



The Simons Center  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

# InterAgency Journal

**Adapting to Change: Strategic Turning Points and the CIA/DoD Relationship**

*David Oakley*

**Everyone Else is They: A New Framework for Operational Culture**

*Megan Kraushaar*

**The National Security Council Deputies Committee – Engine of the Policy Process**

*Mark Wilcox*

**Fundamentally Restructuring Interagency Operations for Future Success**

*Ryan Hilger*

**An Institutional Analysis of the Commander's Emergency Response Program**

*Timothy Gatlin*

**Ripples in the Pond: CGSOC Interagency Education**

*Russell Crumrine*

**Faith-Based Peacebuilding in the Former Yugoslavia**

*David Steele*

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## ***InterAgency Journal***

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## Adapting to Change:

# *Strategic Turning Points and the CIA/DoD Relationship*

**by David Oakley**

### **Introduction**

In January 2012, the Department of Defense (DoD) published “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century,” outlining U.S. national security priorities for the coming decade.<sup>1</sup> Although the document maintains counterterrorism as a strategic priority, its release shortly after the withdrawal of American military forces from Iraq and its broader focus beyond terrorism, signifies what former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta termed a “strategic turning point.”<sup>2</sup> Two years after the publication of this document, the U.S. is transitioning in Afghanistan, cutting national security budgets, and reducing the size of the military. Even though counterterrorism operations continue, it appears the U.S. is undergoing a strategic realignment from the “Global War on Terrorism” (GWOT) to a new focus towards the Pacific. While foreign policy and political pundits continue to debate the merits of the administration’s “tilt” toward the Pacific, often ignored in these discussions is the affect of “strategic turning points” on America’s national security organizations.

The GWOT, the Afghanistan War, and the Iraq War have significantly influenced the cultures and identities of DoD and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). These conflicts resulted in a 69 percent increase in military spending, doubled the CIA’s budget, and provided both organizations common foes on which to focus their efforts.<sup>3</sup> Although America’s strategic successes over the last twelve years are negligible, operations during this period strengthened the CIA/DoD relationship, resulting in a more effective partnership. These improved relations resulted in less parochialism, with officers from both organizations recognizing the value of collaboration and looking for opportunities to work together.<sup>4</sup> Even though improving operational coordination should not be the principle objective of either sound strategy or policy, failure to safeguard these gains, even in times of reduced budgets, only increases the cost of unachieved policy objectives. In order to safeguard the relationship gains, it is important to appreciate why the CIA/DoD relationship

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evolved to its current state and anticipate how changing strategic conditions might affect it in the future.

In his famous speech “What is History?” British historian E.H. Carr said a historian “provides general guides for future action, which though not specific predictions, are both valid and useful.”<sup>5</sup> The economic and strategic

**The changes made in response to Desert Storm and the end of the Cold War established conditions that enabled the blossoming of the relationship since 2001.**

conditions of the post-Gulf War/post-Cold War period that helped shape the current CIA/DoD partnership offer valuable guidelines for today’s DoD and CIA leaders, as well as policymakers. Similar to the early 1990s, the U.S. is once again facing an economic downturn, while undergoing a transitional period in national security affairs. After twelve years of fighting, the U.S. is suffering from operational weariness and budgetary constraints.<sup>6</sup> These realities are forcing the U.S. to reassess its strategic focus and the manner in which it prioritizes its national interests and employs its assets. Understanding how choices made under similar fiscal and national security conditions affected the CIA/DoD relationship can provide a better appreciation for how contemporary policy decisions might affect future CIA/DoD relations.

To appreciate how the CIA/DoD relationship might respond during the post-GWOT strategic turning point, it is valuable to look back at the post-Desert Storm/post-Cold War environment. Although the CIA and DoD relationship expanded significantly following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, its foundation was set in the 1990s. During this period, Congressional

policy pronouncements and organizational changes within both institutions increased the communication and liaison partnerships between the CIA and DoD, establishing the foundation for greater interoperability. The changes made in response to Desert Storm and the end of the Cold War established conditions that enabled the blossoming of the relationship since 2001. Although conflict, war, and terrorist threats provided a common focus for partnership development and integration, existence of a structure coupled with previous policy direction resulted in organizational familiarity and partnership prior to GWOT operations.

**Strategic Turning Point #1: Desert Storm and the End of the Cold War**

Although the Soviet Union did not dissolve until December 1991, the coalition’s overwhelming victory during Desert Storm marked the beginning of a turning point in world affairs. Within one hundred hours, the U.S. and its allies destroyed the world’s sixth largest Army, displayed its operational effectiveness, and silenced the ghosts of Vietnam. Despite success, the coalition’s victory was not without its operational warts. During post-war Congressional testimony, General Norman Schwarzkopf criticized the intelligence community’s performance during Operation Desert Storm.<sup>7</sup> His criticism highlighted a breakdown in the integration of national intelligence and military forces that resulted in disjointed planning, poor communication, and a lack of common understanding of the operational environment.

General Schwarzkopf first identified a need for greater national intelligence support during the planning phase of Desert Storm. Dissatisfied with conflicting analysis and repetitive reporting, the DoD resurrected the Joint Intelligence Center (JIC) concept to integrate the capabilities of the intelligence community (IC) in support of the warfighter. Although helpful in

bringing together the different organizations in support of the combatant commander, the loose and largely informal nature of the organization limited its effectiveness. Once operations commenced, the friction between General Schwarzkopf and the IC only increased due to disagreements over battle damage assessments and what Schwarzkopf perceived as poor intelligence support.<sup>8</sup>

Postmortem Congressional reports criticized the CIA specifically for not providing adequate support to the JIC. The House Armed Services Subcommittee report referred to the CIA's "handoff approach" as one of the reasons the combatant commander did not have an adequate and unified intelligence picture.<sup>9</sup> Acknowledging the postwar critiques, both the DoD and the IC established organizations that would better enable intelligence support to the warfighter. The DoD established permanent JICs at the combatant-command level, and the IC established national intelligence support teams, non-permanent structures that came together to support joint task forces during operations.<sup>10</sup> In later years, the CIA developed crisis operation liaison teams to provide military commanders direct access to CIA products and to increase CIA/DoD integration.<sup>11</sup>

Adapting to the critiques of Desert Storm, the CIA established the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) "to enhance information flow and increase cooperation" with DoD.<sup>12</sup> OMA's creation symbolized CIA's evolving mindset and willingness to expand beyond its principle mission of providing policymakers with intelligence to enable decisionmaking.<sup>13</sup> Although the CIA and DoD had signed previous agreements regarding their relationship during wartime and the CIA provided support whenever possible, its "support to military operations" was always a second-tier mission to the higher priority — "support to the policymaker."<sup>14</sup> The establishment of an organization focused on improving support to the "military customer"

demonstrated the evolutionary changes occurring within the CIA.

Sensing the final collapse of the Soviet Union and realizing its significance on the "changing international landscape," President George H.W. Bush ordered the executive agencies to identify what those changes meant for the U.S. national security apparatus.<sup>15</sup> Domestic fiscal concerns regarding an ongoing recession threatening America's economic health partially drove President Bush's review. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, President Bush called for national security spending cuts amounting to approximately 25 percent. The President and other national leaders believed the global standing of the U.S. was not only contingent on a strong defense, but also on its economic health. The reunification of Germany and the weakening of the Soviet Union provided the U.S. an opportunity to leverage the "peace dividend" and put America's fiscal house in order.<sup>16</sup>

**Adapting to the critiques of Desert Storm, the CIA established the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) "to enhance information flow and increase cooperation" with DoD.**

In the 1990s, Congress, also driven by the ongoing recession and informed by the recent collapse of the Soviet Union and the lessons of Desert Storm, initiated reviews of the IC to determine how it should transform to be effective in the post-Cold War era.<sup>17</sup> Although the commissions acknowledged the importance of intelligence to understanding a post-Soviet world, they also highlighted the need to reduce intelligence expenditures. These reviews looked at ways to cut redundancy and streamline the IC to make intelligence organizations more responsive and integrated but at a cheaper

cost to the American taxpayer. Although these reviews focused on the broad structure of the IC, there is little doubt the criticisms of intelligence integration during the Gulf War informed them. Whatever spurred their actions, it is apparent they sought to remedy the relationship between military operations and national intelligence for both practical and fiscal reasons.

The desire to leverage the post-Cold War environment to strengthen the sickly American economy continued into President Bill Clinton's first-term. Part of the Clinton Administration's strategy to revitalize the economy was a determined focus to make federal government more effective and efficient. Sharing the previous administration's belief that a new world order presented an opportunity to cut national security, the Clinton Administration continued the trend of reduced defense spending initiated by its predecessor. Part of this reduction meant looking for opportunities to leverage existing capabilities to cover requirements, and the intelligence needs of post-Desert Storm warfighters was one of those identified requirements.

In 1995, Vice-President Al Gore's committee seeking efficient and effective governance identified intelligence support to the warfighter as a continued failing that

Brown Commission.<sup>19</sup> Informed by previous post-Cold War intelligence reform attempts and motivated by operational lessons, the committee identified a continued lack of support to operational commanders.<sup>20</sup> Understanding the increasing importance of operational support to the warfighter, the CIA moved the Associate Deputy Director of Operations for Military Affairs out of the Directorate of Operations and created the Associate Director of Central Intelligence for Military Support. After 9/11, the CIA consolidated this position and the Office of Military Affairs into the office of the Associate Director of Military Affairs (ADMA).<sup>21</sup>

## **Strategic Turning Point #2: 9/11 Attacks and the GWOT**

Ten years passed between General Schwarzkopf's Congressional testimony criticizing intelligence support to the warfighter and the 9/11 attacks. During the intervening years, structures were built to institutionalize the CIA/DoD relationship and the effectiveness of the structures tested during operations in Somalia and the Balkans. The military and CIA became more familiar with each other during the mid to late 1990s, but the lack of a significant unifying threat to the U.S. kept CIA and DoD collaboration at low levels. Out of tragedy often grows common purpose. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon gave the U.S. national security apparatus a new focus and helped establish a common purpose for the CIA and DoD.

The CIA/DoD partnership took off shortly after September 11, 2001, when combined cross-functional teams supported the Northern Alliance's efforts to overthrow the Taliban.<sup>22</sup> The melding of the DoD's military capabilities with the CIA's intelligence and paramilitary capabilities provided a good template for counterterrorism operations that were increasing in importance for both organizations. The CIA/DoD partnership continued to grow

### **The CIA/DoD partnership took off shortly after September 11, 2001...**

needed to be remedied.<sup>18</sup> Responding to the reverberating argument for increased support to the warfighter, President Clinton ranked intelligence support to military operations as the number one priority for the IC and established the Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community, known colloquially as the Aspin-



during the Iraq War, with CIA providing valuable pre-war intelligence and planning support and both organizations collaborating during operations.<sup>23</sup> Because of these battlefield experiences, the CIA/DoD “relationship has never been stronger,” resulting in changes to both organizations’ structures, cultures, and identities.<sup>24</sup>

The CIA/DoD interaction occurring throughout both organizations spurs relationship growth and strengthens the partnership. In the early 1990s, there were only a handful of DoD liaison officers located at CIA headquarters; today there are hundreds of uniformed personnel (active, National Guard, and reserve) serving in the building. In addition, the CIA has representation at dozens of military commands and professional military schools.<sup>25</sup> Interaction is occurring at multiple levels throughout both organizations; for example, the CIA’s Special Activities deals directly with the theater special operations commands and CIA’s Counterterrorism Center deals directly with U.S. Special Operations Command. In addition, CIA’s geographic division chiefs interact with special operations personnel in their regions, and coordination occurs between special operations forces and other CIA centers, such as the Counternarcotics Center.<sup>26</sup> The numerous interactions between the CIA and DoD build redundancy in the relationship, which protects against organizational stove-piping and enables unity of effort.

While many of these relationships develop out of necessity during operations, both organizations are making efforts during training to cultivate the partnership. Beyond serving as a gateway into the CIA, ADMA has instituted various programs focused on increasing DoD/ CIA partnership, by cultivating non-parochial leaders who are familiar with both organizations and aware of the value each brings.<sup>27</sup> For example, to build a greater familiarization of the CIA’s mission, ADMA hosts numerous military

professionals during visits to CIA headquarters. Recognizing the increased interaction between special operations forces and the CIA, ADMA has also started bringing newly minted Special Forces captains to CIA headquarters to brief them on the CIA’s mission and introduce them to CIA personnel.<sup>28</sup> ADMA also works to educate the CIA workforce on the military mission and culture, provides pre-deployment briefs to CIA officers, and serves as an accessible resource to learn about the military or obtain contact information for military units.

**A recent training class at the CIA’s renowned “Farm” had over 25 percent military students, and even more telling, a significant portion of the instructors serving at the “Farm” are from military services.**

Cross-pollination is also strengthening the relationship. A recent training class at the CIA’s renowned “Farm” had over 25 percent military students, and even more telling, a significant portion of the instructors serving at the “Farm” are from military services.<sup>29</sup>

Beyond the networking opportunities joint training creates, the bond forged through shared training experience foundationally shapes the mind-set of younger officers and results in organizational integration becoming a way of life and not merely a mandate.

A senior CIA officer previously responsible for overseeing training throughout the organization stated in an interview that the “showcasing” of the military during training, the presence of military colleagues, and the operational experience in war zones are all contributing to a more “enlightened” institution and CIA officer when it comes to working with the military.<sup>30</sup>

## Strategic Turning Point

### #3: Post-GWOT

The end of the Iraq War and the drawdown in Afghanistan marks another strategic turning point for the U.S. The 2012 “Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century” focus on the Asia-Pacific signals America’s shifting priorities away from the decade long counterinsurgency fight and toward more traditional state balance of power conflicts.<sup>31</sup> Considering the significant cost of the GWOT in both blood and treasure, this transition is not surprising. Since 2001, the U.S.

**...strategic reframing and economic concerns are once again resulting in reduced defense spending and challenging institutional identities that were cultivated on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.**

has lost 6,795 service members and spent over \$1.4 trillion on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>32</sup> The overall cost of these conflicts will continue to accrue even after America’s withdrawal from Afghanistan, with one study estimating that the wars will cost between \$4–6 trillion.<sup>33</sup> The tremendous cost of these conflicts coupled with America’s current economic condition makes this strategic turning point understandable.

The shifting strategic focus and economic slump are also affecting DoD and the CIA. The DoD “estimates a twenty percent drop in the overall defense budget,” and the Army, which saw significant increases during the two wars, is in the process of reducing its active duty strength from 570,000 to 420,000 and cutting twelve brigade combat teams.<sup>34</sup> The IC budget has fallen by 15 percent since 2010, and the Director of National Intelligence James Clapper

is cautioning against a “damaging downward spiral” similar to the 1990s.<sup>35</sup> These budget reductions coupled with shifting strategic focus will result in changing priorities for the CIA and DoD. These changing priorities will inevitably influence the course of the CIA/DoD partnership, but whether the relationship grows stronger or becomes contentious is up to the two organizations.

The future choices made by the CIA and DoD regarding their partnership will be shaped by its leaders, national security requirements, policymaker preferences, and fiscal considerations. Over the last twelve years, there have been leaders within the CIA and DoD who appreciate the partnership and understand the importance of collaboration to achieve America’s national security objectives. Although these leaders have made strides toward institutionalizing the partnership, parochial bureaucrats replacing the current collaborative leaders could halt or degrade progress. Even if the current crop of leaders remains in place, their collaborative efforts could be affected by changing national security requirements and the absence of operations to drive CIA/DoD collaboration.

Strategic refocusing might also result in a changing partnership between the U.S. military and the CIA. For example, over the last decade, the CIA has largely served in a “supporting” role to the military’s “supported” status.<sup>36</sup> The end of the Iraq War and the planned drawdown in Afghanistan could result in significant role reversals between the two organizations. At the very least, the interaction between the two organizations will evolve from a predominantly war-focused, military-driven relationship into a non-war zone partnership. This dynamic change marks an important period in the CIA/DoD relationship, one that will determine if the comprehensive partnership of the last twelve years is permanent or fleeting.

## Conclusion

This past December marked 22 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a major “strategic turning point” for the U.S. and an operational transition for the CIA and DoD. Both organizations grew out of the 1947 National Security Act, and their institutional cultures/identities were shaped and largely consumed by the Cold War.<sup>37</sup> Despite significant budget reductions and the dissolution of an enemy both organizations were created to confront, the CIA and DoD were successful in establishing a foundational relationship during the 1990s. When tragedy struck and the GWOT began, the foundation set over the previous decade quickly blossomed into a valuable and productive partnership.

Although the end of the GWOT is not as significant as the collapse of the Soviet Union, strategic reframing and economic concerns are once again resulting in reduced defense spending and challenging institutional identities that were cultivated on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. Only time and possibly another strategic turning point will determine if the CIA/DoD partnership adapted and flourished during this transitional period. **IAJ**

## Notes

- 1 <[http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense\\_Strategic\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf)>, accessed on January 17, 2014.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 For military spending increases, see <<http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2013/03>>, and for CIA spending increases, see <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/28/AR2010102807237.html>>, accessed on January 17, 2014.
- 4 CIA analyst, interviewed by David Oakley, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 12, 2012. Both the after-action review and the interview highlighted the willingness and creativity of officers to break down barriers to accomplish mission objectives. Historians within the CIA’s Center for the Study of Intelligence stated that interviews with CIA personnel highlight significant improvement in CIA’s relationship with other government organizations since 9/11.
- 5 E.H. Carr, “What is History?” <<http://library.universalhistory.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/What-is-history.pdf>>, accessed on January 31, 2013.
- 6 Rowan Scarborough, “Panetta Says 2013 Defense Budget to Cut Land Forces,” *Washington Post*, January 26, 2012.
- 7 Molly Moore, “Schwarzkopf: War Intelligence Flawed; General Reports to Congress on Desert Storm,” *Washington Post*, June 13, 1991, Section A.
- 8 “Intelligence Successes and Failures in Operations Desert Storm/Shield,” U.S. Congress, House Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, 103rd Cong., 1st sess., 1993, pp. 2–4.
- 9 Ibid., p. 6.
- 10 Michael Warner and J. Kenneth McDonald, *U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies Since 1947*, Center for the Study of Intelligence, Washington, 2005, p. 33 and James Lose, “Fulfilling a Crucial Role: National Intelligence Support Teams,” <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/>

kent-csi/vol43no3/pdf/v43i3a08p.pdf>, accessed on November 14, 2012.

11 Michael Pick, “What the Joint Force Commander Needs to Know about CI and HUMINT Operations,” 2002, <<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA405644>>, accessed on February 3, 2013 and History Commons, “Profile: Crisis Operations Liaison Teams,” <[http://www.historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=crisis\\_operations\\_liaison\\_teams\\_1](http://www.historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=crisis_operations_liaison_teams_1)>, accessed on February 3, 2013. These organizations were used in Iraq and Afghanistan to successfully facilitate CIA/military partnerships.

12 Persian Gulf War Illness Task Force, “CIA Support to the U.S. Military During the Persian Gulf War,” Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, June 16, 1997, p. 7.

13 After 9/11, the CIA consolidated the ADCI/MS and OMA into the office of the Associate Director of Military Affairs (ADMA). See CIA Public Website, “Military Affairs/History,” <<https://www.cia.gov/offices-of-cia/military-affairs/historm.html>>, accessed on March 4, 2013.

14 Richard L. Russell, “Tug of War: The CIA’s Uneasy Relationship with the Military,” *SAIS Review*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Summer/Fall 2002, p. 8.

15 George H.W. Bush, “National Security Review 29: The Intelligence Community,” <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsr/nsr29.pdf>>, accessed on November 17, 2012.

16 Michelle R. Garfinkel, “The Economic Consequences of Reducing Military Spending,” *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review*, Vol. 72, No. 6, November/December 1990, p. 49.

17 Warner and McDonald, pp. 33–36.

18 “Commonsense Government: Works Better, Costs Less,” National Performance Review, <<http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/nprprt/annrpt/pdf/com02.pdf>>, accessed on November 18, 2012.

19 William Jefferson Clinton, “Presidential Decision Directive-35: Intelligence Reform,” Government Printing Office, Washington, March 2, 1995, and Loch Johnson, *The Threat on the Horizon: An Inside Account of America’s Search for Security after the Cold*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Kindle edition, 2011, p. 243.

20 “Preparing for the 21st Century: An Appraisal of U.S. Intelligence,” Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1996, p. XXIII.

21 CIA public website, “Military Affairs/History,” <<https://www.cia.gov/offices-of-cia/military-affairs/history.html>>, accessed on March 4, 2013.

22 Garry Reid, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict, interviewed by David Oakley, September 19, 2012.

23 In 2003, Colonel David Perkins was a Third Infantry Division brigade commander leading the “Thunder Run” into Baghdad. Later LTG Perkins recalled during an October 2012 interview how a CIA officer arrived at his tactical operations center on the eve prior to the assault into Baghdad. The CIA officer, who turned out to be the future Baghdad Chief of Station, asked if he could accompany Perkins into Baghdad. Perkins not only agreed, but also upon arrival to Baghdad the CIA and Perkins began to cooperate and support each other’s operations.

24 Reid interview.

25 National Clandestine Services Senior Intelligence Service (SIS) Officer, interviewed by David Oakley, Washington, August 28, 2012; Lieutenant General Kurt A. Cichowski, CIA Associate Director for

Military Affairs, interviewed by David Oakley, Langley, VA, August 29, 2002; and Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 2014, p. 33. Gates mentions the improving partnership between the CIA and DoD.

26 Reid interview.

27 See <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/additional-publications/the-work-of-a-nation/cia-director-and-principles/the-office-of-the-director.html>>, for description of the ADMA mission.

28 Military liaison to CIA's Office of the Associate Director of Military Affairs, interviewed by David Oakley, Langley, VA, August 28, 2012.

29 National Clandestine SIS Officer interview.

30 Ibid. Historians within the CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence stated that interviews with CIA personnel highlight significant improvement in CIA's relationship with other government organizations since 9/11. These improved partnerships have resulted in less parochialism and increased mission success. Most important, the officers recognize the value of these partnerships and are now more receptive to engaging their interagency colleagues instead of operating alone.

31 Council on Foreign Relations webpage, January 5, 2012, <<http://www.cfr.org/defense-strategy/panettas-remarks-defense-strategic-review/p26978>>, accessed on January 17, 2014.

32 "Cost of War," Costs of War Project webpage, Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies, <<http://icasualties.org>> and <<http://costsofwar.org/article/economic-cost-summary>>, accessed on January 19, 2014.

33 Linda J. Blimes, "The Financial Legacy of Iraq and Afghanistan: How Wartime Spending Decisions Will Constrain Future National Security Budgets," HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP13-006, March 2013, Harvard Kennedy School webpage, <<https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=8956>>, accessed on January 19, 2014.

34 "Defense Budget Priorities and Choices—Fiscal Year 2014," United States Department of Defense website, <<http://www.defense.gov/pubs/DefenseBudgetPrioritiesChoicesFiscalYear2014.pdf>>, accessed on January 19, 2014.

35 Marshall C. Erwin and Amy Belasco, "Intelligence Spending and Appropriations: Issues for Congress," September 18, 2013, Congressional Research Service, <<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/intel/R42061.pdf>>, accessed on January 19, 2014; Lance M. Bacon, "Chief, Congress and DoD Hammer Out Army's Future Manning Levels," Oct. 7, 2013, Army Times webpage, <<http://www.armytimes.com/article/20131007/NEWS/310070003/Chief-Congress-DoD-hammer-out-Army-s-future-manning-levels>>, accessed on January 17, 2014; and Claudette Roulo, "Army to Cut 12 Brigade Combat Teams by 2017, Odierno Says," Department of Defense webpage, <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=120361>>, accessed on January 17, 2014.

36 National Clandestine SIS Officer interview. The possibility of transitioning from a "supported" to a "supporting" role and how it would be handled was one of the issues the NCS officer brought up in our discussion.

37 Intelligence Authorization Act of 1947, <<http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/nsaact1947.pdf>>, accessed on January 19, 2014.

# *Everyone Else is They*

## *A New Framework for Operational Culture*

**by Megan Kraushaar**

It is unlikely that the conflicts the U.S. military and intelligence communities will face in the future will be simple, conventional clashes. Rather, horizontal and vertical integration of the world add layers of complexity and competing alliances and identities that will continue to muddy the operational environment. Second-, third-, and fourth-order effects will result from even minor interventions in the increasingly complex system of the international environment. Trade relations and commercial business decisions could affect the internal dynamics of a failing state, sparking conflict or creating stability more effectively than an armed intervention might. The U.S. military must recognize the competitive influences within these complex systems and acknowledge that seldom can a line of effort or course of action be imagined within a vacuum or without the influence of a myriad of outside, uncontrolled actors.

As the U.S. continues to be engaged in the far corners of the world, its leaders cannot rely on laminated cultural “smart cards” when attempting to evaluate the desired end states and outcomes of intervention. The cultural understanding necessary to foresee the type of catastrophe that occurred in Iraq requires extensive consideration of complex social science theory and true openness to realities other than liberal democratic traditions. The “tactical culture” that governs interpersonal interaction does not provide any tools for decisionmakers to consider alternate approaches and end states not derived from the American worldview. Debating the definition of culture in Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, draws focus from the more relevant question: Are the concepts of culture in FM 3-24 useful in operational planning? The answer, unfortunately, is they are not.

The U.S. military and intelligence communities are adept at collecting information and facts,

***The views expressed in this article are the author's and do not represent the views of the Army, U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Intelligence Agency or the United States government.***

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correlating them, and drawing conclusions based on what is available.<sup>1</sup> But in complex situations, simply accruing facts, arranging them into a series of pamphlets, and expecting this knowledge to be useful is disastrous. One of the concerns with FM 3-24's concept of culture is that it compiles litter—artifacts and pieces of information that may form part of the skeleton of a society—without making the necessary connections between these facts to give them meaning and without making the relationship between these facts and the desired end state apparent.

To that end, social science theory is more useful for evaluating the role of culture in conflict and defining desired end states. The foundation of this framework is the differentiation among multiple logics at work in a society. These logics operate at different levels and play important roles in ordering society, maintaining that order, and potentially changing that order. The social logic, which articulates what can be observed about a culture, is constructed by the observer, and it is used to explain the practices at hand.<sup>2</sup> The constructs proposed in FM 3-24 address mainly the social logic of a society. They remain concerned with describing the “other” and foreign practices, thus missing opportunities to evaluate end states in light of cultural realities.

Political logic, which explains how and where points of contestation develop within a society and what conflict arises from differing political views, is more relevant to operational culture. The political logic shows where consensus is achieved in a society, as well as where dissent arises and resists the existing logic.<sup>3</sup>

The ways in which political logics, through contestation and challenge, give rise to institutions provide a means to design and implement logical lines of effort in support of the end state. Good governance, security, and stability are all desired end states articulated in FM 3-24, though the suggested paths to achieve

these goals are constrained by American concepts of political legitimacy. By considering the logics of equivalence and difference unique to the society in question, leaders can arrive at meaningful end states and lines of effort to reach those goals. Areas of contestation and fissures in the established political order also provide opportunities for intervention, particularly if a given regime is failed or failing. Addressing these areas of contestation, the U.S. can

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advocate for a socially-relevant and culturally -acceptable form of political logic to replace that which came before.

The question arises as to how those political institutions survive despite emergent challenges to the status quo. The answer is a third level of logic. Fantasmatic logic papers over the fissures in society that result from the competitive, exclusionary process of political life. The fantasmatic logic tells a story to the people, particularly the disenfranchised, as to why things must be the way they are. This fantasy sublimates dissent and hides social emergence that could lead to change, and it reinforces the existing system as the only solution by preemptively absorbing alternate political logics.

An illustrative example is the fantasy that maintained the regime of Hafiz al-Assad in Syria.<sup>4</sup> Irrationality, at least as a spectator would identify it, at one level creates and reinforces irrationality throughout.<sup>5</sup> The Assad regime required adherence to a cult of personality around the Syrian president, calling for elaborate displays of support for the regime and ever-

present photographs of Assad, which the entire population understood to be entirely inauthentic. And yet the ability of the regime to enforce compliance, despite the acknowledgement of disbelief, further shored up Assad's dominance and prevented the emergence of real challenges to the regime.<sup>6</sup>

The result of this enforced fantasy for such duration was the abrupt (and violent) expression of all those points of contestation in the political logic that remained stifled throughout both Assad regimes. An observer may have constructed a social logic that over-valued the cult of personality around Assad, without considering

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the other reasons the fantasy prospered. Thus, the social logic and observable "otherness" of a foreign society can be understood as "culture" but can just as easily be a fantasmatic logic designed to conceal political and social resistance within that society. If U.S. military and intelligence professionals are not able to identify that a fantasmatic logic is at work, the fissures in society that present opportunities for intervention may not be identified.

Articulating the social logic at work in a country is generally the easiest process, but unfortunately the U.S. efforts at understanding another culture tend to stop with the social logic. In order to conduct military and intelligence operations effectively, leaders must instead address the presence or absence of both political and fantasmatic logics. It is only through changing these logics, or establishing others to replace the existing logics, that they can hope to make meaningful change in the manner

described in FM 3-24.

The issue of how a society arrives at an acceptable political logic, or one that requires hearty fantasmatic logic, is relevant to planners dealing with societies in conflict. The creation and maintenance of these logics is achieved through stories of peoplehood and narrative construction. While the U.S. has engaged in institution- and nation-building in Iraq and Afghanistan, it has paid little attention to the necessity of creating a sense of peoplehood within these countries.

The U.S. cannot lift the American tradition of liberal democracy and simply present it wholesale to the Iraqi people and expect it to take root. Rather, leaders must understand the stories of peoplehood that unite and divide the people of a given society, such as Iraq, and understand how these narratives can create or undermine good governance as that society defines it.

In *Stories of Peoplehood: The Politics and Morals of Political Membership*, Rogers M. Smith discusses two assumptions about political peoplehood that are relevant to understanding the political and fantasmatic logics and how they can aid in operational planning: (1) No political people is primordial, and all are derived from pre-existing forms of peoplehood; and (2) Asymmetric and constrained relationships between leaders and constituents create the sense of peoplehood.<sup>7</sup> Aspiring leaders must work with constituents with established senses of identity based in other memberships and interests, all of which will influence what narratives and stories these individuals and groups find compelling. It is possible to adapt these identities but only through the thoughtful creation of other identities.

Stories of peoplehood are also utilized to construct and maintain institutions, as these narratives define who is a member of the group and who is not, and can be used to express the identities, values, and interests of the group in



an official way.<sup>8</sup> As such, narratives can arise from and reinforce the political institutions that order a society. Indeed, the narrative is a vital part of maintaining the fantasy of why a society must operate as the political in-group wants it to operate, with narratives defining enemies and threats that justify papering over legitimate contestation in society.

Smith identifies three types of stories that help to accomplish these goals. These stories are combined in different ways and to different degrees, depending on the goals of the leadership and the interests of the constituency, but they include economic, political power, and ethically constitutive stories.<sup>9</sup>

The economic story may closely correlate with the social logic, in that it is rather easily observed and understood by the outside observer. Examples include struggles over resources and the role of perceived economic deprivation relative to other groups. These economic stories promote trust by arguing it is in the interests of a leader or specific group to advance each member's economic well-being, while offering a sense of motivation through the potential for increased wealth.<sup>10</sup>

The political power story is associated with both the political and fantasmatic logics, as stories of political power can shore up both types of claims. These political power stories motivate constituents through the idea that a political community will exercise power through institutions and policies that distribute power to each member, generally through alleged virtual or actual representation.<sup>11</sup> All groups engaged in a struggle for power wish to create a coalition large enough to seize and maintain power, while limiting the size of the group to ensure maximum political and economic payoff for their constituents.<sup>12</sup>

Of the three types of narratives, the ethically constitutive story is the most relevant for the idea of operational culture. The ethically constitutive narrative provides a story that

belonging to a particular people is intrinsic to who its members really are, and it affirms that "members' culture, religion, language, race, ethnicity, ancestry, history, or other such factors are constitutive of their very identities as persons, in ways that both affirm their worth and delineate their obligations."<sup>13</sup>

These narratives in particular are important to intervention. Doctrine does not account for how these identities, particularly ethnic and religious identities, are malleable. If operational culture views these narratives as contestable and their client groups as constructed rather than born, there are areas for intervention within the group. Furthermore, history has shown there is "no such thing as an impossible alliance in the context of a multiparty civil war. . . . Nor is any group, however homogenous, safe from internal fractionalization."<sup>14</sup> These identities are constructed and abandoned as needed, which bears particular relevance as leaders seek to intervene.

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The ethically constitutive story, then, is very much a fantasmatic object. It illustrates to the population, in terms of "us versus them," why belonging to a specific group is preordained, and why the organization of society "must" be a certain way.<sup>15</sup> It provides a goal and envisioned end state of society that must be attained in order for the constituents of the ethically constitutive story to prosper. Groups that mobilize their followers according to an ethically constitutive story are primed to establish a fantasmatic logic

over their political order if they achieve power.

There is danger for the student of operational culture in concentrating too much on the ethically constitutive story as being the primary motive for conflict. Much has been written about the role of ethnic, religious, and racial differences in creating and perpetuating armed conflict, and it seems as though the U.S. defaults to the categorization of groups and persons involved in a conflict according to

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their linguistic or ethnic identities.<sup>16</sup> This can create a superficial and dangerous view of the operational environment, as in Afghanistan, where Tajiks and Uzbeks were immediately correlated with the Northern Alliance and thus considered uniformly anti-Taliban.

In *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*, Fotini Christia discusses the means by which leaders in civil wars blend stories to facilitate shifting motivations.<sup>17</sup> This blending of stories creates a flexibility in alliance formation and fractionalization that bears out in the American experience in Afghanistan. There is evidence the elites will pick allies based first on power considerations and then construct the narratives justifying the alliance, identifying characteristics or historical occurrences that are shared with their allies but not shared with others.<sup>18</sup> The U.S. cannot direct attention only to the outward manifestations of divided groups (their social logic) or their allies, but must understand the political power stories in the political logic of a conflict to get to the root of who cooperates with whom and why.

Though elites manipulate the identity aspects of these narratives, to include the ethically constitutive stories, identity attributes can have emotional impact on the rank and file; thus, identity factors do not drive alliance choices, but are useful to justify elite choices and establish stories for public consumption.<sup>19</sup> These narratives thus fulfill the role of fantasmatic logics, even without an established political logic, in the midst of ongoing conflict.

When considering the creation and maintenance of ethically constitutive stories and the fantasmatic logic, one must ask how it is possible to sell these types of deceptions to an entire people. Without additional insight, outsiders may be unable to identify the narratives present or understand the semiotics supporting political and fantasmatic logics.

When we attempt to understand political pronouncements in a society that is not ours, and whose language we likely do not speak, the relationship between political language and political reality becomes more important. The flexibility of language plays a role not only in creating a political reality but in creating narratives, strengthening the political logic, and developing the fantasmatic logic.

Despite this, a conversation about political language and the ways in which words can be used is distinctly lacking in the dialogue of operational culture. Political language is about the construction of beliefs within a constituency and evoking meaning in order to legitimize some actions while condemning the alternative. Political language contributes to the creation and support of narratives and stories of peoplehood, as well as the political and fantasmatic logics that underlie a society. As we consider the challenges of constructing a sense of peoplehood, we must acknowledge the fluidity of meaning inherent in political language.

In addition to the flexibility in the language itself, Edelman observes that the material

situation in which a person lives makes that person sensitive to some political language but not others, largely because the material situation defines what that person's "reality" is.<sup>20</sup> What is important is not necessarily the material circumstances themselves, but rather the effect they can have on the understanding of political dialogue and construction of personal and public narratives. This sensitivity to some political language may also predispose parts of the constituency to hear economic stories or political power stories more strongly than others and identify with groups that weight concern toward those ends.

Most important, from Edelman's view, is that political language constructs the political reality.<sup>21</sup> Politicians choose from a set of stock texts when using political language, which are largely derived from the stories of peoplehood that support the political and fantasmatic logics currently at play within the society. These stock texts are effective in maintaining political support, not because they are "true" in any empirical way but because they accurately reflect the hopes and fears of the population.<sup>22</sup> The potency of this political language derives from reflecting these fears and from reconstructing a powerful interpretation of the past, while evoking the hope of the future.

Practices of meaning-making shed light on the stories at work in society, as well as whether a fantasmatic logic is at work. These semiotic practices refer to meaning-making in which agents' practices interact with their language and symbolic systems and describe how these symbols in turn create meaning and observable political effects.<sup>23</sup> Unleashing the "right" symbol, or destroying the meaning in another, can eliminate the inertia of social practices and spur instead the vector of political practices.

The interaction between symbols and action in foreign cultures is often opaque to Americans, as evidenced by difficulties experienced in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The practices and

their meanings thus always play a dual role: the outside spectator observes one meaning, while the actors understand their own actions in a different context.<sup>24</sup> If we stop analysis at the social logic, we never view the deeper, more relevant meaning intended by the actor.

Starting with meaning-making practices that illuminate "how people attempt to make apparent, observable sense of their world—to themselves and others—in emotional and cognitive terms," operational culture is better served by identifying the semiotic practices relevant to a given operation and exploring how those practices work, than attempting to create a human terrain map of an entire country.<sup>25</sup>

The symbols supporting a political regime may be absurd and widely understood to be superficial but can still serve their purpose in establishing and maintaining social order.<sup>26</sup> Discussions of the Assad regime reveal how symbolic practices, such as hanging pictures of the president in every home and business, reinforced the regime's political power, even as citizens privately acknowledged the ridiculousness of doing so. The power of semiotics should not be disregarded in operational culture, as it can serve an important role in establishing a political and even ethically constitutive narrative to maintain order and enforce compliance with the existing political logic.

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Finally, and perhaps most importantly for operational culture, concentrating on semiotic practices within a society creates explanations

for how political groups are formed, particularly in concert with different stories of peoplehood, as well as how groups are solidified and maintained. Semiotics can also account for how alternative narratives and “possibilities of belonging” were dismissed, which can provide valuable insight into how and why a society chose its political logic, its narrative, and its system of signification.<sup>27</sup>

The semiotics in a society is often reflective of popular creeds, as these creeds contribute to both the story of peoplehood and the stock texts available to elites within that society. A creed supplies the critical components of an individual’s belief structure. The manifestation of our creed in a public context results in our sensibility as we interact with others. The relevance for our understanding of operational culture is the formation of what Connelly terms “existential faith,” or the combination of creed and a distinctive sensibility.<sup>28</sup> The importance of this existential faith is twofold: (1) It can be

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engaged intellectually at some levels and not at all at others; and (2) It informs political thinking and theory, from micropolitics in an individual’s life to the macropolitics of an entire state.

An existential faith is not merely a measured, considered application of philosophy to world events, but rather it is “a hot, committed view of the world layered into the affective dispositions, habits, and institutional priorities of its confessors.”<sup>29</sup> Deconstructing

an ethically constitutive narrative or fantasmatic logic may become easier if the analyst can first articulate the existential faiths in competition. Understanding the contradictions or potential conflicts present in existential faith across a society can also provide insight into what narratives would be useful within that society, as existential faith is not immune to new concepts and interpretations.

These concepts provide flexibility in understanding and action. The U.S. process usually involves identifying an end state—often liberal democracy with a human rights focus—and then developing lines of effort that will notionally get the U.S. from point A to point B. Rarely do the end state or lines of effort have input from what is achievable, given the state of affairs on the ground or cultural reality. Rather than picking a goal for Iraq, Afghanistan, or Syria that plays well in the American media, leaders should identify relevant, desirable, but still achievable end states that reflect the values, narratives, and realities of the society in which they propose to intervene.

The speech of our adversaries and allies can provide rich fodder for information operations or the creation of dialogue. Understanding the stock texts that are available to a politician in a given society will aid American leaders, whether diplomatic or military, in crafting statements that are familiar to the intended audience, while using the correct semiotics to ensure the American message is palatable. Finally, leaders must take care to minimize creed and sensibility in the conversation, as creed and sensibility dominate tactical culture. They should be more interested in the existential faith that underlies who accepts what narratives, why they do so, and how this applies to the political and fantasmatic logic at work in a society.

Operational culture must address the development and use of narratives, particularly the ethically constitutive narrative, in building peoplehood, as well as the relationship

between meaning and practice. By examining the meaning and interaction of narrative, semiotics, and political language, we can begin to understand how the fantasmatic logic holds a society together (or has failed to do so). The fissures that exist within a society, beneath the fantasmatic logic, afford us an opportunity to intervene to encourage disorder or create stability.

The specific traits and artifacts of a given society are not particularly useful in designing an operational approach or otherwise attempting to build lasting institutions. It is the relationship between these things and the symbolic meaning of the artifacts that inspire people to action. It is only through understanding these outward expressions of culture that leaders can hope to identify places to intervene within a conflict and cause meaningful change, rather than sow chaos.

The question of whether the U.S. should intervene in Syria remains an issue for the U.S. government and the international community. It is worth examining to what extent the U.S. government has considered the narratives and logics of the various Syrian rebel groups that receive economic, humanitarian, and now military aid from the U.S. Addressing these narratives and stories now may provide the U.S. with the opportunity to influence potential allies, or at least identify future adversaries while these groups are still in the nascent stage. Perhaps by evaluating these rebel groups through this framework, the U.S. can identify viable partners for conflict resolution, as well as groups who may represent an undesirable future for Syria and the region. For example, Russia and other global powers play a significant part in constraining the options available to the U.S. and the international community for intervention. The roles of Hezbollah and Iran and the growing tension between Lebanon and Syria over refugees all factor into how this conflict may escalate or implode. Evaluating

Syria's narratives and logic in the context of the Levant, the wider Middle East, and international alliances and obligations could provide global strategic options for intervention for the U.S. If engaging with members of the Arab League, for example, could influence the outcome of the Syrian civil war prior to the need for American boots on the ground, then that possibility should be raised to American policymakers and military leadership. We cannot know the areas of contestation and potential for intervention unless we look for them.

Avenues for further research include applying this framework to specific conflicts or during real-world planning events to gauge the utility and effectiveness of these analytic tools. Use of the framework during ongoing problems and emergent situations may also provide feedback as to the selected courses of action

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or ways to evaluate individual lines of effort. At the operational level, the framework could be useful as part of the overall design when evaluating a smaller part of an overall strategic plan. Future research could also include assessments of newer social science theories related to conflict initiation and termination that may shed additional light on these processes.

Outside of this framework, the theories and ideas introduced here should be a starting point for a greater focus on political theory and the social sciences throughout the military and intelligence communities. Informing policymakers and civilian leaders of potential consequences and outcomes of the exercise of U.S. power, whether diplomatic, military,

or economic, requires cutting edge scholarship and the willingness to challenge the accepted ways of doing business. It is incumbent upon the military and intelligence communities to seek out knowledge that will give our recommendations more clarity or prescience. To that end, it would be worthwhile to consider a greater focus on political theory and social sciences in Army professional military education, in analytical training courses, and other intelligence training. Part of this conversation should also include other interagency partners and the whole of government, in order to better leverage the experience and knowledge of partner agencies and departments. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has a wealth of experience on the ground in the majority of countries in the world and can provide valuable insight into not only the specific societies in which we might intervene, but also the larger regional, economic, and even environmental impact of potential intervention. **IAJ**

## Notes

1 Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, December 15, 2006, and Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 5.0, *The Operations Process*, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, May, 17, 2012. See the military intelligence preparation of the battlespace for acronyms and methods designed to aid the average planner in categorizing culture and other social variables:

Operational variables—political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time.

Mission variables—mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations.

Civil considerations—areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events.

These acronyms along with the information derived from their parts are fit into matrices and filled out as a way of informing the staff of relevant information, although it may not be immediately (or ever) clear what is relevant.

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- 16 Paul Staniland, “States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders,” *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 2, June 2012, pp. 243–264; Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher, “Ethnic Cleavages and Irregular War: Iraq and Vietnam,” *Politics and Society*, Vol. 35, No. 2, June 2007, pp 183–223; Stathis N. Kalyvas, “Ontology of Political Violence: Action and Identity in Civil Wars,” *Perspective on Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 3, September 2003, pp. 475–494; and Raphaël Franck and Ilia Rainer, “Does The Leader’s Ethnicity Matter? Ethnic Favoritism, Education, and Health in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 106, No. 2, May 2012, pp. 294–325.
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- 18 Ibid.
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- 20 Murray Edelman, “Political Language and Political Reality,” *Political Science*, Vol. 18, No. 1, Winter 1985, pp 10–19.
- 21 Ibid., pp. 10–19.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 10–19.
- 23 Wedeen, “Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science,” p. 713.
- 24 Linda Zerilli, “We Feel our Freedom: Imagination and Judgment in the Thought of Hannah Arendt,” *Political Theory*, Vol. 33, No. 2, April 2005, pp 158–188 and Wedeen, “Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science,” p. 720.
- 25 Wedeen, “Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science,” pp. 721–722.
- 26 Wedeen, “Acting As If: Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria,” p. 503 and “Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science,” pp. 713–728.
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- 28 Samuel A. Chambers and Terrell Carver, (eds.), *William E. Connolly: Democracy, Pluralism And Political Theory*, Routledge, New York, 2008, p. 305.
- 29 William E. Connolly, “Method, Problem, Faith,” in Ian Shapiro et al. (eds.) *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 333.

# The National Security Council Deputies Committee Engine of the Policy Process

**by Mark Wilcox**

***"They are a hugely influential group of public officials that most of the public knows very little about."***

***John Norris, CEO of the Enough Project.<sup>1</sup>***

Action by the agencies of the United States government at the operational and tactical levels is premised on policy and decisions made inside the Beltway at the strategic level. While the heavyweights who meet as the National Security Council (NSC) garner the public's attention, more often than not it is their deputies who do the heavy lifting. Working as the NSC Deputies Committee (DC), they process inputs from subordinates and the lower-level groups that do the nuts and bolts work on policy, tee up issues for consideration by the NSC and decision by the President, and manage responses to crises. The NSC DC is, in fact, the engine of the policy process.

The National Security Act of 1947 established the NSC and its statutory members and advisers. Over time, Presidents have added the NSC Staff and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (the National Security Adviser) to assist them in discharging their national security responsibilities. Presidents have also created standing and ad hoc committees and other bodies to manage the process of formulating and executing national security policy. Since the late 1980s, to some extent as a result of lessons learned from the Reagan Administration's Iran-Contra affair, the DC has played a key role within the NSC system. The endurance of the DC over the course of multiple presidential administrations from both political parties attests to its effectiveness.

The goal of this article is to offer insights into the organization and functioning of this hugely influential group of public officials over the course of several presidential administrations. Because the content of DC meetings is classified, this article draws on studies of the NSC, memoirs of participants, and open-source reporting to paint a picture of the workings of the DC.

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## Origins of the Deputies Committee

The immediate predecessor to the DC was the Policy Review Group (PRG) established by President Reagan's National Security Adviser Frank Carlucci in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair. Carlucci's successor, General Colin Powell, later lamented that the George H.W. Bush administration eliminated the PRG in its initial national security decision-making structure. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) under Bush, Powell witnessed a dysfunctional crisis-management process as the administration grappled with an attempted *coup d'état* against Panamanian leader General Manuel Noriega in early October 1989. This experience, as recounted by Powell, would lead to the birth of the DC:

This [the Panama crisis] was my first opportunity to see the Bush team in action and I was surprised that critical deliberations were taking place with no preparation or follow-up planned. The PRG system that Frank Carlucci and I created had been dismantled by the new team. Brent Scowcroft, a sharp player, later diagnosed the problem and reimposed order by reincarnating the PRG as the Deputies Committee, chaired by Bob Gates, his deputy.<sup>2</sup>

The DC can trace its official birth to 25 October 1989, when Scowcroft, Bush's National Security Adviser, issued a supplement to National Security Directive (NSD) 1, "Organization of the National Security Council System," that directed the NSC DC "be responsible for day to day crisis management, reporting to the National Security Council."<sup>3</sup> The DC thereby transformed from purely "a forum for policy development, sifting through different options and narrowing choices for the president and his principals to consider" to a body also "responsible for meeting regularly at times of crisis, summarizing information,

developing options, and following up on any decisions the president had made."<sup>4</sup>

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## The Gold Standard

The NSC system Brent Scowcroft ran for President Bush is widely held up as the gold standard. Under the chairmanship of Scowcroft's deputy, Robert Gates, the DC became "the engine of the policy process."<sup>5</sup> Records maintained at the George H.W. Bush Library show that the DC met 433 times between February 1989 and January 1993.<sup>6</sup> In his memoir, Gates explained that the DC was the administration's senior-level group charged with managing the national security process. "This group...would develop the medium- and long-range objectives of U.S. policy and would manage U.S. policy day to day through one of the most remarkable periods in modern history...the DC was also assigned by the President to handle crisis management for the American government."<sup>7</sup>

The performance of the DC under President George H.W. Bush owed its success to the people involved—thanks to both their individual personalities and stature in their respective organizations and the management of the process. The members of the DC developed friendship and trust, "cutting down dramatically on the personal backstabbing and departmental jockeying that had been so familiar." The members of the group also "never forgot that it was [their] bosses and ultimately the President

who made the final decisions.”<sup>8</sup> Two basic rules applied to the members of the DC. First, each had to be the number two official in his or her respective department or agency. In the case of the State and Defense departments, however, it became apparent that the number three officials, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Robert Kimmitt and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz, respectively, were more appropriate candidates because they were involved in policy, rather than the departmental

review what needed to be discussed, what was likely to come up, and where we wanted things to come out. People got the chance to say their piece but not to filibuster. We would get through the agenda in the allotted time, and at the close of the meeting everyone understood what had been decided and what was expected in the way of follow-up.<sup>10</sup>

**President Clinton retained the NSC system, including the DC Scowcroft had established under President Bush... The DC, along with the Principals Committee and working groups below the deputies, survived the transition to the George W. Bush administration.**

### **Continuity (With a Few Adjustments)**

President Clinton retained the NSC system, including the DC Scowcroft had established under President Bush. One significant change, however, was the addition of Leon Fuerth, Vice President Gore’s national security adviser, to the committee’s membership.<sup>11</sup> Fuerth’s participation in national security decision making, as a representative of the Office of the Vice President set a precedent that pre-dated the active intervention of Vice President Cheney in national security affairs in the George W. Bush administration.

management issues that occupied the nominal deputies in these departments. The second rule was that the “deputy” had to have round-the-clock, immediate access to the department or agency principal.<sup>9</sup>

Robert Gates’s adroit management of the DC also contributed to its effectiveness. Aside from maintaining closeness to National Security Adviser Scowcroft and President Bush, Gates was skilled at preparing and running meetings of the DC. Richard Haass, a member of the NSC staff at the time, wrote that Gates’s talent for meeting management “...is worth noting because meetings are so prevalent and so few people know how to conduct them.” Haass described a meeting management process that aimed to achieve results and ensure common understanding among the participants:

Beforehand he and I would sit down to

The DC, along with the Principals Committee and working groups below the deputies, survived the transition to the George W. Bush administration. Under National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice’s tutelage, the NSC system worked in an “orderly policy process.” Issues were first worked in interagency committee meetings (Policy Coordination Committees [PCCs]), then by the deputies, and finally by the principals and the NSC. Inherent in such an orderly and hierarchical process, however, was the potential for delay. As an example, the Counterterrorism and Security Group reported to the DC under Rice’s system, rather than to the Principals Committee, as had been the case during the Clinton Administration. The effect of this decision, according to one observer, “was to delay the development of an effective strategy [toward Al Qaeda]. While other issues such as Iraq and missile defense

were fast-tracked and quickly discussed by the principals, Al Qaeda and terrorism were moving along slowly. It would take more than three months to convene the first DC meeting on the issue.”<sup>12</sup>

As was the case in the NSC system under President Clinton, the “deputies” who attended the meetings were not always the department deputy secretaries. In the case of the Department of Defense, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith assumed many of the departmental lead duties for the DC, much as Paul Wolfowitz had done for his deputy secretary during the George H.W. Bush administration. Membership on the DC also remained a part-time job that nonetheless required mastery of (or at least familiarity with) a host of issues, as Feith explained in his memoir:

Regulars on the Deputies Committee... did not deal only with a particular region, function, or subject matter, but with whatever national security issues arose. Work crossed our desks as a profuse tangle of diverse demands for attention—some important, some merely pressing, some both.<sup>13</sup>

## **The DC and the Policy “Battle Rhythm”**

Whether in the routine formulation of policy or during crisis management, the DC meetings fall within whatever schedule, or “battle rhythm” in military parlance, the administration follows. During a crisis, the battle rhythm could prove to be quite robust, as Robert Kimmitt, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs in the George H.W. Bush administration, described it during the crisis over Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait:

8:00 AM Internal State Department “all hands” meeting.

10:00 AM Interagency PCC meeting.

(immediately preceded by an internal State Department small group meeting).

11:00 AM DC meeting by video teleconference.

12:00 PM DC “small group” meeting at the White House.

2:00 PM Expanded DC meeting at the White House.

Additional DC small group and internal State Department meetings would usually follow.<sup>14</sup>

Richard Armitage, a veteran of several administrations and Colin Powell’s Deputy Secretary of State during the George W. Bush administration, offered a blunt take on the NSC system’s battle rhythm and the place of the DC in it:

We’d get on the gerbil wheel every morning getting ready for these DCs [DC meetings] and PCs [Principals Committee meetings]... Then we’d get off the gerbil wheel and wait for an answer. No answer would ever come back from the NSC, so we’d get back on the gerbil wheel the next morning.<sup>15</sup>

The battle rhythm depends on the role assigned to the DC in a given administration and the scope of issues that fall within its purview. According to one source, the DC in the Obama Administration has conducted a standing meeting once a week in the White House situation room. “In a busy stretch [then-Deputy National Security Adviser Thomas] Donilon might lead as many as four deputies meetings in one day.”<sup>16</sup> Under these circumstances, the members of the DC cannot be expected to command detailed information on each issue, so they depend on their “plus ones,” the assistant secretary-level officials and others who accompany them for preparation, inputs, and advice during the meetings.

## Military Advice

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

**The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VCJCS) represents the CJCS and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the DC. In this capacity, the VCJCS must stay abreast of both operations and policy issues.**

of Staff (VCJCS) represents the CJCS and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the DC. In this capacity, the VCJCS must stay abreast of both operations and policy issues. The VCJCS and the rest of the deputies “usually analyzed the issues first and then presented options to the principals, the leaders of the departments and agencies represented on the National Security Council.”<sup>17</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, for example, the members of the DC immediately turned their collective attention to military responses. The DC met by video teleconference at 6:30 PM on 11 September 2001 to prepare for a meeting of the NSC the next afternoon. Then VCJCS General Richard Myers and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz spoke from the Pentagon, Deputy National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley from the White House, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage from the State Department, and various members of the intelligence community from their offices. Topics of discussion included the status of military units, terrorist target lists, potential allies and partners, and initial military options.<sup>18</sup>

Collaboration between the Joint Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) about what military advice to offer to the deputies (and principals in both the Principals Committee and the NSC) was not always

evident. General Peter Pace, who served as both the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Vice Chairman, recalled that when he was the Director of Operations (J3) from 1996 to 1997 the Joint Staff often prepared its position independently of OSD. At White House meetings, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and OSD representatives frequently did not know what the other might say. From 2001 to 2007, the situation was completely different. The Joint Staff and OSD coordinated their positions closely, and the Chairman or, in the case of DC meetings, the Vice Chairman, would ride to the White House with his OSD counterpart, so when they arrived for the meeting at the White House, “there was absolute clarity on what everybody’s position was.”<sup>19</sup>

### Post-9/11 and Iraq

The work of the DC in preparing options for actions at the operational and tactical levels was on full display as the George W. Bush administration debated a response to the 9/11 attacks and later shifted to planning for the invasion of Iraq. The deputies had taken up the topic of terrorism and, specifically, Osama Bin Laden, prior to 9/11. In April 2001, the DC recommended a policy that would arm the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan against the Taliban. In July, the deputies recommended a plan to take the offensive against Al Qaeda, destabilize it, and eliminate it.<sup>20</sup> Following the 9/11 attacks, the deputies met regularly to discuss homeland security, U.S. desiderata for support from various countries for potential operations in Afghanistan, reconstruction and stabilization in post-Taliban Afghanistan, and new threats (e.g., radiological weapons).<sup>21</sup>

In the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks, the deputies met to prepare initial U.S. responses. On 13 September, the DC met in advance of the critical meeting of the NSC that would take place the next day at Camp David. The deputies considered three options National

Security Adviser Rice's staff had developed: attack Al Qaeda targets only; attack Al Qaeda and Taliban targets; and attack Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Iraq threat. Deputy Secretary of State Armitage, Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz, and VCJCS Myers were the primary interlocutors.<sup>22</sup> When the DC debated whether to restrain the Northern Alliance forces as they moved toward Kabul in October 2001, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin raised his concern that too rapid an advance by the Northern Alliance might alienate the Pashtuns. McLaughlin's intervention during the 9 October DC meeting led Wolfowitz, in an aside to his "plus one" Douglas Feith, to remark on how frequently CIA officials made policy arguments.<sup>23</sup> Implied in Wolfowitz's aside was an admonition to intelligence community representatives to limit themselves to providing intelligence and remain aloof from policy advocacy, which might color their intelligence judgments. As the executor of policy via a covert operation, in other words, as the owner of the boots on the ground at the tactical level, the CIA deputy had a policy stake in this instance.

The intelligence community would remain active, yet frequently frustrated, in the DC, albeit not just because of Wolfowitz's aforementioned disdain. Discussions about Iraq in the DC, starting in late 2001 and going into 2002, precipitated this frustration and accompanying discomfort for the intelligence community representatives. George Tenet, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, captured the essence of the intelligence community's discomfort with the process when he described Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin as "my long-suffering deputy" for whom the DC meetings were a "burden."<sup>24</sup> One of the many battles McLaughlin waged in the DC after the invasion of Iraq, for example, was over the creation of a new Iraqi intelligence service. According to Tenet, McLaughlin's pleas to the deputies for the establishment of

such a service fell on deaf ears. Tenet admitted that in all the years he had known McLaughlin he had never seen him more exasperated.<sup>25</sup> Being a deputy was not always an enviable task, despite placing one at the forefront of planning for the most pressing actions in support of the nation's security.

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**The deputies' involvement in broad, strategic planning that would pave the way for subsequent action on the ground was evident in the Bush Administration and its approach to Iraq...**

in the Bush Administration and its approach to Iraq, which made its way to the deputies' agenda shortly after President Bush's inauguration. One of the first topics was support for Iraqi opposition groups, such as Ahmed Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress (INC). According to Bob Woodward's account, the deputies' goal was "to increase pressure on Saddam, to try to create fissures and disagreements within the regime," and "the debate was passionate about how far and how fast to go with the opposition." Indicative of the divisiveness of this aspect of policy toward Iraq among the deputies was their failure to reach agreement, which led the DC to pass the issue up to the full NSC on 1 June 2001.<sup>26</sup> Deputy National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, who chaired the committee, convened the deputies four times between 31 May and 26 July 2001 "to work the Iraq policy." The deputies' work resulted in a Top Secret paper entitled "A Liberation Strategy" that they forwarded to the principals on 1 August 2001.

**Beginning in November 2002, the DC debated the transition of power in post-Saddam Iraq following the end of major combat operations.**

Beginning in November 2002, the DC debated the transition of power in post-Saddam Iraq following the end of major combat operations.<sup>27</sup> Douglas Feith described the nature of the DC's work on Iraq, which by the summer of 2002 "dealt less with whether the United States should press for regime change and more on how to bring it about."<sup>28</sup> Feith's description succinctly captured the essence of the planning the deputies carried out in Washington, which he explained differed significantly from the military planners' work at the United States Central Command:

The planning documents written by officials in Washington were, as a rule, general, conceptual, strategic, and short. They were referred to as *policy plans*. Steve Hadley and the DC orchestrated this Washington work, coordinating input from an elaborate set of interagency groups.<sup>29</sup>

**The DC and the Obama Administration**

President Obama's first National Security Adviser James Jones assigned the DC three responsibilities:

- "Review and monitor" the work of the interagency process, to include the Interagency Policy Committees. Specifically, the DC "shall also help ensure that issues being brought before the NSC/PC [Principals Committee] or the NSC have been properly analyzed and prepared

for decision."

- Implement policy (a task for "significant attention") to include "periodic reviews" of major foreign policy initiatives "to ensure they are being implemented in a timely and effective manner.
- Day-to-day crisis management.<sup>30</sup>

The Deputy National Security Adviser who chairs the DC is responsible to set the agenda, ensure required papers are prepared, and record and circulate conclusions of the DC meetings to members of the interagency. The DC is charged to "...ensure that all papers to be discussed by the NSC or the NSC/PC fully analyze the issues, fairly and adequately set out the facts, consider a full range of views and options, and satisfactorily assess the prospects, risks, and implications or each."<sup>31</sup>

Jones, in his broad guidance on the interagency process in the Obama Administration, reinforced the role of the DC in monitoring policy implementation. As part of "an NSC that monitors strategic implementation, the DC will be responsible for establishing a system for tracking implementation so that Principals can be informed regularly about where progress has been made as well as where critical benchmarks are not being met."<sup>32</sup> Jones also set out a series of general principles to guide interagency meetings, including those of the DC. A number of these principles are reminiscent of the procedures Robert Gates employed during his tenure as the Deputy National Security Adviser and Chairman of the DC during the administration of President George H.W. Bush:

- There will be a regular and announced schedule of PC and DC meetings.
- There will be an agreed agenda for each meeting which will be circulated to participants well in advance of regular

meetings

- As standard practice, discussion papers will be circulated to participants at least 48 hours prior to regular meetings.
- Every meeting will end with clear agreement on what was decided and what may have not been decided. Such an ending will also include the delegation of responsibilities for implementation. Summaries of conclusions reflecting agreements will be circulated within 48 hours of any meeting.
- Each agency in NSC meetings will be represented by the relevant member plus one other agency representative, unless specifically excepted. Substitutes for members will occur only with the approval of the chair.
- Agency representatives must be able to speak for their agency.
- Deputies should be able to speak for their Principals; if necessary. Principals' concurrence will be obtained within 24 hours of any DC meeting.<sup>33</sup>

The DC has habitually operated outside the spotlight, however, in January 2010, a meeting of the DC on Sudan policy caught the attention of a coalition of Sudan advocacy groups. The coalition bought an advertisement in *The Washington Post* in an effort to call attention to the deputies by name (U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Susan Rice's deputy Erica Barks-Ruggles, Deputy National Security Advisor Thomas Donilon, Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg, Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levy, and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy) and to influence the policy discussion.<sup>34</sup> John Norris, Chief executive Officer of the Enough Project, told a blogger for *Foreign Policy* magazine, "We're not trying to

hold [the deputies'] feet to the fire...It's not an effort to demonize them, but **we recognize they are key decision makers**" (emphasis added).<sup>35</sup> According to one report of the Sudan meeting, which apparently did not go well, the deputies were limited to sharing their views and their agencies' assessments of the issue, because "the

**Every meeting will end with clear agreement on what was decided and what may have not been decided. Such an ending will also include the delegation of responsibilities for implementation.**

briefing paper that was to have all the agencies' positions clearly spelled out was not prepared in advance, hurting the deputies' ability to iron out any differences." The same report asserted that National Security Staff Director for Africa Michelle Gavin received a dressing-down from Deputy National Security Adviser (and DC chairman) Thomas Donilon for the lack of preparation.<sup>36</sup> If true, this omission violated the "standard practice" set out in the third of National Security Adviser Jones' general principles listed above. Whether this deviation from procedure reflected a shortcoming in the functioning of the DC and supporting staff or the contentious nature of Sudan policy within the Obama administration at the time remains unclear.

Subsequent events, for example the uprisings in North Africa and the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, demonstrated that the DC has retained its responsibility for various aspects of crisis-management throughout the Obama Administration. As a part of the battle rhythm of meetings at the White House to deal with the crisis in Egypt that began in January 2011, daily

morning meetings of the DC under the chairmanship of Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough established the “‘play of the day’ — in West Wing jargon—a plan for responding to the day’s unfolding events.”<sup>37</sup> In the case of the disaster in Japan, the DC became the forum for discussion about whether to authorize the departure of USG dependents from Japan following the meltdowns at the Fukushima nuclear power station. “A number of heated DC meetings,” which also included the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, John Roos and military commanders in the region, eventually led to Washington’s decision to authorize the voluntary departure of dependents, a step that addressed the concern for the safety of U.S. citizens while not undermining confidence in the Japanese government. In this case of crisis management, the DC gathered inputs from outside the Beltway and brought in players such as the Department of Energy and the White House Science Adviser, who contributed expertise not normally resident in the committee.<sup>38</sup> The DC was involved in not only assigning tasks to the operational- and tactical-level operators who implement policy, but also in ensuring the welfare of these operators and their families.

## Conclusion

The NSC DC remains a lynchpin in the national security policy and execution process. When military and civilian personnel carry out the tasks of defense, diplomacy, and development on the ground, chances are the DC had a hand in the process. Presidents, national security advisers, and cabinet secretaries have come to rely on their deputies to collectively formulate U.S. policy and develop guidance for the entire government, whether in regard to routine matters or during management of crises. President Bush and President Obama’s promotions of deputy national security advisers Stephen Hadley and Thomas Donilon, respectively, to the post of national security advisers highlight the value they place on these individuals and, indirectly, the DC. The committee’s members depend on the work of their assistant secretaries, bureau chiefs, desk officers, and action officers—the officials who comprise the next lower level of NSC committees (be they interagency working groups, policy coordinating committees, or interagency policy committees) to do the “nug work” in support of their deliberations.

The endurance of the DC over the course of multiple presidential administrations from both political parties attests to its effectiveness in the national security policy formulation and execution system. As the insights cited in this article suggest, the committee’s deliberations are not always easy, as bureaucratic and genuine policy differences are aired out. Nonetheless, when the deputies build relationships based on trust and operate under a clearly understood set of rules and procedures, their collective efforts as the DC add value to the national security policy formulation process and set the conditions for coordinated interagency execution on the ground. **IAJ**



## Notes

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- 10 Richard N. Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2009, p. 93.
- 11 Daalder and Destler, p. 213.
- 12 Ibid., p. 263.
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- 14 Rothkopf, p. 270. During the Gulf Crisis, “the deputies would meet at least twice a day and often more frequently to keep track of the seventy-five detailed items that had to be handled each and every day.” See also Daalder and Destler, p. 185.
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# Fundamentally *Restructuring Interagency Operations* for Future Success

**by Ryan Hilger**

***"The whole thing was uncoordinated and did not get us very far. The upshot is that in the ninth year of the war we are starting from scratch."***

***Ambassador Richard Holbrook***

Ambassador Holbrooke's lighthearted comments about the ongoing stabilization and reconstruction operations in Afghanistan in December 2009 belie how poorly the U.S. has managed nation building not only in Afghanistan, but also in other places over the course of the half-century.<sup>1</sup> For the past twenty years, the U.S. has embarked on operations that challenged the ascendancy of the military as the prime provider for nation-building efforts. These operations have required the cooperation of many branches of government to be successful. But lately, getting the Department of State (State), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Defense (DoD), and a host of other organizations to cooperate effectively toward a common goal remain elusive. A decade of ad hoc arrangements in Iraq and Afghanistan has only underscored the need for Congress to undertake a sweeping reform of the national security apparatus. Nation building, in this context, encompasses peacekeeping, capacity building, stabilization and reconstruction operations, and traditional nation building. Future security challenges will only require increased interagency cooperation, not less.

The following three recommendations should be implemented to fundamentally change how interagency cooperation works abroad:

- Congress should legislatively expand the combatant command (CCMD) structure to reflect the need for continual interagency planning and integration.
- The President should grant the National Security Council (NSC) the authority for oversight and direction of interagency operations abroad.

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- The professional education system should be reformed and expanded to produce a cadre of experienced interagency professionals ready to advance the nation's interests abroad.

**...the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 administratively removed many of the barriers to effective joint operations.**

### **Expansion and Reorganization of the Geographic Combatant Commands**

The streamlining of the military chain of command in the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 administratively removed many of the barriers to effective joint operations. The invasion of Panama in 1989 validated and cemented the operational effectiveness of these changes. Removing service chiefs from the operational chain of command freed them to focus on the long-term issues of training, readiness, recruitment, and procurement instead of fighting with other services to control short-term operations, as happened in Grenada in 1983. The ability of a combatant commander to exercise operational control of all branches of the military within his areas of responsibility without having to deal with service chief infighting to accomplish the mission so fundamentally altered the way the U.S. fights that its success bears repeating.

In 2007, DoD stood up the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) as the newest geographic CCMD, with a function-based, interagency structure at its core. The success achieved in interagency coordination, namely with State and USAID, has been significant. General William Ward, a previous commander of AFRICOM, noted that instead of strictly interagency, "USAFRICOM might be better termed interagency-oriented because of its design

charter that emphasized support to an integrated '3-D' approach of diplomacy, development, and defense activities."<sup>2</sup> The AFRICOM approach recognized the contributions of other agencies as mutually supportive of U.S. goals in the region. As a result, the organizational structure of AFRICOM looks very different from other CCMDs. AFRICOM has been organized around functional capabilities, instead of the more typical directorates, complete with a mix of civilians, including a few from outside the DoD, and military leaders at all levels. Day-to-day interagency interaction and cooperation produces more effective working relationships and better unity of effort toward the common objective.

However, the AFRICOM model should not be implemented across the remaining geographic CCMDs. Instead, AFRICOM should be viewed as the prototype for interagency integration and improved upon. The geographic CCMDs could be reorganized as follows. First, Congress should establish a post-ambassador position of Chief of the Regional Mission above the military combatant commander. This new Chief of the Regional Mission reports to and is directly accountable to the NSC, thus ensuring that neither the Secretary of State nor Secretary of Defense can maintain operations within that department alone. The NSC would grant the regional chief the authority to conduct specified operations in support of the national interest without obtaining explicit approval from the President, thus granting a degree of autonomy and flexibility to U.S. foreign policy. This post-ambassador also helps current ambassadors by providing advice, mentorship, and guidance on issues that, at present, get lost in the shuffle of the millions of cables coming into State yearly. An arrangement similar to this may have prevented the catastrophe that befell the U.S. mission in Libya that resulted in the death of the Ambassador and three other Americans. The Chief of the Regional Mission would have

a closer connection to the Secretary of State and NSC than the individual ambassadors currently enjoy.

The military officer, the combatant commander in the present system, then assumes the dual role of Deputy Chief and the military combatant commander. The combatant commander would only assume command when directed by the NSC to conduct major combat operations in the area of responsibility. This approach reflects the growing need to demilitarize foreign policy and aid, reaffirms the desire for civilian control of foreign policy, and brings the two primary foreign policy entities together under the same organizational structure. It also reflects the underlying assumption that all combatant commanders must be well versed in political- and civil-military relations to succeed at their jobs. The combination of agency efforts, especially from Defense and State, will remedy the chief complaint of the U.S. Chief of Mission in Afghanistan that “the lack of a single, unified chain of command was a core problem leading to weak management oversight.”<sup>3</sup>

Such a model worked extremely well on a micro-scale during the crisis in Greece from 1947–1949 when the U.S., at Britain’s behest, intervened to save Greece from communist influence. President Truman assigned Paul A. Porter to study the problems in Greece and provide recommendations. His incredibly comprehensive, yet exceptionally succinct, report formed the basis of the organizational structure for the American Mission for Aid to Greece—a case study in its own right. After resolving a few personnel problems in early 1948, the mission began to achieve rapid success. The working relationship of Ambassador Grady and General Van Fleet, his subordinate, could not have been better. These “officials set aside the parochial interests of their agency in favor of the interests of the overall U.S. mission to Greece” on countless occasions, such as Greece’s military campaign in the north, debates

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over the type of government to establish, and the decision that all communications with U.S. agencies stateside, including Defense, pass through the ambassador.<sup>4</sup> In the end, the mission to Greece was a success, and the U.S. sent only 100 combat troops, who never deployed outside the embassy walls. Such selfless cooperation, recently seen in the relationship between General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker in Iraq, proves that different agencies can work in harmony toward a national objective if given unity of command and strong leadership, which in turn helps produce unity of effort.

However, “[the] chain of command, as it currently stands, will inevitably exert a countervailing force on interagency coordination,”<sup>5</sup> as seen in the early 1980s as the probable passage of Goldwater-Nichols Act loomed over the military. The service chiefs at the time balked and lobbied Congress against the passage of Goldwater-Nichols, citing disastrous scenarios for U.S. national security and victory for the Soviet Union. With the benefit of hindsight, none of those scenarios played out. The U.S. military managed to slowly integrate into a more effective joint force, whose prowess went on display in 1991 with Operation Desert Storm. The sweeping changes here will be met with similar criticisms should Congress introduce formal legislation commensurate with these recommendations. Indeed, General David Petraeus, one of the most celebrated generals in

the last few decades, sees the difficulties with such an approach.

State is never going to put an ambassador under a general, and DoD is never going to put a general under an ambassador. So you have to resolve to work together. You have to make way and pull together and be joined at the hip. You have to have unity of purpose as the bottom line.<sup>6</sup>

**State is never going to put an ambassador under a general, and DoD is never going to put a general under an ambassador. So you have to resolve to work together.**

While General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker achieved remarkable success in Iraq, the U.S. cannot jeopardize success in complex operations by pinning its hopes on the personalities of two individuals. A similar approach in Afghanistan produced damaging results to the coalition efforts when the senior U.S. civilian and military leadership failed to cooperate. To correct this, Congress has the ability, just as they did in the 1980s, to legislatively force cooperation.

Congress should expand the existing CCMD organizational structure to include permanent positions for the following agencies under existing directorates: State; USAID; the Departments of Agriculture, Treasury, Justice, and Homeland Security; and the Central Intelligence Agency. Additional temporary positions should be available for other federal agencies as needed. All geographic demarcations across agencies should be standardized under the current unified command plan. Bringing all relevant agencies into the CCMD structure leverages the capacities, infrastructures,

resources, and strategic planning abilities of the military with the expertise of the other departments, who generally have far fewer resources.<sup>7</sup> Agencies should be compelled to part with some staff at regional bureaus in favor of rotational tours at the new interagency commands or hire additional personnel to meet the demand. This process will provide interagency experience for personnel at varying levels of their careers, not unlike the military structure, while preserving the regional expertise that members develop during a lifetime of service. To forcefully change the culture in the civilian agencies, promotion into the senior executive or foreign service should be tied to the completion of interagency tours. Like the run up to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, agencies will likely resist this change vehemently. But few, if any, officials would say now that the reforms implemented by Goldwater-Nichols were less efficient than before or detrimental to national security since. Legislatively forcing interagency cooperation by reorganization will, in time, produce substantially better results.

Congress should provide for the establishment of regional security councils within each interagency command. Modeled after the NSC and its interagency policy committees, it will ensure that each agency has equal status in the decision-making and planning processes. As Whitaker, et al. note, “[different interpretations] must be openly addressed to enable the group to collaborate effectively, refine core policy issues, and achieve a consensus policy document.”<sup>8</sup> Having regional experts discuss regional problems as equals, each understanding his or her agency’s capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses, will help develop truly interagency solutions to difficult national security problems. This approach also relieves the burden on the NSC and the President to bear the brunt of the planning and decision-making, which would now be done closer to the problem.

## Providing Oversight and Accountability

The spectacular failure of post-conflict reconstruction and interagency cooperation in Iraq under the direction of L. Paul Bremer highlights the need for a responsible, accountable entity with executive powers below the President to oversee non-combat operations. By appointing L. Paul Bremer as a Presidential Special Envoy, he became accountable to no one but the President. In this case, the President becomes the single-point failure for U.S. national security policy. President Bush was very reluctant to intervene in subordinate matters, giving Bremer unprecedented autonomy and authority with little to no required reporting or accountability. The implosion of high-level interagency efforts came when the “U.S. military forces in Iraq learned of the unilateral disbandment of the Iraqi army—the cornerstone of all U.S. security planning—through a cable news report, [which] is indicative of the disconnect between the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the U.S. military command.”<sup>9</sup> Having an accountable entity in charge above the local ambassador would have prevented the issuance of CPA Orders 1 (de-Baathification) and 2 (disbanding the Iraqi army). Secretary of State Colin Powell would not have allowed it.

At present, the U.S. does not have a formal system in place to prevent this from happening again. In fact, “under the current system, only the President has the decisive authority necessary to require interagency coordination for contingency relief and reconstruction operations.”<sup>10</sup> However, the President does not have the time to provide sufficient oversight and force the day-to-day cooperation necessary to harmonize operations and achieve unity of effort, nor should that burden be placed solely on him.

In his various testimonies before Congress

and in both of his books, *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience* and *Applying Iraq’s Hard Lessons to the Reform of Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, Stuart Bowen espoused the need for a central office with executive authority to oversee stabilization and reconstruction operations, a new U.S. Office for Contingency Operations (USOCO), as he defined it. Designed primarily to be a lead agency to coordinate the efforts of the DoD and State, USOCO would not have much of an organic capability to conduct nation-building operations.

**The spectacular failure of post-conflict reconstruction and interagency cooperation in Iraq under the direction of L. Paul Bremer highlights the need for a responsible, accountable entity with executive powers below the President to oversee non-combat operations.**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) represents the domestic equivalent to the proposed USOCO. DHS brings together the domestic agencies to improve homeland security and disaster response and coordinates the efforts of agencies at the federal, state, and local levels to a given end—effectively domestic nation building. However, a decade after its creation, the overall success of DHS remains in question. The Heritage Foundation recently concluded that DHS suffers from “too much triumphalism and not enough recognition of the pressing challenges in building the homeland security enterprise that the nation needs. The report does not acknowledge how overcentralization, complacency, and misguided politics have thwarted the efforts to address the challenges

laid out by the 9/11 Commission.”<sup>11</sup>

These words could be easily written a decade following USOCO’s implementation. USOCO would only work if Congress legislatively placed command of DoD and State resources directly under USOCO’s control, a move that both departments would ferociously fight and makes little sense. Such a relationship would likely prove untenable and caustic. Departments and agencies would engage in constant bickering about who will provide funding, training, personnel, logistics, etc. for a given operation, which would degrade the nation’s ability to advance national security interests abroad.

Without a legislative mandate, USOCO would merely be another level of bureaucracy with neither the authority nor the resources to carry out its mission. Both State and DoD would have no reason to acquiesce to the orders of USOCO, unless it was in the interest of the department, knowing that USOCO would lack the ability to compel them to do so. When a group already exists that is better suited to the task, implementing a new agency to coordinate nation building would not be in the best interest of U.S.

**Most analyses of interagency operations identify education, specifically outside the DoD, to be a significant hindrance to further integration.**

The NSC must take the lead and be given the authority and responsibility to manage non-combat operations. The practice of appointing a single agency to lead operations, such as Defense in Iraq, does not work. A senior NSC official observed that “*lead agency* really means *sole agency*, as no one will follow the lead agency if its directions substantially differ

from their organizational equities.”<sup>12</sup> The NSC agencies work together in the field and at the regional commands toward the common objective and prevent a single agency from putting too heavy a Defense or State approach into practice. Contingency and operational plans developed at the interagency command level can be analyzed, refined, and approved by a similar group of individuals to ensure that national interests, not agency interests, are being advanced. The NSC can then provide a set of solutions and recommendations for presidential decision that better encapsulates a whole-of-government approach and wields all elements of national power.

However, this structure would not be without problems. Those with years of experience working closely with the NSC state that the “hierarchy of interagency committees complain that the system is ineffective, ‘byzantine,’ and stultifying.”<sup>13</sup> Reform of the NSC structure is tangentially related to the problem of broader interagency cooperation, but the archaic structure should be reformed to meet the needs of the twenty-first century in parallel with these recommendations. Such reform would require legislative action, given that many of the current organizational problems in the NSC stem from legislation.<sup>14</sup> Such a grand bargain for national security reform would be hard to accomplish, but would be worth the effort. Nevertheless, the NSC remains the best candidate for overseeing daily interagency operations when explicitly granted the authority by the President to do so.

### **Educating a Cadre of Interagency-Savvy Professionals**

Most analyses of interagency operations identify education, specifically outside the DoD, to be a significant hindrance to further integration. Indeed, “most federal agencies put little or no effort in education, preferring instead to send their professionals to shorter training



courses or to depend on mentoring and on-the-job training for skill acquisition.” Culturally, these agencies do not have the personnel depth and management systems to provide for significant graduate and professional education outside the agency without negatively impacting career paths and agency manning.”<sup>15</sup> The military has taken great steps to developing a well-educated joint force, overcoming many of the above obstacles in the process. Other government agencies should now be included in this effort.

The joint professional military education (JPME) system now required by law has greatly benefited the military. While the joint education system still lacks a true “jointness,” just like the rest of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, few would say that it has set the U.S. military back. Implementing a similar program within the civilian agencies of the government will help in passing on lessons learned, ensuring members have the required knowledge that agency heads believe necessary, and understanding the roles of the agency beyond their insular bureau or department. At the more senior levels, national security professional education should be standard across the government, military forces included. The National Defense University would likely be the best organization to undertake an interagency curriculum, likely a JPME Phase III, to train leaders to act as a joint, interagency force and employ all the tools of national power. Students from all branches of government, including the military, would then be required to attend this program prior to assuming a directorate-level position in an interagency command. Currently, there are few civilian agency students at defense schools, and rarely does a military officer rotate into an interagency assignment. Broadening the programs in place will ensure a cadre of national security professionals knowledgeable about each agency, their capabilities and resources, and the mistakes of the past. It also provides a low-pressure forum for officials from all agencies to interact and develop the camaraderie necessary to build unity of effort. Making these interagency assignments and professional education a required milestone for promotion would further signal the shift toward interagency, vice intra-agency, national security professionals.<sup>16</sup>

## **Conclusions**

Over the past half-century, the U.S. has undertaken more nation-building operations than traditional wars. Failures have ranged from minor, such as Haiti, to catastrophic, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, with a scant few successes, such as Greece. “Continuing to do business the way we have over the past eight years and expecting a different outcome is not efficient, or even rational.”<sup>17</sup> Congress should legislatively restructure the geographic CCMDs to force agency integration by creating a Chief of the Regional Mission position, incorporating agencies into the existing geographic CCMD structures, and establishing regional security councils. Additionally, Congress should strongly recommend to the President to designate the NSC as the accountable leader of non-combat operations abroad and expand and enhance the education system for national security professionals across the government. With a paucity of resources for the foreseeable future, the nation cannot afford to continue ad hoc interagency operations and expect even a modicum of success. Informal reform has not worked. It is time to force agencies to work together to advance national interests. **IAJ**

## Notes

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# An Institutional Analysis of the *Commander's Emergency Response Program*

**by Timothy D. Gatlin**

The U.S. military has been engaged in protracted warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan for more than a decade, and every aspect of the nation's strategy, doctrine, and tactical operations is the topic of intense debate among academics, the general public, political leadership, and military professionals. Since the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. has sought to develop a security strategy to eradicate conditions that create fertile breeding grounds for non-state actors and asymmetric threats. A critical aspect of the U.S. strategy is helping to build steadfast and credible local governments that, in turn, provide security and essential services to their citizens.

Carl Schramm, an advocate for "expeditionary economics," believes the best way to ensure sustainable economic growth is through the use of host-nation companies, and the military has the capability to take a leadership role in bringing economic stability to countries devastated by internal conflict.<sup>1</sup> At first glance, it is difficult to refute this statement. The military is a vehicle through which the nation can protect its interests. It has both the requisite resources to provide a consistent presence in volatile regions, as well as the necessary technology to effectively operate in environments that inevitably cripple other agencies. However, there is still no definitive evidence that a positive correlation exists between the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) spending and reductions in violence.<sup>2</sup>

Do state-sponsored development efforts reduce insurgent violence and facilitate host nation long-term sustainability? This study examines two causal mechanisms related to development efforts accomplished under the auspices of the CERP program: 1) development projects reduce grievances by providing essential services, and 2) development projects reduce violence by providing licit opportunities for employment. Using the institutional analysis and development framework (IAD), an examination of governmental, scholarly, and personal accounts of CERP funding in Iraq finds the program fails to reduce grievances or decrease violence partly because of the existence of perverse incentive structures.

This study has significant policy implications for interagency cooperation in future reconstruction

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efforts by providing the following:

- Qualitative perspective on a topic that is generally viewed through a quantitative lens.
- Tools for military, economic, and political leaders to address issues from the institutional perspective.
- Recommendations for commanders to facilitate optimal implementation of CERP and possibly negate the insurgents' influence.

Since this study only examines a portion of the CERP network, the results cannot be transferred to other interactions within CERP. As such, room exists for continued analysis using the IAD framework. However, given the current operational environment and the probability of future U.S.-sponsored efforts to bring stability through the use of all the elements of national power, specifically economic and military means, it is important to highlight these apparent shortfalls.

Academic literature provides little insight into the relationship between economic development and violence. Academics cannot say with certainty that CERP projects alone account for decreases in violence. However, personal accounts from leaders in the field and Congressional reports give the impression that the CERP misses the mark when it comes to creating meaningful projects for Iraqi citizens. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) reports described reconstruction operations as misled with a narrow application of the revised counterinsurgency doctrine.<sup>3</sup> Stuart Bowen (SIGIR 2004–2013) posits that an effective capacity-development program should have been implemented from the onset to avert the sustainability issues that eventually overran the Iraqi ministries.<sup>4</sup>

Elinor Ostrom routinely warns of the danger of simple truths that inform the research of

academics and the decision-making processes of policymakers with respect to interactions between key stakeholders and the rules that govern those interactions. She observes that the intuitive answers are often wrong.<sup>5</sup>

The CERP system in Iraq is comprised of multiple actors who operate at the constitutional, collective-choice, and operational levels. It is a complicated system that involves numerous interactions between public and private sector entities, and it requires a framework that can set the conditions for institutional analysis and reflection at the constitutional, collective-choice, and operational levels. The IAD framework offers an effective platform in which to organize and analyze ideas and actions regarding reconstruction efforts in Iraq, as it accommodates interdisciplinary work.

The focus of the IAD framework is interactions. It presents a practical method for dealing with these interactions at the three levels referred to above. An operational situation refers to an individual interacting within a repetitive setting, while the rules that constrain the actions within the operational situation originate at the collective-action level. The rules and policies that affect who will make the decisions are made at the constitutional level.<sup>6</sup> The IAD framework highlights the preponderance and effects of motivational and information problems that not only subvert reconstruction efforts, but also negatively affect many other collective-action situations, such as security and capacity-building operations.<sup>7</sup>

The action situation allows the analyst to isolate the entity affecting a particular process to explain the gaps between human action and outcomes.<sup>8</sup> The IAD framework requires the analysis of seven variables composing the action situation:

1. The set of actors.
2. The set of specific positions to be filled by actors.

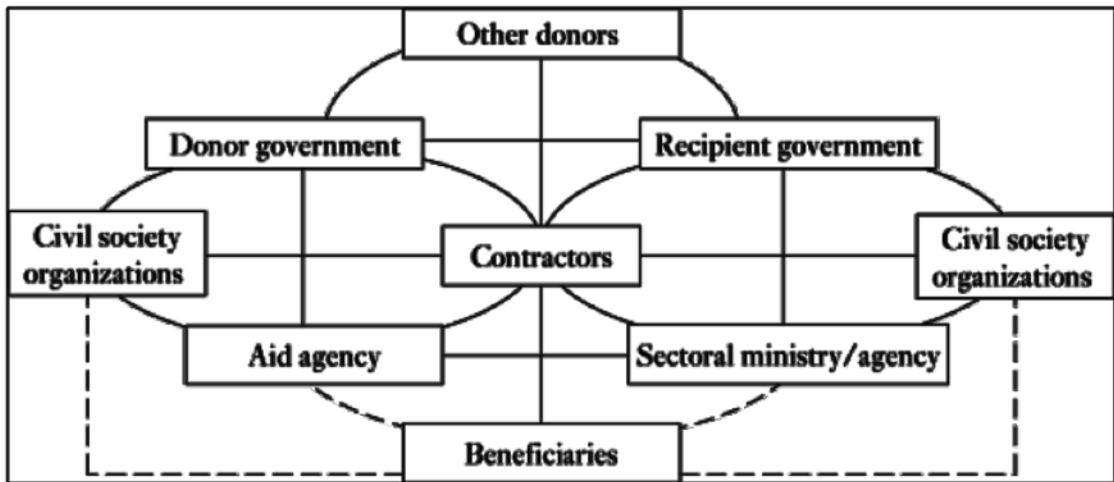


Figure 1. International Development Cooperation Octangle

3. The set of allowable actions and their linkage to outcomes.
4. The potential outcomes that are linked to individual sequences of actions.
5. The level of control each actor has over choice.
6. The information available to actors about the structure of the action situation.
7. The costs and benefits—which affect perceived incentives—assigned to actions and outcomes.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the basic IAD framework, Gibson, et al. developed the International Development Cooperation Octangle<sup>10</sup> to analyze linked action situations by identifying eight important actors within the development cooperation system:<sup>11</sup>

1. Donor government.
2. Recipient government.
3. Other donors.
4. Donor's international development agency.
5. Sectorial ministries and agencies within the recipient government.
6. Third-party implementing organizations, including nongovernmental organizations and private consultants and contractors.
7. Organized interest groups and civil society organizations within the donor and recipient countries.
8. Target beneficiaries.

The IAD framework and the International Development Cooperation Octangle<sup>12</sup> seek to isolate

these variables and actors and provide leaders, both military and civilian, with concrete explanations as to why economic development often falls short of achieving its long-term goals.

**The Iraqi government and other institutional systems were completely dismantled when Saddam Hussein was removed from power. This situation created a strong donor/weak recipient dynamic, which normally gives rise to undesirable outcomes...**

The International Development Cooperation Octangle focuses on the donor-recipient negotiation triad (field commanders, Iraqi community leaders [sheiks/muhktars], and insurgents) to highlight why donor-advocated projects often do not meet the expectations of the recipient and, ultimately, result in ambivalent reception to new community projects and/or increased grievances.

At the operational level, U.S. Army brigade level and below units often found themselves in a principal-agent quandary because they were often forced to serve two masters—their higher headquarters and the local population. Effective reconstruction efforts require extensive collaboration between the donor and the beneficiary to discern what is truly necessary to improve the prospects of the local populace. Unfortunately, unit commanders were often driven by the results-oriented culture of the Army, which at times can be more concerned with the number of projects as opposed to the quality of the various development projects within Iraq.

*Contextual variables affecting interactions:* Contextual variables influencing the outcomes associated with the CERP program

reconstruction efforts can be grouped into institutional, cultural, and biophysical factors that influence interactions at the constitutional, collective-choice, and operational levels. The Iraqi government and other institutional systems were completely dismantled when Saddam Hussein was removed from power. This situation created a strong donor/weak recipient dynamic, which normally gives rise to undesirable outcomes, such as moral hazard (one party continuing to undertake bad business practices due to a lack of consequences associated with its actions) and poor sustainability.<sup>13</sup> Poor sustainability is directly related to biophysical attributes or institutional support needed to sustain opportunities created by CERP. A lack of understanding of what is needed for long-term sustainability may have negatively affected which projects were approved at the operational level.<sup>14</sup> Would a greater understanding of the support structure necessary for these projects inform collective-choice level decisions regarding the rules-in-use needed to positively affect the interactions between the U.S. military units and Iraqi citizens at the operational level?

U.S. military leadership struggled to reconcile the benefits of short-term security gained through CERP projects versus long-term economic development strategies.<sup>15</sup> The creation of CERP and the rules-in-use that regulated its use affected the daily interactions between field commanders (brigade and below) and the Iraqi communities, which defined the operational level of institutional analysis.

The results-oriented culture of the U.S. Army seemed to overwhelm the Iraqis, who were not accustomed to taking the initiative on issues that affected their communities. In the absence of community participation, asymmetric power relationships developed, and the donors were left to make unilateral decisions influenced by their own incentive structures, which may not have been in the best interest of local population.<sup>16</sup> These cultural gaps led to a situation where

leaders at the collective-choice level did not use the ideas of sustainability and ownership as evaluation criteria to govern the allocation of CERP funds within the community.<sup>17</sup>

*Donor-recipient negotiation arena:* Within the donor-recipient arena, donor governments must have the express permission of the recipient government to conduct any type of bilateral economic development.<sup>18</sup> The nature of this relationship varies because of the power asymmetry between the donor and the recipient and the pool of available alternative donors. In the case of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the relationship between the U.S. and Iraq was strong donor and weak recipient.<sup>19</sup> As a result, negotiations at the operational level took on the character of a dictatorial relationship, where the U.S. sometimes dictated terms to the Iraqi people, which left the Iraqis with no alternative but to accept the terms specified by the unit commander. This situation can lead to undesirable outcomes, such as increased dependence of the recipient on donor aid and moral hazard.

For the purposes of this paper, the actors in this interaction arena are unit field commanders/staff officers, local Iraqi community leaders, and insurgent networks. Despite the fact that much of insurgent networks' power was the result of coercive methods, they controlled many of the daily activities within the community.

### **Application of IAD Framework Variables**

At the operational level, the U.S. military became the state agent responsible for providing security and rebuilding the community's capacity to govern itself after the fall of the Iraqi government.<sup>20</sup> The U.S. military relied on its significant monetary and military resources to aid efforts to establish security in Iraq and build the capacity of local government through economic development.<sup>21</sup> Field units were allowed to use CERP funds

as a mechanism to address security issues under the guise of economic development.<sup>22</sup> Notwithstanding the above, many brigade combat teams lacked the manpower to properly monitor the implementation of CERP projects, which allowed many contractors to produce substandard work that did nothing to reduce the grievances within the community.

Although the U.S. military's vast resources afforded it a fair amount of control when it came to identifying insurgents, its overreliance on technology and inability to provide consistent oversight on CERP projects created information asymmetries with the local population, which affected intelligence collection and project sustainability.<sup>23</sup> These asymmetries hindered U.S. efforts to understand what communities

**...overreliance on technology and inability to provide consistent oversight on CERP projects created information asymmetries with the local population...**

needed to restore economic viability and confidence in the local government.<sup>24</sup>

Unit commanders also faced principal-agent issues when they found themselves trying to serve both higher headquarters and the local population in their area of operations—more often than not, the needs of the former trumped those of the latter. For example, as a result of flawed assessment programs, U.S. military higher headquarters rewarded units based on the volume of CERP projects, rather than the quality of those projects,<sup>25</sup> which left many communities with unwanted and unsustainable CERP projects, crippled economies, and high unemployment rates. Insurgents took every opportunity to attack construction workers and the infrastructure they were building, and while unit commanders attempted to utilize CERP

under these conditions, they often failed.<sup>26</sup> The U.S. military's 12-month deployment model (rule-in-use) facilitated the shortsighted mindset of unit commanders and staff officers and sustained the information gap between military units and the Iraqi citizens.<sup>27</sup> As units rotated into and out of theater, plans were always revamped and built from scratch, which did not help units maintain continuity or unity of effort.

**The heavy-handed tactics used by some units, such as cordon and searches of entire towns, often violated cultural mores and norms...**

Iraqi citizens lacked robust resources to aid in reconstruction efforts due to the collapse of their country's economic and political apparatus. As a result, the local populace had three options: support U.S. military efforts and live in fear of the insurgents, leave the community in search of a new homestead, or assist the insurgents and receive monetary compensation.<sup>28</sup> On the surface, it seems like the local population had very little control over its own destiny. Yet, in some cases, the locals had near perfect information on the physical geography of the town, the intentions of the insurgent cell located in the community, and the systems and projects needed to foment sustainable economic and political recovery. However, community leaders were typically unwilling to openly support U.S. efforts for fear of retribution, which passively assisted the insurgency.

The information asymmetries between the locals and military units did not engender trust and collaboration. Many field units did nothing to close the relationship gap, and they were left to establish an understanding of the environment on their own. This brought about resentment

between the donor and the recipient, which drove some locals closer to the insurgents.<sup>29</sup> The heavy-handed tactics used by some units, such as cordon and searches of entire towns, often violated cultural mores and norms and did nothing to build trust and respect between military leaders and community leaders.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, the locals were acutely aware of the frequent turnover of coalition forces, and often chose to remain neutral or turn a blind eye to insurgent activities because it did not serve their long-term interests to oppose the insurgent networks.

The insurgents' access to money, their knowledge of the community, and their role as the defacto government gave them substantial capabilities to disrupt this donor-recipient action arena.<sup>31</sup> They established elaborate defense networks within the local community to thwart U.S. efforts to establish a foothold with community leadership. They used violence against non-compliant community members and coalition forces to maintain control and ensure that freedom of maneuver was maintained throughout their area of operations.<sup>32</sup> Further, the violence between the insurgents and the coalition often had the unintended consequence of non-combatant fatalities, which drove many fence-sitters closer to the insurgents.<sup>33</sup> Through a range of methods, the insurgents were often successful in neutralizing U.S. efforts and delegitimizing them as a viable alternative to the existing power structure within the local communities.<sup>34</sup>

CERP projects posed an interesting obstacle for the insurgent networks, as they created alternative sources of work for the males within the community. Individuals who might be recruited by insurgent groups would be less likely to participate in illegal insurgent activity because the opportunity cost would be too great.<sup>35</sup> As a consequence, insurgent networks were forced to engage their more committed members to initiate attacks with



increased lethality, such as suicide bombers, vehicular-borne improvised explosive devices, etc.<sup>36</sup> Although these types of attacks were not carried out with the same frequency as the roadside bomb attacks, the more lethal attacks maintained steady fatality rates.

### **Patterns of Interaction— Evaluation of Incentives**

It is my view that the U.S. military's pattern of interaction with the local community resulted in incentives that created seams that could be exploited by the insurgent networks. Information asymmetries, discussed previously, resulted in Iraqi citizens not being treated as equals. Their opinions were often disregarded because they had no resources to allocate towards reconstruction efforts. As a result of this power distance, CERP project design and implementation was a dictatorial process, as opposed to a collaborative one, and it created an over-dependency on U.S. aid, leaving Iraqi communities with no capacity or desire to be innovative and create solutions to their own problems. This left some communities with projects that did not serve the long-term needs of the Iraqi citizens.

The U.S. military's assessment mechanism incentivized quantity over quality of CERP projects.<sup>37</sup> For example, military commanders were evaluated and rewarded for the completion of projects (e.g., the physical structure), rather than their sustainability.<sup>38</sup> Further, the 12-month timeline to completion imposed on U.S. military units did nothing to incentivize a long-term approach toward economic development within Iraqi communities.<sup>39</sup> Collaboration was not geared toward building a long-term relationship and fostering the creation of a shared path to achieve a common vision for the community. Consequently, military units could not see the benefit in really understanding what the Iraqis needed to create sustainable economic development.

As a result, insurgents could use violence against the local population and the coalition forces to keep many aspects of the counterinsurgency campaign off-balance and stymie the reconstruction process in Iraq. The violence I witnessed was associated with a restive environment where local officials were not prepared to expand local government control and create economic development opportunities, which allowed the insurgents to maintain control of the local population long after U.S. forces departed.

**The U.S. military's assessment mechanism incentivized quantity over quality of CERP projects.**

### **Recommendations**

An analysis of the interactions between U.S. field units, Iraqi community leaders, and the insurgent networks uncover insightful observations regarding the implementation of CERP. The strong donor/weak recipient paradigm, faulty assessment mechanisms, information asymmetries, unrealistic time boundaries, and principal-agent issues are the main areas of contestation that arguably hinder the efforts of CERP. These institutional issues should be addressed before CERP can be fully evaluated and understood as a viable method for reducing violence. In the meantime, field commanders at all levels can advocate for a change of the rules-in-use, which will allow donors to engage in meaningful dialogue with the recipient, with a view to identifying projects aimed at long-term sustainability. The issues identified in this paper can be addressed at the operational, collective-choice, and constitutional levels of interaction.

The following recommendations are intended to serve as reference tools for field

commanders whose overall mission set encompasses economic development:

### ***Strong donor/weak recipient paradigm***

The donor (U.S. field units) must take into account the perspective of the local community in the initial planning process. More importantly, the opinion of the local community must be genuinely valued. This will not offset the recipient's need for financial capital and physical materials. However, community outreach has the potential to plant the seeds necessary to foster a sense of ownership by locals and, therefore, facilitate the sustainability of completed projects. While there are no guarantees in taking this approach, if the donor continues to plan all aspects of development, the recipient will never take ownership of or develop the capacity to sustain the completed projects.<sup>40</sup>

### ***Assessment mechanisms***

Presently, the U.S. Army uses measures of performance (MOP) and measures of effectiveness (MOE) to evaluate unit performance. The validity of these two instruments is often debated, but the real issues in the context of development occur when the MOE are focused on the units, instead of on the local population.<sup>41</sup> Although population-centric MOE make evaluation much more difficult because the results are not quantitative, the unit is forced to gain greater situational understanding of the operational environment, including a keen understanding of the recipient's sentiment toward the donor's efforts, which would go a long way toward closing the information gap/asymmetry. The U.S. military should adopt population-centric MOE.

### ***Information asymmetries***

Consistent and meaningful dialogue with the local population and other external agencies operating in the area is imperative to closing the information gaps that insurgents normally exploit. However, it matters when the dialogue occurs. Engaging the local community leader and USAID after the development plan is in motion is not beneficial—the discussion must take place during the initial design phase.<sup>42</sup> This collaborative approach will facilitate greater situational understanding between the various agencies and generate more effective and creative solutions to ill-framed problem sets. The increased collaboration also ensures the agencies have a unified message to the recipients. Additionally, in order to ensure a better finished product, field commanders should certify more contracting officer representatives within their units to provide additional oversight on CERP projects.

### ***Unrealistic time boundaries and understanding the situation***

A time boundary issue should not be addressed by increasing the length of deployments. However, field commanders should reexamine the existing relief in place/transfer of authority process. Often times, the incoming commander ignores the work of the incumbent unit and sets a totally different agenda for the area of operations. As a result, units can spend the first three to five months relearning the human terrain. Military leaders at the collective-choice level, such as division- and corps-level leaders, should mandate that no changes be made to the operational systems already in place until 120 days have elapsed, unless certain conditions

are met. Department of State officials within the provincial reconstruction teams and USAID representatives should also be required to provide incoming commanders with enhanced situational understanding on the progress of various projects within his/her area of operations. This process would allow incoming commanders to capitalize on the previous unit's gains and significantly decrease the already steep learning curve inherent when conducting operations in an unfamiliar environment.

### ***Principal-agent issues***

This most challenging issue would require a change in how the U.S. military interprets the principal-agent relationship when units participate in reconstruction efforts. The principal benefits from the actions of the agent, while the agent takes the appropriate actions to achieve outcomes that are advantageous to the benefactor. The higher headquarters also benefits from the actions of the subordinate unit, as it helps the higher echelon move closer to its objectives. Most issues occur when the needs of the community are in conflict with the desires of a higher headquarters. The leader's response could be positively influenced if superiors rewarded behavior that was conducive to long-term sustainability and codified it in counseling and evaluation reports to reinforce habits commensurate with long-term stability.

This study uncovered some of the issues that may inhibit a clear understanding of whether CERP can actually reduce violence. The issues are systemic and reside within U.S. institutions. However, the focus of study is narrow and would benefit from additional analysis of other interactions within the CERP system. In particular, does the interaction between the contracting officer and contractor enhance or detract from the intended purpose of CERP? It may also be beneficial to explore the interaction between the field commanders, contractors on the ground, state department officials, and host-nation municipalities. Resulting research using the IAD framework as a tool will be important to understanding actors and how their interactions can facilitate or stymie a commander's effort to successfully achieve a mission. **IAJ**

### **Notes**

- 1 Rebecca Patterson and Jonathan Robinson, "The Commander as Investor: Changing Practices in CERP," *PRISM* 2, No. 2, 2011, p. 116.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Chad Livingston, "Beyond SWEAT: Developing Infrastructure in Stability and COIN Operations," *Small Wars Journal*, October 5, 2011, p. 1.
- 4 Stuart Bowen, *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, Washington, 2009, p. 4.
- 5 Clark Gibson, et al., *The Samaritan's Dilemma: The Political Economy of Developmental Aid*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, pp. 34–40.
- 6 Ibid., p. 24.

- 7 Ibid., p. 27. The IAD framework requires that actors in a situation be characterized by four sets of behavior variables: resources (time, energy, finances) that an actor brings to the situation; internal valuation that actors assign to actions and outcomes (including pride and shame); way actors acquire, process, retain, and use knowledge and information; and processes actors use to select particular courses of action.
- 8 Ibid., p. 31.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid., p. 61.
- 11 Ibid., p. 62.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid., pp. 34 and 66.
- 14 Anthony H. Cordesman, "Past Failures and Future Transitions in Iraqi Reconstruction," Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2010, p. 14.
- 15 Patterson and Robinson, p. 116.
- 16 Gibson, et al., p. 40.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 16–17.
- 18 Ibid., p. 65.
- 19 Ibid., p. 66. A weak recipient is a government that has grown entirely dependent on external assistance. Iraq lacked sufficient capacity in economic planning and project administration, so most of the initiative in planning development aid was taken a strong donor, the U.S., specifically, the U.S. military.
- 20 Eli Berman, et al., "Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq," *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper No. 14606, 2009, p. 8.
- 21 Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson. "Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency," *International Organization*, Vol. 63, Winter 2009, p. 75.
- 22 Mark Martins, "The Commander's Emergency Response Program," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 37, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, 2005, p. 48.
- 23 Lyall and Wilson, p. 75.
- 24 Bowen, *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*, p. 18.
- 25 Livingston, p. 7.
- 26 Stuart Bowen, "Falluja Waste Water Treatment System: A Case Study in Wartime Contracting," *SIGIR Audit Reports*, Issue 12-007, October 30, 2011, p. 14.
- 27 Gibson, et al., p. 134.
- 28 Berman, et al., pp. 8–10.
- 29 Patterson and Robinson, p. 117.

30 Lyall and Wilson, p. 98.

31 Berman, et al., 8–9.

32 Ibid., p. 9.

33 Hanson, et al., “Building Peace: The Impact of Reconstruction Spending on the Labor Market for Insurgents,” *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper, October 2009, p. 22.

34 Berman, et al., p. 9.

35 Hanson, et al., p. 4.

37 Livingston, p. 3.

38 Livingston, p. 7.

39 Gibson, et al., pp. 134–135.

40 Ibid., p. 67.

41 Livingston, p. 4.

42 Stuart Bowen, “Falluja Waste Water Treatment System: A Case Study in Wartime Contracting,” p. 3.

# *Ripples in the Pond*

## **CGSOC Interagency Education**

**by Russell B. Crumrine, Jr.**

***When the U.S. undertakes military operations, the Armed Forces of the United States are only one component of a national-level effort involving all instruments of national power. Instilling unity of effort at the national level is necessarily a cooperative endeavor involving a number of USG [U.S. government] departments and agencies.<sup>1</sup>***

Interagency coordination and cooperation efforts between the U.S. military and other U.S. government agencies have increased over the past ten years of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Besides operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, interagency coordination related to steady-state shaping activities and programs occurs daily within geographic combatant command (CCMD) headquarters and between those headquarters and U.S. diplomatic missions within the same areas of responsibility. Joint doctrine emphasizes this interagency unity of effort.

But unity of effort is not just important at the national level where National Security Council (NSC) structure, processes, and programs, such as “promote cooperation,” exemplify efforts to foster interagency coordination and cooperation. Interagency unity of effort is important at the operational and tactical levels of military operations as well. This importance will not diminish as current military operations wind down. The partnering of the U.S. military with other government agencies is a central tenet of future joint operations. The central concept of the “Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020” is globally integrated operations. A key element of globally integrated operations is the necessity of partnering.

Fourth, *globally integrated operations place a premium on partnering*. This allows expertise and resources existing outside the U.S. military to be better integrated in a variety of operational contexts. The complex security challenges of the future almost invariably will require more than the military instrument of national power. Joint Forces must be able to integrate effectively with U.S. governmental agencies...<sup>2</sup>

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Other U.S. government agencies also recognize the importance of a whole-of-government approach in promoting and protecting U.S. interests and security. In 2010, the Department of State (State) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) published the first ever “Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review” (QDDR). The QDDR noted the importance for State and USAID to work in conjunction with the Department of Defense (DoD) and other agencies to more effectively utilize America’s power in whole-of-government efforts.<sup>3</sup>

The development and deployment of provincial reconstruction teams in Iraq and Afghanistan and the creation of a Joint Interagency Coordination Group or J9 at geographic CCMDs exemplify interagency coordination and cooperation efforts over the past ten years. But while these are positive steps, interagency challenges remain for the U.S. military. In its report on enduring lessons from the past decade of military operations, the Joint and Coalition Operations Analysis Division of the Joint Staff/J7 identified interagency coordination as an area that required more effort. The report stated: “In the wide range of operations conducted over the past decade, interagency coordination was uneven due to inconsistent participation in planning, training, and operations; policy gaps; and differences in organizational culture.”<sup>4</sup> To improve the unevenness, the report recommended improving interagency participation in military training and education.

As military operations scale down, it is likely there will also be a concomitant decrease in the extent of daily or regular interaction among members of the U.S. military and of other government agencies; therefore, interagency exposure and participation in professional military education becomes even more important. This article will highlight some of the programs and actions undertaken

by the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) to tackle this challenge by increasing interagency participation and interagency topics in its Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) curriculum.

Currently three agencies (State, the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency) have representatives serving as CGSC faculty. Integrated into CGSC, the interagency faculty conducts a variety of activities that increase student and faculty knowledge about other U.S. government agencies’ roles, capabilities, and cultures.

Interagency faculty develop and deliver elective courses; assist other faculty, where appropriate, with development and revision of lessons; and participate as interagency role-players and mentors in practical exercises and as guest speakers in large and small groups. For

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students pursuing a Master of Military Art and Science degree or a master’s degree from another institution, interagency faculty members often serve on thesis committees and support students’ research efforts by providing reach-back support to their parent agencies. Through regular contact with students and faculty, the interagency faculty enhances the educational experience by providing interagency perspectives and whole-of-government approaches in conjunction with military operations. An on-going CGSC objective is to add additional interagency

faculty representatives from other agencies, such as the USAID, Department Homeland Security (DHS), and Department of Justice.

During the past four academic years, interagency-related topics, especially relevant to State and the diplomatic and economic instruments of national power were an integral part of the guest speaker program. Numerous serving and retired ambassadors as well as CGSC's interagency faculty spoke on topics such as reconstruction and stabilization challenges; State and DoD interdepartmental challenges; interagency operations overseas

**Interagency students who participate in the ten-month resident course gain a deeper understanding of military culture and the perspectives of their military counterparts.**

(diplomatic missions); roles and responsibilities of State's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization; diplomacy, ambiguity, and global remedies; State's mission and ambassador responsibilities; the "Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review"; and the new Bureau for Conflict Stabilization Operations.

The short-term exposure to interagency resident faculty and guest speakers is a valuable contribution to increasing the students' understanding of interagency cooperation and coordination; however, long-term exposure and daily interaction with fellow students from other U.S. government agencies cannot be understated. During the past few years, CGSC leadership has reached out to a number of DoD and other government agencies to encourage them to send individuals to CGSOC. Having interagency students complete CGSOC alongside their military partners benefits both parties.

Regular interaction in the classroom with interagency students facilitates opportunities for the military students to achieve a deeper understanding of the cultures, perspectives, and capabilities of other U.S. government agencies. In their 1998 paper, Lieutenant Colonel Rickey L. Rife and Foreign Service Officer Rosemary Hansen coined the oft-quoted phrase: "DoD is from Mars and State is from Venus." They contend "a 'marriage of necessity and convenience' between two temperamental cultures [Defense and State] is slowly evolving; a relationship based on trust and respect; but with each still wary of the other. To achieve foreign policy goals both must clearly recognize, acknowledge, and respect the differences of the other."<sup>5</sup>

Interagency students who participate in the ten-month resident course gain a deeper understanding of military culture and the perspectives of their military counterparts. In addition, they are exposed to joint and Army doctrine and processes. Through classroom discussions and exercises, interagency students have opportunities to apply military doctrine and utilize the joint operational planning process and the Army's military decision-making process. This mutual understanding and appreciation should lay the foundation for smoother and more effective cooperation and coordination in future assignments and endeavors. The professional and personal relationships formed between the military and interagency students also expand networking opportunities that may be helpful in the future.

From 2010 to 2013, an average of 15 interagency students attended the resident course each year. State has sent the largest number of students, mostly foreign service officers and diplomatic security officers. Other departments and agencies represented include the DHS, Customs and Border Patrol, Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Marshal's Service,



Veterans Administration, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Defense Intelligence Agency, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. It is worth noting that other interagency students have also attended the CGSOC at satellite campuses.

CGSC continues efforts to increase the overall number of interagency students attending CGSOC as well as the U.S. government agencies represented. This remains a challenging endeavor for a number of reasons. First, unlike DoD, most other government agencies have limited personnel, and they potentially have to gap billets for ten months to send an individual to the course. Second, successful completion of the CGSOC is not always seen to benefit the participants or enhance their career progression and promotions within their agencies. Third, there is the ever-present challenge of funding and resources to support professional education and development opportunities.

Besides increasing interagency representation, CGSC is increasing the interagency-related topics in the resident CGSOC core curriculum and electives. To provide students with some familiarity of the interorganizational cooperation and capabilities of some interagency and other unified action partners, the CGSOC core curriculum includes a lesson on interorganizational cooperation and capabilities. The lesson introduces students to relevant joint doctrine and specific examples of interagency coordination structures of selected geographic CCMDs. New for most military students, another key aspect addressed is the authorities and responsibilities of U.S. ambassadors and interagency processes of U.S. diplomatic missions. Finally, the fundamental roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of selected U.S. government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations are discussed. Particular emphasis is given to State and

USAID, which are the two agencies the U.S. military works most closely with at many levels on a daily basis.

A number of electives focus on interagency-related topics, and for the students who decide to complete them, they provide an expanded interagency education. Senior representatives of a number of agencies participate as guest speakers, either in person or via video teleconference. Among the more popular interagency elective offerings are ones that discuss diplomacy, national security policy making, and the CIA.

**CGSC continues efforts to increase the overall number of interagency students attending CGSOC as well as the U.S. government agencies represented. This remains a challenging endeavor...**

Analyzing and evaluating how the U.S. uses the diplomatic instrument of national power is the overarching focus of the elective course on diplomacy. Students study how the U.S. government is organized to conduct diplomacy and the tools it uses. The course emphasizes the central relationship between the diplomatic and military instruments of national power and how military personnel and diplomatic personnel interact and work together in executing U.S. foreign policy.

The elective course on national security policy making provides an opportunity to study the concepts, organizations, and processes for developing and executing national security policy and examines strategy making within the executive branch of the government. The intent of this course is to guide students to a more in-depth understanding of interagency principles,

relationships, and interactions among agencies.

Students with the requisite security clearance and interest may enroll in a course that increases their understanding of the missions, resources, authorities, capabilities, and limitations of the CIA. The course also introduces students to the organization and structure of the national intelligence community and emphasizes the three CIA missions—strategic human intelligence collection, all-source analysis, and covert action. Case studies illustrate key aspects of CIA operations and, more importantly, the contribution and effect of strategic intelligence on national security policy formulation.

Students may also choose to focus their elective studies..A popular interagency-related focus program is the Homeland Security Studies Program. Students first complete a homeland security course that introduces them to aspects of homeland security including strategies, key U.S. government agencies, legal authorities, and roles and responsibilities of DoD and military services in supporting other government agencies. Students are also required to complete at least two other homeland security-related elective courses that focus on topics such as homeland security planning, domestic terrorism, and legal aspects of homeland security. Students also have the option to complete additional requirements for Defense Support to Civil Authorities Phase II Certification. Students become familiar with the DHS's Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, Customs and Border Patrol, FBI, and Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

Besides courses developed by CGSC faculty, CGSOC seeks to include courses developed by other U.S. government agencies either for their personnel or personnel of other agencies. The intent is to have an agency representative present a course to CGSOC students at Fort Leavenworth. For example, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) Joint Humanitarian Operations Course (JHOC) informs military personnel how the U.S. government responds to international disasters, including USAID and OFDA roles, authorities, capabilities, and coordination procedures for disaster assistance, as well as how DoD and the military may support disaster assistance operations.

The first JHOC was presented to CGSOC students and faculty in April 2013. Both students and faculty commented on the course's value in better understanding USAID capabilities and operations, and how they will be able to improve military cooperation and coordination with USAID in future operations. To meet curriculum standards for elective courses, upon completion of the JHOC, students also conduct a challenging scenario-based practical exercise. The students applied the information gained from the JHOC in planning military support to an OFD-led disaster response.

Coordination, cooperation, and collaboration between the U.S. military and U.S. government agencies are critical to success in future actions across the spectrum of conflict and range of military operations to protect and promote U.S security and interests. Expansion of interagency participation in professional military education is imperative to continuing to improve interagency efforts. Current CGSC actions to build interagency collaboration, understanding, and relationships in the CGSOC classrooms can lay the foundation for this future success. Metaphorically, this is dropping the interagency stone into the CGSOC pond, and the educational ripples spread throughout the Army and other military services.

Current limitations in funding and personnel may constrain future interagency-related educational endeavors. But efforts to increase the size of the interagency stone in the military professional education pond to expand the educational ripple effect should remain an imperative for the U.S. military and U.S. government agencies. These efforts are key to overcoming the unevenness of past interagency coordination and executing more effective whole-of-government approaches to future challenges. **IAJ**

## Notes

- 1 Joint Publication 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States Department of Defense, March 25, 2013, p. II-2.
- 2 “Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020,” Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States Department of Defense, September 10, 2012, p. 6.
- 3 “The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review: Leading through Civilian Power,” United States Department of State, 2010, p. 201.
- 4 “Decade of War, Enduring Lessons From the Past Decade of Operations,” Vol. 1, Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis Division, Joint Staff /J7, United States Department of Defense, June 15, 2012, p. 25.
- 5 Ricky L. Rife and Rosemary Hansen, “Defense is From Mars, State is From Venus: Improving Communications and Promoting National Security,” U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, May 1998, p. 2.

# *Faith-Based Peacebuilding in the Former Yugoslavia*

**by David Steele**

An examination of regional, civil society peacebuilding in the former Yugoslavia provides an excellent opportunity to examine reconciliation efforts and evaluate both methodology and success in light of lessons learned during the ensuing years. In this article, I will evaluate projects I personally directed from 1994–2006.

As a fellow with the Program on Preventive Diplomacy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington (1994–2003), I directed a conflict resolution training program for religious communities in the former Yugoslavia. This project began exclusively as a training program for clergy and laity in Croatia, Serbia, (including Kosovo at that time), Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro (which was at that time still part of Yugoslavia). As time progressed, the project's focus evolved in many ways, including an emphasis on influencing policy making by political actors.

From 2003–2006, while serving as a program manager, then interim executive director at Conflict Management Group (CMG), and finally a program manager at Mercy Corps, I led a project on building inter-ethnic community in Macedonia. This project included religious persons, as well as many other civil society and governmental actors.

## **Objectives and Methodology**

The basic goal of these projects was to train and equip local people, especially the clergy and laity from all religious communities, to be better agents of reconciliation. The three objectives were to build relationships among people from different ethnic/religious communities, resolve disputes by applying problem-solving skills used by heterogeneous groups, and build capacity to affect the structural changes necessary for sustainable peace. The religious values of staff and participants provided primary motivation and contributed significantly to the content of specific project activities. Those invited to participate included representatives of all religious communities

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within a given context, most often mid-level people (though occasionally both hierarchy and grassroots) who were open to inter-faith dialogue and had some degree of influence within their societies. Despite these criteria, most participants were influenced by nationalist mentalities that had affected their respective ethnic and religious identities.

The conflict resolution training program for religious communities in the former Yugoslavia began with workshops held in eastern Croatia following the war there and in Sarajevo during the siege. The training adopted the approach of problem solving patterned after the principled negotiation strategy developed at Harvard under the aegis of Roger Fisher.<sup>1</sup> In Croatia, the approach resulted in what we deemed to be possibilities for cooperative action among Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslim refugees. In Sarajevo, however, inter-religious problem solving in the midst of bombardment felt like the impossible task of pulling a tooth that was not yet loose. We concluded that the major accomplishment was simply bringing together the entire spectrum of religious communities—Muslim, Catholic, Serbian Orthodox, Jewish, and a variety of Protestants—in Bosnia-Herzegovina’s capital city. Relationships were clearly re-established and in some cases initiated, though not without difficulty or, as it turned out, cost to some participants.

Two later developments demonstrate both the unexpected negative and equally unexpected positive results of our efforts. On the negative side, a Croatian newspaper violated our clear guidelines regarding confidentiality by printing comments by an imam, who demonstrated an unusual empathetic understanding of the needs and fears of the Bosnian Serb population, though not their actions. As a result, his Bosnian Muslim community chose to ostracize him, and he was forced to leave his mosque. This incident led us to adopt regulations prohibiting journalists from attending workshops and preventing all

participants from revealing or publishing any personal information about what transpired at these events. A number of years after the war, participants in a workshop requested media presence and we again allowed media presence with close supervision.

**The conflict resolution training program for religious communities in the former Yugoslavia began with workshops held in eastern Croatia following the war there and in Sarajevo during the siege.**

On the positive side, when I returned to Sarajevo one year after the end of the war, the president of the Academy of Sciences and Arts Dr. Seid Hukovic handed me his book on conflict resolution in the Bosnian language. Hukovic then indicated that he learned the entire problem-solving methodology described in the book at our workshop. He described how he used this methodology to convince the Bosnian Muslim political leadership to accept the ceasefire that led to the Dayton Accords that ended the war. Hukovic concluded by asking if I could set up a meeting between leading Serbs in Belgrade and himself in order to discuss how to resolve ongoing conflicts between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Despite this unexpected success at training in problem solving, we decided to continue an emphasis on training in relationship building. The purpose of what we came to call Level 1 workshops was to assist victims (from all sides of the multiple wars in the former Yugoslavia) to turn away from a revenge mentality and begin a process of building trust, understanding, and empathy.

The workshop methodology followed a six-

**...we were frequently surprised by how long it took, sometimes requiring repeated retelling of their stories, before some (though not all) people were ready to move on.**

step approach to help transform participants' attitudes toward others:

- Process grief by listening to the stories of all participants and ritualizing processes of lament using each religious tradition.
- Share fears and ways in which faith helped people face them.
- Identify the needs of other groups and help to re-humanize them.
- Admit wrong attitudes or actions done by oneself or one's group.
- Turn from captivity to the past by giving up all hope of changing it (i.e., through forgiveness open oneself to a positive vision of the future).
- Envision an understanding of justice that is bigger than punishment, retribution, or revenge and focus on restoring relationships and meeting the basic needs of all people.

The basic *modus operandi* for this approach included storytelling, sharing personal experiences, listening, and utilizing one's own faith tradition to come to terms with a traumatic past and rediscover a hopeful future. We were, in fact, surprised by how ready people were to share their experiences. When kept to personal sharing, without accompanying assumptions or conclusions about the behavior of the "other side," there was seldom any dispute. Instead, bonds were created among people who realized they had experienced much the same suffering.

Yet, we were frequently surprised by how long it took, sometimes requiring repeated retelling of their stories, before some (though not all) people were ready to move on. Trauma recovery is a very individual and, often, slow process.

At the same time, there were people who were ready to engage in joint problem solving. Therefore, we developed a series of Level 2 workshops focused on skill development in dispute resolution. Many inter-religious working groups were formed over the next ten years. These groups initiated numerous joint projects to address a variety of social problems including ecumenical prayers and inter-religious sports programs for youth in Croatia; religious clerics leading refugee return programs; using public media to highlight problems of corruption in Bosnia; interfaith cooperation on developing curricula for religious education in Serbia; Serbian Orthodox and Albanian Muslims working together to coordinate and improve education, medical care, and governance in Kosovo; inter-ethnic/religious cooperation on environmental challenges in Macedonia; and other joint projects too numerous to name. In fact the efforts generated by these interfaith-based efforts to address common problems began to have a carry-over effect on other components of society.

Slight adaptations of the methodology enabled us to work with a variety of civil society and political actors to resolve even larger problems. After attending one workshop, a political advisor to the Serbian Orthodox Bishop of Kosovo facilitated introductions, followed by brainstorming sessions, with officials in the Milosevic regime, resulting in a back channel of communication between the Yugoslav and U.S. governments, which each side credited with hastening the end of the Kosovo war. In a second example, the success engendered by working together on environmental problems enabled Albanian local government officials and a Macedonian women's organization to

successfully mediate rising tensions in the city of Struga that appeared headed toward reigniting another civil war in that country.

Efforts to accomplish structural change began to happen as a natural result of the activities of the working groups that formed at the end of the Level 2 workshops. Structural change became part of the task confronting the imam in Fojnica, Bosnia, as he assisted 1,600 Croat families to return to their homes in that post-war, Muslim-controlled city. Structural change occurred as Serbian workshop participants, as well as some of the government officials with whom we worked, took part in the demonstrations and behind-the-scene confrontations and negotiations that toppled the Milosevic regime. Structural change took place in 2006 as we assisted some leading Kosovo Serb clerics and politicians to realize the inevitability of Kosovo independence and engage in dialogue with some Kosovar Albanian politicians who realized the need to include Serbian politicians and Church leaders, thus paving the way for some cooperation within the new Kosovo government.

The greatest impact on structural change, however, came as a result of our efforts to create indigenous multi-faith organizations in each country. The Centre for Religious Dialogue was established in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, Bosnia, in 1998 and the Inter-Religious Centre in Belgrade, Serbia, in 2000. In addition, a new program on inter-faith reconciliation was added to the Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights in Osijek, Croatia. In each case the mandate was to continue the training and cooperative efforts of religious people in conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

The former local consultants to the CSIS project became the new directors of the respective new entities. The CSIS staff assisted in the transition to local leadership that occurred quite rapidly in Croatia, where there was an established institution, but took three

years in Bosnia. In each case, the staffs of these organizations began leading workshops on their own and implementing new cooperative ventures. For example, the new director in Sarajevo helped negotiate the creation of the Inter-Religious Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a body composed of the leaders of the Muslim, Catholic, Serbian Orthodox, and Jewish communities. Unfortunately, due to difficulties in fundraising efforts (especially after the Balkans were no longer in the headlines), both new organizations in Bosnia and Serbia have now closed. At the same time, some inter-faith organizations and professional networks, established by other participants, continue to flourish. One such example is the Face-to-Face Inter-Religious Service established by Franciscan priest Ivo Markovic in Sarajevo.

**The greatest impact on structural change, however, came as a result of our efforts to create indigenous multi-faith organizations in each country.**

### **An Assessment: Both Concurrent and Retrospective**

Throughout the implementation of both of these projects, we learned and made many adjustments. Many more lessons can be ascertained now in retrospect:

- The need to employ an elicited approach that is culturally sensitive and utilizes local religious traditions.
- The need to relate inter-faith conflict transformation and peacebuilding efforts to both development and policy making.
- The need for ongoing analysis and assessment, monitoring, and evaluation.

- The need to evaluate the criteria for assessing success or failure.

**...I spent three years prior to initiating the CSIS project, plus two years at the start of that project (five years total) just getting to know people and learning about them, their faith orientations, and their cultures.**

I visited each region in the former Yugoslavia before attempting to hold any workshops in a given location. In some cases, especially Serbia where there was the most intense anti-American sentiment, I spent three years prior to initiating the CSIS project, plus two years at the start of that project (five years total) just getting to know people and learning about them, their faith orientations, and their cultures. I firmly believed that listening and observing were prerequisites to offering anything. At the same time, in retrospect, I am sure that my actual approach when beginning the training was heavily influenced by my own Western assumptions. I gradually came to realize there were different ways of understanding and knowing, as well as different norms for acceptable behavior. One small example came to my attention after attempting to inform Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians about the need to use “I” statements. Finally, someone told me that it made no sense to them since in their language they typically omit the pronoun “I,” which, like in many languages, is inferred in the form of the verb.

Regarding use of the local religious traditions, the project began with some awareness of this need. Opening spiritual messages were offered by a different religious tradition on each day of each workshop.

However, there was still a set perspective presented in the content, very much influenced by my own Christian background. There were some efforts at inclusion of other traditions as we Western leaders became more aware or as participants and local staff interjected their own insights. One such poignant occasion occurred when a deputy to a Serbian Orthodox bishop picked up on a call to acknowledge wrongdoing on the part of one’s own group by telling a story that set my request in the context of a Serbian Orthodox practice of confession of sin. The effect was powerful.

At the same time, lack of sensitivity to differences in Muslim tradition only began to dawn on me much later. For example, the need to deal with justice (both retributive and restorative) before turning to forgiveness is a lesson I learned only later, after working in a predominantly Muslim society. As outsiders, we must be very careful not to impose. We must carefully use our outside perspective to occasionally and with sensitivity confront sometimes flagrant cultural patterns of disrespect and even abuse. If we have truly gained trust as outsiders, and worked long enough in that context, we will likely find local people willing to support such concerns.

While implementing these projects, we also expanded to include both development and policy making onto conflict transformation. These efforts became more central over time, resulting in much greater emphasis on them in Kosovo and Macedonia where we later worked. It became very clear that by their very nature working groups involved work on development—economic, environmental, or governmental—as in policy related to refugee return and the formation of new governments. What also became very clear was that our small budget limited the kinds of development or policy making we could implement. As a result, we began teaching fundraising to working groups, especially environmental groups in



Macedonia.

When the Macedonia project was taken over by Mercy Corps as a result of the merger with CMG, I thought this union of conflict management and development would be the ideal solution. However, differences in organizational culture appeared (one large organization focused on quick humanitarian response, and the other smaller organization focused on detailed examination of process). Differences in mandate also became apparent. Was the mandate of the combined organization to serve both parties to a conflict with equal sensitivity, or was priority or exclusivity to be given to the disadvantaged party? Was the priority to start with development and ask how conflict management could contribute to the goals of community mobilization? Or was the priority to start with conflict transformation and then resource the working groups that are generated in this process, regardless of whether they fit the priorities of the development agency? What about controversial issues normally addressed by conflict transformation specialists, yet might endanger the ability of development programming to continue in that context? Or vice versa? Which discipline's mandate should prevail? Which should be sacrificed or at least placed second in priority? All these are difficult questions, as development and policy-making issues are placed alongside conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

The need for analysis and assessment are ongoing, as was certainly the case during these projects. However, at the turn of the century, the entire peacebuilding field received a shock when told by the donor community that there was insufficient monitoring and evaluation taking place within our discipline. I was made aware of this at the start of the Macedonia project in 2003. For the first time, the donor assigned an outside evaluator to assist with the project. She and I initially clashed, as she attempted to set up a typical monitoring and evaluation procedure

as practiced at that time in the development community. It was not clear at all to me, as project director, that the indicators she proposed would effectively measure the accomplishments of my project. Would measuring the degree to which local Macedonian and local Albanian media accurately represented the view of the other group say anything about the results of my project? My project might never even be reported by the media, in which case, it may totally miss any effective impact the project has had. Conversely, if my project did have a positive effect on media but nowhere else in the society, the result would still skew the conclusions.

**Would measuring the degree to which local Macedonian and local Albanian media accurately represented the view of the other group say anything about the results of my project?**

We ended up developing an evaluation approach that is very similar to Michael Quinn Patton's "developmental evaluation."<sup>2</sup> According to Patton, the changing, complex, turbulent conditions encountered when dealing with violent and post-violent societies frequently call for very adaptable, nonlinear, evaluation methodologies. In this context, measurable objectives, an explicit change model, and precise, unchangeable indicators tend to inhibit, rather than enhance, the search for successful programs with sustainable impact. What we need is monitoring and evaluation methodologies that assist project staff and participants to develop a creative process that utilizes reality testing to facilitate and support dynamic innovation. In order to complement the traditional monitoring and evaluation

approaches, staff should:

- Focus on attaining major impacts regarding big problems, rather than predetermining smaller goals and objectives.
- Aim beyond perceived possibilities, rather than identify what is provable.
- Discover unanticipated, emergent outcomes, rather than predictable, preprogrammed ones.
- Explore options, rather than assume fixed interventions.
- Utilize feedback, rather than rely solely on traditional generic monitoring and evaluation standards.
- Gather lessons learned, rather than critique compliance.
- Apply these lessons to a specific context, rather than generalized best practices.
- Interpret, rather than just collect data.
- Enhance internal accountability, rather than answer primarily to external authorities and donors.
- Give priority to building local capacity in monitoring and evaluation, rather than in getting measurable results.

In Macedonia, we decided to track the perceived changes in attitude and behavior on the part of project participants following each of seven consecutive workshops for the same 50 leaders. At one point in the evaluation process, our data indicated that the sectors of the participant group experiencing the greatest change with respect to ethnic cooperation were middle-aged Albanian men and Macedonian women. As a result, we began consciously to encourage these two groups to join together in inter-ethnic cooperative projects of their own

choosing. One result was the environmental working group described above that not only developed a waste disposal system in multi-ethnic villages, but also used the relationships they developed to temper the escalation of conflict and, according to them, prevent the restart of a civil war.

Such an outcome was way beyond the stated objectives for the project and was only possible because of the real-time feedback provided to project staff and participants. It was an example of the double-loop learning that is the goal of developmental evaluation. It went beyond identifying a problem and finding a solution. It involved questioning assumptions (for example that youth would be most open to change), altering objectives (to include development of environmental programming), re-perceiving system dynamics (interfacing male Albanian politicians with female Macedonian civil society leaders), and intervening in ways that modified underlying system relationships and function. The result was not just improvement of a specific, pre-determined outcome, but systemic changes that prevented a recurring escalation of violence. This kind of evaluation process, I believe, should be integrated more fully into the way monitoring and evaluation is performed within conflict management and mitigation in general.

Finally, the question of criteria for success, an issue related to monitoring and evaluation. At the beginning of the Yugoslav project, I asserted that success was not to be determined by the degree of change that resulted from implementation of the project. Rather, I made the case that in faith-based peacebuilding, success is determined by faithfulness to one's understanding of God, an assertion which certainly would fly in the face of current monitoring and evaluation perspectives and most donors. Yet, I would like to lift up some things such a perspective can offer. Trusting the transformation process to a higher power (yet

one with which we can participate) has the potential to free the peace actor from the need to control or manipulate the outcome. If one sees oneself as part of the action of God, then one can perceive one's role as enabling, not determining. One can also be spared the negative assessment of failure to succeed at something that might well be impossible in the first place. What would happen to the U.S. military budget if the Pentagon were denied any further funding until it demonstrated it could function 10 percent better than it has in Afghanistan? Or take some other examples. Some would say that Mother Teresa failed significantly in her aim to make the world concerned about poverty in India. One might also ask if Nelson Mandela was really successful given the sad shape of South Africa today. These observations highlight the question of appropriate criteria for measuring success, and what is the role of failure? Are failures, perhaps even more important than successes, due to what we can learn from them? When I look back at my work in the former Yugoslavia, I see much that I have already learned and would now approach differently. At the same time, I do not regret the effort I made and even the mistakes along the way. My strong belief is that God guides us, despite our mistakes, even using them to teach us. That, I believe, is the lesson. What have we learned? And how will we keep learning from those whom we wish to serve and from those colleagues in related fields with whom we need to learn to collaborate most effectively?

## Conclusions

We must keep asking how we might achieve greater impact. These projects never reached their potential. To do so would have required more time and resources. It is simply not realistic to expect that a small team of eleven people at its peak, spread across six countries, with minimal financial support could bring about a stable peace within seven years (in Bosnia) or three years (in Macedonia).

To nurture effective peacebuilding within populations struggling to overcome the effects of traumatic violence, sometimes experienced over generations, requires much more than a mandate that says "get in and get out" as quickly as possible. This may be appropriate for the military, but not when attempting to transform attitudes, build relationships, engender inter-group cooperation, and facilitate structural reform in the context of the traumatic aftermath of war. Donors and policymakers need to offer more sustained, long-term support for such projects. At the same time, conflict transformation practitioners should utilize monitoring and evaluation processes that enable them to continually reassess their programming in such a way as to make it as flexible, culturally sensitive, holistic, and successful as possible. **IAJ**

## Notes

1 Roger Fisher, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, revised edition, Penguin Books, New York, May 3, 2011.

2 Michael Quinn Patton Ph.D., *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*, The Guilford Press, New York, June 15, 2010.

# Worth Noting

**Compiled by Elizabeth Hill**

## **Senate Intelligence Committee Releases Declassified Report on 2012 Benghazi Attacks**

On January 15, the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence released their declassified bipartisan report on the September 2012 terrorist attacks in Benghazi. The report is based on dozens of committee hearings, briefings and interviews, and includes 18 recommendations designed to improve security of American diplomatic and intelligence facilities abroad.

The report asserts that the attacks of September 11 and 12, 2012 were preventable based on known security shortfalls at State Department Mission in Benghazi, and partially attributes the failures to prevent and respond to the attacks to a lack of cooperation between the different government agencies. The report found that significant strategic warning had been provided by the intelligence community in the months prior to the attack, and that the State Department failed to increase security enough to address the threat. Additionally, U.S. military assets were not positioned to respond in time to save the four Americans killed in the attack, though they were able to provide situational awareness for those under siege.

The report also included many recommendations relating to preparing for and responding to similar attacks in the future, including recommendations to halt the operation of State Department facilities that fall short of security standards. The report stressed the importance of interagency cooperation to ensure the safety and security of U.S. diplomatic, military, and intelligence personnel, declaring that it is imperative that the Departments of State and Defense as well as the intelligence community work together to identify and prioritize the largest gaps in coverage for the protection of U.S. diplomatic, military, and intelligence personnel in high-threat posts around the world. **IAJ**

## **Special Report: The Foreign Policy Advisor Program**

The Simons Center recently published a special report entitled *The Foreign Policy Advisor Program: Diplomats Among Warriors*, which focuses on the role of the State Department Foreign Policy Advisors, or POLADs, who serve with the U.S. military. The report follows a May 2013 conference sponsored by the Simons Center and the American Academy of Diplomacy, and was hosted at the American Foreign Service Association.

Event speakers included Acting Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs Thomas Kelly, Director of the Army Staff Lieutenant General William J. Troy, General (Ret.) David Petraeus, and Ambassador (Ret.) Michael Gfoeller. Ambassador (Ret.) Ronald Neumann moderated the discussions.

The report discusses the POLAD program's importance and growth – a 600% increase in seven years – and the importance of maintaining State and DoD relationships as a key part of the

POLAD's mission. Also covered in the report is the POLAD program's role in greater whole-of-government integration; the program's contribution to increased State-Defense understanding and coordination; selection and training of POLADS; role of the POLAD as part of the military commander's special staff; and importance of personal "chemistry" in the POLAD-commander relationship. **IAJ**

## **Counterinsurgency Joint Publication Updated**

In Fall 2013 the Joint Chiefs of Staff released an updated version of the joint publication on counterinsurgency. Joint Publication 3-24, Counterinsurgency, provides joint doctrine for the planning, execution, and assessment of counterinsurgency operations, and builds on and amends the original joint publication that was published in 2009.

Among the changes included in the updated joint publication is the refined definition of "counterinsurgency" as a comprehensive civilian and military effort to both defeat and contain insurgency, as well as address the causes of insurgency. The joint publication also reduces redundancies and improves continuity between Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, and JP 3-0, Joint Operations.

Several appendices have also been added to the joint publication, including civil military operations, authorities in counterinsurgency operations, and precepts for counterinsurgency. **IAJ**

## **Paper Examines Approaches to Leadership**

In 2013, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) published a working paper reviewing approaches to leadership. Who's in Charge Here? builds on a previous ALNAP study, *Leadership in Action: Leading Effectively in Humanitarian Operations*, examining some of the questions raised about the role of effective leadership, particularly the "strong element of collective leadership."

Who's in Charge Here? is the result of an extensive review of literature from international humanitarian, civil defense, military, and emergency medicine organizations. The paper investigates alternative approaches to leadership and how they might be implemented in humanitarian operations. The paper forms hypotheses which can be tested "in the field," enabling ALNAP to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian leadership.

ALNAP is a learning network that supports the humanitarian sector to improve humanitarian performance through learning, peer-to-peer sharing and research. ALNAP's members are actors from across the humanitarian sector, including donors, NGOs, the Red Cross/Crescent, the UN, academics, independent agencies and individuals. **IAJ**

## **Conference Report Covers Transitions, Multi-Agency Operations**

In November 2013, the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) released the follow up report from the 8th International Lessons Learned Conference, which was co-hosted by ACMC and Headquarters Joint Operations Command. The conference was held in December 2012 in Sydney, Australia. The report is based on formal and informal feedback and comments received both during

and after the conference.

The overarching theme for the 2012 conference was “transitions,” including the complexity of multi-agency operations and future cooperation. The conference incorporated lessons from more than 200 experts and practitioners from over 30 countries and a wide variety of organizational backgrounds and cultures. The conference was divided into five broad areas: multi-jurisdictional responses to complex emergencies; stabilization and reconstruction; peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding; counterinsurgency; and novel evaluation techniques and evolving lessons capability.

The goal of the conference was to promote best practice in international lessons learned by bringing together civil, military, and police professionals, as well as scholars from around the world to contribute. Conference participants shared lessons and best practices from a variety of civilian, military, police and civil-military missions and operations worldwide. Participants also shared methods, processes and tools used to identify, apply and share lessons learned and best practices. **IAJ**

## **Executive Order Creates Interagency Council on Climate Preparedness**

On November 1, 2013, President Obama issued an Executive Order that is aimed at preparing the United States for the impacts of climate change. The Executive Order calls for close cooperation and coordinated planning to manage the risks associated with impact of climate change, which include prolonged periods of excessively high temperatures, increases in wildfires and torrential rains, more severe droughts, and rising sea-levels.

Section 6 of the Executive Order specifically addresses these concerns, creating an interagency council on climate preparedness and resilience. The council’s members will include representatives from the Departments of State, Treasury, Defense, Justice, Interior, and Agriculture, as well as other departments, agencies, and organizations.

The mission and function of the council is to work across agencies and offices to develop, recommend, and coordinate interagency efforts related to climate preparedness and resilience. The council will also support regional, State, local, and tribal action to assess climate change related vulnerabilities and cost-effectively increase climate preparedness and resilience of communities, critical economic sectors, natural and built infrastructure, and natural resources.

The EO also provides for the sharing of data between agencies to better prepare for incidents related to climate change. **IAJ**

## **Report Examines Interagency Coordination in Afghanistan**

In 2013, the IBM Center for The Business of Government published a report examining interagency coordination in Afghanistan. The report, *Coordinating for Results: Lessons from a Case Study of Interagency Coordination in Afghanistan*, is part of the IBM Center’s Collaboration Across Boundaries Series.

Unlike earlier IBM Center reports that have examined the use of collaboration, this report focuses on interagency coordination. In the report, the author notes the difference between

interagency collaboration and interagency coordination, stating that when agencies collaborate, they work side by side toward a shared goal, whereas when they coordinate, they deliberately align separate resources, capabilities, strategies, and implementation in support of shared goals.

The author draws on interviews with ambassadors, generals, and other important figures, analyzing the interactions between U.S. civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan from 2001-2009, and describing examples of successfully coordinated initiatives. However, the author also observed instances where the lack of civil-military coordination resulted in duplicative efforts and the accidental undermining activities or goals. The author then offers recommendations for more effective coordination based on her observations.

The agencies on the ground in Afghanistan faced many of the same coordination challenges faced by agencies in the U.S., making the lessons contained in this report relevant to public executives and managers, as well as individuals involved in civil-military relations. **IAJ**

## **Director Discusses DIA's Future, Cybersecurity**

In September 2013, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) director Army Lt. Gen. Michael T. Flynn addressed a panel at the Intelligence and National Security Alliance (INSA) Summit.

In his remarks, Flynn said that DIA must focus on their mission and strengths, and that they must “continually emphasize burden sharing, partnerships, and integration.”

Flynn spoke about DIA's focus on three core qualities: the fusion of analysis and collection; the importance of organizational flexibility; and the integration of interagency partners from across the intelligence community, including close relationships with combatant commands and service intelligence centers. He then went on to discuss DIA's role in the intelligence community, their support of several combatant commands, and their involvement in policy.

Flynn also discussed the potential for strategic cyberattacks, saying “[DIA is] aware of the cyber threat.” He also reiterated Defense Secretary Hagel's May remarks that the destructive potential for cyberattacks has become a prominent national security issue, and stated that DIA was collaborating with intelligence community partners “to understand the security challenges that we face in our era.” **IAJ**

## **GAO Appraises U.S. Border Security**

In June 2013, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report addressing the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to secure the southwest border, interagency oversight and information sharing efforts related to the southwest border, and DHS management of assets used to secure the southwest border. The report, GAO-13-653T, was based on previous GAO reports and testimonies released between January 2008 and March 2013.

GAO-13-653T confirmed that DHS has either followed or intends to follow the recommendations set out in previous GAO reports. For example, while the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol is in the process of developing the performance goals and milestones recommended in previous GAO reports, those milestones are not currently in place.

Also, DHS has similar opportunities to improve its management of border security assets. The report notes proposed border management efforts that have not yet been analyzed, and notes that these efforts should be analyzed to justify the types, quantities, and locations proposed in the plans.

While DHS still faces challenges in securing U.S. borders, DHS has made improvements in interagency coordination and information sharing. For example, DHS has made great strides in cooperating with other security and law enforcement agencies, but further actions are needed to uphold existing interagency agreements. **IAJ**

## Report Calls for More Effective Government

The Partnership for Public Service (PPS) and Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) released in August 2013 *Building the Enterprise: Nine Strategies for a More Integrated, Effective Government*, a new report designed to assist the Obama administration's efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the federal government. *Building the Enterprise* builds on the groundwork laid by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, and aims to "improve the overall performance of the federal government and, in so doing, restore the American public's trust and confidence [in the U.S. government]."

The report's nine strategies call for a multiagency approach to how the U.S. government responds to situations and circumstances in the most efficient, appropriate, and economic manner. These strategies include:

- Strategy 1 – Develop an enterprise performance plan with senior-level commitment to drive cross-agency goals and mission;
- Strategy 2 – Build portfolios of programs aligned against the enterprise plan's goals;
- Strategy 3 – Designate and empower enterprise goal leaders;
- Strategy 4 – Develop career enterprise executives to lead cross-cutting missions and functions;
- Strategy 5 – Establish an independent office of evaluation to assess enterprise performance;
- Strategy 6 – Manage information technology as a true enterprise resource;
- Strategy 7 – Take shared services to scale;
- Strategy 8 – Adopt an enterprise approach to the acquisition of goods and services;
- Strategy 9 – Build an enterprise civil service system.

By implementing these nine strategies, the U.S. government can begin to eliminate program duplication and overlap, and align scarce resources toward defined goals to better serve the needs of the American people. **IAJ**



## Study Examines Civil-Military Role in Regional Stability

In July 2013, the Center for Strategic & International Studies released a study analyzing the causes of instability in the Middle East and North Africa. The study, *Changing U.S. Strategy: The Search for Stability and the “Non-War” Against “Non-Terrorism,”* examined the causes of terrorism, insurgency, and other forms of violence. According to the study, the U.S. has not actually fought a “war on terrorism” since late December 2001, as Bin Laden, Al Qaeda, and key elements of the Taliban had escaped to Pakistan by that time.

Also according to the study, U.S. efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq focused too much on terrorism, ignoring the broader causes of violence and extremism. The study also asserts that most of the violence that was labeled as terrorism by the State Department is actually a form of insurgency that is caused by internal instability. As such, the U.S. failed to develop effective civil-military efforts to address the underlying causes of civil violence, and needs to make fundamental changes in the ways it addresses counterterrorism and reduces the civil and military causes of instability.

The study emphasizes the need for partnerships with regional friends and allies, and calls for changes in the ways the Department of Defense, State Department, and USAID address the nature of instability and violence in the Middle East and North Africa region. The study also calls for strong U.S. country teams that combine civil-military-internal security efforts, as well as fully integrated interagency plans, budgets, and measures of effectiveness. **IAJ**

## Interagency Leaders Needed in Government

In a June 2013 podcast from Excellence in Government, Admiral Thad Allen, former Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, and Ron Sanders, formerly of the U.S. Intelligence Community, spoke about the need for “enterprise leaders” in government. The two men described enterprise leaders as individuals who can lead across agencies to solve national problems requiring the cooperation and coordination of multiple departments and agencies. Allen, who led the government response to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in 2010, discussed the complexities inherent in government initiatives and operations, saying that multi-agency endeavors require “different kinds of insight and leadership.”

Allen and Sanders also called for better leadership training within the Senior Executive Service (SES). Sanders noted that the original vision of the SES has never come to fruition. While the SES was originally designed to be a cadre of senior executives who would move from agency to agency, bringing their expertise with them, those in the SES rarely work outside their agencies.

According to Sanders, the U.S. government has entered an era where the original vision of the SES is essential, and where executives are required to operate on multiple levels. Sanders described the new old vision as “back to the future,” explaining that because each agency will eventually be involved in some interagency element, it is necessary that executives be able to move within departments and lead multi-agency operations.

“Everything the government does is interagency. We need to start developing leaders for that kind of brave new world,” said Sanders. He went on to encourage mid-level government employees to push for better leadership training opportunities that focus on the competencies agencies need to work together, including courses, training, and rotational assignments. **IAJ**

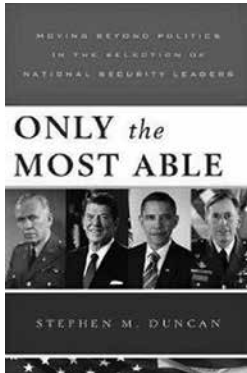
## Report Addresses SES Collaboration

In 2013, the IBM Center for The Business of Government published a report examining the ability of Senior Executive Service (SES) members to lead and collaborate on cross-agency initiatives. The report, *Developing Senior Executive Capabilities to Address National Priorities*, is one of three recent IBM Center reports that examine the impact of the Government Performance and Results Act of 2010 (GPRAMA), which required the development of government-wide priority goals and greater coordination among agencies.

The report intends to facilitate discussion about how SES members would be able to lead major, cross-agency initiatives focused on national priorities, and is organized in two parts. The first part explores the possibility of creating a subset of SES members who would be government-wide cross-agency leaders. The second part is a case study of how the Department of Veterans Affairs created a corporate senior executive management office to more effectively develop, manage, and deploy its senior executive corps.

The report found the lack of SES mobility across agencies to be a major obstacle to developing the talent and experience needed for effective interagency collaboration. While the drafters of the original 1978 civil service reforms intended for all SES members to have a government-wide perspective, SES members often find it difficult to form cross-agency partnerships due to limited resources or a focus on local programs. **IAJ**

# Book Review



## **Only the Most Able: Moving Beyond Politics in the Selection of National Security Leaders**

**by Stephen M. Duncan**

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 296 pp.

**Reviewed by James A. Stever, Ph.D.**  
- *University of Cincinnati*

Civilian control of the military has been in place since the founding of the country; its most recent affirmation—the Truman MacArthur Controversy in the 1950s. Duncan’s book does not challenge this principle, but suggests that the basis for this control is under stress. The quality of civilian leadership is inferior, and unqualified civilian leaders have the capacity to degrade and misuse the military.

Throughout history, the military has improved the quality of its leaders. The last round of reforms was at the end of the Vietnam era. Better personnel selection, evaluation, and training improved the post-Vietnam military leader. Moreover, the reforms culminated in the Goldwater Nichols Act of 1986. This act synchronized military decision-making, enabled joint operations between branches of service, and reduced micro management by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In contrast, there is no systematic method for selecting, training, and disciplining civilian leaders of the military. Because there is no common ethos, training and certification are out of the question. Nor has the Congress addressed the problem with effective legislation.

Duncan traces the problem back to the source; presidents and senior civilian leaders who are incapable of fulfilling their Constitutional responsibilities. Rather than attribute the problem to vague historical trends, the author is courageously specific. President Clinton, with no military experience, used flawed ascriptive criteria to appoint civilian leaders to key security posts. The most conspicuous Clinton failure was Congressman Les Aspin. In Duncan’s words: “His schmoozy, arm-around-the-shoulders style clashed with the formal culture of senior officers.” Aspin was an ineffective manager who endlessly entertained options but could not make a decision. The Aspin era ended in the debacle of Mogadishu. Eleven months after assuming office, Aspin resigned. This botched military mission illustrates what happens when the delicate partnership between civilian and military leaders does not develop: people die, needlessly.

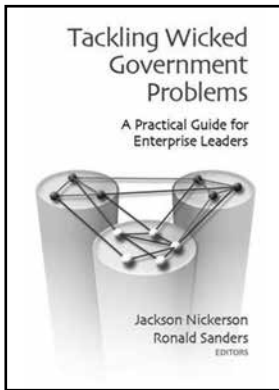
Though Duncan’s focus is civilian/military leadership, the principle could be expanded. Civilians who manage agencies with a security mission have a special burden. When social security administrators make a mistake, checks can be recalled or reissued. When civilian managers of military agencies, emergency management agencies, or law enforcement agencies make a mistake, the results are usually irreparable with widespread negative consequences. The incompetence of a

civilian governor was responsible for delaying the deployment of the military to New Orleans, and millions suffered the consequences of haphazard recovery and rescue efforts. Another example, the deaths at Benghazi and the failure of U.S. foreign policy can be traced to failed civilian leaders—leaders incapable or unwilling to forge interagency policies ensuring the security of the U.S. Embassy.

Duncan correctly argues that the present system allows civilian leaders to remain unaccountable. Only after conspicuous, obvious failures such as Mogadishu, Katrina, or Benghazi do bad civilian leaders begin to squirm. His positive and original contribution to the literature is that civilian leadership must be and can be improved. Duncan offers a two-part solution.

The first solution is mandatory training: at minimum a two week orientation course that educates aspiring leaders to not only the importance but the complexity of their future responsibilities. Such training would be an opportunity for the Simons Center to educate civilian leaders on techniques of interagency management. The second is ongoing performance management. Civilian managers of security agencies should understand that the importance of their task requires they be routinely evaluated and held accountable to established performance benchmarks. Results of these performance evaluations would be reported to the president.

The contribution of Duncan's book is to shine the light of analysis on an area that for too long has been exempt from rigorous scrutiny. Whereas military leaders know that they are subject to rigorous performance standards, their Constitutional bosses remain exempt—free to pursue whatever ideological agenda they please. Under present arrangements, no systematic scrutiny and evaluation of civilian leadership exists. Only until the magnitude of civilian failure is sufficiently great are ad hoc evaluation processes hastily thrown into place. Duncan is correct. There must be a better way. How much worse can it get? Under the present system, civilian leaders like Hillary Clinton, knowing they are impervious to evaluation, can say: "What difference does it make?" **IAJ**



## **Tackling Wicked Government Problems: A Practical Guide for Developing Enterprise Leaders**

***Edited by Jackson Nickerson and Ronald Sanders***

Brookings Institute Press, 210 pp.

***Reviewed by Lt. Col. Leonard L. Lira, U.S. Army***  
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The term “wicked problems” is such an overused trope that it is in danger of losing resonance as an operational concept. However, readers turned off by yet another power point deep term used as a book title beware. If you skip this book by judging its title alone, you will miss a unique treatment of the persistent plague in both the interagency and intergovernmental arenas: the lack of capacity among public leaders to work together on the pressing problems of government that “are increasingly complex, cross jurisdictional, amorphous, and difficult to solve.” *Tackling Wicked Government Problems* addresses this perennial problem by offering a cutting-edge mixture of practitioner experiences and academic theory in its chapters.

Nickerson and Sanders argue that wicked problems in government require an enterprise solution. By enterprise, they mean the “resources and capabilities found in the constellation of public and private stations that must act in concert they are to successfully address cross cutting national and international challenges.” Wary of organizational changes that rely solely on structural changes, which in their view are insufficient, the editors argue for a new kind of leader and a new kind of approach to leadership development. Thus, their purpose in writing this book is to inform the reader of the reasons why government needs enterprise leadership, to provide different practitioner perspectives on the capabilities enterprise leaders need, and to present recommendations on how government agencies can develop enterprise leadership in government executives. They accomplish their purpose in three parts.

In part one, Nickerson and Sanders describe the contemporary challenge as an inadequacy in traditional leadership development strategies. Those strategies assume “leaders function in an intra-organizational context, that is, they are embedded in a formal organizational structure with a defined mission, limit of authority, and accountability.” Therefore, the traditional literature considers actors that are external to the formal and informal structures of traditional organization constructs as extra-organizational—important but largely outside the leader’s sphere of influence. Yet, their surveys from practitioners such as Michael Connell, from the intelligence community, Pat Tamburrino, from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Admiral Thad Allen, director of the federal response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, provide examples of government leaders establishing that very type of external influence that the traditional literature ignores. These are examples of leaders solving problems without any formal chain of command authority over most of the actors involved in solving their problems. These examples demonstrate a contradiction to classic organization theory, which holds that authority must match accountability and show that that axiom is unlikely to hold in current environments. Each of the

practitioners listed above offer a chapter that gives their perspective of what Nickerson and Sanders call enterprise leadership and describe their approach to building synergy with external actors to solve complex problems in several different contexts.

In the second part of *Tackling Wicked Problems*, the editors explain how enterprise leadership relates to the latest “dislocated leadership” theories such as informal leadership and network leadership.<sup>1</sup> These theories involve various forms of inter-organizational and cross-jurisdictional collaborative action, and stress the application of normative reasons for sharing power such as ethical and pragmatic considerations.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, disparate organizations work together not only to collectively solve tough problems that they cannot solve independently, but also to achieve individual organizational objectives.

Part two makes its greatest contribution to the leadership literature by asking what makes for an effective enterprise leader and providing a concise theoretical description of its qualities and necessary competencies. First, enterprise leaders need to identify and understand the missions, structures, budgets, and bureaucratic processes of all relevant actors. Second, they need to understand the depth and breadth of information, knowledge, and motivation of all of the actors in the context of their problem setting. This allows them to compose a network that can comprehensively and collectively see and understand wicked problems and solve them. Third, when enterprise leaders engage those relevant network actors to develop solutions they require the interpersonal skills to form a unified, cohesive team without any formal authority. The skills required to implement these competencies consist of the ability to establish a common language and communication channels, build and maintain trust and reputation among collaborating actors and entities, balance dependencies so that one organization is not significantly more at risk than other organizations, and the ability to determine mutual incentives that will stimulate the necessary collaborative action.

Part three provides examples of government organizations exercising enterprise leader development and the editors’ conclusions. In this section the authors expose themselves to the first criticism. In offering the example of DoD’s U.S. Army Command and General Staff College interagency fellowship program to illustrate what the authors consider a successful program of developing enterprise leaders, they fall short of demonstrating their point empirically due to potential sample bias. They base their assessment of the program on Government Accountability Office (GAO) surveys of participants in the fellowship whereby 86 percent report that the program effectively helped them develop skills to lead in interagency environments. While this finding may be within the theoretical expectations of those researching enterprise leaders, it may also suffer from sample bias because the GAO estimated effectiveness of the participants’ skill development based on self-reporting. Reports from external observers might provide better measurements of program effectiveness for developing interagency skills.

The editors conclude their book with four recommendations they believe are critical in developing enterprise leaders. These recommendations consist of establishing enterprise leadership as an Office of Personnel Management executive core qualification; requiring interagency assignments as a prerequisite for promotion to the Senior Executive Service (SES); strengthening SES candidate development by making it mandatory; and requiring formal leadership education as part of executive development. The editors cite DoD and its joint professional military education system as an example of how other federal agencies might be able to accomplish this. However, this analogy opens the book to a second critique. DoD has the ability and flexibility to conduct professional education by maintaining a “Trainees, Transient, Holdees, and Students” personnel

account where approximately 11 percent of the force is assigned while attending leader development and the rest of the force continues with daily operations. Budgetary or legislative constraints may prevent other agencies from following DoD's example. Removing those obstacles first may allow other government agencies to implement Nickerson and Sanders' recommendations.

Despite these critiques, *Tackling Wicked Government Problems* offers a fresh look at an old problem through the lens of enterprise leadership. As chapter six in their book highlights, "effective collaboration requires a holistic approach... simply introducing a collaborative technology, tweaking incentives, or advocating control programs to promote collaboration is often insufficient." By offering a collection of both practitioner and academic perspectives, Nickerson and Sanders provide succinct, action oriented, and pragmatic focus for viewing the problem of interagency collaboration differently and for developing leaders and strategies to solve wicked problems. **IAJ**

## Notes

1 For explanations of these theories see Montgomery Van Wart, *Leadership in Public Organizations: An Introduction* (M.E. Sharpe, 2012).

2 Peter M. Jackson and Lynn Stainsby, "The Public Manager in 2010: Managing Public Sector Networked Organizations," *Public Money & Management* 20, no. 1 (2000), pp. 11–16; Donald F. Kettl, "Managing Boundaries in American Administration: The Collaboration Imperative," *Public Administration Review* 66, no. s1 (2006), pp. 10–19.











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