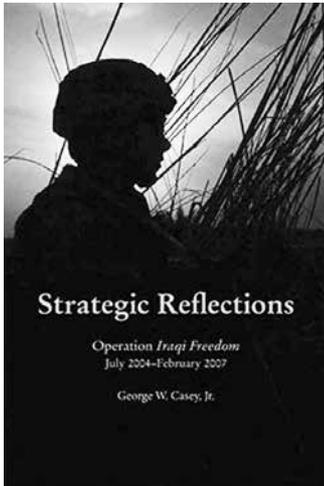


# Book Review



**Reviewed by Lt. Col. Leonard Lira, U.S. Army  
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## **Strategic Reflections: Operation Iraqi Freedom, July 2004–February 2007**

by George W. Casey, Jr.

National Defense University Press, 215 pp., \$24.95, or download free at <<http://www.ndu.edu/press/strategic-reflections.html>>.

In wars conducted by democratic nations, the adage still stands: The interagency process is good at teeing up problems but not so good on the follow through. Perhaps, as General George Casey, former commander of Multi-National Force Iraq (MNF-I) and Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, reflects, this is because for strategic leaders, “the higher up you go the less guidance you receive.”<sup>1</sup> Casey points out that interagency implementation is a very personal endeavor, one that involves direct leadership in execution. In *Strategic Reflections*, Casey surmises that it is not a lack of guidance on the goals and objectives, but rather a lack of direction on how to achieve them that provides the core of the operational dilemma in the interagency process.

Casey relied on three sources of strategic direction for guidance in executing the war in Iraq: National Security Presidential Directive 36 of May 11, 2004, the President George W. Bush’s May 24, 2004, speech at the Army War College, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546. He used all three sources to guide how he framed his mission and how he used Bush’s five-step framework for achieving his goals. However, he still lacked guidance on how to make this all happen and how exactly to implement the five steps, achieve the goals, and ensure the mission was a success. In fact, all three sources of guidance created a major obstacle to success, one that all democratically subservient armies must contend with. They divided the authority and responsibility for political and military efforts between the State Department’s agent, Ambassador John Negroponte, and the Defense Department’s agent, General Casey. The crux of Casey’s interagency problem was how to control things and people outside his control.<sup>2</sup>

Dividing the responsibility for the war’s execution between two culturally different organizations also meant separate reporting chains, separate budgets, and, thus, separate implementation efforts. Without the principle of unity of command, Casey and Negroponte were forced to create the necessary unity of effort [emphasis added] by developing a “one team/one mission” concept for interagency operations.<sup>3</sup>

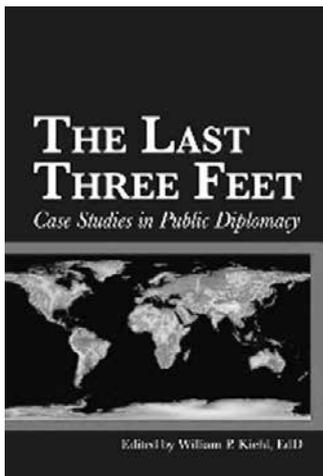
To implement “one team/one mission,” Casey and Negroponte cross-leveled staff and assigned deputies from one organization to the other. They also developed a Red Team composed of members from both organizations and charged it with looking at integrating efforts to ensure the intellectual integrity of their joint campaign. Nevertheless, their most important step in implementing this

concept was the personal attention both leaders poured into it. They issued joint mission statements, collocated their offices, traveled together, and consulted regularly in a visible manner to ensure that members of both organizations witnessed their joint effort. In all, Casey concedes that he and Negroponte spent a lot of personal time integrating the efforts of the Embassy and MNF-I with the interim Iraqi government.

Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom significantly changed how agents of the U.S. government, both civilian and military, think about executing wars. Casey reflects on his actions and the actions of his headquarters in executing modern war. For those interested in studying the interagency at the operational level, *Strategic Reflections* provides insight on how to make interagency happen. Toward that perspective, Casey advises that creating unity of effort among diverse organizations that fall outside a leader's control is and will continue to be one of the key tasks of senior leaders in twenty-first century warfare."<sup>4</sup> *Strategic Reflections* provides advice for executing strategy in modern war. How Casey dealt with the modern dilemma of bureaucratic pathologies in interagency operations during his tour in Iraq is the primary take away for interagency scholars and practitioners. **IAJ**

## NOTES

- 1 George Casey, *Strategic Reflections: Operation Iraqi Freedom July 2004–February 2007*, National Defense University Press, Washington, 2012, p. 6.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 157.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 157.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 159.



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### **The Last Three Feet: Case Studies in Public Diplomacy**

Edited by William P. Kiehl

The Public Diplomacy Council/PDWorldwide,  
196 pp., \$14.99 (paperback)

How hard can it be to communicate in foreign countries? This is America, the land that invented marketing, public relations, and survey research, right? After all, most Americans know from watching television advertising and political campaigns that there are just a few rules: develop a clear message, keep it simple, and say it often. In a foreign environment, forget translating from English. Just turn up the volume and repeat. Right? Sometimes public diplomacy practitioners slip into the language, if not the theory, of artillery.