Management efforts to enhance individual leader develop and education should be expanded. The leadership literature stresses the need for continuous learning, constant assessments, 360-degree feedback, and progressive assignments. These efforts to foster the development of a sense of military/civilian professional solidarity, partnership, and public service are critical for interagency coordination.

The military services stress their professional ethic. Can we define and develop the concept of an interagency professional ethic that transcends natural but sometime harmful agency loyalties?

The military service's efforts to move officers from branch to combined arms to joint training, education, certification, and promotion may serve as a model. A new interagency professional culture that systematically trains in accord with and promotes its ideals can extend the scope and reach of individuals positioned to improve the effectiveness and value of their agencies as well as serving the national interest in stability, support, and reconstruction efforts. Leadership can be developed over time with thoughtful approaches based on legitimate research knowledge. Shifting from adhocery, crisis management, and fire fight into enlightened responses by a trained and ready professional interagency cadre is not beyond the reach, capacity, or imagination of the U.S. Government.

3. What are the military and civilian leadership skill sets for conflict and post-conflict environments?

Several researchers stress being able to see the nature of individual and collective tasks within the context of the strategy and operational priorities. Linked to this concern for the big picture was the need to understand interagency resource capacities and constraints affecting achievement of unity of effort on a local, regional, country, area, and wider geographical basis. One researcher also notes the need for guidelines and standards providing a baseline for integration of interagency functions at each operational echelon, while aligning activities at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

Baselines, guidelines, and standard procedures can be perceived as barriers to creativity and innovation, and these findings strongly reinforce the importance of flexibility and adaptability in dynamic situations. Without serious efforts to synchronize overall efforts, however, there is the open-ended possibility for endless reinvention and inefficiencies. These problems are especially pronounced in situations of high personnel and organizational turnover, where the possibilities for false creativity and wasted motion are very real. Therefore, educated, experienced, and high-performing individuals, teams, and organizations are a necessary condition for interagency effectiveness.

Communication skills are especially important for enhancing interagency effectiveness at all levels. Real concerns about overcoming turf and stovepipe pathologies cannot be erased by achieving false consensus among diverse agencies for the purposes of group cohesion and conflict avoidance. Time must be allocated for agencies to ensure that interagency communications do not obfuscate facts related to core competencies, capabilities, possibilities, etc. The attitude of "I don't speak State Department" should be the beginning of an in-depth conversation to discover the true intent and meaning of interagency written and oral communications. The requirement for cross-cultural savvy applies to both interagency and intercultural communications.

A common lexicon for unifying understanding of key terms would improve interagency communications. While there is no substitute for face-to-face, on-scene interpersonal dealings, there is no excuse for the present lack of a common vocabulary to undergird a deeper understanding among agencies.

4. How should military and civilian agencies develop those leadership skills needed in the short term and the long term?

Systematic, progressive, and career-long leadership, education, and development focused on interagency skills must become part of the culture of the U.S. Government's military and

civilian agencies. Interagency subject matter expertise and experience should become part of selected individuals' career progression and be linked to promotion and other incentives, such as advanced civil schooling opportunities at prestigious schools of public and international affairs. Research studies, reports, and publications should elaborate on interagency work, stressing its importance, its career-enhancing effects, and its critical benefits for the U.S. Government and the national interests. It is also essential to formalize mentoring systems to support nontraditional career paths that extend opportunities for interagency and international work. As previous national studies of U.S. Government performance have stressed, there is in an age of globalization an urgent need to break away from stove-piped agency education and promotion systems.

At the same time, creating a reservoir of interagency talent will have to focus on individual as well as team development. Creative solutions using on-line educational technology should provide educational support for individual and team training and development. New and distributed educational networks that can meet individual as well as team/organizational training and educational development needs can substitute for or supplement full-time, long-term, traditional schooling. In a period of increasing demands and decreasing personnel, there is a need for more focused and efficient skill development programs.

5. Does the U.S. Government have a means for rating the effectiveness of civil-military coordination?

The ad hoc and personality-driven nature of many civil-military operations by the U.S. Government has been fairly characteristic, especially in the crisis atmosphere of Afghanistan and Iraq. It is noteworthy that the successful case of postwar Japan included more than two years of pre-deployment preparation, study, policy development, and capacity-building among several U.S. agencies. Nontraditional measures of effectiveness are needed for nontraditional missions and tasks, such as those required for successful support, stability, and reconstruction activities. What does it mean to conduct successful interagency operations over time? What standards are needed to measure effectiveness in interagency operations in a counterinsurgency context? The metaphor of "nested bowls" for aligning and integrating the military's strategic, operational, and tactical levels could well be useful for modeling interagency efforts to coordinate horizontally and vertically. In short, there is a need to relate local, task-oriented, mission-essential objectives with regional or national programs, priorities, resources, and oversight functions. Furthermore, all of this must be accomplished in the context of the grand strategy, viewing the U.S. national, host country, and, in most cases, international institutional levels through a big-picture lens.

The amount of information available through modern information technologies is staggering for any organization. Aggregating efficient, real-time, and focused information for improving interagency effectiveness in counterinsurgency operations will continue to be a major challenge. A search for the "deeper meaning" of useful and actionable intelligence and information requires new ideas, new systems, and real creativity. Along the same lines, more imagination would be helpful for satisfying real information needs while countering the false creativity of allowing all agencies to go their own way so far as agency-specific information reporting and coordination documents are concerned. There is certainly a need for accurate and meaningful processes for measuring interagency communications and effectiveness. Using surveys to rate employee satisfaction along with program performance measures, e.g., "balanced scorecard" techniques for assessments of interagency processes, feedback, and opinions, is the type of step that would help in creating useful knowledge.¹⁰

Current systems developed and underpinned by agency traditions, cultures, and communication patterns all serve unwittingly to splinter common management processes into complex information, personnel, finance, accounting, and logistics systems. The effect is to undermine any potential foundation for creating an interagency culture that reins in the hydra-headed monster, unifying and integrating its impulses. Everyone with interagency experience knows that we can do much better.

Concluding Thoughts: Continuous Improvements and a Generation's Work

The efforts reflected in the Capstone research project, the Interagency Research Symposium, and assembling of this volume have contributed to defining the nature of the problem. Much work remains to be done in improving agency and interagency structures, as well as educating and training a core of interagency civilian and military professionals. Aligning and integrating the efforts of various agencies and people from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in effective interagency endeavors remain key tasks for the U.S. Government in the years ahead. This is especially so in the case of support and stability operations.

Those of us involved in the different aspects of the effort recognize the huge national commitment it will take to effect necessary changes. The U.S. ability to provide international leadership requires adapting to and, in some measure, shaping the 21st century security environment, by both forming and implementing effective national security policies and processes, and improving organizational designs and leader development. The strategic environment in an age of globalization is sure to require our leading international coalitions, especially in counterinsurgency warfare and complex contingencies.

Providing effective national security in the short and long term depends in large part on continuing to improve current policies, strategies, and operations while initiating interagency and national security reforms. This volume provides a foundation for defining the nature of the interagency problems in counterinsurgency warfare and thus an approach for meeting these thus far intractable challenges through improved interagency effectiveness.

Notes

1. Robert G. Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000, p. 105. Kaufman provides this insight in his discussion of Senator Jackson's Senate Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, *Organizing for National Security*, Vol. I, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961, pp. 12-45. For the role and influence of the Jackson subcommittee, see Robert David Johnson, "The Government Operations Committee and Foreign Policy during the Cold War," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 113, No. 4, Winter 1998-99, pp. 645-671.
2. Even during the times of the State and Defense Department giants like Acheson, Lovett, and Nitze, there was great consternation about the ambiguities in the strategic environment, the lack of interdepartmental coordination, and internal agency malfunctioning, including turf issues and interpersonal conflicts among political, civilian, and military leaders. For a straightforward, credible, and personal account of these problems during World War II and the Cold War, see Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1969.
3. A reviewer of *War and Peace* points out that Tolstoy's genius was to make the commonplace not seem ordinary. Clifford Fadiman, "Foreword," in Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1942, p. xxxvi, in commenting on the view of Van Wyck Brooks notes: "It is true that to make the obvious not commonplace one has to be a Tolstoy." This chapter is not arguing that genius is required to gain an awareness of the many problems in the interagency. Many, if not all, of the complex issues and proposed solutions outlined here are said to be common knowledge in the national security policy community. The point of this monograph is to collate, analyze, reassess, and record "what we all know" about the nature of the problems as well as recommended approaches for problem solving — with the purpose of building a consensus on the need for interagency and national security reforms.

4. See, for instance, David A. Whetten and Kim S. Cameron, *Developing Management Skills*, 7th Ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2007.
5. Patricia W. Ingraham, Philip G. Joyce, and Amy Kneeder Donahue, *Government Performance: Why Management Matters*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003, p. 152. Ingraham notes that although her research group's extensive examination of federal and state government performance and management capacity "had not originally intended to study leadership — indeed, were advised not to do so — leadership surfaced as an important influence in the effective governments we studied." She goes on to write, We found that strong leadership in public organizations was most often best described as a team effort, spanning political and career staff boundaries. ... We found further that these leaders and teams had the ability and the will to move from strategic vision-setting to a very practical view of making the vision happen. This included a willingness to be involved with implementation. ... Leadership was somewhat situational, in the sense that effective leaders and leadership teams captured opportunities for change or created them if necessary. One consistent characteristic of strong leaders and teams, however, was a sound organizational base. Understanding the organization and the management capacities it required well enough to foster and sustain effective system creation was central. We called this leadership model "grounded leadership."
6. Ingraham, pp. 20-21.
7. See www.un.org/esa/progareas/governance.html, accessed June 14, 2007.
8. The May 3, 2007, session reviewed the Capstone groups' key findings, drawn from their individual research projects, as well as their insights from participating with subject matter experts during the research symposium held at the Bush School on April 5-6, 2007. Participants at the May 3d session included Patrick Baetjer, Christopher Cline, Carlos Hernandorena, Brian Polley, Katherine Rogers, Amanda Smith, and Tyson Voelkel.
9. These research questions are adapted from a Creative Associates International, Inc. conference panel and report on "Stabilization and Reconstruction: Closing the Civilian-Military Gap," held in Washington, DC, on June 20, 2006. The conference co-sponsors were the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies of the National Defense University, the Bush School of Government and Public Service, and the Triangle Institute of Security Studies. The questions were refined after discussions with the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations.
10. Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton, *The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.

Death of the Combatant Command? Toward a Joint Interagency Approach

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In the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns, one of the most important lessons . . . relearned is that military success is not sufficient. . . . These so-called soft capabilities along with military power are indispensable to any lasting success, indeed, to victory itself as Clausewitz understood it, which is achieving a political objective.

—Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense¹

Hindsight is often 20/20. We can study our efforts in Vietnam, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and even the current situations in Afghanistan and Iraq and come to some fundamental conclusions. One is that our interagency process is broken.² Why is that? If it is broken, can we fix it? In this article, we explore the problems with our current interagency process,³ suggest a solution, compare that with other possible solution sets, and discuss consequences of its implementation.

The problems with the American interagency process are complex. We do not pretend to be experts on the current process or historians recounting each incremental step along our path to the present. We do believe, however, that most of today's problems arise from a gap created by a lack of either capacity or integration, or both, below the national level. This article proposes filling that vacuum with standing, civilian-led interagency organizations, having regional responsibility for all aspects of U.S. foreign policy.⁴

Thomas Ricks posits that the decision to give the Department of Defense (DOD) the lead for postwar Iraq was problematic and may have doomed the American effort from the start, since the department lacked the capabilities to oversee a large multiagency civilian mission.⁵ If so, then why did DOD get the lead for postwar Iraq? A possible answer is that although DOD may not have had all that it needed at the outset of the war, there was no other government institution that had the budget or manpower to manage the effort.⁶

While history will judge how well DOD lived up to those postwar Iraq challenges, it seems evident now that an agency responsible for one of the instruments of power should not be responsible for integrating the efforts of all the others. At the national level, that integration is supposed to occur from within the National Security Council (NSC). The NSC advises the President, decisions are made, and the instruments of power are integrated toward our national interests. In response, the various agencies march forward to do their respective parts. Below the national level, integration is problematic. At the regional or operational level, a coherent blend of the instruments of power is dependent on cooperation.⁷

It seems logical that if true integration only occurs at the national level, execution at the regional or local levels could be fraught with problems, as the agencies representing the instruments of power are organized differently and there is no directive authority for implementation at the regional level. DOD is organized with six geographic combatant commands responsible for the various regions, but the Department of State regional organization is different. State also has six regional bureaus, but the boundaries do not match those of DOD. As an example, the U.S.

Central Command (USCENTCOM) commander must coordinate efforts with three regional State bureaus: African Affairs, Near Eastern Affairs, and South and Central Asian Affairs. The State bureau system is also relatively new, as the traditional approach to coordination has been at the Ambassador/Country Team level. The result is that the combatant commander must coordinate efforts with three Assistant Secretaries of State (leaders of State regional bureaus) and 27 Country Teams. Conversely, the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs must coordinate with three combatant commanders: those of USCENTCOM, U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), and U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM).

Integration of the informational and economic instruments of power is also problematic at the regional level. The U.S. Information Agency morphed into the Department of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs as part of the State Department. Similar to the move to appoint the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) concurrently as the Director of Foreign Assistance (a Deputy Secretary of State), the change was an attempt to better integrate efforts at the national level, but no comparable regional level structure exists. A further complication is apparent when we consider that much of our national structure evolved only to consider domestic U.S. problems. Many organizations outside DOD and State consequently did not develop an expeditionary capacity and are not structured to meet foreign demands.

Band-aids on a Sucking Chest Wound

Spurred by recent experience, gaining unity of effort within the interagency realm has galvanized so much debate that possible solutions are blooming from almost every think tank and military academic institution. While space prevents addressing each individually, these proffered solutions fall into three basic groups, running the gamut from legislative actions that restructure or add more agencies outside of DOD, to modifications to existing combatant command staffs, to a proposal that recommends completely replacing three of the regional command staffs with hybrid organizations.

A prevalent academic argument is that the flaws in the interagency process can be legislatively remedied by creating additional organizations to coordinate the efforts of existing agencies, citing as a prime example the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 as the fix for poor coordination and communication among the military Services. Nora Bensahel and Anne Moisan embrace this legislative premise and propose an accompanying organizational construct.⁸ Their approach includes shoring up the NSC leadership role by establishing a Prevention, Reconstruction, and Stabilization Cell (PRSC) within the NSC. The PRSC would absorb the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) to create a “flat” organization with 10 to 15 permanent members that would have directive authority over supporting interagency (excluding DOD) departments in policy development, strategic planning, execution of crisis management, and conflict and post-conflict operations.⁹ Unfortunately, this proposal appears to be no more than a “super” S/CRS and presents many of the same issues as the original S/CRS. These challenges include ambiguous and omitted lines of authority between military and civilian authorities, insufficient capacity to execute its responsibilities (specifically, no expeditionary capability), and possible lack of political support.

Another legislative solution is the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) model, which creates offices in each of the key civilian agencies to participate in the interagency planning process. These offices would meet quarterly with DOD and other agencies under NSC-chaired summits to coordinate their planning efforts. Similarly, the Defense Science Board

(DSB) would create cross-government contingency planning and integration task forces for countries “ripe and important” under the leadership and direction of the President and NSC.¹⁰ Not only do these models share the lack of deployable resources and ambiguous lines of authority inherent in the S/CRS and PRSC, but they also fail to provide continuous and collective oversight for the complex and global range of U.S. concerns. Moreover, they do not have directive authority to integrate with military planning efforts.

The Marine Forces Pacific Crisis Management Group (CMG) model takes a step beyond the limited planning role of the CSIS and DSB by creating a full-time standing organization to support crisis prevention and response and provide a cohesive transition from Defense to State while executing stability and recovery operations.¹¹ While certainly a step in the right direction, it adds another level of bureaucracy between the NSC and DOD/State (and correspondingly creates a competing demand for resources and personnel from other agencies) and still lacks directive authority over DOD or State actions.

Turning from the “legislatively added” organizations, there is a group of proposals, summarized by Neyla Arnas, Charles Barry, and Robert Oakley, that aims to restructure the current geographic combatant command staffs to include elements of the interagency milieu. These include the Full Spectrum Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) Concept, Super Political Advisor (POLAD), J-10, and Defense Advisor proposals.

Although the individual details differ, they all add a number of interagency advisors of varying capabilities to the combatant command staff. The most far-reaching of these staff reorganizations is that of the nascent USAFRICOM staff, which proposes a fully integrated military and non-DOD civilian interagency staff. These civilian representatives would not merely advise, but would be full-fledged members of the staff. Despite the appealingly fresh approach to staff composition, the Achilles’ heel of all of these constructs remains that the interagency representatives, whether advisors or staff, lack directive authority over their parent organizations. While any of these models would undoubtedly improve planning by broadening staff expertise, under the crucible of combat or bureaucratic pressures, they cannot compel interagency compliance with the resulting plan — no matter how comprehensive. Another drawback is that all of these proposals weight the combatant command inordinately heavily in the regional planning process. This unbalanced approach may militarize U.S. foreign policy, which, some fear, risks creating modern-day proconsuls.¹²

Significantly, the final alternative, conceived by James Carafano, proposes replacing the existing Unified Command Plan (UCP) with the U.S. Engagement Plan (U.S.-Plan). It would reduce the number of combatant commands to three and reorganize their boundaries and responsibilities. The U.S.-Plan would establish three Joint Interagency Groups (InterGroups) responsible for Latin America, Africa–Middle East, and Central and South Asia. Each InterGroup would have a military staff as the nucleus of a standing joint task force (JTF) in the event of military operations. Also, the InterGroup proposes a flexible command structure that defines operational leadership — be it civilian or military — by the nature of the task performed.¹³

This concept has substantial merit. In fact, our most significant critique is that it does not go far enough. Having only approximately a third of U.S. global interests served by this multidisciplinary organization begs the question of how crises would be managed elsewhere and why risk should be assumed in those regions lacking InterGroups. In addition, one can argue that the regions Carafano offers for combatant commanders and his proposed InterGroups are too vast, and the regional issues too varied and complex, for this small grouping to manage.

This argument appears to have been validated by creating USAFRICOM to manage issues that exceeded the capacities of existing USCENTCOM and USEUCOM staffs. Carafano also does not specify how the InterGroups would relate to the NSC, State, Ambassadors, DOD, or other combatant commands (are they peers or superiors?). Moreover, he does not specify who would lead such a nontraditional organization. While “fluidity of leadership” may be an asset in operations that transition smoothly between phases in a linear fashion, many contemporary stabilization operations can suddenly shift between combat and nation building, while some scenarios may require simultaneous actions on multiple priorities. Any confusion that delays appropriate response in such a situation could prove fatal. Despite its drawbacks, the InterGroup concept has significant merit.

Breaking the Rice Bowls

As the review above should illustrate, the world has changed since 1947, and indeed, even since Goldwater-Nichols reorganized the U.S. military Services’ relationships. The Cold War is long over, non-state actors dominate international conflict, DOD has transformed and become the dominant arm of foreign policy, and the Department of State has withered and atrophied.¹⁴ Today’s combat environments — often with a significant nation building component — are replete with entities and organizations besides the military. Unfortunately, our governmental structure has not concomitantly changed.

The absence of change does not appear to be due to a paucity of ideas, yet all proposals so far appear to share the common flaw of lacking true directive authority to integrate interagency operations.¹⁵ This is a task that the military has no authority to perform, yet current practice has effectively made DOD responsible for its success. This flies in the face of State Department responsibilities and risks militarizing America’s foreign policy.¹⁶

As noted at the outset, this article proposes standing, civilian-led interagency organizations, with regional responsibility for all aspects of U.S. foreign policy, reporting directly to the President through the NSC.¹⁷ These entities’ formal structure would include representatives from all major Federal Government agencies, including DOD, while dissolving the existing geographic combatant commands.¹⁸ These organizations would be led by highly credentialed civilians, potentially with a four-star military deputy. Their charter would include true directive authority to all agencies below the NSC, as it would relate to activities occurring in the assigned region — to include U.S. Ambassadors and Country Teams.¹⁹

The NSC would be responsible for integrating policy among these regional entities and proposing solutions to the President for intractable resource or mission conflicts. In addition to representatives and staffs of other agencies, these organizations would have assigned joint military forces, tailored to the regional missions and augmented as necessary in times of crisis. This construct would change only the authority to integrate the instruments of national power at the operational level. It would not change Title 10 military administrative command responsibility, which would continue to run from the President through the Secretary of Defense to the senior ranking military officer in the new organization. Given the joint nature of forces assigned, as well as the inherent interagency structure with both interagency directive and military command authority, we propose naming these organizations Joint Interagency Commands (JIACOMs).

The result would be an operational-level organization responsible for planning, integrating, and executing all U.S. regional foreign policy. It would contain or have direct access to and tasking authority over all U.S. agencies likely to be involved in planning and implementing these policies, up to and including the use of military force. This structure would exist permanently, whether or not contingency operations were under way. Finally, where the JIACOM interfaces at the strategic level through the NSC, it would interface with operational-tactical level activities by standing up joint interagency task forces (JIATFs) that would have the lead for local crisis management, just as combatant commands may currently elect to stand up JTFs.²⁰

Answering the “So What?”

The first question one might ask is if the formation of JIACOMs would even be feasible. The answer is a resounding maybe — and it would be hard to bring about. In the first place, the changes necessary to form JIACOMs would require significant cooperation and action from both the executive and legislative branches of government. The need for reform in our interagency process is critical and Congress must play a central role:

It is unrealistic to expect the executive branch to reform itself. Administrations are too busy with day to day operations to see the need for change and presidential directives are insufficient and ineffective for this level of reform ... [which] must be driven by Congress, in a manner similar to that achieved by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986. ... While Congress is part of the solution it is also part of the problem and requires similar reform of its own.²¹

JIACOMs are feasible only through a new National Security Act and revision to Title 10, the UCP, and various Presidential decision directives, among other documents. Funding would certainly require significant attention. At the minimum, the “non-DOD” portion of the JIACOMs must be adequately resourced to meet regional integration challenges.

As with any sea change, the formation of JIACOMs would likely carry both costs and benefits. Aside from the necessary changes in structure, authorities, and funding, the development of JIACOMs could create three new concerns. The first is a potential loss of integration among the regions. One advantage we currently enjoy with inconsistent combatant command and State bureau areas of responsibility is that we are forced to work across boundaries at the regional level. If we ensured that all elements of power were regionally integrated through the formation of JIACOMs, the burden for strategic level integration at the NSC may increase.

A second concern is a potential loss of the balance of power at the regional level. The Founding Fathers established three branches of government to ensure checks and balances. One could argue that the healthy tension between DOD and State at the regional level maintains that balance. Directive authority at the regional level equates to unity of command rather than merely unity of effort, so we run the risk of poor direction through a lack of internal criticism. However, this potential cost could be mitigated through sound leadership.

Such is also the case for the final concern: dealing with organizational culture. The various members of the JIACOMs would each be creatures of their parent organizations’ culture. The potential for organizational conflict would be high. The JIACOM leadership must find a way to embrace each organization’s culture and draw out the benefits from membership rather than allowing seeds of conflict to foment internal strife.

The formation of JIACOMs would clearly generate significant benefits, as well as costs. The major potential benefit is a significant increase in unity of effort across all the instruments of national power, through all phases of operations.²² In addition to better geographical integration, we would also enjoy better chronological integration. A second potential benefit is the increased professional development of JIACOM members. In addition to providing an enhanced career path for our most experienced military and civilian leaders, we would likely see better development of regional expertise in the JIACOM staff. Both DOD and State currently have significant developmental programs, but JIACOMs would force more robust experience overall.

A third potential benefit is that JIACOMs may facilitate both coalition and alliance-based operations from a political standpoint. It may be more palatable for some nations to accept working with a civilian-led organization rather than a purely military one. Similarly, we may see a significant increase in participation of the other non-military ministries of a contributing nation. One could also postulate that the civilian-led JIACOM would appear less threatening to many NGOs and intergovernmental organizations; therefore, we might expect better inter-national and private integration. Likewise, few could construe a civilian JIACOM leader as a provocative proconsul.

Recent experience may be the slap that refocuses our perception of previous post-conflict experiences. Regardless of perspective, today's reality should not be ignored. Our interagency process is dangerously dysfunctional. Bipartisan pundits are charging head-long with possible solutions, but all appear fatally flawed from inception.

Existing proposals either increase bureaucratic complexity or fail to proscribe true directive authority that would force the integration of myriad agencies wielding national power. Other suggestions merely add weight to an already bloated combatant command staff and risk DOD drowning the foreign policy voice of State. Although a definite break from traditional thought, the JIACOM concept may address these concerns. It does require sweeping governmental change and a willingness to shatter paradigms, but with a new Presidential administration — and while the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan are still fresh — it may be time for the death of the geographic combatant command as we know it. Instead of dissipating our peerless, precious national energies through lack of focus, we have the opportunity to harness all elements of national power through a Joint Interagency Command and truly labor as one.

Notes

1. Robert M. Gates, remarks delivered to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, January 26, 2008.

2. Nora Bensahel and Anne M. Moisan, "Repairing the Interagency Process," *Joint Force Quarterly* 44 (1st Quarter 2007), 106–108, available at <www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/jfq_pages/editions/i44/30.pdf>.

3. For purposes of this article, the term inter-agency includes those from the Departments of State, Treasury, Justice, Transportation, and all others as detailed in Joint Publication (JP) 3–08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Coordination During Joint Operations*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 2006), but will exclude those from the Department of Defense (DOD), although the authors recognize that DOD is itself an agency and would by other definitions be included in that term. Examples of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) include the United Nations, World Health Organization, Red Cross, and Red Crescent (among others), while nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) include Doctors Without Borders, CARE, and so forth.

4. JP 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 14, 2007), I–15. In addition to the plethora of interagency actions, this proposal includes the entire range of military operations, such as force protection — which requires significant cooperation from agencies external to DOD.

5. Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 78–79. Ricks is citing an unpublished RAND Corporation study faxed to the Secretary of Defense on February 8, 2005.
6. Gates.
7. As noted in JP 3–08, military operations must be strategically integrated and operation-ally and tactically coordinated with the activities of other agencies of the U.S. Government, IGOs, NGOs, regional organizations, the operations of foreign forces, and activities of various host nation agencies. Sometimes the joint force commander (JFC) draws on the capabilities of other organizations; sometimes the JFC provides capabilities to other organizations; and sometimes the JFC merely de-conflicts his activities with those of others.
8. Bensahel and Moisan.
9. Neyla Arnas, Charles Barry, and Robert B. Oakley, *Harnessing the Interagency for Complex Operations, Defense and Technology Paper 16* (Washington, DC: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, August 2005), 7, available at <www.ndu.edu/ctnsp/Def_Tech/DTP%2016%20Harnessing%20the%20Interagency.pdf>.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., 16. Note that the name reflects only the Service sponsoring this research. The Marine Corps would not “manage” this group.
12. See the extensive critique of the current out-of-balance relationship in terms of resources, personnel, and authority between DOD and State in Howard D. Belote, “Proconsuls, Pretenders, or Professionals? The Political Role of Regional Combatant Commanders,” *Essays 2004: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2004).
13. James Jay Carafano, “Herding Cats: Understanding Why Government Agencies Don’t Cooperate and How to Fix the Problem,” *Heritage Lectures* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, July 2006), 4.
14. Richard H. Kohn, “The Erosion of Civilian Control of the Military in the United States Today,” *Naval War College Review* (Summer 2002), 9; and Kenneth R. Dahl, *New Security for New Threats: The Case for Reforming the Interagency Process*, unpublished manuscript, The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, July 2007, 15, available at <www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/07defense_dahl.aspx?rssid=executive%20branch>.
15. Carafano, 3.
16. Belote, 1.
17. JP 1, I–15. This proposal would include the entire range of military operations.
18. Note that the functional combatant commands (U.S. Joint Forces Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Strategic Command, and U.S. Transportation Command) remain in this construct, but their assigned forces would be employed by and integrated through our pro-posed new structure. At some point, however, the responsibilities and indeed the very existence of the functional combatant commands may similarly be revised. All existing regional boundaries would need to be reassessed and standardized among U.S. Government agencies.
19. Authority would be given by either law or Presidential decree. Obviously, this would require changes to existing U.S. Code, Title 10, the Unified Command Plan, and a host of joint and Service doctrinal documents.
20. Note that these joint interagency task forces would report to their “parent” Joint Interagency Command, similar to a joint task force reporting to a combatant command in the current structure.
21. Dahl, 4.
22. JP 1, I–8–22.

Filling Irregular Warfare's Interagency Gaps

COL Lew Irwin, Ph.D.

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A government ill-executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad government. ... The ingredients which constitute energy in the executive are unity; duration; an adequate provision for its support; and competent powers.

—Alexander Hamilton¹

Hamilton did not have the modern U.S. government's execution of irregular warfare in mind when he laid down his principles of executive leadership, but he would readily recognize violations of those principles if he were alive today. The U.S. government has consistently failed to apply the full weight of its instruments of power during irregular warfare conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, largely due to an inability or unwillingness of various agencies to agree upon the ends, ways, and means needed to prosecute those wars. When coupled with organizational structures that make disjointed visions and efforts the norm rather than the exception, this strategic failing has had dire consequences for U.S. national security, thwarting the "whole-of-government" approach needed to overcome irregular warfare's complex challenges. Accordingly, most participants and observers agree that the American government has to reorganize its interagency process to succeed in these wars and future national security challenges.

Unfortunately, that is where the consensus ends. For while nearly everyone recognizes the need for interagency process reform, few agree on the specific prescriptions for that improvement. Proposed solutions include designs for complex interagency coordinating structures, unrealistic calls for heightened senior-leader participation and centralized oversight, and plans for expanding the capacities of agencies that are ill-suited for the tasks required. These solutions typically hinge upon a pervasive assumption that effective interagency cooperation and integration will occur if only the proper coordinating mechanisms are created. This assumption is not only false, it also misreads history, human nature, and the practical experience gleaned from Afghanistan, Iraq, and other irregular warfare operations.

For a variety of reasons, the U.S. government has turned to the Department of Defense (DOD) as a stopgap substitute for actual robust "whole-of-government" interagency structures in executing irregular warfare (IW). The results are mixed in the best cases and profoundly ineffective in the worst. The interagency problem primarily stems from a fundamental disunity of effort and incoherence of end-state vision among key U.S. agencies at the national-strategic level. Also contributing is a lack of command authority and essential expertise at the theater-strategic and operational levels. But as the Department of Homeland Security's faults compellingly illustrate, the answer — resoundingly — is not to superimpose another bureaucratic coordinating apparatus across the different agencies involved.² Nor does the answer lie in rebuilding the National Security Council in an attempt to exercise centralized planning and oversight of national security operations, especially IW operations that do not readily lend themselves to deterministic, "cookie-cutter" solutions. Instead, any truly effective solution will involve revising agency mandates, consolidating lines of authority, building relevant expertise among key agencies, realigning incentive structures, and decentralizing authority and execution.

This article advances a number of assertions related to conducting irregular warfare in today's environment. First, the U.S. government's existing interagency mechanisms have failed to effectively integrate and coordinate agency resources and efforts, a problem that arises primarily from a disjointedness of authority and vision at the national-strategic level. The result is correspondingly adverse effects at the theater-strategic and operational levels. Commonly proposed solutions to this major problem depend upon a set of faulty assumptions that makes these proposals unlikely to succeed, given the realities of the key agencies' cultural norms, level of existing expertise, comparative resources, and core defining tasks. Instead, any feasible and effective solution to the interagency problem should: (1) provide clear, task-driven strategic-level statements of intent, responsibility, and authority; (2) enable key agencies to develop relevant expertise at all levels; (3) give agencies operational control over personnel from other agencies to realize true unity of vision and effort; (4) integrate other-agency personnel throughout the combatant commands; and (5) create interagency service career incentives.

To be clear, this article does not represent a call for DOD primacy across the spectrum of "hard" and "soft" applications of American power. On the contrary, while it is true that the DOD does require access to the expertise and resources needed to carry out its specific IW responsibilities, the broader expertise required to successfully prosecute irregular warfare, nation-building, and stability operations cannot and should not reside solely within DOD. Instead, the challenges associated with these missions will require developing leaders and capabilities within other key agencies with existing or developing national security roles, jurisdiction, and subject-matter expertise. So while the U.S. military is the correct vehicle to deliver American power in the non-permissive environments where most nation-building missions and all IW operations occur, it is equally important to develop complementary resources, leaders, and capabilities in other agencies that will be engaged in irregular warfare.

Admittedly, changes of this magnitude will not come easily. Implementation will require overcoming major practical and political obstacles. As such, it will be necessary to create a new functional combatant command — a U.S. Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command, led by a senior executive from outside the DOD — to help surmount the obstacles. But the bottom-line remains that in spite of claims or theories to the contrary, the only feasible path to interagency unity of effort is true unity of command. History teaches that there is no feasible substitute for a clear statement of commander's intent and the leverage of command authority to implement it.

Disunity of Effort: Problem, Scope, and Cause

Gaps in the interagency process, beginning at the national-strategic level and subsequently trickling down level by level, have led to an incoherence of effort in Afghanistan and Iraq. These gaps bode poorly for future IW, stability, and reconstruction missions. Agencies and their leaders disagree regarding desired end-states and then pursue their own visions, as no single agency has sufficient leverage or authority to compel any others to follow its lead. Not surprisingly, then, the IW interagency effort demonstrates political scientist John W. Kingdon's insightful description of American bureaucratic practices in general. He noted that U.S. agencies typically suffer from an incoherence of vision and effort while "nobody leads anybody else."³ Observers inside and outside of the U.S. government, including retired General Barry McCaffrey, Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid, and others, have offered similarly stark assessments of American IW efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.⁴

This disunity of effort shows itself in a number of ways. Projects are undertaken where they are least needed, as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other non-DOD agencies choose not to operate in non-permissive security environments. Compounding this weakness, these agencies then complete projects that are only partially resourced, such as constructing schools without providing the teachers needed to staff them; building courthouses or jails where no trained judges or prosecutors exist; or undertaking other similarly shortsighted projects that have impact only if one's metric for success is counting how many projects have been completed. Conversely, the military is too often guilty of disproportionately focusing on security-centered metrics that underemphasize the development of the rule of law, institutions of national and local governance, economic infrastructure, or much needed literacy programs, all vitally important to IW success. These critical aspects of progress are overlooked on a regular basis.

The current operational-level corrections for the interagency problem are not nearly as effective as they are claimed to be. While Afghanistan's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) do in fact provide a venue for interagency coordination at the brigade level, the truth is that they vary widely in their levels of effectiveness, cohesion, and coherence.⁵ As an example, a senior member of NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, the agency with nominal authority over the PRTs, indicated that he did not believe that he or other NATO military leaders could align the PRTs' efforts with the NATO command's specific lines of operations. Instead, he felt that the PRT members' ultimate loyalties resided with their parent U.S. agencies or their home governments.⁶ One observer suggests that PRT performance hinges almost solely upon the ability of the military commander to work around the interagency and coalition obstacles to success.⁷ While there are numerous venues for interagency coordination at the joint task force level of operations, it is clear to all participants that agreements reached in those venues ultimately have to be approved by the leaders of the parent organizations, far from the tip of the spear. These challenges are further exacerbated by the heavy concentration of civilian contractors, as well as the veritable "alphabet soup" of agencies with roles, responsibilities, or expertise relevant to the IW mission. There are 13 other-than-DOD agencies listed in Joint Publication 3-08, the Defense Department manual on interagency, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental cooperation.⁸

There is no shortage of presidential guidance or prescribed interagency coordinating structures, so simply creating more "legislation" or "direction" is not the solution. The Clinton Administration's 1997 National Security Presidential Directive-56, *Managing Complex Interagency Operations*, outlined new mechanisms for facilitating interagency coordination during peace and stability operations.⁹ Presidential Decision Directive-71, *Strengthening Criminal Justice Systems in Support of Peace Operations*, of 2000 defined the roles and responsibilities of federal agencies related to enhancing civilian law enforcement capabilities in peace operations.¹⁰ After implementing National Security Presidential Directive-1, *Organization of the NSC System*, in 2001, the Bush Administration gave further explicit interagency guidance in National Security Presidential Directive-44, *Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations*, published in 2005.¹¹ DOD Directive 3000.05 operationalizes that guidance, as do several other documents.¹² Early in 2009, the State Department published the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, written collaboratively with input from each U.S. agency that has a major national security role.¹³ Obviously, there is no shortage of interagency guidance.

What all of these documents share in common, however, is a basic lack of statutory authority allowing any one agency of the U.S. government to directly manage the resources or personnel of any other agency. Put another way, each of these documents encourages the agencies to work together, but none of them actually mandates cooperation or integration. As a result, each agency is ultimately free to pursue its own vision and decisions. To put the scope and complexity of the IW and nation-building challenges into proper perspective, former Afghan Minister of Finance Ashraf Ghani and co-author Clare Lockhart identify ten major functions of the state that have to be achieved for nation-building to succeed:

- Implement the rule of law.
- Provide security and manage the use of force.
- Provide administrative control.
- Manage public finance.
- Develop human capital.
- Provide social welfare.
- Provide basic services.
- Manage public assets.
- Establish commercial markets.
- Facilitate public borrowing.¹⁴

Clearly, no single agency of the U.S. government has the expertise or resources to independently accomplish these nation-building tasks, and each of the ten functions requires coordinated and integrated actions from different U.S. agencies. Yet no one agency is in charge under the current organizational structure.

Inevitably, the results have reflected a lack of coordination. In Afghanistan, Stephen Flanagan and James Schear of the Center for Strategic and International Studies identify “a progressive loss of momentum” since 2006, a trend they attribute to several obstacles, including “the inherent weakness of state institutions, the dearth of human capital, inadequate international resources, and a lack of visible progress at the local level to give Afghans hope.”¹⁵ They cite poor development practices, the narcotics trade, violence, and corruption as factors that have contributed to a dismally short 43.77-year Afghan life expectancy, a meager 28.1 percent literacy rate, and other key indicators reflecting a grim quality of life for the average Afghan.¹⁶ In an insightful report highlighting conditions on the ground in Afghanistan, General McCaffrey lauds the quality of the military’s kinetic operational efforts, but he then goes on to describe a nation that is “in misery,” given its constant warfare, short life expectancy, high infant and pregnancy mortality rates, and wholesale government corruption.¹⁷ In influential works on similar problems in Iraq, a number of regional experts offer accounts that are consistent with these perspectives.¹⁸ The United States clearly has not gotten the interagency-irregular warfare model right just yet.

Commonly Proposed Solutions and Faulty Assumptions

The commonly proposed solutions to the U.S. government's interagency challenges typically fit into one of three categories: increasing bureaucratic complexity, enhancing other-than-DOD agency capacity, and adding key leader engagement and oversight.

Increasing Bureaucratic Complexity

One commonly proposed solution emphasizes increasingly complex bureaucratic coordinating mechanisms, with expanded and complicated rules for interagency interaction, to provide additional, improved venues for interagency coordination. These technocratic approaches usually emphasize new coordinating venues, interagency checklists, common terminologies, or a realignment of operating procedures. An example of this line of thinking was the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in 2005 issuing *The Post Conflict Reconstruction Essential Tasks Matrix*, an exhaustive compilation of the individual requirements for a complete nation-building mission.¹⁹ This list includes hundreds of tasks. Similarly, analyst John Pulliam suggests realigning the State Department and DOD regional operational boundaries — redrawing the operational maps — to help facilitate common operating practices.²⁰ Other proposals along these lines have addressed the need for “official” interagency language and terminology, while still others have focused on redesigning the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups and similar operational-level interagency coordinating venues.

Enhancing Other Agency Capacity

A second set of solutions calls for enhancing the irregular warfare capabilities of other-than-DOD agencies. Examples include the effort to create a Civilian Response Corps within the State Department, as well as other proposals to scrap the DOD's geographic combatant command structure altogether in favor of a set of functional interagency commands, thereby deemphasizing the military's role while expanding the role of the U.S. ambassadors in each nation. Like other State Department overseas postings, this proposal counts on volunteers to step forward for each contingency.²¹ Similar ideas have included creating an independent organization responsible for integrating civilian and military planning, or replacing the geographic combatant commands with “regional embassy-like teams with all agencies represented.”²² Related initiatives are under consideration in other agencies that traditionally focus on America's domestic operations, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Justice.

Key Leader Engagement and Oversight

A third category of solutions focuses upon the largely unrealistic calls for heightened senior leader attention or centralized oversight of IW operations at the national level. Examples of this line of thinking include a proposal that would create a “czar,” or Deputy National Security Adviser for Interagency Affairs, as well as calls for the creation of Crisis Action Teams for each IW mission.²³ Another related idea includes a proposal to expand the National Security Council in an attempt to give it a major role in the planning and oversight of these missions. Other concepts call for increased leader emphasis and oversight, with some proposals focusing on the President's role and others highlighting the role of the Secretary of Defense. Proponents are constantly lobbying for an increase in the level of priority assigned to various stability operations and IW missions.²⁴

In every category, however, the proposed solutions fall short of solving the interagency problem, as each leads to ever-increasing dialogue between agencies without actually addressing the fundamental cause of the disunity of effort. Interagency practitioners find it hard to believe that additional coordinating bodies, complex checklists and plans, or extra presidential directives will result in more effective interagency operations. As long as agency personnel remain ultimately accountable to “the home office” instead of leaders on the ground, and the agencies in question do not have adequate opportunities to develop the operational- and strategic-level expertise needed to meet the complex challenges of IW, these operations will remain disjointed and ineffective.

Likewise, these proposed solutions almost always rest upon a set of faulty assumptions that are likely to undermine the prospect for success when implemented. For example, each of the solutions assumes to some degree that non-DOD agencies are able to operate in non-permissive security environments, which is simply not the case. Proponents also assume that the key government agencies have the expertise needed to carry out the tasks required for nation-building and IW, such as creating the elements of rule of law, building local and national institutions of governance, or constructing other civil institutions and infrastructure. This assumption is false as well. For example, the U.S. embassy in Kabul was given responsibility for overseeing the development of Afghan national and provincial governing institutions. While the embassy personnel and their interagency counterparts proved adept at their core competencies of strategic-level policy coordination, communication, and reporting, they fell far short of what was needed to implement governance at the national, provincial, and local levels. This shortfall was evident in the poor quality of the mentoring, inadequate planning, and low level of resolution in tracking mechanisms. The Department of State’s core competency of conducting foreign policy clearly does not equate to the ability to build foreign governmental capacity, especially below the national-strategic level.

Another pervasive assumption that underpins the proposed interagency solutions is the idea that the lack of coordination is merely due to a shortage of venues for coordination and dialogue. As this thinking goes, if all U.S. government agencies were to routinely sit down together, they would achieve consensus regarding a common vision of the desired strategic end-state and actions needed to achieve it. Experience shows that this assumption just does not hold up, even among agencies with nominally hierarchical relationships, such as the State Department and USAID. Instead, a more common scenario is for agencies to disagree over their visions, and to “opt out” when decisions are made that contradict their views. Where there is no forcing function to compel cooperation or unified effort, collaboration rarely occurs. These solutions also dismiss the problems associated with multiple points-of-entry into the U.S. government found in irregular warfare theaters. Host nation leaders, host nation agencies, allies, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations each commonly seek to “exploit the seams” between U.S. agencies, often shopping leader-to-leader or agency-to-agency until they get the answer they are seeking to a resource or policy question.

Finally, some solutions assume that placing a senior leader from the State Department or USAID into a geographic or functional combatant leadership position will somehow automatically empower that person to lead at the theater-strategic or operational levels, functions that are often inconsistent with those agencies’ core defining tasks and organizational cultures. The reality is that leaders from the Department of State, USAID, and other U.S. agencies require significant training and developmental assignments in relevant commands before they are capable of exercising such demanding responsibilities.

A Feasible Interagency Solution

In crafting a workable framework for the U.S. government, the Founders created a system of separated, shared, and fragmented powers aimed primarily at minimizing the potential for abuse of authority. They emphatically rejected the fragmentation of executive authority, however, instead creating a unitary executive to exercise presidential powers. As Alexander Hamilton noted in *The Federalist* #70, many historic colonies and other egalitarian societies had implemented organizational schemes aimed at dividing executive power among different actors within government. None of these approaches worked, however, leading to Hamilton's telling observation that whatever these fragmented executive structures might be in theory, they had uniformly failed in practice, regardless of the good intentions of the designers.²⁵

Speaking specifically of the U.S. government's executive branch, and relying upon a close observation of the failures of divided executive authority throughout history, Hamilton identified four components essential to realizing "energetic," or effective, executive leadership. These elements are unity, duration, an adequate provision for support, and competent powers.²⁶ Unity refers to mathematical unity, or the idea that the only effective executive is one person, ultimately responsible and accountable for exercising his authority. Hamilton described at length the fallacy of investing one set of executive responsibilities in multiple people. Duration is the idea of a fixed period of executive authority and responsibility, accompanied by periodic scrutiny, performance reviews, and accountability mechanisms. Adequate provision for support encompasses both appropriate compensation and a staff sufficient to enable the executive to succeed. The phrase competent powers refers to providing the executive leader with sufficient authority to carry out the offices assigned responsibilities, without circumscribing or limiting those powers in a way that prevents the mission from being accomplished. Applied to the modern context, Hamilton argued that history discounts the notion, or "hope," that merely creating enough venues for interagency dialogue will generate consensus, more effective coordination, or efficient execution of complex operations.

Examining the same problem more recently, political scientist and organizational theorist James Q. Wilson analyzes why some bureaucratic agencies are successful in the execution of their responsibilities while others fail. Using armies, schools, and prisons as representative bureaucratic agencies, Wilson attributes the success of the German Army against the French in World War II to an organizational culture which emphasized clearly understood objectives and decentralized planning and execution.²⁷ Citing military historian Martin van Creveld's careful analysis, he highlights the fact that success was realized through the Germans' "mission-oriented command system." Under this system, higher commanders expressed their intent in "an unmistakable way" while allowing subordinate commanders to exercise wide latitude in making personnel, resource allocation, and operational planning decisions, taking advantage of the subordinates' proximity to the situation and their superior understanding of circumstances on the ground.²⁸ In turn, subordinate commanders fostered independent decision making and decentralized authority down to the lowest level, while holding subordinates strictly accountable for the consequences of their actions and severely punishing infractions.²⁹ Keeping Hamilton and Wilson's analyses and logic in mind, any effective solution to the U.S. government's interagency problems should include the following.

(1) The interagency solution provides clear, task-driven, strategic-level statements of intent, responsibility, and authority. Most strategic documents currently emphasize vague "goals" that sound more like rhetorical platitudes or ambitious hopes than specific guidance. Furthermore,

these goals can be interpreted differently among the various agencies according to their own organizational cultures and core competencies. As a result, the Army has viewed IW largely as a conventional security operation — though this perspective is changing — while the Department of State, USAID, and other agencies have interpreted the same goals in ways consistent with their organizational cultures. As Wilson notes, “The State Department has goals, but they are so general that no executive can derive from them a clear definition of the department’s tasks.”³⁰ To succeed in complex IW missions, the national leadership will have to create and clearly articulate one vision for each irregular warfare theater of operations, a vision built using one common language that clearly defines exact tasks to be accomplished and assigns specific roles, responsibilities, and authorities to the relevant agencies. Similarly, the national leadership is required to define and assign specific goals for improved interagency performance and then hold those agencies accountable.

(2) The solution should enable agencies to develop relevant interagency and IW expertise at every level. The agencies playing primary roles in IW have only part of the expertise required to succeed in these lengthy, complex, and demanding missions. These agencies often have relevant expertise at one end of the strategic spectrum while lacking corresponding skill sets at the other levels of warfare. Accordingly, any solution to the interagency challenge for IW has to assist all agencies in their development of subject-matter experts for each set of tasks and area of responsibility. These may include, but are not limited to, operators and planners from the State Department, USAID, DOD, and other responsible agencies. This task-by-task and country-by-country expertise cannot be developed merely by reading books. It is developed by means of a focused and persistent effort over time, in an attempt to understand the challenges of nation-building and IW as well as the culture, demography, geography, politics, infrastructure, economics, key leaders, and associated transnational movements of those particular countries and regions.

Put another way, America cannot afford to continue to apply ad hoc solutions to recurring challenges. Instead, it needs to build and maintain the expertise required to execute nation-building and IW missions. To facilitate the sharing of interagency and IW lessons learned across agencies, it will be helpful to create a national security clearinghouse similar to the Center for Army Lessons Learned. To avoid agency parochialism, this center should be housed in the National Security Council. As the U.S. Joint Forces Command leadership has noted, “The joint force will need patient, persistent, and culturally savvy people to build the local relationships and partnerships essential to executing irregular warfare.”³¹

(3) The interagency solution needs to give the designated lead agency operational control over personnel from other agencies if we are to realize true unity of vision and effort. Any feasible and desirable interagency approach requires giving combatant and joint task force commanders operational control over interagency personnel and the subject-matter experts, during the time they are assigned to that command. One benefit of operational control will be to provide genuine professional development and education opportunities for national security planners and operators from all relevant agencies, facilitating the cross-fertilization of organizational cultures and expertise as well as enhanced interagency effectiveness at all levels of planning and execution. Likewise, commanders should have streamlined access to funds that provide direct, significant, and visible impacts in the lives of average citizens within the theater of operations. Practitioner and thinker John Nagl identifies the Commander’s Emergency Response Program as one such vehicle.³² The typical current approach is for the Department of State and other key non-DOD agencies to retain final approval for spending decisions at their headquarters in Washington, D.C. Similarly, this level of operational control requires civilian contractors’

employment contracts be results-based rather than merely time-based, a move consistent with the governmental reforms suggested by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, architects of the “Reinventing Government” initiative³³. In a sense, these moves to decentralize operational decision making and personnel control will take advantage of the benefits of the broader system of “federalism,” where the key decisions that affect local operations are made by the leaders closest to the situation.

(4) The solution should integrate personnel from various agencies throughout the functional and geographic combatant commands. This change would bring differing perspectives into the planning, resourcing, and operational processes of every command, ensuring that each agency has the opportunity to have its viewpoints heard. It would also be wise to create new deployable interagency structures to mobilize as needed to jumpstart the interagency process, similar to the U.S. Joint Forces Command’s Joint Enabling Capabilities Command and its deployable elements that help task forces bridge the gap between single-service and joint operations. These new interagency structures would represent a cadre of trained specialists in nation-building and IW, with emphasis upon the interagency process and the overlaps and gaps between agencies. It may be appropriate to build these “Standing Joint Interagency Core Elements” in each geographic and functional combatant command. Interim measures might include placing deputies for economic development (from USAID) and governance and diplomacy (from the State Department) in each combatant command, similar to the mix in U.S. Africa Command. In sum, the basic objective would be to shift the military’s primary focus from security force-centered operations to citizen-centered ones, again consistent with the reform themes advocated by Osborne and Gaebler.³⁴ This change would build upon two earlier operational- and tactical-level interagency success stories, the Marine Corps’ Combined Action Platoons and the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program; both achieved significant interagency cooperation in Vietnam.³⁵

(5) The solution needs to create meaningful interagency service career incentives. Any solution to the interagency problem will also need to align personnel incentives with the specific IW tasks that the agencies are assigned. These career incentives may take the form of promotions, awards, financial incentives, or professional educational opportunities, ear-marked for the deployable personnel from the DOD and the other key agencies who become the cadre of interagency, IW, and humanitarian assistance and development missions. Unfortunately, U.S. agencies typically take the opposite approach in their personnel practices, whether due to promotion considerations, a desire for balanced experience throughout the organizations, or a perceived need to offer opportunities fairly. Wilson notes, “U.S. agencies distribute assignments in ways that seem to minimize the chance for key employees to become expert in their tasks.”³⁶ As James Madison wrote in *The Federalist* #51, “Ambition must be made to counteract ambition,” meaning that the agencies’ most talented individuals should receive equal opportunities to pursue leadership development and advancement.³⁷

Overcoming Political and Practical Obstacles

Changes of this magnitude will not come easily, whether viewed from a practical perspective or a political one. Foreign policy practitioners have been skeptical of the expansion of the military’s role in the execution of foreign policy since the 1990s, when the Clinton Administration gave the DOD new responsibilities for demining, drug interdiction, antiterrorism, disaster relief, and other unconventional missions.³⁸ As a result, political obstacles to these proposed changes to interagency practices will include concerns about a perceived militarization of U.S. foreign policy. Along these lines, journalist Dana Priest asserted in a recent book that a mismatch exists between the “culture and mission” of the demands of reconstruction and stabilization operations

and the U.S. military's mindset.³⁹ She argues that the demands of the Global War on Terrorism have exceeded even the broad capabilities of the military, stretching it too thin while requiring skills and expertise not available in the DOD.⁴⁰

Similarly, bureaucratic politics and existing organizational cultures will create additional resistance to change. Specifically, attempts to reduce or change the roles, responsibilities, or resources of any of the major U.S. agencies involved in nation-building and IW probably will result in bureaucratic "pushback" that can undermine the effort. Therefore, any solutions to the problem of interagency gaps should be additive to all organizations concerned. That is, to be successful, organizational changes generally have to increase agency resources rather than subtract from them, and these changes should not threaten the existing functions and organizational culture of the agencies affected. Wilson found that additive types of changes — or the addition of roles and resources — are the ones most likely to succeed, given bureaucratic and political realities.⁴¹

From a practical perspective, the main obstacles to this proposal center largely on the lack of relevant expertise that agencies require to execute the nation-building and IW tasks, as well as the current DOD-driven combatant command structure's limit on providing career incentives and senior leadership opportunities to non-DOD personnel. These practical obstacles include a lack of learning opportunities and mechanisms to provide interagency and irregular warfare skills for civilian agency personnel. Civilian employees do not have significant opportunities to develop the operational planning expertise that becomes second-nature in the DOD's planning culture, or the career incentives to develop these professional skills — although senior-level field assignments such as the Deputy Chief of Mission are in fact highly coveted within the Department of State. Finally, senior leaders from the State Department, USAID, and other key agencies with a role in IW do not have a chance to serve a culminating assignment as a combatant commander under the current structure, thus maximizing their rationale for pursuing "home office" assignments within their parent agencies rather than committing to the interagency track.

Creating an additional functional combatant command, the U.S. Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command, led by the State Department or USAID, would aid in overcoming many of these impediments. Headed by a four-star equivalent civilian from USAID or the State Department, this command would provide a developmental track for aspiring planners and operators from USAID, Department of State, and other relevant agencies, as well as promotion opportunities and career incentives. The new command would facilitate the integration, interaction, and development of personal relationships among key agencies, while enabling the State Department, USAID, and other non-DOD agencies to develop much-needed planning and operational expertise at the theater-strategic and operational levels. Movement back and forth from the U.S. Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command to mainstream State Department and USAID assignments would serve to cross-fertilize those agencies, DOD, and the other combatant commands. Similar to the organization of U.S. Africa Command, it would be appropriate to provide a military deputy to the new command, and to integrate DOD personnel at every level. The creation of this combatant command would be additive, permitting the agencies to maintain their organizational cultures, basic capabilities, and structures, while helping to demilitarize the face of American foreign policy and at the same time enhancing the interagency process.

If America intends to continue to attempt to "fix failed states," then it is imperative that we reshape the relationships among the relevant U.S. government agencies. Using the DOD as a

stopgap substitute for actual “whole-of-government” structures in the execution of irregular warfare and nation-building has yielded results that have been lackluster at best. It is quite likely that more of these nation-building and IW missions will occur in the future.⁴² Approaches that give agencies all of the responsibility for such missions but insufficient authority to accomplish them are destined to fail. Our nation ignores the basic and immutable principles of executive leadership outlined by Hamilton and others at its peril.

Notes

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29. Ibid., 16-17 and 25.
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Interagency Command and Control at the Operational Level: A Challenge in Stability Operations

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Land power success in stability operations will require interagency command structures at the operational level and the concurrent development of a more effective interagency “culture” for these missions. The future probability of military engagement in stability operations is high. Land power, broadly speaking, bears the brunt of the planning and execution of such missions.

Stability operations are military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment and provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure, reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.¹ Land power plays a leading role in stability operations, which concentrate on population control, security, and development activities. Military forces drawn heavily from the U.S. Army engage in stability operations to establish, safeguard, or restore basic civil services. They act directly and in support of government agencies. Stability operations often involve both coercive and cooperative actions. They lead to an environment in which the other instruments of national power can predominate.

The very definition of stability operations raises the problem of how to command and control endeavors that are by nature Joint, interagency, and often multinational. Since the U.S. government will continue to conduct stability operations, the U. S. defense establishment must develop a comprehensive view to integrate military land power with its interagency partners for these deployments. Although stability operations are an interagency and intergovernmental effort, challenges and shortcomings in coordinating and resourcing efforts across executive branch departments often result in the U.S. Army carrying a disproportionate burden in conducting these operations.² While the Army will play a critical role in executing stability operations, and bear significant responsibility for planning in the pre-execution phase of stability operations, it will not be alone.³ During the planning and execution cycle, the Army is directly participating with organizations throughout the government to define the most appropriate and essential roles for the military and civilian agencies in stability operations.⁴

Land power for stability operations is a holistic mix of capabilities drawn from the U.S. Army and a host of other federal agencies. A partial listing of these agencies includes the Department of State (DOS), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the Department of Agriculture. Critical challenges are establishing unity of effort and command over such diverse institutions and structuring appropriate command organizations at the operational level for maximum effectiveness.

Strategic Context

A U.S. Joint Forces Command study on the future of warfare lends credence to the view that the future holds a high potential for instability due to demographic, energy, and climate trends. This Joint Operating Environment 2008 report stated, “The next quarter century will challenge U.S. joint forces with threats and opportunities ranging from regular and irregular wars in remote lands, to relief and reconstruction in crisis zones, to sustained engagement in the global

commons.” The analysis implies that U.S. military forces will engage in persistent conflict over the next quarter century.⁵

In this era of persistent conflict, rapidly evolving terrorist structures, transnational crime, and ethnic violence complicate international relations and create belts of state fragility and instability that present a grave threat to national security. Drivers of conflict (sources of instability that push parties toward open conflict) include religious fanaticism, global competition for resources, climate change, residual territorial claims, ideology, and the desire for power. While journeying into this uncertain future, leaders will increasingly call on stability operations to reduce the drivers of conflict and instability and to build local institutional capacity to forge sustainable peace, security, and economic growth.⁶

Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission. The Department of Defense (DOD) must be prepared to conduct and support them across all activities including doctrine, organizations, training, education, exercises, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and planning.⁷ This mandate implies the need for substantial ground forces that can successfully execute the resulting contingency operations produced by such an unstable and volatile world. These land power forces must contain an integrated mix of civilian and military capabilities to address the core sources of instability and conflict.

Unity of Command and Unity of Effort

While the functions of command are eternal, the nature of command must evolve in scale and scope, given developments in technology and the mission. If the United States remains involved in stability operations, the Armed Forces, together with their civilian partners, must apply doctrinal principles that are applicable to these missions. Chief among these are unity of command and its interrelated concept of unity of effort.⁸

Unity of command is simple — for every objective, ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander. Unity of command means that a single commander directs and coordinates the actions of all forces toward a common objective. Cooperation may produce coordination, but giving a single commander the required authority is the most effective way to achieve unity of effort. The Joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational nature of unified action creates situations where the commander does not directly control all organizations in the operational area. In the absence of command authority, commanders must cooperate, negotiate, and build consensus to achieve unity of effort.⁹

Unity of effort is coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization—the product of successful unified action.¹⁰ Uniting all of the diverse capabilities necessary to achieve success in stability operations requires collaborative and cooperative paradigms that focus those capabilities toward a common goal. Where military operations typically demand unity of command, the challenge for military and civilian leaders is to forge unity of effort among the diverse array of actors involved in a stability operation. This is the essence of unified action: the synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.¹¹

To this end, military forces have to operate with the other instruments of national power to forge at a minimum unity of effort through a whole-of-government approach.¹² Regrettably, lack of true unity of command leads to inefficiencies, opportunity costs, and a less-than-holistic

approach to a global counterinsurgency and other post conflict missions. The correct command structure for stability operations is crucial. Unfortunately, political or agency considerations too often determine specific command structures. History abounds with command arrangements powered by these attributes.¹³

The problems with the current American interagency process are complex. Most of today's troubles arise from a gap created by a lack of either capacity or integration, or both, below the national level.¹⁴ So while the strategic policy level may have its integrative mechanisms, the operational and execution level are where the deficits lie. This operational level links the use of tactical forces, which include civilian agencies, to achieving the strategic end state.¹⁵ Major operations are not solely the purview of combat forces. They typically go forward with the other instruments of national power. Major operations often bring together the capabilities of other agencies, nations, and organizations.¹⁶ Unfortunately, current command arrangements are imprecise or cobbled together and do not fully address the situation at hand.¹⁷ Integrating the efforts of military and nonmilitary organizations in the interagency process to achieve unity of effort has proved elusive, allowing for unclear lines of authority and communication and leading to confusion during the execution of the operation.¹⁸ Given the challenges and complexities inherent in stability operations, military and civilian agencies must evolve to a more concrete unity of command approach that avoids the inefficiencies of consensus building and compromise found in a unity of effort model.

Organizational Mismatches

Typically, execution at the regional or local levels is fraught with problems, because the agencies representing the instruments of power organize themselves differently and there is no directive authority for implementation at the regional level. The DOD and the DOS, as the core players in stability operations, are representative of these problems. The former has six geographic combatant commands responsible for the various regions, but the latter's regional organization is different. The State Department has six regional bureaus, but their boundaries do not match those of DOD. As an example, the U.S. Central Command commander must coordinate efforts with three regional State bureaus: African Affairs, Near Eastern Affairs, and South and Central Asian Affairs, plus 27 country teams.¹⁹ Because most emergencies transcend national boundaries, the absence of a compatible operational framework between officials of the DOS and the geographic combatant commanders is a problem. Complications thus arise between the DOS (with its country teams) and the DOD (with its regional commands).²⁰

In addition, the resourcing and readiness of personnel are vastly different between the two organizations. As House Foreign Affairs Committee Acting Chairman Howard L. Berman pointed out, "There are only 6,600 professional Foreign Service officers today in the State Department. According to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, this is less than the personnel of one carrier battle group and, allegedly, less than the number of active duty military band members."²¹ Similarly, USAID today has less than 3,000 people essentially doing the contract management that outsources their entire development mission.²²

The Interagency Historical Record

In this light, an effective strategy to resolving a regional crisis depends on integrating all elements of power through the interagency process at the operational level to achieve unity of command and effort with clear lines of authority and lines of communication. The difficulty integrating military and nonmilitary actions at the operational level is a recurring theme.

In a number of contingency operations undertaken over the past two decades, this lack of amalgamation has produced enough obstacles to meeting political-military objectives that military and interagency participants attempted a series of internal reforms, often to no avail.²³ The following vignettes provide a sampling of the difficulties:

Somalia. In Operation Restore Hope (1992-1993), the human resource element came to the fore. A critical shortfall was that most civilian organizations did not maintain large staffs and were not equipped to conduct expeditionary operations. In Somalia, neither the DOS nor USAID had sufficient personnel in the region. For example, while Ambassador Robert Oakley and his staff remained fully engaged working with the military in Somalia, there were not enough civilian personnel to negotiate with the various factions or to assist local village elders in establishing councils and security forces. Army civil affairs teams had to assume those responsibilities to the detriment of other tasks.²⁴

Haiti. For Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti (1994-1997), military planning began in October 1993 when the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed U.S. Atlantic Command, now U.S. Joint Forces Command, to focus on a forcible-entry option.²⁵ Working in self-prescribed isolation, the military planners did not have the ability to coordinate with other agencies. Already, other branches of government — the DOS, Treasury, Transportation, Commerce, Justice, Agriculture, and the CIA — were engaged in working some facet of the Haiti problem.²⁶ The compartmentalization of planning prevented the interagency process from producing coordination and consensus, the two most necessary ingredients for unity of effort.

The month of September 1994 demonstrated that insufficient planning in the interagency process affected the strategic, operational, and tactical level of war. The “close hold” on information retarded mutual understanding of the operation by different agencies and even within individual agencies themselves.²⁷ U.S. Atlantic Command went to the National Security Council to meet with the Haiti Interagency Working Group. During the meeting, one Army officer in attendance noted, “Many members of the working group stared in disbelief; not even their own people, who had known about the plan for over a year, had let the secret out.”²⁸ As further evidence of insufficient coordination, during the meeting, Major General Byron, head of the U.S. Atlantic Command J-5 Plans Cell, asked the DOJ representative to explain how the DOJ was going to train the new Haitian police force, an earlier agreement in the Political-Military plan, only for the department to say it could not handle the mission.²⁹

Similarly, at the execution level, the ad hoc nature of interagency arrangements also revealed themselves. In Cap Haitien, for example, representatives from the 10th Mountain Division and the Coast Guard collaborated closely, but as one observer noted, “We had our tents pitched next to each other, but the USAID tent was missing. ... There was no one to answer our questions about civilian assistance capabilities for 30 days into the operation.”³⁰

Afghanistan. In Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan (2001-present), interagency command and coordination improved, but many deficiencies remained. On the positive side, to facilitate coordination between the two organizations during pre-war planning sessions, the CENTCOM staff included a senior CIA officer that served as special advisor to the commander.³¹ Also, the DOS and the military’s combatant commander for the region worked closely from the onset to secure basing and over-flight rights. Nevertheless, other agencies focused on reconstruction in a post-war Afghanistan played catch up, and many elements of the U.S. government were largely absent.³² For example, only a small handful of personnel from the U.S. Department of Agriculture deployed to Afghanistan, a country with both a critical demand

for agricultural development and a significant capacity for such development — including the need to develop alternatives to the production of poppies, doubly corrosive because it both funds the Taliban and spreads drugs to other countries. And the United States has perhaps the best-organized and most successful agricultural extension service in the world! As this example shows, the Departments of Defense and State and USAID have been “at war,” but almost all the rest of the U.S. government has not been so engaged.³³

Iraq. Finally, Operation Iraqi Freedom (2002 to present) provides a host of pre- and post-conflict interagency command issues. As in Afghanistan, fears of widespread famine motivated civilian planners to pre-position relief supplies in Kuwait. Despite close coordination between USAID and the military in the month leading up to the war, the head of USAID, Andrew Natsios, could get neither the Pentagon’s permission to pre-position supplies thought necessary nor get release of funds for rebuilding Iraq.³⁴ In the post-conflict phase, the friction and interagency fighting between the military’s Combined Joint Task Force-7 and the Coalition Provisional Authority reached extraordinary and costly levels.³⁵

The Proposals

Unity of command should not threaten any government agency’s independence; only a dedicated portion of each agency in direct support of stability operations should ever come under the authority of a unified commander. Under these circumstances, an enforcement mechanism would probably be necessary to compel agencies to attach competent people to centralized commanders or directors. While National Security Policy Directive-44 recognizes the need for interagency integration, it does not enforce unity of command. The executive branch should follow-up NSPD-44 with a presidential-level document requiring unity of command in areas undergoing stability operations. In doing so, it should dictate the various government agencies’ roles and responsibilities as well as the conditions under which any particular agency should assume overall direction.³⁶ Such a step then needs pragmatic solutions that establish appropriate organizational models for interagency command, while augmenting liaison capabilities and developing professional education to foster a true “interagency culture” for stability operations.

Current Models for Interagency Command

As noted, in many respects, interagency efforts at the theater or field level are even more important than at higher levels of government. Interaction between military and nonmilitary activities needs to be seamless. As requirements for assistance with governance (including human rights), reconstruction, stabilization, and development increase, the requirement also increases for cooperation across institutional boundaries.³⁷ Given the nonmilitary nature of most activities in stability operations, civilian command primacy would be the pragmatic goal to strive for. Several precursor institutional models already exist that partially reflect this precept and could evolve into true and institutionalized interagency command arrangements. These three precursor models are the classical embassy country team, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), and provincial reconstruction teams. Such institutionalization would avoid tendencies to adopt ad hoc approaches in operations short of war, including post-conflict transition.³⁸

Country teams. Until now, combatant commands on the strategic and operational level have had an institutional means, albeit incomplete, of synchronizing interagency actions ongoing in theater — the embassy country teams.³⁹ Headed by the ambassador and composed of representatives of various agencies, it can provide specific recommendations on peacetime engagement or contingency responses. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3113.01A, *Theater*

Engagement Planning, refers to the role of the teams in contingencies.⁴⁰ While providing an interagency perspective, country teams have inherent disadvantages. By definition, their focus is limited; commands may not have adequate staff to interpret competing priorities advocated by various teams in any region. Secondly, as senior government liaisons, DOS political advisors to military commanders represent only one of the many agencies on the country team, so the potential exists for biased priorities and misunderstanding. Lastly, because USAID does not maintain staff in every diplomatic mission, country teams do not offer an accurate representation of all ongoing or funded efforts.⁴¹

This template would improve with the creation of a more robust team. In-theater U.S. country teams would need to be all-inclusive (including specialized agencies and organizations such as the CIA and U.S. Special Operations Command) to be able to share information and intelligence, have common communications protocols and systems, and put a premium on building and sustaining mutual confidence and respect.⁴² They should also continue to be headed by a senior diplomat.

The AFRICOM model. As an expert on African affairs in the United States, Dr. Dan Henk from the Air War College noted, the U.S. engagement with Africa has often reflected rather different approaches and intensities among DOS, USAID, and DOD. This often resulted in confusion about U.S. interests, objectives, and motives.⁴³ To address this bewilderment, the DOD activated AFRICOM as one of its six regional military headquarters on 1 October 2008. Africa Command has administrative responsibility for U.S. military support to U.S. government policy in Africa, including military-to-military relationships with 53 African nations.⁴⁴

The command started with a greatly different organizational approach to its area of responsibility. The designers of U.S. Africa Command understood the relationships between security, development, diplomacy, and prosperity in Africa. As a result, AFRICOM reflects a much more integrated staff structure that includes significant management and staff representation by the DOS, USAID, and other U.S. government agencies involved in Africa.⁴⁵ U.S. Africa Command also departed from the Pentagon's traditional "J-code" organizational structure, a method of organizing a command for warfighting developed in the Napoleonic age. Furthermore, AFRICOM's commander, uniquely, has a civilian deputy from the Department of State to coordinate the nonmilitary functions of the U.S. government in Africa.⁴⁶

Thus, AFRICOM, with its envisioned interagency character, should positively influence U.S. policy coordination in Africa and move toward greater interagency integration.⁴⁷ Yet for several reformers, AFRICOM did not go far enough in establishing a true interagency structure.⁴⁸ As Robert Munson suggested in his article on AFRICOM in *Strategic Studies Quarterly*:

My first proposal is for AFRICOM to be established from the beginning not as a military command with a few nonmilitary trappings but as a true interagency command. This command would have three equal main components: the military, a political element, and a section devoted to development. Despite the military title of "command" and the current focus of the Secretary of Defense on creating AFRICOM, we must refocus the effort to include all-important elements of foreign policy equally. If there were a better word to replace "command" in AFRICOM, it should emphasize the nonmilitary missions and deemphasize the military aspects. Perhaps one should begin with the organizational model of an embassy rather than a military organization!⁴⁹

Interestingly, he promotes a more country-team model on an enlarged scale. With this perspective in mind, the current AFRICOM can only provide an evolutionary step to greater interagency command and control structures under civilian agency leadership.

The provincial reconstruction team model. During the summer of 2002, U.S. officials developed the concept of provincial reconstruction teams to spread the “ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] effect,” without expanding ISAF itself. First established in early 2003, provincial reconstruction teams consisted of 60 to 100 soldiers plus, eventually, Afghan advisors and representatives from civilian agencies like the State Department, USAID, and the Department of Agriculture. These teams have the potential to become a model for future stabilization and reconstruction operations.⁵⁰ Since their inception, they have proven effective in supporting the spread of governance and development in Afghanistan. Since then, 25 additional teams (11 U.S.-led and 14 non-U.S.) have deployed throughout the country, mostly small forward-operating bases in provincial capitals. The U.S.-led teams combine civilian and military personnel who focus on governance, development, and security. These civil-military teams work with the Afghan government, civil society, Afghan and coalition security forces, and the international community.⁵¹

The provincial reconstruction team leverages all the instruments of national power — diplomatic, informational, military, and economic — to improve stability. However, the team’s efforts alone will not stabilize an area; combined military and civil efforts are necessary to reduce conflict and develop local institutions to take the lead in national governance, provide basic services, foster economic development, and enforce the rule of law.⁵² The team’s structure is modular in nature with a core framework tailored to the respective operational area. A typical team contains six Department of State personnel, three senior military officers and staff, 20 Army civil affairs advisors, one Department of Agriculture representative, one Department of Justice representative, three international contractors; two USAID representatives; and a military or contract security force (size depends on local conditions). The size and composition of the team varies based on operational area maturity, local circumstances, and U.S. agency capacity.⁵³ Eleven of the 12 U.S. teams are military-led and have a handful of civilian officers — one each from State, USAID, and the Department of Agriculture. The civilians are equal members of the integrated command team and provide crucial skill sets that the military lacks — political reporting, cultural awareness, an understanding of civilian governmental structures, and a background in development. The military commander has final authority on all security matters, but the civilians take the lead on governance and development.⁵⁴

Nevertheless, the teams are only a tactical-level interim measure. They need a national or regional level interagency command framework. Yet, these provincial reconstruction teams provide a good starting point to develop the tools necessary to achieve political and military success in future missions, whether they involve counterinsurgency, peace enforcement, or even ungoverned spaces.⁵⁵

The Next Evolutionary Step

To have a true interagency command arrangement for stability operations, several elements are needed — an end to stovepiping, effective lines of authority, and civilian agency primacy. To the extent possible, stovepiping of different agencies must be eliminated, such as the current practice of requiring field-level missions to refer to higher levels in theater or to Washington for permission to take actions that either need to be decided upon rapidly or where local expertise should trump that at the parent level.⁵⁶ Second, clear lines of authority must exist in the theater

and in the field. Setting parameters and business rules can help build mutual trust.⁵⁷ Third, civilian agency primacy would bring greater benefits when considering the nature of stability operations. The civilian Department of State and USAID have a long-term focus, train their personnel to work with foreign partners, and generally acquire better language skills than the military. Both agencies are comfortable in taking time to build personal relationships with other officials, and they tend to remain in the region longer, maintaining personal bonds and facilitating work between nations on a civilian basis.⁵⁸ In contrast to military officers who are frequently reassigned, USAID officers spend much longer developing their expertise, often living in country for four or more years.⁵⁹

In order to support these multilateral stability operations, commands need to be truly an interagency construct rather than just a military organization with a few actors from other agencies included for effect.⁶⁰ I support the recommendation Jeffrey Buchanan, Maxie Y. Davis, and Lee T. Wight made in their Joint Force Quarterly article “Death of the Combatant Command: Toward a Joint Interagency Approach.” They propose establishing standing, civilian-led interagency organizations that will have regional responsibility for all aspects of U.S. foreign policy.⁶¹ These civilian-led interagency organizations would report directly to the President through the National Security Council, and their formal structure would include representatives from all major federal government agencies, including DOD, while dissolving the existing geographic combatant commands. Highly credentialed civilians, potentially with a four-star military deputy, would lead these institutions. Their charter would include true directive authority to all agencies below the National Security Council, with regard to activities in the assigned region — to include U.S. ambassadors and country teams.⁶²

In the aforementioned AFRICOM example, the civilian commander of an advanced interagency AFRICOM would then be the U.S. ambassador to the African Union. Not only is this diplomat already representing the United States at the continental level, but he is also a civilian and would emphasize the American tradition of civilian control of the military. While the appointment of this diplomat to lead a partial military organization may call for congressional or presidential action and a change to U.S. laws, it is hardly a new concept since both the president and the secretary of defense, the two top leaders of the military, are civilians.⁶³

Conclusions and a Precedent

The United States must make a quantum leap in establishing interagency command mechanisms if it wants to employ its land power effectively in future stability operations.⁶⁴ The key difference between the hard slog to “Jointness” versus interagency operations is that the armed forces had a clear chain of command, with the chairman of the joint chiefs at the top to push through reform. For many federal agencies, the first common point of authority is the president. Congress or the president should find a way to cause the various agencies of the executive branch to pull together at the operational level during war and post-conflict activities to achieve unity of command.⁶⁵

Only civilian leadership, with significant interagency experience, can evolve existing models like the country team, AFRICOM, and provincial reconstruction teams into truly macro-interagency command organizations capable of harnessing and projecting America’s “soft” power, arguably the most potent weapon in its arsenal, along with its military force.⁶⁶ In addition to the current three models mentioned, a precedent does exist in the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support” (CORDS) program in Vietnam. The CORDS program in Vietnam integrated civilian and military efforts on a larger scale, with soldiers serving directly under civilians, and vice versa, at all levels.⁶⁷ In fact the head of CORDS, Robert Komer, was

deputy to the commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV). He ranked third at MACV, after General William C. Westmoreland's deputy, General Creighton Abrams. This status gave him direct authority over everyone in his organization and direct access to Westmoreland without having to go through the MACV Chief of Staff.⁶⁸ Komer did not have command authority over military forces, but he was the sole authority over the entire U.S. pacification effort, "for the first time bringing together its civilian and military aspects under unified management."⁶⁹ The interagency integration at all levels was a most impressive feature. In addition to the military, the State Department, CIA, USAID, the U.S. Information Agency, and even the White House staff were represented at all levels within CORDS. Throughout the hierarchy, civilian advisors had military deputies and vice versa. Civilians wrote performance reports on military subordinates, and military officers did the same for Foreign Service officers.⁷⁰

The heritage of such an interagency "command" needs to permeate the current precursor models to create the next step — a true interagency command structure. Without this evolutionary process, the effective application of U.S. land power in future stability operations will remain haphazard — an outcome fraught with both risks and costs.

Notes

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Complex Operations and Interagency Operational Art

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The term *comprehensive approach* has been used by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union not only with great frequency but also with a high degree of ambiguity.¹ The U.S. Government Interagency Counterinsurgency (COIN) Guide provides a graphical depiction of a “Comprehensive Approach to Counterinsurgency,” showing a mixture of economic development, political strategy, information, security, and control, but does not define the term within the text.²

Army Field Manual (FM) 3–07, *Stability Operations*, defines *comprehensive approach* as one that “integrates the cooperative efforts of the departments and agencies of the United States Government, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), multinational partners, and private sector entities to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal.”³ Additionally, it states that “through a comprehensive approach to stability operations, military forces establish the conditions that enable the efforts of the other instruments of national and international power. By providing the requisite security and control to stabilize an operational area, those efforts build a foundation for transitioning to civilian control, and eventually to a host nation.”⁴

Although a “comprehensive” or “whole-of-government” approach is widely accepted as a requirement for successful humanitarian assistance, COIN, and stability operations, it is nonetheless extremely rare to find the requisite levels of political, military, economic, and civil resources being successfully integrated into the prescribed collaborative effort. This observation begs the question: If there is consensus that a comprehensive approach is required for complex operations, why has the concept proven so difficult to implement?

Much of the attention regarding shortfalls in American interagency coordination has focused on bureaucratic wrangling at the National Security Council level.⁵ This is certainly part of the problem. A report by the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services found that current national-level direction “provides unclear and inconsistent guidance on agencies’ roles and responsibilities. In addition, the lack of an agreed-upon definition for stabilization and reconstruction operations poses an obstacle to interagency collaboration.” Furthermore, the report asserts that “while senior leaders should get along in the interest of the mission, history is replete with examples where they have not. Rather than depending exclusively on personalities for success, the right interagency structures need to be in place and working.”⁶

Other analyses have pointed to the differences in the amount and deployability of resources available to implement the military and nonmilitary dimensions of such efforts. For example, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen recently stated that “I’ve got Soldiers in the [National] Guard who are farmers in Texas and Missouri and Iowa, and they are going to Afghanistan to work on agriculture” because employees from the U.S. Department of Agriculture do not expect to be sent to Afghanistan.⁷

Calls for improving the processes of the National Security Council, shoring up the nonmilitary aspects of U.S. national power, and increasing civilian expeditionary capability should not be discounted. However, this article argues that differences in the characteristics of the various elements of national power (often summarized as diplomatic, information, military, and economic [DIME]) and in the activities necessary to bring them collectively to bear pose unique planning and coordination challenges. Even if resource, policy, and bureaucratic impediments can be resolved, it remains a puzzle how to effectively integrate the activities performed by the military, civilian agencies, private sector, and international and nongovernmental organizations into a common synergistic effort.

Recognizing this aspect of the interagency challenge is particularly important because a frequent policy prescription is to achieve “unity of command” instead of mere “unity of effort” by placing a single person in command of all military and civilian aspects of a complex operation. Yet emerging concepts such as the Combatant Commanders Integrated Collaboration Team are unlikely to garner adequate academic, private sector, and interagency cooperation if they are perceived as subordinate to a particular military command rather than being a council of equals. The Joint Interagency Coordination Groups have generally been plagued by a lack of interagency buy-in that at best results in an information fusion center rather than a forum for effective collaborative planning.

Regardless of who or how many are “in charge,” we simply do not know how to achieve both vertical and horizontal integration of planning and execution across all the elements of DIME. In short, we need *interagency operational art*.

Nature of Warfighting versus Civilian Challenges

Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations*, states that *operational art* links the tactical employment of forces to strategic objectives. Furthermore, it entails “the application of creative imagination by commanders and staffs — supported by their skill, knowledge, and experience — to design strategies, campaigns, and major operations and organize and employ military forces.”⁸

Although the comparison is not exact, it could be argued that the civilian equivalent of operational art is *policy implementation*, variously defined as “the carrying out of a basic policy decision” or “what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action.” This is a different concept than “management.” It is an element of policy *design* that includes consideration of the problems of interpretation and adjusting policy decisions to make it more likely that eventual policy execution will produce the desired outcomes. Although the term *design* is now emerging in U.S. military doctrine, as discussed below, public policy analysts have been using it since at least the 1980s.⁹

Perhaps because of smaller size and often much greater autonomy at the delivery end of policy, civilian agencies (and private businesses) rarely have organizational structures and planning functions equivalent to the military concept of an operational-level headquarters. Nor is it clear that they would benefit from adding such a layer in most circumstances. The purpose of civilian midlevel management is usually to reduce the span of control rather than develop plans to link strategy to “tactical” activity by multiple offices or business units.¹⁰

At least in the case of ground forces, which are generally expected to have the lead during complex operations, modern U.S. military planning still betrays its physical heritage of moving

large armies on land during the era of Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini, when an army's line of march was a critical consideration. Beginning at least with the concept of AirLand Battle adopted by the U.S. Army in the late 1970s and early 1980s, doctrine began to recognize that the contemporary battlefield was "nonlinear" and included a much deeper physical dimension and a time dimension.¹¹ However, the "line of operation" continues to be a basic organizing principle.

The U.S. Army has tried to relax this conceptual straitjacket and now speaks of "lines of effort" (previously called "logical lines of operation") in addition to "physical lines of operation."¹² But, of course, by definition "lines" are "linear." Trying to fit non-warfighting activities into such a framework has not thus far proved productive. One reason might be that the objectives and tasks for the political, diplomatic, and economic lines of effort in a campaign plan have significant qualitative differences from those of the security line. Calling these activities a "line of effort" instead of a "logical line of operation" does not resolve this disjuncture. The mathematical concept of a set is probably a better organizing principle for most of the nonmilitary activities in complex operations, many of which do not require performance in a specific sequence.

In a critique of U.S. Army FM 3-24/U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, Major General Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., asserts that the manual relies too heavily on "the same solution that Soldiers typically fall back on when confounded by a difficult operational situation (COIN or otherwise): employ ever larger numbers of Soldiers and have them engage in 'close' contact with the 'target,' however defined." With a logic that should apply to stability operations as well as COIN, General Dunlap argues, "Of course, Airmen bring distinct weaponry to the fight but equally — or more — important is the Airmen's unique way of thinking."¹³ There is no doubt that bringing a less Earthbound perspective to planning for the military aspects of a comprehensive approach would be useful. Yet if Dunlap is correct about the differences between the way Soldiers and Airmen think about strategy and tactics, the divergence between typical military and civilian approaches — and the nature of their activities — is even greater.

For example, military and nonmilitary activities tend to differ in their calculability. While many components of economic development — such as miles of road built and kilowatt hours of electricity generated — can be straightforwardly counted or measured, many critical non-security outputs, such as political accommodation, progress toward reconciliation, legitimacy of governing institutions, and cooperation from neighboring states, are more likely to be intangible. This is not to say that empirical indicators cannot be identified, but these are highly subjective constructs that are more difficult to measure than, for example, the size of the area under military control or friendly, enemy, and noncombatant casualty rates.

Perhaps the biggest difference may be the inputs. Activities to implement a security line of operation frequently involve well-defined tasks such as providing military and police training to host-nation security forces, clearing neighborhoods, and operating checkpoints. Military inputs tend to be tangible: T-walls can be touched; the number of patrols conducted or joint security stations in operation can be counted. The inputs involved in many, if not most, political tasks are to attend meetings and perform other activities in attempts to persuade political leaders to behave in a certain way.

Another aspect to the difference between security and the other requirements for stability is that the organization and processes for military operations have been well documented. This is not to imply that warfighting is simpler or easier than performing nonmilitary tasks (it is certainly

deadlier), but it is an empirical fact regarding what the military has done to train and prepare for combat operations.¹⁴

For “traditional” high-intensity battles, we have a pretty good understanding of the physics and physiology of combat.¹⁵ The Army, for example, has planning factors that suggest that a 3-to-1 ratio of attackers to defenders is necessary for an assault to have a reasonable probability of success. After defeating a defending company at 3-to-1, a battalion will be out of the fight for 24 hours. The odds of success are increased and the recovery time reduced if the attackers have a higher ratio against the defenders.¹⁶

Conversely, our understanding of how to produce political change (at least in the absence of military or economic threats, if not an outright military overthrow) and how to create economic growth is vague. The time-lines for realizing concrete results from political and economic policies tend to be wildly inaccurate and reflect wishful thinking rather than historical analysis.

Military planners can use shorthand on PowerPoint slides for a task such as “Seize Objective Widget,” and there is a largely common understanding of the requirements. Behind that simple description, there will be detailed operations orders down through several levels of command and troop leading procedures and standard operating procedures at the lowest echelons. Military leaders at all levels involved will have completed significant formal training to inculcate the processes to develop plans and monitor their execution.

The U.S. Army has a standard, modular hierarchical organization from division headquarters down to squads. There are Joint and Mission Essential Task Lists, which break down further into Battle Tasks that describe the key subtasks for accomplishing a mission and their interrelationship between the next higher/lower echelons. There are task lists and crosswalks for leader tasks, collective tasks, and Soldier tasks; and there are training and evaluation outlines for use in training units and troops to accomplish these actions and in assessing their ability to do so. (Of course, the other Services have modular organizations and similar training and evaluation regimes.)

A typical military operation will delineate unambiguous geographic boundaries (area of responsibility) that assign specific units to be responsible for every inch of ground and cubic foot of airspace. There is an obvious chain of responsibilities and expected actions between each individual Soldier or Marine on the ground and the commanding general.

Nothing comparable exists for economic development and governance tasks, which tend to be aligned by function rather than local geography or a rigid hierarchy of authority. This does not imply that civilian processes are slipshod or lackadaisical. Rather, they are of a different nature.

Figure 1 illustrates the differences between coalition civilian and military structures and their organization to manage or command and control their relative functions in Iraq as of 2008. At the top, the shaded area depicts the U.S. Embassy and Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF–I) Headquarters and their roles in relation to the national government of Iraq. Both organizations collaborated in writing, updating, and monitoring the execution of a joint campaign plan for Iraq and engaged the prime minister and other ministerial-level Iraqi officials.

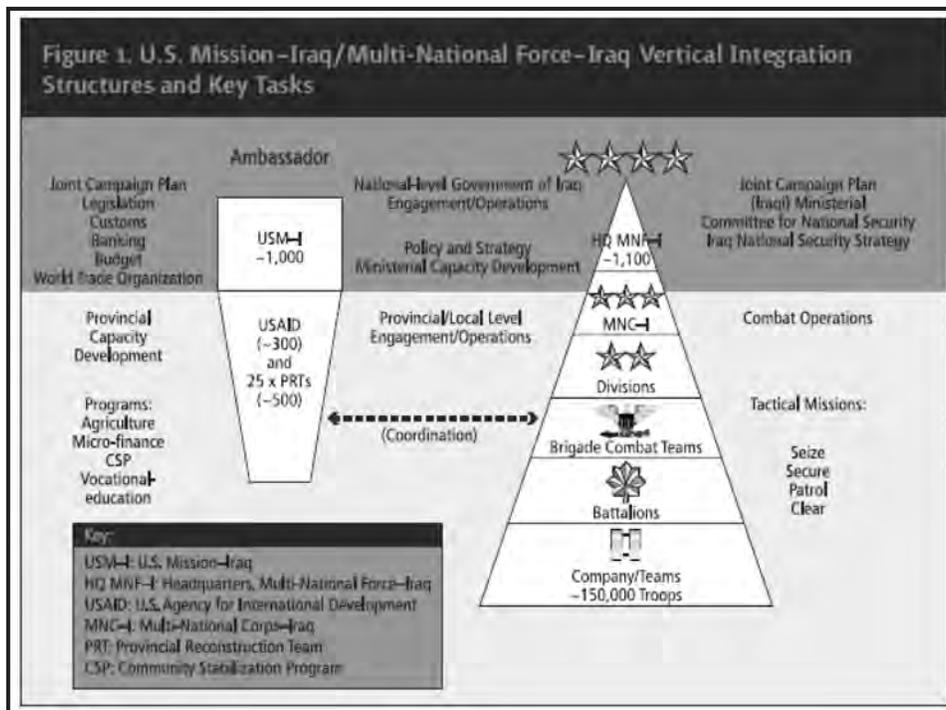


Figure 6-1.

It might be argued that at this level can be found the greatest similarities between military and civilian activities. Neither the U.S. Ambassador nor the MNF–I commanding general could *force* the sovereign government of Iraq to do anything. The primary inputs were to advise, monitor, and persuade Iraqi officials to make decisions conducive to promoting security and stability, to include implementing policies that would promote democracy, good governance, rule of law, economic growth, and good relations with neighbors and other states.

However, the MNF–I military headquarters also executed considerable efforts from the top down to conduct command and control of all coalition military activities. In comparison, the Embassy is not organized with the equivalent of subordinate “maneuver units.”¹⁷ The Embassy’s political, political-military, and economic sections operate with a high degree of autonomy in day-to-day activities. Even senior Foreign Service Officers typically spend more time as “operators” than managers or developers of strategy and plans. A higher “rank” or grade in the Foreign Service correlates more closely with the expected level of host-nation interlocutors than with the number of subordinates directed.

Below the horizontal line in figure 1, the disparities become even sharper. The military activities are aligned with a straightforward, hierarchical pyramid with many more personnel and other resources at the bottom than at the top. Although midlevel and junior leaders can and often do perform activities typically described as “civilian” tasks, such as promoting good governance and economic development at the local level, their primary responsibilities are security related — the “clear” and “hold” tasks in a counterinsurgency framework.¹⁸ The vertical integration via a chain of command is unambiguous. While horizontal coordination occurs, laterally between units at the same echelon and in some cases between units and local Iraqi officials, most attention is downward-directed management (that is, command and control).

Civilian political and economic tasks are conceived and executed differently than military security tasks. Especially in traditional Embassy activities, there is much less management directed downward. The civilian side is nearly an inverted pyramid with more staffing and resources at the top than at the bottom.

This configuration is not top-heavy in the sense of a high ratio of “management” to “workers,” but is a reflection of the fact that the bulk of the political and diplomatic work is being conducted parallel to the Iraqi national level of government. Most Foreign Service Officers spend the majority of their time engaging their host-nation equivalents, not directing actions along a chain of subordinates. Also, there is no matching effort at the neighborhood, district, and municipal level — which would require several thousand more civilian personnel.

Most economic development programs are decentralized and diffuse. Programs are not “tied in” with other programs on their left and right boundaries as is the case with military units. There is no battlefield maneuver conducted between or among the programs and thus no requirement for civilian management to be the equivalent of military command and control.

Another difference (asymmetry?) is that war is almost always a zero-sum game. For something to be a benefit to one side, it generally must hurt the other. Time is a great example of this. Historically, it usually benefits the defender except during a siege.¹⁹

Successful democratic governance and economic development, however, are usually not zero-sum. For a voluntary economic transaction to occur, both sides must perceive that they will benefit. Otherwise, the voluntary exchange would not take place. (This is not to say that both sides must benefit equally or that the transaction is necessarily noncompetitive.)

Often, time will benefit both sides in a business or diplomatic negotiation by allowing them to explore and agree upon a mutually satisfactory resolution. However, in cases such as the coalition efforts in Iraq, timeline-driven legislative and political goals can be counterproductive by reducing the opportunities to resolve real differences. In such a fragile environment, it may be better not to pass a controversial law than to pass it with a legally required parliamentary majority that lacks consensus and thus results in driving the parties further apart. Intervening policymakers must be careful that by applying additional pressure on host-nation political parties to reach a deal, they do not inadvertently push them toward violence instead of agreement.

Clocks and Clutch Plates

There are at least two components to the problem of improving host-nation governance. One is *technical capacity*, which is somewhat amenable to being developed more quickly through “surging” to provide expertise. This has to do with teaching/helping host-nation officials to perform the bureaucratic functions of government (and, to a lesser extent, business). Perhaps any artillery captain can become emperor of France, but running a national government is a difficult task for most people who do not possess large organization management experience. In failed or failing states, there are few such individuals, much less those who also possess legitimacy with the population. This challenge is compounded by the fact that at least initially, these leaders will typically be without a capable, professional bureaucracy that can effectively implement even the wisest policy decisions.

Within a wide range, there is a direct correlation between surging civilian resources to provide advice and the pace of improvement in technical capabilities. Even so, technical training can be

ineffective unless the society has accepted and inculcated the values on which the principles are based. For example, anticorruption technical assistance and investigator training does little good if corruption is widely accepted in society and government officials are routinely able to act with impunity. A great deal of technical assistance also requires civil society programs that reinforce the message among the general populace.

A related and more difficult problem is *willingness* to make the compromises necessary to achieve political consensus. To some extent, willingness can be generated with targeted and appropriate training for government officials and awareness programs in civil society if such efforts result in socialization of the necessary underlying values. These are the types of programs needed to provide a foundation for building the necessary governmental or economic capacity in areas such as rule of law, electricity, oil, services, medical care, and so forth. But these cultural/societal shifts are likely to take decades or generations to fully achieve.²⁰

Lack of willingness is a problem that does not lend itself to a more rapid resolution as a result of a “surge” of resources, whether military or civilian. Some of the elements of reconciliation, if they are to truly occur instead of being merely a “check in the box” on the political timeline of the intervening powers, are likely to require decades if not generations.

Despite doctrinal recognition that military operations entail art as well as science, with increasingly more art and less science applicable at the higher levels of war, the modern U.S. Army still tends to take a mechanistic approach to planning its operations — the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). Although the process may be modified, especially when time is running short on the battlefield, its procedures are far more routinized and driven from the top down than anything found in the civilian world. The MDMP is primarily deductive and designed for a specific set of problems (military missions) under a specific set of circumstances (primarily combat).

This approach is rarely optimal for civilian decision making. The most important factor may be that the MDMP begins with a “problem” that has largely been defined by the higher headquarters in the form of orders or plans that assign a specific mission to the organization conducting the MDMP. In most cases, civilian organizations must start from scratch in framing the problem to be solved rather than deduce it from higher guidance that, when it exists at all, is likely to be ambiguous and aspirational rather than precise and directive.²¹

These differences in planning, combined with different cultures and types of activities involved in the execution of plans, increase the difficulty of integrating military and civilian activities in a conflict environment. This observation is not to claim that either a civilian or a military approach to decision making is the better. Rather, they serve different purposes that historically have operated in separate, unrelated spheres in which the coordination of military and civilian activities was not a consideration.

Most military tasks can be synchronized in time and space (this is the crux of “maneuver”) and, given a known correlation of forces, have somewhat predicably outcomes that can be modeled using computer simulations. Yet this is often not true for key aspects of political and economic development. While interdependent, the linkages between activities in these realms are not rigid.

Building a road or installing a sewer line, at least in a peaceful area, is largely predictable and can be scheduled. However, creating jobs, reconciling grievances, or negotiating political compromises in an area still torn by conflict is much more problematic. Even “simple”

construction tasks such as building a hospital or repairing power lines become unpredictable when workers are threatened by violence or infrastructure is frequently attacked. Building schools does little good if teachers or students are routinely killed or afraid to come to class. In such cases, the military can enable civilian efforts by providing sufficiently enduring security, but this tends to be sequential rather than integrated.

Tactical-level ground force leaders, especially at echelons below division, can create relatively accurate timetables for the “clear” portion of the “clear-hold-build” approach to counterinsurgency. Adjusted through experience and the level of armed resistance met, a unit can develop a fairly reliable estimate of how long it will take to clear a geographic region of a given size with a given force of known capability. When projected timelines go awry at the company, battalion, regiment, or brigade level, they are likely to be off by a matter of hours or days rather than the months or even years that are the common range of error for political or economic estimates.

Nonetheless, the “hold” task becomes problematic. This is not because maintaining security or defending a cleared area is uniquely difficult, but because of the question of how long it must be held. This presents a particular challenge in situations such as Iraq — at least prior to the troop surge in 2007 — and contemporary Afghanistan where there are insufficient capable and reliable forces to clear *and* hold large parts of the battlespace simultaneously. The need to clear other areas puts pressure on the military force to move on from holding an area once it has been cleared. Yet when an area is insufficiently “built” to keep insurgents out, there is a high probability that it will revert to enemy control and have to be cleared again.

A lesson that many military leaders have drawn from the problem of holding gains long enough is that clear-hold-build activities must occur simultaneously rather than sequentially.²² However, it might be instead argued that the real lesson is that security (“clear” + “hold”) requires a more enduring effort and that the political and economic development aspects of “build” cannot quickly replace the need for security.

Yet another layer of complexity is added when the important role of NGOs in a comprehensive approach is considered. Many NGOs operate highly independent programs with almost no hierarchical structure for managing their in-country activities. Some NGOs refuse to collaborate with military units as a matter of principle. In an *International Herald Tribune* op-ed, for example, Anna Husarska of the International Rescue Committee wrote that “mixing aid and security is a mistake the international stakeholders in Afghanistan are making ... security and development are two distinct objectives that require different approaches.”²³

Ironically, on the same day, the *Times of London* carried a front-page article on development aid to Somalia being inadvertently used to fund militias and warlords. It was followed by an article on the British Department for International Development having “taken over diplomacy in Africa” while “[naively] dealing with Africa’s notoriously venal leaders, dragging Britain into unhealthy close relations with countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, which have poor governance records.” It concludes by noting that “it is precisely the money lavished on some of the most incompetent governments in the world which prevents them from taking measures for higher economic growth.”²⁴

The preceding does not suggest that political and economic development is not of equal or greater importance to military (and police) security in establishing a stable democracy. However, these different aspects of counterinsurgency and stability operations move according to a logic

of their own and at a pace that seems only indirectly related to policy changes and financial initiatives. A mechanistic approach to synchronizing them is probably not possible. At best, they are more akin to the clutch and pressure plate in the transmission of a car than the precisely fit gears in a watch. Making allowance for friction is as important as making use of it.

Getting the Pieces to Work Together

The collaborative “design” approach now being explored by the U.S. military seems to offer the most promising methodology to bridge the gap between traditional “military” and “civilian” activities in counterinsurgency and stability operations. It may help to fill some of the void and provide an intellectual framework that could be useful to both military and civilian planners in beginning to meet the challenge of aligning their disparate activities.

The February 13, 2008, version of JP 3–0 briefly addresses design elements in relation to operational art. However, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525–5–500, *Commander’s Appreciation and Campaign Design*, develops the concept in much greater detail and specifically recognizes the limitations of the military’s “traditional planning processes” in its assumption “that plans and orders from higher headquarters have framed the problem for their subordinates” and, as shown in figure 2, depicts a range of “engineering” to “designing” according to the complexity of the problem to be addressed.²⁵

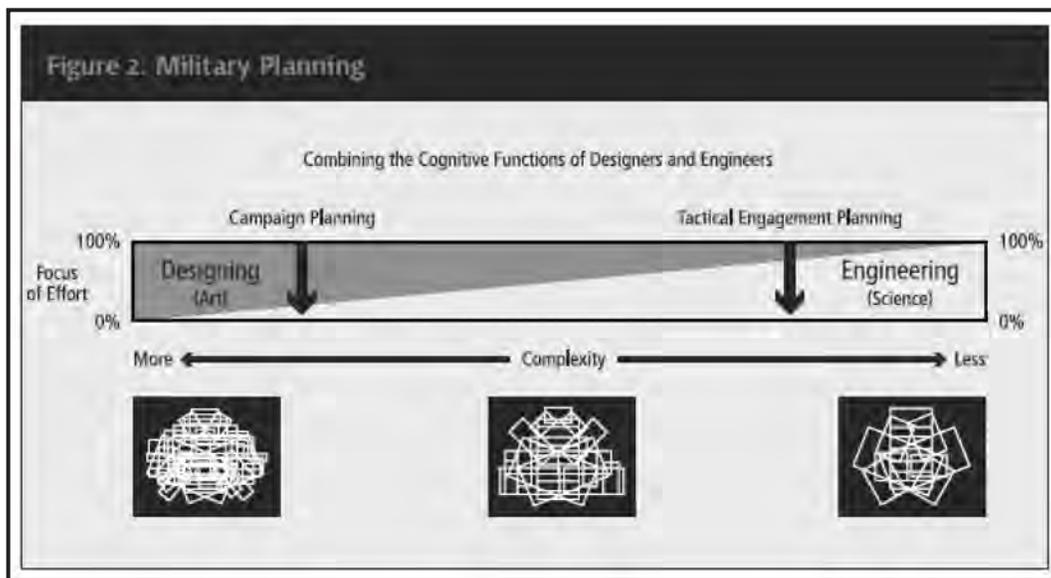


Figure 6-2.

The campaign design approach recognizes a class of complex, ill-structured — or “wicked” — problems that lack not only a single solution set, but also a commonly defined frame for the problem. Furthermore, the problem evolves because the inputs intended to provide a solution cause shifts within the system. Traditional sequential step problem solving approaches do not work for wicked problems. Instead, an iterative effort that initially focuses on framing the problem is necessary.

Key elements to implementing a campaign design approach include:

- Establishing the strategic context. What is the history of the problem, and why does it now require military power to address it?
- Synthesizing strategic guidance. What ends do national-level leaders desire, what have they directed military commanders to accomplish, and why did they establish those particular goals?
- Describing the systemic nature of the problem to be solved and creating a narrative to explain what problems must be addressed to achieve strategic goals. What factors, constituents, and relationships are relevant?
- Establishing assumptions about the problem. In social science terms, this is similar to establishing a working hypothesis: What gaps need to be filled between what we think we know and what we think we need to know in order to design an approach to the problem?

The campaign design process also recognizes the importance of continually revisiting and revising the framing of the problem, especially the assumptions, as the design is implemented. More information about the problem will become known as the process is carried out. Additionally, system inputs resulting from the design are likely to cause the problem to evolve and require an adjustment to the previous frame. This concept is a quantum leap from planning a linear campaign that moves sequentially across a geographic series of battlefields.

Perhaps the most significant change from traditional MDMP-style planning is the axiom that “designing is creative and best accomplished through discourse. *Discourse* is the candid exchange of ideas without fear of retribution that results in a synthesis ... and a shared understanding of the operational problem.”²⁶ This suggests more of a two-way, dialectic approach between a commander and his staff compared to the MDMP, which is largely driven from the top down.

Such practice is similar to how many corporations develop business strategy. According to University of Pittsburgh Professor of Strategic Management John C. Camillus:

Companies can manage strategy’s wickedness not by being more systematic but by using social-planning processes. They should organize brainstorming sessions to identify the various aspects of a wicked problem; hold retreats to encourage executives and stakeholders to share their perspectives; run focus groups to better understand stakeholders’ viewpoints; involve stakeholders in developing future scenarios; and organize design charrettes to develop and gain acceptance for possible strategies. The aim should be to create a shared understanding of the problem and foster a joint commitment to possible ways of resolving it.²⁷

While the campaign design approach is a step in the right direction, many challenges to implementation remain. Although it will probably be incorporated in the next version of FM 5–0 on the operations process, the Army has yet to fully institutionalize the concept of “design” versus planning. Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege has recently written that “the kind of thinking we have called ‘operational art’ is often now required at the battalion level,”²⁸ but for most U.S. Army officers — at least at the company and field-grade ranks — the TRADOC

pamphlet is an esoteric, academic document, and their thinking is still largely driven by the traditional top-down, linear MDMP approach.

Additionally, even though the campaign design concept highlights the importance of discourse, it is still commander-centric. Successfully applying it will require modification to make it work among multiple agencies and organizations. Civilian leaders will typically expect to be treated as equals rather than subordinates of the military commander. In this author's experience, most senior military commanders work cooperatively and collegially with their civilian counterparts. The difficulties usually appear at the next layer down within their staffs, which may sometimes be inclined to cut off the civilian side of discourse by saying that "this is what the commander wants." Commanders must not only be cognizant of their own interactions with their partners from other organizations, but they also need to ensure their staffs work in a truly collaborative fashion with their civilian counterparts.

Another of the institutional differences that make it difficult to implement collaborative designing or planning is the fact that American civilian agencies generally lack comprehensive continuing professional education programs for mid-career and senior managers that are comparable to professional military education programs. Although the State Department sends some Foreign Service Officers to the National War College or one of the other Defense Department senior Service colleges, most have no formal education regarding the development of strategy or planning. This inequality in education is combined with a disparity in typical levels of management and/or leadership experience: The average company commander on the streets of Baghdad is in charge of more people than the average U.S. Ambassador.

Rather than simply being directed — which many "unity of command" proponents assume will solve the interagency problem — most civilian leaders and planners will need to be both convinced and guided through the process of writing a joint-interagency campaign plan or through other means of designing and implementing a comprehensive approach. This in turn will place a premium on interpersonal skills and require a degree of persuasion that many commanders and staff officers are unused to applying in a traditional military context.

Notes

1. See Brooke Smith-Windsor, NATO Defense College Research Paper #38, "Hasten Slowly: NATO's Effects Based and Comprehensive Approach to Operations," July 2008, available at <www.ndc.nato.int/research/respaper.html>.
2. United States Government Counterinsurgency Initiative, January 2009, 17, available at <www.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf>.
3. In November 2008, the Joint Doctrine Development Community agreed to initiate the development of a joint publication (JP) on stability operations with U.S. Joint Forces Command designated as lead agent. See "Joint Doctrine Update," *Joint Force Quarterly* 54 (2d Quarter 2009), 128.
4. JP 3-27, Homeland Defense, states: "Given the persistent nature of current threats, a proactive, comprehensive approach to HD is required," in Glossary-4 and vii; however, it does not provide a definition (I-3).
5. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) has compiled a summary of many of the arguments in the American context. See Catherine Dale et al., *Organizing the U.S. Government for National Security: Overview of the Interagency Reform Debates* (Washington, DC: CRS, April 18, 2008).
6. U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, "Agency Stovepipes vs. Strategic Agility: Lessons We Need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan," April 2008, 32, 49, available at <www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT_Report.pdf>.
7. Walter Pincus, "Foreign Policy Beyond the Pentagon," *The Washington Post*, February 9, 2009, A-15.
8. Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, Change 1, February 13, 2008, xiii, xix.

9. Peter deLeon and Linda deLeon, "What Ever Happened to Policy Implementation?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 12, no. 4 (2002), 473–474.
10. The author thanks Allen Burch and Joseph Banavige for their insights on this topic as Master of Business Administration graduates and instructors. Also see Steven Kelman et al., "Dialogue on the Definition and Evolution of the Field of Public Management," *International Public Management Review* 4, no. 2 (2003), 1–19.
11. The kernel of this concept was to attack Soviet–Warsaw Pact formations in depth, that is, hit their second- and third-echelon unit formations, as a means to offset their superior numerical strength in lieu of conceding defensive space on West Germany territory. This concept replaced the "active-defense," which proposed "trading space for time" and fighting a delaying effort until reinforcements could arrive from North America. Naturally, the owners of the space to be traded — the West Germans — were not enthusiastic about the earlier concept. Compare John Romjue, "The Evolution of the Airland Battle Concept," *Air University Review* (May–June 1984), available at <www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1984/may-jun/romjue.html>.
12. Jack Kem, "Thoughts on Logical Lines of Operations," November 17, 2008, available at <<http://usacac.army.mil/BLOG/blogs/reflectionsfromfront/archive/2008/11/17/thoughts-on-logical-lines-of-operation.aspx>>.
13. Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., "Developing Joint Counterinsurgency Doctrine: An Airman's Perspective," *Joint Force Quarterly* 49 (2d Quarter 2008), 87.
14. James Q. Wilson argues that in peacetime, the U.S. Army is a "procedural agency"; it can observe the activities of its operators but not the outcomes of their efforts because war is the only test that counts. Yet in wartime, it is a "craft agency" because the outcomes can be observed but not the activities of its operators. Accordingly, this uncertainty drives the Army to emphasize the detailed definition and documentation of tasks during peacetime. See *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 163–168.
15. This is not to claim that achieving mechanical precision in security operations is possible. As H.R. McMaster has recently written, the intangible human element plus the "fog of war" play key roles in determining the outcome of any armed conflict. See "The Human Element: When Gadgetry Becomes Strategy," *World Affairs* (Winter 2009), available at <www.worldaffairsjournal.org/2009%20-%20Winter/full-McMaster.html>. Nonetheless, the side that possesses overwhelming force, sound leadership, and mostly accurate information will usually win a particular battle.
16. Field Manual (FM) 5.0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, January 2005), 3–32.
17. Susan B. Epstein, U.S. Embassy in Iraq (Washington, DC: CRS, October 24, 2006), figure 1.
18. The "clear-hold-build" approach to counterinsurgency is described in chapter 5 of FM 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*. In brief, "the pattern of this approach is to clear, hold, and build one village, area, or city—and then reinforce success by expanding to other areas. This approach aims to develop a long-term, effective HN [host-nation] government framework and presence that secures the people and facilitates meeting their basic needs. Success reinforces the HN government's legitimacy." The primary tasks during clear-hold-build are to provide continuous security for the local populace, eliminate insurgent presence, reinforce political primacy, enforce the rule of law, and rebuild local HN institutions.
19. Compare Victor Davis Hanson, *A War Like No Other* (New York: Random House, 2006), 207. One of the debates on the existence of military revolutions concerns whether or how technology has shifted the advantage back and forth between the offense and defense over time.
20. However, recent research by Stathis N. Kalyvas on civil war violence implies that effective control by the government (or insurgents) can shift the prewar preferences of the population toward the position favored by the group exerting control in a relatively short time. This implies that causing a change in societal values may be easier than expected, but emphasizes the ability to broadly apply force rather than the effects of political compromise, implementing good governance, or achieving economic growth. See *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 92–104, 112–132.
21. There are also significant differences in planning and execution between the private sector and government civilian agencies. This is true particularly with regard to establishing goals since making a profit is rarely a governmental consideration. Wilson provides a detailed analysis in *Bureaucracy*. For the purposes of the argument in this article, however, reference to a common "civilian" approach is adequate.
22. John Burns, "U.S. General Says Jobs and Services May Curb Iraq Violence," *The New York Times*, December 13, 2006, A–1.

23. Anna Husarska, "Sending the wrong message," *International Herald Tribune*, June 3, 2008, 8.
24. Rob Crilly, "British taxpayer funds Somali police force for regime accused of war crimes," *Times of London*, June 2, 2008, available at <www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article4046164.ece>.
25. U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525–5–500, *Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design* (Fort Monroe, VA: TRADOC, January 28, 2008), figure 1–3.
26. *Ibid.*, 15. Italics in original.
27. "Strategy as a Wicked Problem," *Harvard Business Review*, May 2008.
28. Huba Wass de Czege, "Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," *Military Review* (January-February 2009), 2.

The Interagency Future Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne

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In his foreword to U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, General William Wallace emphasizes that victory in modern conflict will be achieved “only by conducting military operations in concert with diplomatic, informational, and economic efforts. Battlefield success is no longer enough; final victory requires concurrent stability operations to lay the foundation for lasting peace.”¹

Combat operations thus require further insight largely beyond the conventional canon of military training and expertise. In response to this emergent reality, the Army ushered in a new element to traditional arsenal of war: embedded provincial reconstruction teams (ePRTs). These teams consist of a small civil-military cadre drawn from government agencies and experts at the brigade level. Task Force Marne was one of the first to host these groups, serving as home to four teams.² Based on the Marne experience, I will examine the origins and definition of embedded provincial reconstruction teams. In challenging some basic assumptions, I will discuss the difficulties encountered as these teams formed and integrated into their brigade-level counterparts. Finally, I will offer recommendations to increase team effectiveness.

Into the Surge

By the spring of 2007, U.S. forces in Iraq began receiving the first influx of additional combatants in what came to be known as the “surge.” Simultaneous to this influx was a less publicized discussion about how, beyond military prowess, the United States could directly leverage the full complement of its national power to support the “on-the-ground” efforts of the warfighters. The answer, first articulated in the January 2007 “New Way Forward” speech by President George W. Bush, was to expand the provincial reconstruction team concept to create embedded teams.³ The embedded teams were a joint and interagency construct that “represents the civilian contribution to the military surge.”⁴ Department of State Foreign Service officers joined with experts from the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Justice, and contracted specialists from various backgrounds to form a collaborative cell of civilian experts. This cell, augmented with a mid-level military officer as deputy, became a direct component of the maneuver brigades.

Task Force Marne is the element that commanded the Multi-National Division-Center from March 2007 until June 2008. The unit’s operational environment covered an area of 23,190 square miles stretching from the Saudi Arabian border in the West to the Iranian border in the East, encompassing four full provinces (Babil, Karbala, Najaf, and Wasit) and the two largest *qadas* (counties) of Baghdad Province, Mada’in and Mahmudiyah.

Provincial reconstruction teams in Iraq divide into two primary categories: “paired” and “embedded.” Paired provincial reconstruction teams are largely stand-alone entities, with robust manning structures and dedicated movement security teams. Their mandate includes government engagement at the provincial level.⁵

Embedded teams, on the other hand, are fully entrenched at the brigade combat team level, sharing the space, resources, and hardships of the units with which they partner. These embedded teams have a capacity-building mandate to engage the Iraqi government and population at the local level and support the brigade's counterinsurgency effort. Theoretically, these embedded teams have a four-person core element: a team leader, deputy team leader, United States Agency for International Development representative, and bilingual-bicultural advisor. A bilingual-bicultural advisor is a subject matter expert who is native to the region and provides insight to the cultural dimension. Around this core, additional specialized personnel are added based on their availability and the specific mission requirements. A baseline team of 7 to 11 personnel is normal.⁶

In the spring of 2008, Task Force Marne had five paired provincial reconstruction teams and four embedded provincial reconstruction teams operating in its "battlespace." The Baghdad provincial reconstruction team, whose mandate extended to all of Baghdad Province, shared an overlapping relationship that included Multi-National Division-Baghdad. The Babil team, along with the nominal operations of the Karbala and Najaf teams, operated from the Regional Embassy Office in Hillah. The other provincial reconstruction team was in Wasit Province, near the provincial center of Al Kut. Marne's four embedded teams were known as "Baghdad 4," "Baghdad 7," "Baghdad 8," and "North Babil." This served as the crucible which tested the embedded provincial reconstruction team concept and revealed areas of weakness and strength.

Embedded Team Pedigree and the Afghan Catalyst

The success of the TORCH operation is critically dependent upon the reactions of the authorities, inhabitants and troops of North Africa. With this in mind, General Eisenhower has on his staff a Civil Administrative Section to coordinate the civil and political matters in immediate relation to the operation. He urgently requests that men from the State Department be released to serve on this body. ...[T]he War Department should undertake to carry out this operation in all respects, but the political and civil phase of the plan could be facilitated by the aid of the State Department.

—Memo, General George C. Marshall for
President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 3 September 1942⁷

Embedded provincial reconstruction teams call upon a varied pedigree. Although new, they did not emerge suddenly. The embedded teams are the third evolution of the broader provincial reconstruction team concept, which further traces its civil-military lineage at least to World War II. Battlefield commanders through the centuries have had little cause to consider an official role for civilians among their combat units. This view changed considerably during World War II, and it has been developing ever since. From brevet promotions and the implementation of the Marshall Plan, to codifying pacification efforts through the Civil Operations and Revolutionary (later Rural) Development Support (called "CORDS") program in Vietnam, and to the shared operational space of the Balkan conflicts, the direct role of civilians representing other instruments of national power on the battlefield has continued to evolve.⁸

The Army's counterinsurgency principles, formalized in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, call upon the Army to expand from its singular reliance on the standard sword and shield tools of

war. This holistic approach leverages critical elements of society to look beyond a defeated enemy and achieve a more comprehensive victory.⁹ A clear example, and an early application of these principles, came when the provincial reconstruction team concept emerged in 2003 in Afghanistan as a precursor to the embedded teams.

The irregular environment of Afghanistan proved appropriate for examining the direct integration of nonlethal military activities using civilians. As FM 3-24 states, “Military forces can perform civilian tasks but often not as well as the civilian agencies with people trained in those skills. Further, military forces performing civilian tasks are not performing military tasks.”¹⁰ Development is not an art in which the military is trained, nor does it seek to be an agency for the delivery of such a service. The military seeks to set the conditions for development, first establishing security and then providing a platform for the delivery of the immediate needs of the populace. Beyond this a gap occurs.

In Operation Enduring Freedom, something was missing between the immediate tactical application of military activity and the eventual concerted international community development effort. The U.S. government response in Afghanistan created the first provincial reconstruction team for this need. This effort initially was a stand-alone construct, physically apart from the primary military presence and imbued with a distinct non-lethal mandate. Components of this group were civilians, but it was a military organization with military leadership. The Afghanistan environment accorded a large degree of autonomy and the military hierarchy facilitated a degree of natural integration with overall military activities. As a group of combined experts, it largely bridged the development gap and opened the door for the insertion and expansion of the broader international community. Based on this modest success, the military exported the combined civilian-military approach of the provincial reconstruction team to the Iraq conflict.

In Iraq, the provincial reconstruction team program was restructured with a civilian emphasis. The teams now possessed Department of State leadership and a focus on civilian skill sets. The exception was the deputy team leader, usually a lieutenant colonel. By 2006, counterinsurgency principles began to take prominence in coalition force operations, leading to the surge and a devolved, community-centric focus. Expertise in areas such as local governance, business development, and agriculture was now a requirement. This course adjustment precipitated the evolution of the fundamental provincial reconstruction team concept into the embedded team concept.

Truth in Advertising

Embedded provincial reconstruction teams must affect the environment quickly. They must establish bona fides with the combatant commander, stake a claim to legitimacy in the eyes of the populace, and prove they are trustworthy interlocutors to the Iraqi leadership. However, team personnel usually arrive at a disadvantage when compared to their combatant counterparts. The combatant commander leads a robust and highly trained team, has experienced more time on the ground, owns comparatively vast resources, and exhibits a disdain for patience.¹¹ Additionally, scant training, an unpredictable manning process, and an unfortunate misunderstanding of their mandate often undermine embedded teams. Despite tremendous promise, these groups often experience costly delays in establishing legitimacy and achieving effectiveness due to these largely foreseeable and correctable problems.

Erroneous Expectations

In Task Force Marne, embedded provincial reconstruction teams, as marketed, were more myth and shadow than realities. This judgment is not to say that they were ineffectual but does suggest that their mission was made more difficult due to the way they were assembled and packaged. The mythology begins with the name “embedded provincial reconstruction team.” The title of a nonfiction book generally describes some truth about what the reader may expect to discover in its pages. A military commander, a host-nation-government official, or an average Iraqi citizen is likely to make some reasonable assumptions when beginning interactions with an organization that calls itself an embedded provincial reconstruction team. That the team provides a cohesive organized unit tasked with addressing reconstruction issues at the provincial level is certainly a reasonable expectation. However, this expectation, though reasonable, would be in error. Not because these groups do not fulfill their mandate, but because their mandate does not match their name, these differences are more than merely splitting hairs or semantics. The name carries ramifications for managing expectations and providing both guidance and structure to the group’s operations.

Three claims make up the label: provincial, reconstruction, and team. Taken individually it is clear how this label creates inherent difficulties in clarifying roles and establishing bona fides.

- **Provincial.** The mandate for embedded teams does not extend to the province. Their realm of interaction is sub-provincial. Aligned as they are with task-organized brigades, they cede provincial level interactions to provincial reconstruction teams, just as brigades defer to the division level. Therefore, they develop a sphere of influence that focuses on local level interactions, not provincial ones.¹²
- **Reconstruction.** As a term of art, “reconstruction” may be interpreted as the full spectrum of activities necessary to provide a framework for social, economic, political, and military stability. However, to an Iraqi citizen or company commander, this word conjures an image of hard “brick and mortar” infrastructure projects. Thus, collaborators with the embedded teams inaccurately expect that construction contracts for schools, clinics, and the like will soon follow. While the actual mandate may only touch on infrastructure reconstruction, the expectations of others make actual mission accomplishment more difficult. Thus, the teams’ viability suffers.
- **Team.** The concept of “team” is critical and fundamental to the success of a civil-military group in a counterinsurgency environment. The embedded provincial reconstruction team does achieve the limited standard of the definition for “team” as “a number of persons associated together in work or activity.”¹³ However, a true team, an effective collaboration of individual skills directed toward a shared vision, requires a higher standard. When thinking of successful teams, one imagines sports teams, a group of lawyers in a complex legal case, or perhaps a military unit. In these cases, people prepare and train together in advance of the endeavor they will undertake. They link their individual skills and actions in direct concert with those of their teammates to produce a coordinated outcome. This result presupposes teammate cooperation; individuals who have specific, appropriate skills; and sufficient numbers to fill the requisite positions of the team. Task Force Marne teams’ inaugural year was fraught with difficulty in these aspects of preparation and appropriate staffing. Thus, the claim of establishing a true team is elusive.

Recognizing that embedded provincial reconstruction teams are not quite what they appear does not delegitimize them. Rather, in breaking down the myth, we create the foundation for understanding what the concept aspires to: a uniquely contributing part of the counterinsurgency effort.

Manning the Ship

The true value of the embedded provincial reconstruction team is in its personnel. In Task Force Marne, talented experts made magnificent contributions. For example, the United States Agency for International Development's representative and member of the North Babil team, Dr. Louis Tatem, collaboratively participated in the revitalization of Jurf as Sukhr. His work was key to transforming this blighted area, and it illustrates the units.¹⁴ However, this and other similar successes largely hinged on individual effort and personal relationships, not on an institutionalized standard. As noted in a Brookings Institute report, "Perhaps the most important area of improvement is in how well the new embedded provincial reconstruction teams are working... Unfortunately, State and other civilian agencies have done a poor job providing the needed manpower for the [teams]."¹⁵ This lack of cohesion owes to two primary factors: staffing and preparation.

Staffing. "In somewhat typical State Department fashion, the mandate to staff provincial reconstruction teams came down from above and the Foreign Service had to respond — without an influx of sufficient funding, training, or personnel."¹⁶ This quotation from former Foreign Service officer Shawn Dorman refers to the broader process as initially implemented in Iraq, but it applies to the embedded provincial reconstruction team situation as well, with the additional caveat that many individuals comprising the teams come from sources outside of the Department of State. Although the process is somewhat mysterious, and its uneven flow undoubtedly owes to many factors, there is apparently no cohesive staffing plan.

Due to the absence of such a plan, a number of detrimental conditions have emerged. At various stages, the embedded provincial reconstruction teams at Baghdad 7 and Baghdad 8 have been reduced to a fraction of the baseline group, merely 29 to 43 percent required strength.¹⁷ Brigade combat teams and embedded provincial reconstruction teams are seldom able to identify when a replacement may arrive to fill an open vacancy or replace redeploying personnel. In some instances, embedded provincial reconstruction team personnel arrive with impressive credentials in a particular field, expecting to apply those skills in a position matched with their experience, but they soon find themselves in a position that requires them to serve as the subject matter expert for something foreign to their background and qualifications. At Baghdad 4, acute vacancies identified as critical remain unfilled while other positions receive duplicate candidates.

Team positions require a robust vigor due to the rigorous combat environment and extreme climate temperatures encountered. This raises concerns when individuals of significantly advanced age or poor physical fitness present themselves for service.¹⁸ Once assigned to and faced with the austerity of an embedded provincial reconstruction team, some individuals have sought and received reassignment to the relative luxury of Baghdad's International Zone. Complaints about a general lack of individual comforts such as televisions, DVD players, and refrigerators have been common.

Although anecdotal, these instances articulate two requirements for the embedded provincial reconstruction team positions. Personnel must possess both the requisite expertise of the position

and the ability to thrive in a demanding physical environment. A codified and standardized approach to the identification and preparation of personnel is necessary. While many positions fill appropriately, the examples above reinforce the concerns voiced by many. In an informal discussion regarding the criticality of specific skill requirements and the less-than-ideal efforts to match those skills to actual need, one team leader emphasized the “consistent underestimation of how hard the job [really] is” displayed when filling “expert” positions.

Preparation. In the military, you axiomatically train as you fight. In many cases, incoming embedded provincial reconstruction team members have never worked with the military and some have never even worked abroad. The work environment for team members is certainly austere and can be intimidating. Team members arrive as individuals having never met, much less worked with, fellow teammates or their military counterparts. Newcomers are not systematically prepared for the circumstances they encounter. Instead they must rely on the happenstance of previous personal experiences. The team itself is not systemically prepared to orient, train, and incorporate the newcomer. The brigade, comprehensively engaged in myriad tasks, expects the newcomer to quickly provide insight and deliver value. In short, embedded provincial reconstruction teams and the individuals who comprise them are setup for failure. The simple fact that teams generally do not fail speaks to the quality of the individuals who are involved and the willingness of the broader team to work together to overcome the institutional hurdles.

The in-country oversight responsibility for administration and human resources issues lies with the Department of State’s Office of Provincial Affairs. Thus, it absorbs the brunt of criticism for this ad hoc manning process. However, their task is challenging, involving a selection process that occurs beyond their auspices. It involves coordination of a number of interagency partners and individual contractors over which it has limited authority. The Office of Provincial Affairs is a nascent body, striving to grasp the reins as it works through a chaotic milieu that includes its own manning shortfalls.

In some cases, the staffing difficulties result in an absence of critical expertise to accomplish the civil-military mission. Baghdad 7 endured significant personnel fluctuation and uncertainty in its brief tenure. Recognizing the limitations, team leader John Smith, a veteran with decades of experience developing teams in tricky situations, worked hand-in-hand with 2/3 Brigade Combat Team to secure the staffing support of talented officers from within the unit itself. While this arrangement worked, it is another example of success in spite of the lack of established support systems. As the security situation improves and the demand for true subject matter expertise rises, military officers can shore up the dam only to a certain point. The lasting effort needs to be less on point-of-impact creativity and more on influencing systemic change in identifying, preparing, and deploying embedded provincial reconstruction team personnel.

Achieving Unity of Effort

The fundamental issues are not new. What is new in the current context is the nature of the conflict, the conditions of service, and the delivery method of the required skills. The vehicle for delivery in the modern environment is the embedded provincial reconstruction team, a viable and valuable asset and an integral component of a brigade combat team’s available tools. As noted in a report from the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, “with few exceptions, we observed good civil-military integration and cooperation, and brigade combat team leaders seemed convinced that embedded provincial reconstruction team members provided valuable advice and expertise and constitute a tangible benefit to their battle.”¹⁹ However

positive the experience thus far, the teams have only scratched the surface of their potential. A comprehensive and longer term approach to the development of these teams can achieve the full measure of their promise. This optimization process can occur by directing institutional resources toward a three-fold approach:

- Forecast needs and identify individual team members.
- Provide individual preparation and develop the small team dynamics of the embedded provincial reconstruction team.
- Integrate team training with the sophisticated pre-deployment training of brigade combat teams.

Beginning the Battle

Any initiative must have a starting point. The embedded provincial reconstruction team deployment process should start when a brigade receives its deployment warning orders. Warning orders provide military units with a notice to begin preparations for an action. In the case of Operation Iraqi Freedom, brigade combat teams have significant time in advance of their deployments. By now, embedded provincial reconstruction teams are ingrained in brigade leadership, and the planning to fully incorporate the team should take place as a matter of course. However, there are other pieces to the puzzle. The interagency partners providing assets to the embedded provincial reconstruction team must receive notice similar to the brigade's warning order from their national-level leaders so that they too may develop their support plans. The organizations contributing personnel should appoint a team coordinator for the provincial reconstruction team program who will identify the individuals for selection and coordinate with both the departments of State and Defense to support these personnel with the full preparation process.

The Individual

There are three opportunities to influence the incoming team member: prior to deployment, throughout the deployment process, and during the deployment itself. There is no effort currently made prior to deployment. Once the deployment process begins, incoming members attend a two-week training course in the Washington D.C. area followed by a two-day orientation at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. A benefit of these courses is that new members form relationships with others en route to their assignments, and this contributes to a viable support network. The training itself is limited in duration and scope, notably without any real military integration component. Upon completion of the two-day orientation, individuals leave the embassy to join their teams and the team-building process begins. Unfortunately, this is very late in the game to begin team integration. To be effective, the preparation pipeline must —

- Expand to begin at the beginning prior to deployment.
- Provide deeper insight into the nature of the mission.
- Broaden its focus to include critical team elements, especially military interaction.

The Near Team

The concept of embedded teams in the Task Force Marne context exists on two levels. At one level is the larger comprehensive team, embodied by the brigade combat team, but comprised of the full spectrum of actors directing their energies toward influencing the same territory, service sector, or population segment assigned to the embedded provincial reconstruction team.²⁰ But before the larger team is established, there is the embedded provincial reconstruction team itself, the “near team.” Its internal composition, interpersonal dynamics, and ability to produce a cohesive and relevant product or service is the near team. Efforts to build this team should be ongoing and must begin early in the process. To synchronize the team, Department of State should collaborate with coordinators from the partner agencies and with Office of Provincial Affairs to identify the specific requirements. They should develop embedded provincial reconstruction team templates for the projected brigade locations. These agencies should then identify the personnel they intend to assign to the projected vacancies. In this fashion, the team will begin to take shape, removing much uncertainty. Each location will be different and the environment retains its fluid nature. However, this method identifies team members and tailors them to a template of specific requirements early in the process. Once identified, these team members can communicate among themselves and establish crucial internal relationships with their currently serving counterparts.

The Full Team

As author Shawn Dorman wrote, “Joining military and civilian personnel together for a joint mission is a tall order requiring, among other things, the bridging of cultural divides.”²¹ Building this bridge should not begin at the point of arrival. Even if the embedded provincial reconstruction team manages to achieve a degree of internal harmony and function, acceptance among their military counterparts (and their eventual integration into all brigade operations) is a necessity. Historically, individuals have discovered ways to accelerate this process. One case in point is the “Dog-face Diplomat,” Howard Van Vranken, who clearly demonstrated his desire to be part of the team and thus made the integration process much smoother.²²

However, more can be done to institutionalize this integration and set conditions for immediate, on-the-ground impact. Early contact by at least the key members or even just the team leader can help reduce the uncertainties and delays that characterize the beginning of any integration process. Brigade combat teams must gain confidence in the embedded provincial reconstruction team’s collective counsel, even if its insight reveals that development and other improvements will occur at a seemingly glacial pace.²³ Those in the embedded provincial reconstruction team must learn to appreciate the military’s unique organizational culture. After all, as one team member put it, “You’ll not be living alongside a military culture; you’ll be living *in* the military.”²⁴

Military units embark upon impressively elaborate training exercises prior to deployment. At complexes erected to simulate Iraqi streetscapes, actors role-play local populations and key personalities. Simulated munitions replicate the noise and chaos of battle to create a truly realistic training environment. Just as the brigade strives to ensure that their troops are as prepared as they can possibly be when they encounter the enemy, the embedded provincial reconstruction team should be represented at all of these significant exercises. Beyond the individual training value of these events, one cannot overstate the trust, understanding, and general team-building opportunities of these exercises. Commanders rightfully protest when they must train without even secondary weapons systems. Most acknowledge the importance of stability operations and

the role embedded provincial reconstruction teams play in this operational effort. Commanders should insist on team participation at these training events, and embedded personnel should insist on this opportunity to prepare their team for its role.

This early collaboration is not without precedent. Training iterations prior to Bosnia deployments brought together military elements and a training cadre of civilians playing the role of positions they held during previous deployments. In addition, the Pentagon is currently employing a program that pairs members of a “human terrain team” with the units they will support on deployment.²⁵ These cultural experts join their units well in advance of the deployment and participate throughout the train-up period to shape the unit’s combat preparation and carry on into actual operations once deployed.

While unable to immediately affect those currently on the ground, these recommendations are all within reach for the next rotation of war fighters and their civilian teammates. If the embedded provincial reconstruction teams are to achieve their full potential as pivotal components in the rising importance of stability operations, bureaucratic hurdles inherent in this progress must be minimized.

Effectiveness

The embedded provincial reconstruction team finds its niche as an accepted member of the brigade combat team. When a battlefield’s rubble is freshly formed, the embedded team is best positioned to deliver its expertise: picking up and bolstering worthy leaders, increasing the capacity of local institutions, and mentoring all sides. Coalition forces, men-on-the-street, and local leaders all need mentoring on the structures, formalities, and mechanisms that have proven successful in other strife-torn countries.

Through an interagency process that identifies embedded provincial reconstruction team personnel (and codifies the team-building, preparation, and integration processes), there is potential to make the teams much more effective. Through early integration, the team will serve as a lens to view the operational environment in its many facets, including those perspectives that are beyond the scope of traditional military strengths. Team integration of military and civilian talent, resources, and expertise can better enable “winning the Nation’s wars by fighting within an interdependent joint team.”²⁶

Embedded provincial reconstruction teams have borne the burden of interagency hopes and fears in the most unforgiving of environments. War and political scrutiny have forged the civil-military construct into a rough tool for U.S. foreign policy at the focal point of the War on Terrorism. In the Task Force Marne operational environment of Iraq, this trial by fire has exposed imperfections, and there is clearly room for significant refinement. However, a unique capacity is also clear. The embedded teams demonstrated potential, and successes point to an enduring value in making these teams a permanent fixture in force structure.

Notes

1. FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO], 27 February 2008), foreword.
2. A provincial reconstruction team is a unit consisting of military officers, diplomats, and reconstruction subject matter experts that work to support reconstruction efforts. An embedded provincial reconstruction team (ePRT) works locally with a brigade combat team (BCT).
3. While the speech itself does refer to doubling the number of provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), the ePRT concept is not directly mentioned. However, the accompanying fact sheet distributed by the White House explicitly states as a key element: “Establish PRT-capability within maneuver brigade combat teams (BCTs).” <www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-3.html> (23 April 2009).
4. *Provincial Reconstruction Team Playbook* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, September 2007), 69.
5. “...paired PRTs — so named because of their specific alignment with geographic provinces and whose principle focus is the provincial government,” COL Ralph Baker, statement before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations on Provincial Reconstruction Team Programs, 4 October 2007.
6. Early descriptions of Multi-National Division-Center’s ePRTs called for no less than 7 personnel as a starting point, by late 2007 briefings cited requirements for 11 personnel at Baghdad 4; and 7 personnel each at North Babil, Baghdad 7, and Baghdad 8.
7. Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors, United States Army in World War II Special Studies* (Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1964), 31-32.
8. At the close of World War II, the United States provided brevet promotions to civilians with certain expertise, allowing them to integrate into the post-conflict environment as uniformed members of the overall reconstruction effort. This included the formation of the “Military Government” specialty, the precursor to today’s Civil Affairs branch and military occupational specialty. “The effectiveness of CORDS [Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support] was a function of integrated civilian and military teams at every level of society in Vietnam. From district to province to national level, U.S. advisors and interagency partners worked closely with their Vietnamese counterparts . . . and ensured that military and civilian agencies worked closely together . . . Success in meeting basic needs of the populace led, in turn, to improved intelligence . . .” FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 15 December 2006), 2-12.
9. *Ibid.*, 1-27. “While security is essential to setting the stage for overall progress, lasting victory comes from a vibrant economy, political participation, and restored hope.”
10. FM 3-24, 2-9.
11. When walking through Task Force Marne Headquarters, it is difficult to miss the large banners that proclaim “No Patience!” or signs fashioned like street warnings depicting the word “Patience” with a red line through it.
12. The United States Agency for International Development’s *Republic of Iraq District Government Field Manual*, vol. I, July 2007, vers. 1; addresses “local-level authorities” as those below Provincial or Governorate level, specifically identifying qadas (counties) and nahias (neighborhoods), 14.
13. *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MS: Merriam-Webster Inc., 2003), 1282.
14. The transformation of Jurf as Sukr. Decimated by political strife and the recent ravages of combat, the town of Jurf as Sukr was seemingly more a candidate for demolition than development. Its abandoned business stalls and the town center stood vacant. However, a vigilant military presence allowed for the seeds of a considered and deliberate revitalization program to take root. The collaborative efforts of ePRT expertise and military resources produced a noteworthy outcome. In the fall of 2007, Dr. Louis Tatem was the United States Agency for International Development representative with the North Babil ePRT that supported in turn both the 4/25 and 4/3 brigade combat teams. Drawing upon his numerous years in post-conflict and developing environments throughout East Asia and Europe, he developed a multi-faceted micro-grant program that served as the cornerstone of the revitalization effort. Counseling against a less nuanced approach employed by military units elsewhere, Dr. Tatem and the ePRT capitalized on strong social pressures at play within Iraqi culture to provide small grants to Iraqis. The intent of these programs is to provide scarce venture capital to allow an economic base to take root. With funding in the form of the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, and dollars and security from the BCT in place, Dr. Tatem

first employed a market survey to understand where the populace obtained their goods and why there would be change. Then, he planned the market expansion in deliberate stages to ensure the populace was sincere and to filter individuals as well as businesses and markets. After screening applicants for proven social standing and reasoned proposals, those initially selected for grants then received basic bookkeeping training. The initial grant recipients felt both the collective pressure and the support of the community, as their results would determine the continuation of the program. This group dynamic served as a far more effective check against fraud or abuse than could any other mechanism. Micro-grant initiatives elsewhere have run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars and have focused on speed of distribution above thoroughness of process, resulting in limited success. By contrast, at a cost of well under \$20,000, Jurf as Sukr is now a social center with more than 40 operational shops. This infused vitality was instrumental in securing funding from the Shi'a dominated provincial government to pave the main thoroughfare of this Sunni community. The resurrection of this now vibrant community owes its existence to the combined efforts of the BCT and the experience and knowledge of ePRT personnel.

15. Michael Hanlon and Kenneth Pollack, "Iraq Trip Report," Brookings Institute (August 2007), 10.

16. Shawn Dorman, "Iraq PRTs: Pins on a Map," *Foreign Service Journal* (March 2007), 24.

17. A recurrent joke about Baghdad 7 ePRT is "How many people are on the ePRT? Two, and one of them is on leave." This underscores the pervasiveness of the manning problem but overstates the reality, as this specific PRT has strong military staff support.

18. This refers to actual extreme individual instances; aged in their middle 70s, and a gross body size that limited their capacity to wear Personal Protective Equipment (body armor) or to travel in the confined spaces of military vehicles

19. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, "Review of the Effectiveness of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Program in Iraq," 18 October 2007, Arlington, VA, 17.

20. This includes, certainly, the many manifestations of civilian actors in the area, to include nongovernment organizations, independent initiatives of U.S. government agencies and their implementing partners. However, this also differentiates the separate layers of military presence as well. As CPT Jeremiah Fritz, ePRT Baghdad 7 Governance Lead puts it, "The ePRTs must work with the bde staff, but each battalion has ownership of the physical space and is of course then divided into companies and sometimes into platoons. Therefore we have to negotiate our way through myriad different approaches to non-lethal operations. All these personalities collide in 'support' of a single piece of ground."

21. Dorman, 27.

22. Dog-face diplomat. The military is an organization that promotes the team concept and esprit de corps through a phalanx of traditions and ritual. The main element comprising Task Force Marne is the Third Infantry Division, whose members are respectfully referred to as "Dog-Face" Soldiers, a tradition stemming from World War II. Each morning at division headquarters, Soldiers stand and sing the Dog-Face Soldier song. Howard Van Vranken, ePRT team leader, presented a section of the daily battle-update-brief to the Third Infantry Division commanding general MG Rick Lynch, as well as the brigade's commanders and assorted leadership of Multi-National Division-Center gathered there. He began with, "Good evening, Sir. It's another great day to be a Dog-Face Diplomat."

23. "The main point of divergence is in the time horizon," says foreign service officer Chuck Hunter, team leader for Provincial Reconstruction Team Babil, "with the military focused on short-term effects and State/USAID concerned more with long term outcomes." Dorman, 29.

24. Horacio Ureta, "Bidding Advice from PRT Anbar," *Foreign Service Journal* (March 2007), 24.

25. John Vandiver, "Cultural Advisors to Join 1AD for Next Iraq Tour," *Star and Stripes European Edition* (26 March 2008), <www.stripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=53600> (23 April 2009).

26. FM 3-0, viii.

Working Relationships: Interagency Exchange Program Improves Army's Relationship with Whole of Government

CPT Bryan Gibb

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Building and maintaining strong relationships between the United States Army and its governmental partners is essential to bringing forth a positive outcome in the war on terror. With that end in mind, Lieutenant General William Caldwell, the commandant of the Command and General Staff College, or CGSC, and the commanding general of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS, developed the Interagency (IA) Exchange Program in order to “improve how we as an Army work in conjunction with other governmental departments and agencies.”

The IA program, now in its pilot year, affords Army captains and majors the opportunity to join national agencies for a one-year, interagency fellowship. As interagency fellows, they replace a civilian government employee within the partnered organization, giving that employee the opportunity to attend the one-year CGSC Intermediate Level Education, or ILE. The intent of this cross-pollination of Army officers and governmental civilians is to increase collaboration, cooperation and interoperability to better serve the unified approach described in Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, and FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*.

Serving as an Army IA fellow is both an outstanding professional-development opportunity and an excellent mechanism for imparting a company-grade officer's tactical- and operational-level experiences to members of a national-level organization. I was selected to serve an IA fellowship with the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, or NGA. Before my NGA assignment, I attended ILE at Fort Belvoir, VA. ILE was an excellent venue for fostering strategic-level thinking in someone who was about to report to an organization that has a national mission and focus. I began my NGA fellowship Oct. 1, 2008, and my first task was to develop a proposal with key leaders on how I could best serve the agency and simultaneously receive a broadening, professional development experience. We determined that I should first receive formal training and orientation to the organization, followed by a period during which I could apply my tactical and operational experiences as a Special Forces officer to help shape the way that NGA supports the warfighter.

My initial introduction to NGA was participating in the biannual conference held by the NGA support teams, or NSTs. Members of the NGA's mission-partner organizations, such as other intelligence agencies and the combatant commands, are embedded on NSTs to ensure that they provide relevant, timely geospatial intelligence. Senior NGA personnel attended the conference to address common issues and to synchronize the organization's efforts to support its mission partners. Early in my fellowship, I attended a number of strategic-level meetings in order to understand the focus and direction of the organization. My attendance at the NST conference and at meetings of key leaders gave me valuable insight into who NGA supports and the way it tailors its intelligence products to meet the needs of its mission partners.

After this period of garnering the strategic vision, I attended two formal NGA courses to gain a better understanding of how the organization operates. The first, the two-week Geospatial Intelligence Orientation Seminar, gives participants exposure to a number of NGA directorates and demonstrates how those organizations fit into NGA's strategic objectives. The second, the

Geospatial Staff Officer Course, provides a baseline understanding of the way NGA collects and disseminates geospatial intelligence to the intelligence community. Those courses gave me an excellent introduction to NGA's capabilities and an appreciation of the multitude of strategic-level intelligence requirements that the agency fulfills for our nation on a daily basis. The orientation I received to NGA was outstanding professional development, because it explained the operations of not only NGA but also the entire intelligence community. Because of NGA's close collaboration with a number of intelligence organizations, such as the CIA, the National Security Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency, I was exposed to their operations, as well — a byproduct of an age of information sharing and cooperation.

Following the institutional orientation, NGA provided me access to a number of its analysis and production branches for a one-to-two-week internship to gain firsthand knowledge of the way analysts support the warfighter. I had the opportunity to sit with a number of NGA branches that provide geospatial products in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, or OIF, and Operation Enduring Freedom, or OEF. In addition to speaking to analysts about their work, I was asked to share with department personnel my experiences in receiving and using NGA products as a detachment commander during OEF. Those briefings generated a lot of discussion on the ways geospatial products can benefit warfighters at the tactical level, and the discussions became the catalyst for a special project that I could manage to support NGA's wartime focus.

During the remainder of my NGA fellowship, I will conduct a study of the ways NGA supports theater special operations forces. The study will make recommendations on the best ways to tailor NGA's relationship with theater combined joint special operations task forces, or CJSOTFs, to meet the CJSOTFs' geospatial intelligence requirements, and on ways that support can benefit detachment-level operations. The basis for the study is my exposure to the way NGA currently supports its national military partners. I am studying ways of incorporating into theater-level SOF operations some of NGA's outstanding tactics, techniques and procedures developed to support our national military assets. My study began with visits to the 7th and 10th Special Forces groups to receive firsthand accounts of NGA's support to those groups' recent deployments to OIF and OEF. Following discussions with those redeployed units, I traveled to the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility to continue the study with the 5th and 3rd SF groups.

In addition to making recommendations on ways that NGA can maximize its support to deployed SOF forces, I am working to increase SF's awareness of NGA's unique capabilities. Geospatial intelligence is an extremely powerful tool that can combine multiple sources of intelligence into one product that increases situational awareness and understanding. With SF's unique mission set, executing kinetic and non-kinetic operations as part of counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan, geospatial intelligence can be a powerful decision-making tool for tactical- and operational-level mission planning and execution. I will continue to engage the SF groups in order to increase cooperation and interoperability between the two organizations and to highlight the strategic, operational and tactical implications of geospatial-intelligence.

By design, the interagency fellowship was implemented by Army leaders to increase understanding and cooperation between the Army and our interagency mission partners. According to Lieutenant General Caldwell, "There are no longer only military solutions to conflict; we must embrace a whole-of-government approach." As a member of the pilot program, I feel the initiative is an outstanding way to use the tactical and operational knowledge of mid-level Army leaders to positively affect the contributions made by our country's national-level organizations and bring a positive outcome to the war on terror.

The Challenge of Leadership in the Interagency Environment

William J. Davis, Jr., Ph.D.

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To address myriad issues in foreign engagements across the range of military operations, numerous federal agencies are required. Military members who operate in this interagency environment may well think they have traveled to a foreign land where their cultural norms are deemed impertinent. However, the interagency environment is a cultural reality they must understand and successfully navigate to accomplish the mission. For the most part, military organizational culture is characterized by a strong hierarchy with almost absolute adherence to orders. Indeed, the first step of the Army's military decision making process is "receipt of mission," which, of course, supports the notion that higher headquarters knows best.

The interagency culture takes an antithetical slant. The interagency environment is usually one in which there is no single, distinct chain of command. It is not a monolithic hierarchical organization. It is a loose conglomeration of agencies on the same road at the same time, but all going to a different destination. In this culture, the way to accomplish the mission is to employ the "six Cs" — comprehend, coordinate, cooperate, compromise, consensus, and communication.

Comprehend

The Joint Forces Staff College conducted a needs assessment in 2002 to determine the skills and knowledge needed for an effective Joint-qualified officer. It found that the most critical requirement was an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the military services. Working in an interagency environment is no different. Officers must know about what each participating agency "brings to the table." In a long-standing organization such as Southern Command's Joint Interagency Task Force South, agencies share offices and use procedures that involve all agencies so that participants can see the whole picture and determine what their agency can contribute. In an ad hoc or crisis situation, dialogue among the participants is critical to unveiling the capabilities and limitations of each agency. In these situations, a physical space shared by all representatives from the various agencies (to include the military) and an open and inquisitive approach from the military is necessary. As a staff member, you do not take the initiative to communicate with other agencies, do not assume that they will provide information of their agency's capabilities. In addition, do not assume that they are familiar with your capabilities and limitations. The most important dynamic that agency or military representatives can establish is open dialogue. Comprehension can only be gained through such dialogue.

Coordinate

Military officers often interpret "coordination" to mean "deconfliction," but a dictionary definition tells us that the word means "to work or act together harmoniously." This does not mean that each agency stays out of the others' way, but that all agencies plan each action to maximize the effect of all other actions taking place. For example, military efforts to rebuild medical care in Mogadishu in Somalia during the early 1990s focused on the military providing free medical care to Somali nationals. However, the military failed to coordinate with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which was working to ensure that Somali doctors returned to Mogadishu. Because the military and USAID did not coordinate their efforts, Somali nationals went to the free hospitals set up by the military, but Somali doctors lost clientele and left Mogadishu.

Cooperate

According to Webster, to cooperate is “to act jointly or in compliance with others.” While one can argue that cooperation is a military value displayed throughout the chain of command, the cooperation the military most often exercises takes place within a single service. At one time, cooperation was so lacking among the military branches of service that Congress had to enact the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 to force U.S. military services to sufficiently cooperate. There are those who argue that a similar act would force cooperation among the various agencies of the government. However, until that happens, success in the interagency environment requires agency representatives to work with each other of their own volition.

Compromise

Although the word “compromise” may have a negative connotation within the military culture, willingness to compromise is essential for success in the interagency environment. A common definition is “a settlement of differences reached by mutual concessions.” The military lives with compromise every day. For example, most leaders would like to have more ammunition for live-fire training, but they compromise on the allocation of ammunition for the good of the other units who also need ammunition. Military commanders probably would like more time off for their personnel after a deployment, but commanders compromise this desire for the good of the real-world mission. Compromise does not mean conceding individual values or those of an organization.

Consensus

The ability to have everyone agree — to build consensus — is a significant talent that must be mastered for the interagency environment. Going to Webster once again, we find that consensus is “a collective opinion.” Consensus building is a skill that, for the most part, is foreign to military culture. A common mantra of military officers is that “it is fine to challenge the boss, but once the decision is made, you need to follow the order as if it were your own.” Interagency decisions do not work like that. If an agency does not think a consensus has been reached, the agency may not participate in the proposed solution. Consensus is probably the most critical aspect of accomplishing national objectives during an interagency operation.

Communication

Having to communicate effectively to convince an individual or organization to do something is foreign to military personnel. The military’s hierarchical design is based upon the assumption that one will do what one is told by those higher in the chain of command. However, positional authority is not enough to convince agency representatives. To persuade them, one must have evidence and a sound argument to prove that what is proposed will actually contribute to solving identified problems. As an example, a commander of three multinational divisions in Bosnia had to visit each division commander after an operations order was published to convince them that the order would be good for the overall mission and their particular stake in it. Perhaps this commander may have avoided such visits by applying the six Cs before the order was published, but regardless, he recognized the need to effectively communicate.

Conclusion

We must take an interagency approach in the complex contingencies that the United States enters — no single agency has the knowledge, resources, or talent on its own. Such operations present unique challenges. The assumptions made when operating within one’s own organizational culture are often invalid or impractical in the inter-agency environment. When working with the various organizations responding to an international crisis, military members should apply the “six Cs” to ensure the optimum response to complex operations across the globe.

Interagency Lessons Learned in Afghanistan

LTC(P) Tucker B. Mansager

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Future conflicts will likely continue to blur the line between war and peace, necessitating close cooperation between groups previously considered the exclusive practitioners of each — soldiers and diplomats. Just as terrorism crosses military, economic, and criminal spheres, U.S. efforts to counter it must closely integrate the elements of national power — diplomatic, informational, military, and economic — and reveal no seams the enemy can exploit. Occasionally, the interagency process meant to bring all these elements to bear has worked well. More commonly, the coordination of these elements has been haphazard and ad hoc, particularly at lower levels. Action is required; the system will not improve by itself.

A recent effort to improve lower-level coordination took place with the establishment of Combined Forces Command–Afghanistan (CFC–A) alongside the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, resulting in significant lessons learned in the execution of interagency policy that might be applied in other countries and situations. Such basic concepts as collocation of senior military and diplomatic leaders, consensus building, and military planning support to the U.S. Ambassador all contributed to greater integration in implementing interagency policy and increased success in carrying out U.S. foreign policy in Afghanistan.

Problems for the Joint Force Commander

Numerous interagency structures are meant to help integrate the efforts of the various executive agencies and departments in their pursuit of foreign policy goals. Unfortunately, they do little to help implement policy on the ground or deal with the overarching integration required of a joint force commander (JFC). Often they are outside the commander's control, or are de facto limited to one country. Not only do these structures not help, but they also pose a series of problems for the JFC.

The commander in a joint operational area (JOA) has no regional peer from the State Department or any other U.S. Government agency. While joint doctrine notes that Ambassadors operate at both the operational and tactical levels, their authority is effectively limited to their country of accreditation, as explained in Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations*. The same is generally true of representatives of other executive and intelligence agencies. The JFC's area, on the other hand, encompasses both the primary country of operation and all or part of neighboring countries; thus, the commander will have to coordinate policy or operations with multiple country teams. The first level at which the JFC may encounter a State Department individual with regional authorities comparable to his own is at the regional assistant secretary level. For example, the Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs has responsibility for U.S. relations with Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan, among others. But since State geographic areas, as well as those of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), are not aligned with combatant commander areas of responsibility, a JFC with a JOA encompassing both Pakistan and Tajikistan might also have to deal with the Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs. Subsequently, such coordination often must be effected at the combatant command or even Joint Staff level — distant in time, space, and perspective from the area of conflict.

Even inside a given country, with one country team, cultural differences between foreign service and military officers complicate policy coordination and implementation. While military officers are focused on the military element of foreign policy, foreign service officers deal with all aspects of that policy. Detailed planning is a core activity of the military, while general planning is acceptable in the State Department; teamwork is rewarded in the military, while individual achievement is highly regarded in the State Department. Misperceptions and cultural differences add more friction and challenges to the coordination and execution of foreign policy under stressful and often austere conditions.

Cultural differences can also exacerbate the issue of who is in charge and when. In some contingencies, it is clear who has primacy in a given country or operation. Since Washington did not have an Ambassador in Kabul in October 2001 or in Baghdad in March 2003, General Tommy Franks, Commander, U.S. Central Command, was obviously running the show along with his subordinate commanders. In other operations, such as disaster relief, humanitarian support, and noncombatant evacuations, the Ambassador or chief of mission assumes the lead.

Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom seem to fall into a category of neither war nor peace. While the initial phases of both were clearly in the military's purview, a continuing insurgency in the reconstruction phases (greater in Iraq than Afghanistan) has blurred the line between war and peace. Although joint doctrine categorizes counterinsurgency as an "operation other than war" and the Army dubs it a "stability operation," these constructs may not help the JFC execute his combat mission when mixed with humanitarian relief, reconstruction, and stability operations.¹ Who is in charge in such a situation, the Ambassador or the JFC? This nebulous condition could cause further conflict or uncoordinated efforts between the military and civilian components of foreign policy, depending on the Ambassador or JFC.

Some structures exist for developing interagency policy. What configuration or organization translates the policy into coherent, coordinated orders that are executed on the ground? While the Executive Steering Group cited in joint doctrine has the potential to provide such a mechanism within a country, a JFC's operational area regularly encompasses more than one country. In theory, a commander could gather senior representatives, even Ambassadors, from all the countries in his JOA to serve as a super executive steering group, but since each Ambassador is an authority unto himself, and the JFC has no authority over him, the commander must sell his plan to a group of senior foreign service officers or political appointees who may have divergent ideas on how to implement national policy.

Afghanistan as a Case Study

Many in Bagram and Kabul felt that Operation Enduring Freedom had nominally transitioned to stability operations in May 2003, when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated that "major combat activity" had changed to "stability and stabilization." Yet Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-180 remained focused on combat operations in country, to the detriment of implementing an integrated U.S. military effort to help rebuild Afghanistan.² The most senior U.S. military leaders were in Bagram, physically and perhaps psychologically separated from Afghan political and international diplomatic efforts in Kabul. In October 2003, U.S. Central Command began to form CFC-A to put more emphasis on the political-military aspects of efforts in the country; then Major General David Barno, USA, arrived early that month to assemble a staff and structures to knit together the military and political work. Originally conceived as a "pocket staff," CFC-A soon took over all higher level aspects of political-military coordination, as well as overall direction of military activity in the JOA, allowing CJTF-180 and later CJTF-76 to focus on tactical warfighting and stability operations.³

Locating CFC–A headquarters close to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul was critical to helping integrate diplomatic and aid efforts with military operations. Until that point, Embassy officers had to travel to Bagram to consult with military planners or operators, and vice versa. This trip required numerous security measures on the part of the military and an even greater effort on the part of the unarmed Embassy members, making it so difficult that the two organizations often worked without interaction. To further integrate the military and diplomatic aspects of the mission, the commander (COM CFC–A) maintained his office and personal staff in the Embassy, two doors from Zalmay Khalilzad, who became U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan in November 2003. Numerous high-ranking visitors to Kabul praised the team’s progress, which resulted in a number of lessons learned on how to improve interagency cooperation at the lower end of the operational level.

Lessons to Learn

Collocate the Senior Military and Diplomatic Leaders. The benefit of physical collocation of senior military and diplomatic leaders and their staffs cannot be overemphasized; nearly all other lessons learned were influenced by physical proximity and its beneficial effect on personal interaction and coordination. Being in the same place allowed more agility and speed in dealing with rapidly developing crises. Additionally, locating the senior military commander in the Embassy made a clear statement to allies, the Afghan people and government, and the world that the United States was entering a phase of Enduring Freedom focused on reconstruction and stability.

Senior leadership presence in the Embassy allowed military representation in what was referred to as “Core Group,” a smaller meeting of top Embassy officers, instituted by Ambassador Khalilzad and hosted by the Ambassador or, in his absence, the Deputy Chief of Mission. Attendance regularly included COM CFC–A; Chief, Office of Military Cooperation–Afghanistan; CIA Chief of Station; and sometimes the USAID Mission Director and a few other selected parties. Sensitive information was shared and critical decisions were often made in the Core Group Meeting. Collocation allowed regular participation and input into this vital forum.

Build Consensus. Proximity made it easier to build consensus. With no command authority between military and Embassy staff, and with questions about who was in charge, CFC–A relied on extensive efforts at consensus-building to develop and implement coherent, cohesive plans and policy. In fall 2003, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General Lakhdar Brahimi requested development of a plan to increase stability in strife-torn southern and eastern Afghanistan. In response, the CFC–A staff began work on a political-military strategy to implement ideas from a discussion paper entitled “Provincial Strategies,” written by Brahimi’s deputy, Jean Arnault. Thus, CFC–A developed what became known as the “Strategy South and East” through an intense consensus-building process.

The initial framework of the strategy was developed within the military staff, based on guidance from the commander. Once it was framed, the Director of Plans and Policy (CJ–5) first presented the concept to senior Embassy leaders without the Ambassador present. The Deputy Chief of Mission, USAID Mission Director, and others provided insights to the concepts; more importantly, they took away a sense of ownership in the strategy. After making adjustments based on the feed-back from the senior Embassy staff, the CJ–5 and COM CFC–A presented the strategy to the Ambassador, making adjustments based on his suggestions and receiving his support and concurrence before proceeding. This process continued in widening circles to brief and gain support from Brahimi and Arnault, the five lead nations in security sector reform (the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and Italy), and ultimately President Hamid

Karzai and appropriate officials in his government. The interagency consensus building within the Embassy helped iron out initial problems in the plan, making it more acceptable to the other non-U.S. organizations, and convinced senior leaders in the Embassy to support the plan even though they answered only to the Ambassador, not the military commander.

Provide Military Planning Support. Early in his tenure as COM CFC–A, General Barno directed that the staff provide a small group of field grade officers, led by a colonel, to form the Embassy Interagency Planning Group. As noted, detailed planning is not generally recognized as a State Department core competency; furthermore, an Embassy staff has no plans section per se. The planning group was envisaged to provide the Ambassador with this type of capability, but it had effects beyond the initial concept. The seconding of military officers to the Ambassador helped further integrate political and military efforts through closer and more continuous coordination. This dedicated group provided the Ambassador military expertise for which he might otherwise have turned to the CFC–A staff, distracting it from its other missions. For example, the group was able to collect and collate information about nearly all U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, be they military, USAID, or nongovernmental, to give the Ambassador an overall vision and indicate gaps or overlap. That, in turn, allowed him to adjust efforts and seek more support for others. Choosing to form, staff, and maintain this group built goodwill with the Embassy staff and especially with the Ambassador — an advantage when cooperation, rather than command, is the normal mode of operation. Additionally, it can help salve wounds or recoup lost confidence when necessity or mistakes on one side result in bad feelings on the other.

Practice Shuttle Diplomacy. Having no peer with comparable geographic responsibilities, COM CFC–A made a point of visiting the other countries of the JOA, particularly Pakistan, to build consensus with senior U.S. diplomats, show interest in the situation in those countries, and familiarize himself with the senior leaders and issues. Because of the importance of Pakistan to efforts in Afghanistan, Islamabad was a monthly destination. Although much of a given visit might be spent with the Pakistani military leadership, the trips regularly included a visit with the U.S. Ambassador and other senior civilians in the Embassy. While the U.S. Office of the Defense Representative–Pakistan is headed by a flag officer, regular visits and briefings by the senior U.S. officer in the region contributed to understanding and trust and helped resolve issues early. The same concepts of consensus and confidence-building that CFC–A applied in Kabul were replicated by visits to U.S. Embassies in other countries.

Understand the Importance of Personalities. Interagency cooperation is more art than science, even more so the specific cooperation between the Departments of State and Defense. The personalities of the senior leaders played a large role in U.S. success in Afghanistan. While the personae of leaders cannot be dictated or even adjusted, certain qualities or experiences may be more desirable and hence emphasized during selection. By the time of his appointment, Ambassador Khalilzad had spent extensive time in the National Security Council and Department of Defense, as well as with the Department of State. That background provided him a deeper and broader understanding of political-military interaction, particularly the capabilities, limitations, and workings of military force. Other Ambassadors, political appointees or career foreign service officers alike, might possess less experience with military subjects and issues. General Barno did not have the same breadth of experience in national-level organizations, although he did have political-military experience as the commander of Task Force Warrior, which trained free Iraqi forces in Hungary during the buildup to the invasion of Iraq. More importantly, he came to the position with a cooperative mindset, dedicated to working with the Embassy in Kabul to further U.S. policy in Afghanistan. The two senior leaders began building a relationship in Washington before they arrived in Afghanistan, with Barno attending Khalilzad's

swearing-in and the two returning to Kabul on the same flight. Their mutual respect and cooperation guaranteed that the disparate foreign service and military cultures would get along.

Unity of Effort

The interagency process has received increased scrutiny and has room for improvement. Changes to increase efficiency and synergy in the system are necessary to deal with today's multifaceted and asymmetric threats. While the United States has a fairly established way to coordinate the interagency system at the national level, the leaders on the ground in a country in conflict have only general guidance and concepts. Some of these ideas, such as the Executive Steering Group, do not seem to take into account that today's JFC will likely command operations in a number of countries. Yet this is the commander who may need the most help, as he is likely responsible for political-military activities on a large scale with a minimal, and possibly ad hoc, military staff with limited interagency representation.

There are organizational problems with State, Defense, and CIA relationships in areas of conflict. The JFC will likely be responsible for furthering U.S. policy in an area comprising two or more countries, moving among those countries and dealing with their senior military and political leaders largely as he sees fit. On the other hand, if an Ambassador, who is typically accredited to only one country, has responsibilities in another country, the other country may not correspond to a country in the JOA. Like that of Ambassadors, the authority of CIA chiefs of station and USAID mission directors is usually limited to their country of assignment, with the first level of multi-country responsibility occurring at the respective organizations' headquarters in Washington. As the Center for Strategic and International Studies report *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era* recommended in 2004, a Special Representative of the President in charge of all U.S. efforts in an area of conflict would go a long way toward improving unity of effort among the various practitioners of foreign policy there. Misalignment of geographical areas of responsibility will not ease the interagency friction that occurs in any area of conflict. A National Security Council review and realignment of the geographical regions of the major foreign policy players could streamline the efforts of these agencies by easing coordination and eliminating redundant efforts.

The United States is involved in a conflict with an elusive, transnational foe who will use terror, armed force, propaganda, and even diplomacy to achieve goals. Already heavily involved in Afghanistan and Iraq, and to a lesser degree in places like the Horn of Africa and Southeast Asia, Washington must look for ways to do more with limited resources. The massive U.S. humanitarian relief operation following the December 2004 tsunami in South Asia reemphasizes the imperative of improving interagency cooperation and the synergies and economies to be gained. One way to get the most out of the system is to improve the cooperation among the major participants in the execution of foreign policy, particularly the Department of State officials and the uniformed military interacting in the area of conflict. Combined Forces Command–Afghanistan established and proved the value of several best practices that could help improve this coordination in a region in conflict. It is time to enhance the effectiveness of our national security team abroad and hence the security of the United States and its allies.

Notes

1. Joint Publication 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, June 16, 1995), III-9, and Field Manual (Interim) 3-07.22, *Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, October 2004).
2. Kathleen T. Rhem, Rumsfeld Impressed with Progress in Afghanistan Capital, *American Forces Press Service*, May 1, 2003, available at <www.defenselink.mil/news/May2003/n05012003_200305016.html>.
3. This and the following accounts of activities in Afghanistan come from the author's experiences as the political-military officer for the Office of Military Cooperation–Afghanistan, then the Political-Military Division chief for CFC–A from July 2003 to July 2004.

Afghanistan's Nangarhar Inc: A Model for Interagency Success

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While creating solutions for economic development problems in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2007 and 2008, the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team entered into a unique partnership with U.S. government interagency personnel. The result — the Nangarhar Regional Development Plan — was a transformative achievement with far-reaching implications for the counterinsurgency (COIN) effort in Afghanistan. Its conception through interagency collaboration was equally important as a model to emulate for future success. With these and other efforts, the U.S. military is a closer partner with the U.S. interagency community than ever before. Continuing to foster these relationships will be critical to unity of effort and success in the War on Terrorism.

National Strategy

As a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade operating in the strategically important eastern region of Afghanistan (the provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, and Nuristan), I observed the implementation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy from 2007 to 2008. The national strategy, approved in interim form in January 2006 at the London Conference, used district and provincial development plans as devices to achieve the overarching strategic vision. The creation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and associated provincial development plans involved a series of national and sub-national consultations. Each of 16,753 (later expanded to 18,500) community development councils in Afghanistan submitted project "wish lists" to the 345 respective district development assemblies. These assemblies are vehicles at the district level designed to consolidate projects into the district development plans.¹

Formulation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy

The projects sent to the district development assemblies were primarily poverty reduction projects and those that affected essential needs of communities (flood control projects, wells, etc).² The district assemblies took the top projects in each of the eight sectors of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and created the district development plans. From these plans, the top ten projects in each sector were used to create the provincial development plans. In effect, their plans are a consolidated grass-roots driven project wish list generated by communities that did not have a regional view of the development problem. They only saw their own local problems in most cases. Although the provincial development plans state that the national strategies were taken into account, how sector strategies affect the provincial plans in a meaningful way is not clear.

The Afghan National Development Strategy embraces three visions: the political, the economic and social, and the security. Some projects affect each of these. For example, roads are extremely important in Afghanistan and cross all lines of effort. The strategy identifies six other cross-cutting examples: regional cooperation, counter-narcotics, anticorruption, gender equality, capacity development, and environmental management.³

Task Force Bayonet followed three primary lines of effort nested within its higher headquarters' mission and intent: governance, development, and security. These lines of effort were nested within the Afghanistan National Development Strategy visions, but, although the task force was well equipped to deal with security issues in its region, the brigade had to work hard to address development and governance lines of effort to complement the strategy's political and economic visions.

In developing an operational strategy, the brigade identified economic solutions as critical to overall success. Compelling arguments and data points identify the insurgency in the eastern portion of Afghanistan as one driven by economics. The numbers of ideological fighters in the region are quite low. Many people fight because they have no other way of making a living. In some cases, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have reduced the number of fighters simply by paying \$5.50 per day for the services of fighting-age males — 50 cents more a day than the insurgents paid them.

Defeating an economic insurgency requires an economic strategy. A statement from the interim national development strategy is telling: "Ultimately, we want to move beyond dependence upon international aid and build a thriving, legal, private sector-led economy that reduces poverty and enables all Afghans to live in dignity."⁴ The Afghan government understands that development efforts in many cases need not attempt to reduce poverty directly. The long-term solution is to build a thriving economy that will do the job. Revisions in the 2008 version of the strategy display the same logical thought process, but mark a noticeable shift to favor poverty reduction semantics. Because Afghanistan qualifies as a "heavily indebted poor country," obtaining funding from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund requires a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The Afghanistan National Development Strategy serves as this strategy paper for donor funding, but the Afghan government unfortunately uses some policies and procedures that may actually increase poverty. In the 2008 strategy document, the government took a step backward with an economic development objective to "reduce poverty [and] ensure sustainable development through a private-sector-led market economy."⁵ Poverty reduction came to the forefront to leverage international donor money — but at the expense of truly reducing poverty in the long-term by building a thriving economy.

The Problem

If the Afghan government continues to pursue the economic strategy set forth in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, how can the provincial development plans build a thriving, legal, private-sector-led economy? The contributors to the plan do not have the regional vision necessary to address solutions that build the critical infrastructure required to bring about long-term sustainable economic growth. The grass roots projects understandably address only the immediate needs of communities. Afghanistan's Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development's National Area Based Development Program is currently using \$2.5 million of donor funds from the Asian Development Bank on district and provincial development plans projects in Nangarhar Province. The vast majority of the projects are gabion walls and associated check dams not designed to bring about economic growth and which are frequently washed away by floods. They are simply projects that have been identified as important to communities in the near term.

This situation highlights the major challenge in the provincial development plan construct. Top-down planning with bottom-up refinement should reshape the provincial development plans. Instead of a simple list of check dams, gabion walls, and micro-hydro projects, Task Force

Bayonet worked to build the capability of district development assemblies and other Afghan government officials to draw development plans that link together projects to capture and enhance economic value chains. A comprehensive watershed management plan should lead to a dam with associated power production. Irrigation projects and agricultural development projects should increase the production of grain, leading to a grain elevator powered by the dam project while roads link all the projects together. These interconnected initiatives operating as a whole are far greater than the sum of the parts.

The Solution

In Task Force Bayonet's area of operations, the problem was clear; the difficulty lay in how to address it. The task force began operations in May 2007, and from the beginning, it was apparent that the interagency components required to address governance and development solutions were not present. Department of State, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and U.S. Department of Agriculture positions in the PRTs were not filled; there was little or no interagency staffing at the brigade level, and the entire complement of interagency personnel in the eastern region was less than 1/100th of one percent of the paratroopers on the ground from the Department of Defense.

The onus to provide a solution fell on the shoulders of the agency that knew and interacted with the people and government every day. The brigade accepted this task as a necessary burden. FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, states that whenever possible, civilians should perform civilian tasks but "military forces [must] be able to conduct political, social, information and economic programs 'as necessary.' ... Depending on the state of the insurgency, therefore, Soldiers and Marines should prepare to execute many nonmilitary missions to support COIN efforts. Everyone has a role in nation building, not just Department of State and civil affairs personnel."⁶ In fact, Task Force Bayonet undertook a number of initiatives in governance and development simply because no one else was available to do so.

It was with this in mind that the brigade commander and senior leaders traveled to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul at the invitation of the acting brigade political advisor. They met with various interagency leaders to discuss possibilities in Nangarhar. During a meeting with the acting USAID Afghanistan director, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) director, Department of State interagency resource coordination director, Task Force Bayonet commander Colonel Charles Preysler, Ambassador William Wood, and other leaders, Task Force Bayonet agreed to help facilitate the creation of an economic development plan for the agencies to execute together. The Ambassador said he would like Nangarhar to be a "model for success." And so Nangarhar Inc was born.

Eight key members of the Task Force Bayonet staff, to include the brigade operations office, the fire support office, the CJTF-82 liaison officer to Task Force Bayonet, as well as representatives from PRT Nangarhar, traveled to the U.S. Embassy for nine days to prepare the plan. The PRT members were at the end of their deployment with nearly a full year of experience working in Nangarhar under their belts. The leaders from Task Force Bayonet had more than nine months of experience in Nangarhar and the eastern region. Working with the Department of State interagency resource coordinator, with advice and input from the Afghan Reconstruction Group, INL, and USAID, the team prepared the business plan for Nangarhar Inc.

The 62-page business plan used the corporate model to jump-start and create sustainable, long-term economic growth leading to full employment. The plan included input from all agencies

involved and included compelling strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Group, a management and sustainability plan, and 35 prioritized projects with project descriptions, general scope, charts depicting associated timelines, cash flows, and required resources. The projects fell into three categories: quick impact, near term, and long-term.

The Nangarhar Inc quick-impact projects aimed at leveraging the Nangarhar governor's poppy eradication success from 2007 to 2008. However, their critical purpose was to jump-start economic growth in the region. Additionally, intermodal transportation solutions (roads, rail, and a regional airport with an international gateway) were critical to address Nangarhar as a potential agribusiness base.

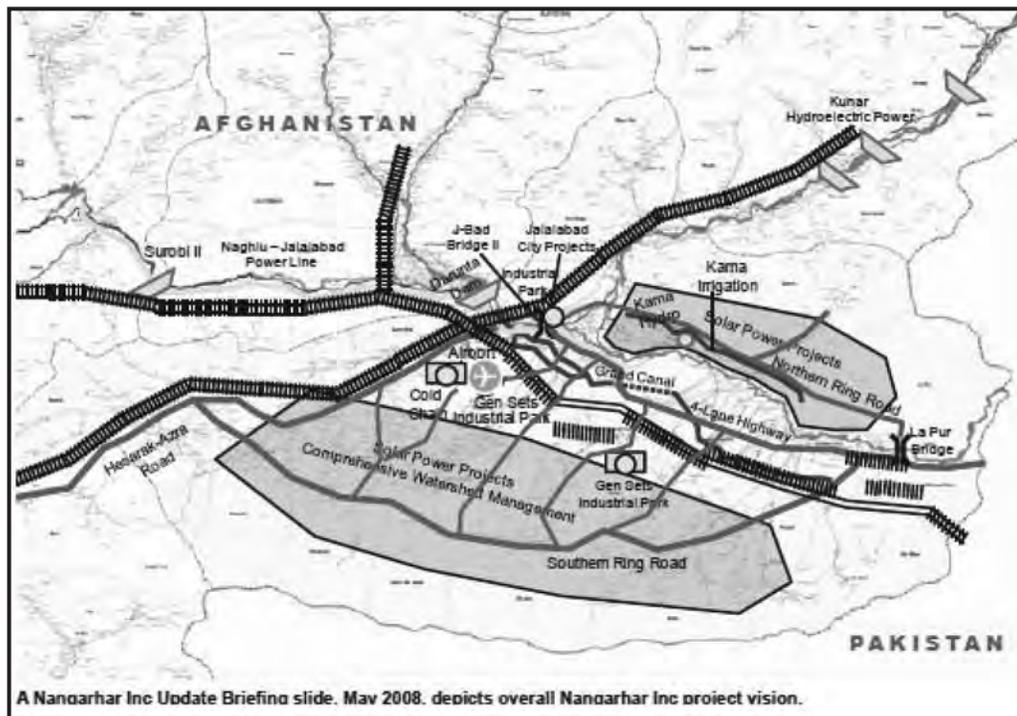


Figure 11-1.

Due to the lack of available export mechanisms, up to 30 percent of produce grown in Nangarhar rots in the field. To leverage these export opportunities, cold storage with collocated power solutions are also critical to enhancing the economic value chain. Currently, Nangarhar exports a large percentage of its agricultural products to Pakistan, which processes, packages, and stores them until they are later resold in Nangarhar at many times their original price. Nangarhar Inc addresses the critical infrastructure requirements for Afghans to enhance their agribusiness value chain and recapture these lost potential revenues.

During creation, the task force identified power solutions as most critical. Thirty-eight businesses in Jalalabad had failed in a 12-month period in 2008 due to high fuel costs.

Long-term projects have higher price tags, but are critical to ensure the self-sufficiency of the government and to reduce reliance on donor support. One noteworthy long-term power project

harnesses an estimated 1,100 megawatts of potential hydroelectric power in adjacent Kunar province by means of a series of dam systems in the Kunar River basin. Power from this project can go not only to businesses in Nangarhar, but can also assist in developing the Federally Administered Tribal Area and Northwest Frontier Tribal Provinces across the border in Pakistan.

This is an example of a project that requires the combined efforts of the interagency to succeed. USAID funding and expertise may contribute to dam design with the Afghan Ministry of Energy and Water, while the Department of Defense and PRTs work local government issues with the Afghan government in the eastern region. However, U.S. Embassies in Kabul and Islamabad, with national level Afghan and Pakistani officials, must resolve cross-border issues such as power purchase agreements and resolution of water rights disputes. No one agency can pursue all of the Nangarhar Inc projects. Of necessity, this plan must move forward with close interagency cooperation.

Indeed, one of the noteworthy aspects of this plan is the amount of interagency cooperation that went into its creation. The experience of the military forces and expert input from the interagency produced the base business plan. The coordinated efforts of the interagency, led by the U.S. Embassy, are continuing to move Nangarhar Inc forward to its logical conclusion — the development of a strategically important trade and transit corridor that will allow the tremendous strengths of the area to create a self-sustaining regional economic engine.

Nevertheless, the future for Nangarhar Inc as a model for success is not a certain one. The combined and coordinated efforts of the U.S. Government interagency must lead the effort in the early stages and emplace critical infrastructure to attract large-scale foreign capital investment. Unfortunately, uncoordinated development is ubiquitous in Afghanistan. Numerous donor and development agencies in Afghanistan operate under their own priorities. International donors, such as the Asian Development Bank, partner with the United Nations Development Program and governmental agencies such as USAID, GTZ International (*Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*, an EU funded development agency), and DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency). Afghan development efforts under various ministries, such as the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, nongovernmental agencies, and PRTs, operate within the constraints of their respective agencies. In large part, they support the Afghan solution—the Afghanistan National Development Strategy — but development efforts in Afghanistan are disjointed and disconnected because they often follow fundamentally challenged provincial development plans and their own guidelines and mandates.

Task Force Bayonet recognized that the lack of coordination had led to numerous instances of “project fratricide” and that solutions beyond the national development strategy were required. To that end, Task Force Bayonet implemented an initiative called “district mapping” to map the past projects completed in a district. It mapped all development agencies’ current projects and future projects envisioned provincial and district Afghan leaders. The plan is moving forward in cooperation with the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan and the Joint, interagency, multinational, and host-nation community of the eastern region. This initiative has tremendous potential.

Even within the U.S. government, efforts are not always synchronized. Although the U.S. is fighting a counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan as part of the War on Terrorism, USAID (the primary U.S. development agency operating there), is focused on “developing Afghanistan.” Although the country team director (the Ambassador) directed that development efforts focus

on certain priorities, USAID instead focused on its internal priorities. Although FM 3-24 only covers the ground elements of the Department of Defense and not the rest of the interagency, the following statement from that manual is wholly applicable to the current situation:

Unity of effort must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation. Otherwise, well intentioned but uncoordinated actions can cancel each other or provide vulnerabilities for insurgents to exploit. Ideally, a single counterinsurgent leader has authority over all government agencies involved in COIN operations...The U.S. ambassador and country team, along with senior host nation representatives, must be key players in higher level planning; similar connections are needed throughout the chain of command.⁷

Without unity of effort between the U.S. government agencies, ensuring the success of focused development strategies such as Nangarhar Inc becomes difficult.

The Way Ahead

We must address interagency discord while pursuing strategies similar to Nangarhar Inc. Although the Department of Defense and Department of State are conducting a counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, the mandate of USAID can be simplified as “development,” although its objectives aim to further the foreign policy goals of the United States. “Developing Afghanistan” can move forward in many ways and does not always contribute to the kind of effects desired in a COIN environment. Department of Defense doctrine indicates “reinforcing success,” while agencies such as USAID typically go where the need is greatest, sometimes for short-term gain at the expense of long-lasting effects that strike at the heart of insurgencies. The country team leader, in coordination with and supported by the various agencies operating in strategic regions, must address these issues.

Nangarhar Inc’s solutions are logical and compelling replies to those who argue that we should spend development funds equally across Afghanistan or in other developing countries. Providing what some might consider a disproportionate amount of development funds in areas such as Nangarhar will pay a high dividend because the seed for success already exists. Investing in other areas can be likened to “pouring water into the sand.”

The Afghan government also must become more involved in all phases to ensure success of Nangarhar Inc. Various government documents show they understand this. Article 10 of the Afghan Constitution “encourages and protects private capital investments and enterprises based on the market economy ...”⁸ The government notes in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy that “given the major limitations in the economic environment that must be addressed, the successful transition to a competitive market economy will require sustained commitment, albeit with the support of the international community. Simply creating conditions in which the private sector can operate alone will not be sufficient.”⁹ Continued efforts are required by the U.S. government to emplace the critical infrastructure needed to jump-start economic growth in Nangarhar, with government cooperation in setting and sustaining the conditions required not only to enable and sustain Afghan businesses, but also to bring in foreign capital and private investment.

In the expansion of the Nangarhar model to the other PRTs in eastern region, future plans and refinements of the provincial development plans must take place in close cooperation with the government. Coordinating development plans in the manner of Nangarhar Inc, while weaving

them into the fabric of the provincial development plans, will achieve the vision of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

Task Force Bayonet moved to the next logical step of Nangarhar Inc. It provided the Nangarhar Inc creation methodology to the three other PRTs in the eastern region and helped them coach their Afghan counterparts to refine their provincial development visions. “Wadan Laghman” (Prosperous Laghman), Kunar’s “Province of Opportunity,” and a development plan in eastern Nuristan are all refinements of Provincial Development Plans. Task Force Bayonet hosted a conference to coordinate these activities with Nangarhar Inc in an “Eastern Region Development Plan.”

This plan, with Nangarhar Inc as the economic engine, harnesses the plentiful natural resources of the adjacent provinces and leverages the potential of the region as a strategic trade and transit hub.

For Nangarhar Inc to become successful and spread across the country as part of a future U.S. COIN strategy, the U.S. government interagency must act together in a coordinated manner with the embassy in Kabul. Coordination of efforts will create a synergistic effect that will contribute to the overall counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan and illuminate the way ahead for an eventual exit strategy in Afghanistan. To be successful in the War on Terrorism, we must duplicate the level of U.S. interagency cooperation illustrated in the creation and implementation of Nangarhar Inc.

Notes

1. The Provincial Development Plan of Nangarhar Province, 5 to 15 August 2007, 9-10.
2. Ibid., 11.
3. Afghanistan National Development Strategy: A Strategy for Security, Governance, Economic Growth, and Poverty Reduction, 1387-1391 (2008-2013), 13.
4. Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy, January 2006, 9.
5. Afghanistan National Development Strategy, 1.
6. Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO], 2006).
7. Ibid., 39.
8. The Constitution of Afghanistan, 4 January 2004, Article 10.
9. Afghanistan National Development Strategy, 4.

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