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NDC FORUM PAPER

Towards a
Comprehensive Approach:
Integrating Civilian and
Military Concepts of Strategy

Edited by Christopher M. Schnaubelt

NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE
COLLEGE DE DEFENSE DE L'OTAN

Research Division
Division Recherche

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction:

Integrating Civilian and Military Approaches to Strategy	4
---	----------

Christopher M. Schnaubelt

The Persistent Problem of Civil Military Integration in War	12
--	-----------

Nadia Schadow

The Illusions and Delusions of Smart Power.....	23
--	-----------

Christopher M. Schnaubelt

NATO's New Strategic Concept:

An Integration of Civil and Military Approaches.....	52
---	-----------

Karl-Heinz Kamp

Strategy, Segmentation and Incrementalism –

A Corporate Approach	70
-----------------------------------	-----------

Allen Burch

All for One and One for All? – Forging Development, Diplomatic and Defense Partnerships under NATO's New Strategic Concept....	89
---	-----------

Christopher A. Jennings

Interagency Challenges in Strategic Assessments.....	115
---	------------

Kirk A. Johnson

Joint Strategic Planning in Iraq: Optimism is not a Plan – Needed Changes for a Long War.....	129
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Bradford R. Higgins

Introduction: Integrating Civilian and Military Approaches to Strategy

Christopher M. Schnaubelt

Whether the preferred term is “interagency” (most common in American parlance), “whole-of-government” (frequently used by the British), or “comprehensive approach” (a term of art typically used within NATO, the UN and EU), it is widely recognized that effective integration of military and civilian capabilities is necessary for NATO to succeed in contemporary missions such as that of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, the Kosovo Force (KFOR), and NATO Headquarters-Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and will likely be required in the aftermath of the No Fly Zone operations in Libya. Indeed, NATO and EU officials frequently talk about the need for a “comprehensive approach” that would integrate the military and civilian components “required to do all the things that NATO has been called upon to do”.¹ However, NATO and its member states have generally done poorly in their attempts at putting the concept into practice.² One of the reasons for this difficulty is the lack of common concepts and approaches towards the development of strategy by the civilian and military elements that must be involved in a comprehensive approach.

This NATO Defense College Forum Paper is the penultimate in a series of workshops and publications regarding better integration of civilian and military efforts in response to contemporary security challenges. The first of these was Forum Paper #9, *Operationalizing*

¹ *NATO Review*, Spring 2007, Interview with Military Committee Chairman General Ray Henault at: <http://nato.int/docu/review/2007/issue1/english/interview.html>

² Christopher M. Schnaubelt, “Complex Operations and Interagency Operational Art”, *PRISM*, December 2009, pp. 37-50. www.ndu.edu/inss/press/prism/1/5_Prism_37-50_Schnaubelt.pdf

a Comprehensive Approach in Semi-Permissive Environments, which focused on Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq and Afghanistan and other models for integrating civilian and military efforts below the strategic level.

Forum Paper #11, *Counterinsurgency: The Challenge for NATO Strategy and Operations*, looked at counterinsurgency (COIN) as a specific kind of civil-military operation. It not only examined COIN in terms of the challenges it presents “in the field” during combat operations, but also analyzed the political impact within NATO of some member states not recognizing COIN as a doctrinal type of operation or claiming for domestic political reasons that their forces in Afghanistan were not conducting a COIN mission.

Forum Paper #14, *Complex Operations: NATO at War and on the Margins of War*, examined whether “Complex Operations” – which by definition require a combination of military and civilian efforts – presented a uniquely challenging type of mission for NATO. Further, it examined the implications of a contemporary security environment that might present increasing demands for NATO to conduct such missions.

The final in the series, Forum Paper #18, *Strategic Challenges to Implementing a Comprehensive Approach*, will be published in late Spring 2011.

Each of these Forum Papers can be downloaded free of charge from the NDC Publications web page at: <http://www.ndc.nato.int/research/series.php?icode=2>

The intent of this particular Forum Paper, #15, *Towards a Comprehensive Approach: Integrating Civilian and Military Concepts of Strategy*, is to present a wide range of ideas on integrating the civilian

and military elements of strategy and how it might be developed. It is not intended to be a primer on strategy or a comprehensive review of the topic. There is an extensive literature on military strategy and planning that is not duplicated or reviewed here.³ Instead, this volume highlights the differences and similarities between the approaches typically used by civilian organizations and the doctrinal methods of NATO and the militaries of its member states and partners, while presenting some ideas on how to bridge the gaps.

Although some stakeholders would like to see the development of a single authoritative doctrine to be followed by all the actors involved in a crisis response (a sort of “Book of Common Prayer” for the comprehensive approach, if you will), it is highly doubtful such a document could be widely agreed upon. Even a military alliance such as NATO, which – in relative terms – is highly cohesive, often finds it difficult to agree upon common approaches to strategy and operational doctrine. For example, NATO assumed leadership of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in August 2003 and completed the expansion of the ISAF mission to include all of Afghanistan in October 2006. Yet at the time this Forum Paper is being written – almost five years later – the Allied Joint Publication for Counterinsurgency Doctrine, AJP 3.4.4, has yet to be ratified and promulgated. If one considers the number of civilian agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations involved in such operations, it is clear they exponentially increase the difficulty of attaining consensus on a standard process or document.

³ The literature on civilian concepts of strategy and planning is relatively sparse. Further complicating attempts at integration, the same terminology is typically used but defined differently than in military usage. At least in terms of a common argot and a widespread understanding of the basic concepts, the literature on military strategy is far more cohesive than that regarding strategy in the civilian domain. See Bartholomees, J. Boone Jr. “A Survey of the Theory of Strategy” and Yarger, H. Richard. “Toward a Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the U.S. Army War College Strategy Model” in *The U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues, Volume I: Theory of War and Strategy* 4th edition, J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr. (editor), Strategic Studies Institute, July 2010, pp. 13-43 and pp. 45-51: <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1004> (accessed March 7, 2011).

There is no single “best” way to address the complex security problems that NATO faces in the contemporary operational environment. Instead, developing mutual understanding to recognize where approaches overlap and where actors simply need to “agree to disagree” is the route most likely to produce practical improvements in the integration of civilian and military efforts. Appreciating the range of views and methods is the first step towards achieving a workable synthesis of them. It is hoped that this NDC Forum Paper will contribute to such an appreciation.

The following summarizes each of the chapters:

In the next chapter, “The Persistent Problem of Civil Military Integration in War”, Nadia Schadow draws from several current and historical examples to provide an overview of the challenges associated with combining the political and military instruments of power. She examines four potential models and concludes that a truly unified organization would clearly be the most effective, but is also the most politically difficult to implement because of resistance to placing military personnel under a civilian chain of command or putting civilians under the command of a military officer.

This is followed by a critique of an increasingly influential concept called “Smart Power”, which is in turn built upon the concept of “Soft Power”. I argue that despite its popularity among some academics, politicians and pundits, soft power is a poorly defined concept with little social scientific evidence to back it up. Thus, rather than something concrete, the edifice of smart power is built on a marshy foundation called soft power. Accordingly, a more traditional concept such as integrating the conventional national elements of power (Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic – DIME) provides a better guide to making policy and developing strategy than smart power.

In chapter four, Karl-Heinz Kamp analyzes the process used to write the Strategic Concept that was released during the Lisbon summit on November 20, 2010. His article, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept: An Integration of Civil and Military Approaches?”, argues that the “Group of Experts” process was successful in bringing about the inclusion of the Comprehensive Approach in NATO core strategic documents. However, it remains an open question whether NATO can effectively implement the concept in practice and whether it will remain a salient topic if NATO eschews future stabilization missions.

Allen Burch subsequently brings to the table a perspective that is outside both the military and public sector civilian perspectives. In “Strategy, Segmentation and Incrementalism – A Corporate Approach”, he provides an overview of successful examples from the consumer goods industry and suggests ways in which some of the lessons from business strategy might be applied to NATO efforts in Afghanistan. The techniques of segmentation and “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats” analysis could provide useful new ways of looking at operations in Afghanistan and future counterinsurgency and stability operations.

Christopher A. Jennings provided the sixth chapter, “All for One and One for All? – Forging Development, Diplomatic and Defense Partnerships under NATO’s New Strategic Concept”. Noting that competing institutional mandates, missions, legal and resource constraints, as well as differences in culture, mind-set, strategic outlook and expectant time horizons impede civil-military integration, he argues that achieving policy coherence across interagency lines is necessary for the successful implementation of a comprehensive approach. Merely increasing funding, staffing, and other resources on the civilian side of the equation will not be sufficient.

Next, Kirk A. Johnson argues that counterinsurgency and

stabilization operations require high-quality qualitative and quantitative information in order to adequately assess progress, or the lack thereof, and make necessary adjustments to plans. Meeting this requirement means that a civil-military assessment processes must be introduced in a comprehensive manner and be linked to the strategic planning process. Such strategic assessments can be difficult because of interagency differences in preferred planning and assessment processes. However, Johnson provides useful recommendations on blending the relative strengths of typical civilian and military processes in order to produce better integrated assessments.

The final chapter looks at a specific program that was initiated specifically to integrate civilian-military planning and the development of strategy. Bradford R. Higgins' "Joint Strategic Planning in Iraq: 'Optimism is not a Plan' - Needed Changes for a Long War" presents a case study of the Joint Strategic Planning and Assessment office that was created within U.S. Embassy Baghdad to help integrate civilian efforts with those of the military in order to create a "Joint Campaign Plan".⁴ He concludes that progress has been made in the integration of civilian and military planning, but lessons have to be continuously relearned because of the constant rotation of civilian and military personnel and the tendency of institutions to revert back to past practice.

The Persistent Problem of Civil Military Integration in War

Nadia Schadow

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan demanded renewed focus on the subject of civil-military integration in wartime. Despite the substantial attention to this issue, a real solution remains absent. Virtually all practitioners and analysts agree that there needs to be a way to deliver civil and military effects on the ground in a coherent and reinforcing fashion. But how and what model to use are still unresolved issues, with serious strategic consequences in both wars.

In essence, the debates over the past eight or so years have been about how to integrate political and military instruments of power at the strategic, operational and tactical levels of war. Another useful way of thinking about this is to consider what might be called the political dimension of war and recognize the need to consider this dimension of war as seriously as those more naturally considered by the military: space, air, ground and sea. It might not be the forgotten dimension of war, but it still remains the most ad-hoc.

While the U.S. government – civilians and the military – have made significant changes to improve America's ability to operate in this dimension of war, there remain internal challenges to winning the peace. Unity of effort has been the most common approach called for by civilian leaders in Washington as well as practitioners on the ground. The Army and Marine Corps field manual on counterinsurgency operations, *FM 3-24*, is essentially built around the core idea that the military instrument alone will not be sufficient to win a counterinsurgency campaign.¹ Counterinsurgency campaigns require the integration of

¹ Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency, Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006. Available online at: <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>

political, economic, and security instruments. Moreover, they require a sophisticated understanding of the makeup of the local community and local actors, and of how operations by intervening powers will change and affect this local landscape. Unity of effort appreciates the complexity of counterinsurgency campaigns but it does not provide an operational model for the achievement of these political goals. Indeed, there is a gap related to the operational achievement of economic and political and military goals – a gap regarding the organization in the field necessary to match and build upon local successes in order to achieve political objectives. Good doctrine alone does not guarantee the effective execution of governance-related tasks. Sound operational approaches are required as well.

Historically as well as in the current wars, military and civilian actors have faltered over the problem of how to create an organization that effectively employs the economic, diplomatic and security instruments necessary to shape desired political outcomes. This is due primarily to domestic political constraints – or perceived constraints. Indeed, it is instructive to step back to earlier periods in American history when similar problems presented themselves. Two books in particular are quite useful. *When Soldiers Become Governors* was first published in 1964.² It is a documentary history of the problems of civil-military coordination in World War II Europe, mostly focused on North Africa, Italy and of course Germany. Despite its weight and level of detail (it comes close to one thousand pages), one consistent theme in the book emerges. Namely, it is the story about a reluctant military seeking to assert control over civil tasks, such as governance and administration. The military is doing so, despite its reluctance, because there are no realistic alternatives to military control. Moreover, General Eisenhower consistently argued that tasks

² Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, U.S. Army in World War II, Special Studies, *Civil Affairs: When Soldiers Become Governors*, Center of Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, DC. <http://history.army.mil/books/wwii/civaff/ch02.htm#b5>

related to civil administration would affect his troops and the course of the war, and that he should therefore retain control over them. General Eisenhower believed that, given his responsibility for “the success of the operations”, it was “essential that final authority in all matters in the theater rest in me”.³

As depicted in *When Soldiers Become Governors*, military commanders from Eisenhower on down describe the importance of maintaining unity of command over reconstruction-related tasks and the lack of sufficient civilian resources. They describe the military’s frustration with not having authority over key tasks related to successful outcomes in the theater of war. In one of his cables, Gen. Eisenhower vowed to create a single staff authority over representatives of various government agencies, since they tended to “descend like locusts” upon a region.⁴

A second useful volume in thinking about civil-military integration was written by Robert Komer some 15 years after Vietnam. It is called *Bureaucracy at War*.⁵ *Bureaucracy at War* consistently highlights the problems of coordinating military and civil assets and the difficulty of garnering enough of the latter. Komer observed that “at no time during the entire 1955-1971 period [did the U.S.] go far enough toward pulling together all the disparate facets of their anti-VC/NVA [Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army] effort under some kind of unified command arrangement”.⁶

³ “Eisenhower concerned over his civil administrators’ divided responsibility” [Msg, Eisenhower to Marshall, 19 Sep 42, OPD Msg files, CM-IN 8213] in *Civil Affairs: When Soldiers Become Governors*, p. 32.

⁴ Eisenhower foresees that the “locusts” will need co-ordination [Msg, Eisenhower to Marshall, 4 Dec 42, OPD files, Item 36A, Exec 10, CM-IN 1672], cable reprinted in *Civil Affairs, When Soldiers Become Governors*, op. cit., p. 59.

⁵ Robert Komer, *Bureaucracy at War: U.S. Performance in the Vietnam Conflict*, Boulder and London, Westview Press, 1986, p. 149.

⁶ Komer, *Bureaucracy at War*, p. 149.

Although they address two separate conflicts, these books reveal that the problems of getting U.S. military and civilian actors to work together are persistent and have existed for decades. In many respects the commonalities of the problems both books describe – despite involving different kinds of wars – are striking. Just as in World War II, in Vietnam and in the current wars the State Department is often struggling to assert authority and provide advice, but is consistently hampered by the lack of personnel.

The purpose of this paper is to offer some thoughts about some of the recurring historical trends in this area, and some thoughts about why this issue remains chronically unresolved. There are countless examples of the call for improved civil-military cooperation. Many studies cite a range of U.S. experiences, from Panama and Somalia, to Haiti, the Balkans and the current wars. Yet the approaches to the problem of civil-military integration have been consistently ad-hoc. We are far from having an ability to deploy an operational, integrated civil-military model in wartime.

Some solutions have, of course, emerged. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq arose to meet the need of improved civil-military cooperation on the ground. But this model did not resolve some of the key problems that have existed at least since World War II – that is, who controls what in a theater, the dearth of expert civilian personnel, and the scrambling for reconstruction-related resources.

Certainly, on a case-by-case basis we have seen many examples of civil-military actors working well together on the ground. An early success in Afghanistan occurred in 2003, when two key actors – a U.S. ambassador (Zalmay Khalilzad) and a three-star general (LTG David Barno) – created an integrated civil-military strategic planning cell to “ensure the concerted use of all instruments of U.S. power to

accelerate the defeat of the Taliban” and to begin the reconstruction of Afghanistan. LTG Barno placed his personal office adjacent to Ambassador Khalilzad’s inside the Embassy. More than a symbolic move, this decision fostered a level of coordination and communication among civilian and military staffs which in turn had a ripple effect in the field, helping to jumpstart the operational civil-military teams known as Provincial Reconstruction Teams.⁷

At the strategic level, in terms of integrated planning there has been perhaps a bit more success at institutionalization of civil and military planning. But at the operational level, consistent problems and mostly vain searches for the right formula have remained. Clearly, operational adaptability is a key strength of the American military. But what deserves further exploration is why, at the operational level, these sorts of ad-hoc examples are perhaps *too* plentiful. This political dimension of war is not new to the United States Army. Throughout its history, the Army has engaged in “politics on the ground”. Virtually all of the wars in which it has fought have involved the problem of managing local political actors in order to restore stability and basic order. U.S. Army officers directly supervised the creation of new governments in a range of wars. These include the well-known success stories of Germany and Japan following the end of hostilities in World War II, and the lesser-known cases of Italy and Korea.

In addition, cases that have traditionally garnered less attention include the Mexican War in the 1860s, reconstruction during the Civil War, and Puerto Rico and Cuba during the Spanish American War. Governance operations took place during the Cold War period too: the Dominican Republic in 1965, Grenada in 1986, and Panama in 1989. Not counting the more recent post-Cold War period, Army personnel under the theater commander’s operational control have frequently

⁷ Quote by Amb. Zalmay Khalilzad, in Christopher Griffin, “A Working Plan: Hope Isn’t the Only Strategy For Afghanistan”, April 2007, *Armed Forces Journal*. See <http://www.afj.com/2007/04/2587549/>

supervised and implemented political and economic reconstruction.

Nonetheless, historically as well as in the current wars, military and civilian actors have faltered over the problem of how to create an organization that effectively employs the economic, diplomatic and security instruments necessary to shape desired political outcomes. Several recurrent themes throughout U.S. history can be identified. First, military commanders have generally been reluctant to give up operational control of forces in a theater. They seek to control the environment in order to protect their troops. By the same token, few civilians have viewed military forces as “nimble or flexible” instruments which can be used on the ground to promote political change.

Second, the military has always had and continues to have the advantage of resources on the ground – resources which overwhelm most other organizations in a theater. Control over resources results, *de facto*, in power. Third, while civilians often played active roles in advising the theater commander, no consistent structures for civilian participation emerged. Fourth, the most problematic arrangements have tended to be those with two parallel – i.e. civil and military – structures on the ground at the same time, creating dual or competing chains of command. A good recent example of this was the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, where there was consistent tension between Ambassador Paul Bremer’s small staff and the much larger assets and control of the theater commander. Earlier examples include NATO’s activities in Macedonia, in which a senior civilian worked alongside a senior military officer, creating a great deal of friction. In the Philippines at the turn of the century, General Arthur MacArthur was fighting a counterinsurgency and also rebuilding countryside when Presidential appointee William Taft arrived as the ostensible Civil Governor, creating tensions on the ground.

Finally, there have been few, if any, cases in which civilians

exerted control from the start of a major reconstruction operation during and following combat. In most cases the military (the theater commander) remained in control for some period of time before a civilian administrator/governor/official moved in – usually appointed by the President. Generally, however, once the security situation had stabilized, the military was eager to transition to civilian control.

Against this historical backdrop, three main models for civil-military integration seem to have emerged. One might be called the civilian advisor model. This model was predominant during World War II, where relatively few civilians, other than top-level political advisors, were involved in the occupations of Germany, Japan, Korea and Italy. At the same time, civilian experts were called upon consistently to provide advice to the theater commander and often worked with him, side by side. While these occupations differed in many respects, a common thread existed: the military remained in control of economic and reconstruction activities for several years after major combat operations ended.

A second approach might be called parallel structures. This model tended to create tensions pretty consistently from the early years of the Philippines insurgency, when General Arthur MacArthur served as military governor of the region while William Taft served in a civilian capacity as well. During the Reconstruction period of the American Civil War, authorities and responsibilities varied widely among civilian officials and theater commanders, creating competing and overlapping chains of command. In the Korean War, the divided authorities between the U.S. military and United Nations civilian agencies also created similar tensions and divisions. In Iraq, the CPA functioned initially as a parallel entity to CENTCOM, as opposed to one whose personnel were fully integrated into CENTCOM staff structures, or vice-versa. The tensions that this parallel structure created in Iraq are well documented.

A third model might be called that of integrated civilian participation. The main example of this – perhaps the only one in American history – was CORDS, or the Civil Operation and Revolutionary Development Support structure, which was the umbrella organization for coordinating and controlling all pacification programs in Vietnam.⁸ The architects of pacification recognized that its success would hinge upon truly integrated civil-military efforts. That structure provided the critical organization for civilian experts and military personnel to work side by side to implement the country-wide pacification strategy adopted in 1967. Until then, “civilian agencies steered clear of the military’s business” and the military “long eschewed involvement in police and pacification matters”.⁹ Walt Rostow argued that pacification was a “two-fisted, military-civil job” and that General Westmorland and Ambassador Lodge should “live in each other’s pockets”.¹⁰ CORDS was set up with this in mind, with civilians and military serving together under a single chain of command.

A fourth, more recent model might be the country team model. This model, which is reaffirmed in more recent counterinsurgency doctrine, creates a team under the leadership of the Ambassador, but its personnel are not integrated into the chain of command in the same way as CORDS. Under the country team model, interagency representatives report to the Ambassador, who directs and coordinates their activities. The country model appears to *separate* military from the non-military tasks. Thus it seems vulnerable to the problems created by competing command structures in a theater.

⁸ See Henry Nuzum, “*Shades of CORDS in the Kush: The False Hope of Unity of Effort*,” Letort Paper, April 2010, Army Strategic Studies Institute, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub981.pdf>

⁹ Komer, *Bureaucracy at War: U.S. Performance in the Vietnam Conflict*, p. 149.

¹⁰ Ibid.

The primary reason why we have resisted creating a truly integrated model, one which preserves unity of command in a time of war, is that there is still disagreement in American policy circles over the degree to which military forces can and should shape the political landscape during war – that is, who rules contested territory. This issue is central to striking the appropriate balance between civilian and military assets in stabilization and reconstruction operations. Current debates over organizing civilian and military assets in a wartime theater are linked, fundamentally, to the question of who should shape politics in a war and, in a certain sense, to the nature of war itself. In war, politics is as contested as territory.

There is a recurring concern in American political culture over placing the military in charge of achieving *political* outcomes in war. As a result, the operational approach has favored unity of effort among civilian and military actors. Unity of effort, however, is not an operational model, but an amalgam of ad-hoc resources and approaches designed to manage political sensitivities. Thus, despite historical evidence, there remains a resistance to the creation of unified management/command structures in a theater to control civil and military resources related to stabilization and reconstruction tasks.

It is not clear that new legislation is necessary to resolve this problem. It is not clear that existing legal authorities actually prevent civilian direction over the combatant commander and/or theater commander at an earlier phase in a conflict – or the opposite. The Goldwater Nichols Congressional legislation of 1986 created a chain of command that runs from the President, to the Secretary of Defense to the Combatant Commander and also gives the President the right to “direct otherwise”.

Of course, even if there were political leadership to ensure an integrated civil-military operational structure, it would still need to be institutionalized. The PRTs in Iraq and Afghanistan did *not*

duplicate the level of integration that was achieved under CORDS. A full explanation of why this was case has yet to be written – yet needs to be. Unfortunately, the CORDS model’s utility and importance was not fully appreciated, seemingly to a certain extent as a result of the deeply divided interpretations of Vietnam. Current efforts to create a civilian corps to respond to crises abroad and perform governance-related tasks in conflict situations would not actually get around this problem of integration.

The current range of solutions – such as the State Department’s new office dealing with Reconstruction and the Defense Departments efforts to transfer some of its funding to State for reconstruction related tasks (the so called 1206 funds) – adds to the menu of ad-hoc capabilities but avoids the need to take political decisions in Washington.

Thus, despite the current emphasis on unity of effort and on the contributions of non-defense agencies to reconstruction in war, limitations in civilian capacity will continue to impact the ability of the U.S. to achieve its national security objectives. In my view, governance tasks are central to the competition inherent in war, and the Army – as the principal land force – will need to play a central role in any such competition. It has in the past and will continue to do so in the future. It is hard to imagine “giving up” a key element of war which is central to sustaining control over territory.

In wartime, unity of effort allows policy-makers to avoid making tough decisions about who is in control of the direction of political and military operations in a theater. The current approaches risk creating the type of dual-parallel structures that lead to frictions and inefficiencies on the ground. A CORDS-based model, which creates a system of accountability among civilians and military personnel working on the same functional tasks, appears to be one of the stronger models – one worth refining and giving greater consideration to.

Over the past several years, in response to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has recognized the importance of unified approaches to reconstruction in a theater. In its Capstone Concept and Operational Concept it has reinforced several key operational concepts – concepts such as Wide Areas Security and Combined Arms Maneuver. Both of these concepts recognize that reconstruction often takes place simultaneously with combat. They recognize and explain the importance of the ability to fight as a combined arms team and highlight the precept that “seizing and retaining the initiative in complex environments will require the *expansion of the concept of combined arms to include the integration of efforts critical to consolidating gains and ensuring progress toward accomplishing strategic objectives*”.¹¹ Nonetheless, decisions about a unified command arrangement are too large for the Army alone to resolve.

In the aftermath of Vietnam, Komer questioned why the United States settled for “such conventional, diffuse, and fragmented management structures ...”. He added that, while senior officials did recurrently focus on this problem, they “didn’t ever do enough about it”.¹² Given the limitations in civilian capacity, and the political sensitivities to a true unity of command model in counterinsurgency warfare, only strong political leadership – and an appreciation for the nature of war – will likely succeed in creating a unity of command model in wartime. Such a model is the one in which the level of civil-military integration necessary for success is most likely to be achieved in practice.

¹¹ Army Capstone Concept, *The Army Capstone Concept Operational Adaptability – Operating Under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict*, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0, December 2009, p. 20, <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/tp525-3-0.pdf>

¹² Komer, *Bureaucracy at War*, p. 94.

The Illusions and Delusions of Smart Power

*Christopher M. Schnaubelt**

“The problem with soft power is that, well, it is soft.”

Niall Ferguson¹

Introduction

Although the title of this chapter uses the term “smart power”, 90% of the critique is directed at the concept of “soft power”. One of the reasons the notion of soft power is problematic is that, rather than being an obscure hypothesis debated among academics studying International Relations Theory, it has become nested in a larger, nearly all-encompassing concept called “smart power”, the promoters of which describe as being the combination of “hard power” and “soft power”.² In short, my argument is that rather than something concrete, the edifice of smart power is built on a marshy foundation called soft power. Despite being poorly defined and with little or no evidence that the concept is useful either as a social science theory or a guide to national security policy, the buzz words “soft power” and “smart power” are being widely promoted by pundits and policy-makers as a basis for making national security decisions.

The term “soft power” has been described as “one of the most successful neologisms of the last few decades”.³ Joseph Nye coined the expression in an article, published in the journal *Foreign Policy*

¹*I would like to thank Kirk Johnson and Claudia Bernasconi for suggestions and assistance with the statistical analysis and graphics used in this chapter. Any errors in data or interpretation are my own.

“Is America an Empire? Should it Be One?”, University of San Francisco, *Pacific Rim Report* No. 30, November 2003 at: <http://www.pacificrim.usfca.edu/research/pacrimreport/pacrimreport30.html>

² For example, see Elizabeth Dickinson, “Brainier Brawn,” *Foreign Policy* May/June 2010, p. 29.

³ Daniel H. Nexon, “The Balance of Power in the Balance”, *World Politics* – Vol. 61, No. 2, April 2009, pp. 343 fn 37.

in 1990, which according to Google Scholar has been cited in more than 400 other scholarly works. In addition to writing dozens of other articles in academic journals, popular magazines, and newspapers, Nye subsequently expanded this theme into a book⁴ that is currently cited in more than 1,000 other books and academic articles. “Nye” + “Soft Power” results in about 668,000 hits on Google.

The intent of this chapter is to stimulate debate regarding this concept, which is surprisingly influential despite having little empirical evidence to back it up. I deliberately hope to be provocative, challenging proponents of smart power – and its key proposition, that soft power is a useful policy tool – to go beyond the Op-Ed level and produce social scientific analysis that supports their assertions. In other words, advocates need to refine their theories of smart and soft power, develop falsifiable hypotheses, and subject them to empirical testing. Similar to Donald Green and Ian Shapiro’s powerful critique of rational choice theory, I believe that “the case has yet to be made” that the concept of soft power has “advanced our understanding of how politics works in the real world”.⁵

My critique proceeds in three steps. First comes a discussion of the definitional problems: many of the people who use the term “soft power” mean widely different things. Second, an analysis is made of the degree to which the concept as laid out by Nye meets methodological standards for social science. Finally, I propose a case that tests for evidence of soft power using an interrupted time-series following a point at which most champions of the concept would argue the soft power of the U.S. experienced a significant boost.

In response to critics who point out that soft power theory

⁴ *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York, Public Affairs, 2004.

⁵ *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994, p. 6.

is threadbare, Nye has argued that there are similar debates and controversies regarding hard power.⁶ However, the literature abounds with systematic attempts to define “power” generally and to derive and empirically test propositions derived from constructs about power. Tens of thousands of pages are devoted to theories about the role of power in international politics, such as balance of power, hegemonic stability and soft balancing. Almost all of these refine and assess constructs that fall under “hard power” within Nye’s typology.

One of the seminal review articles on power and international relations, for instance, is David A. Baldwin’s “Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends versus Old Tendencies”.⁷ Noting that power has been a central aspect in the study of international relations since at least the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli, Baldwin argues that the conceptions of power as a “type of causation” developed in the late 1950s helped to make analyses of power more clear and precise. Baldwin’s article, published in 1979, examines the differing conceptions of power as “potential, probable, and actual” and discusses the relevance of “interdependence”, the specific nature of “military power”, and the distinction between “compellence and deterrence”.

To list just a handful of other examples, Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, in “Power in International Politics”,⁸ suggest a conceptual framework for employing multiple conceptions of power. Offering the following definition: “Power is the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacity of actors to determine their circumstances and fate”, they propose four concepts of power: “compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive”. The

⁶ “Think Again: Soft Power”, *Foreign Policy*, March 1, 2006. A more accurate comparison for Nye to draw might be “Political Capital,” a term that is widely used by politicians and political commentators but has more value as a rhetorical term than a social scientific concept. (See Chris Suellentrop, “America’s New Political Capital: President Bush infects Washington with his favorite buzzword”, *Slate* November 30, 2004 at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2110256/>).

⁷ *World Politics* 31 no. 4, July 1979, pp. 161- 94.

⁸ *International Organization* 59, Winter 2005, pp. 39-75.

Summer 2005 issue of *International Security* provides an interesting set of debates on the nature of power – especially between Robert A. Pape, “Soft Balancing Against the United States”, and Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, “Hard Times for Soft Balancing”.⁹ Other excellent review articles concerning non-soft power in the past half-decade include: Campbell Craig, “American Realism Versus American Imperialism”,¹⁰ Daniel H. Nexon, “The Balance of Power in the Balance”,¹¹ and Christopher Layne, “The Waning of U.S. Hegemony – Myth or Reality?”.¹²

Deterrence, which rests upon threats and capabilities to use hard power, has been an especially rich topic for empirical analysis, applying multiple methods. Works include Alexander George and Richard Smoke’s 1974 classic, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*,¹³ which uses the method of “focused comparison” to develop propositions about deterrence theory through the analysis of thirteen in-depth case studies between 1948 and 1962. On the other end of the methodological spectrum, Paul K. Huth presents a methodologically rigorous large-*n* statistical analysis in *Extended Deterrence and the Prevention of War*.¹⁴ Combining game theory and the in-depth case study approach, Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein use a “mediated stimulus-response model” to analyze the psychology that underlies strategic decision-making by actors on both sides of an attempted deterrence event.¹⁵ More recent volumes containing a range of analyses from varying perspectives include *Complex Deterrence: Strategy in the Global Age*, edited by T.V. Paul, Patrick M. Morgan, and James J. Wirtz.¹⁶ The wealth of such

⁹ Volume 30, number 1, pp. 7-45; pp. 72-108.

¹⁰ *World Politics* 57, October 2004, pp. 143-71.

¹¹ *World Politics* 61, no. 2, April 2009, pp. 330-59.

¹² *International Security* 34, no. 1, Summer 2009, pp. 147-72.

¹³ New York, Columbia University Press.

¹⁴ New Haven, Yale University Press, 1988.

¹⁵ *Psychology and Deterrence*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.

literature does not indicate a consensus on deterrence theory (indeed there is none) or its value as a policy tool. However, it does show there has been a great deal of rigorous thinking and social scientific analysis about the topic.

Two decades after the concept of soft power was broached, a research program equivalent to the scope and breadth of the literature on hard power remains absent. In terms of social scientific explanatory power, the concept of soft power still ranks with arguments about the number of angels that can dance on the head of a pin.

Policy Influence

The influence of Nye's concept might be greater outside academia than inside of it. In a November 2007 speech at Kansas State University that garnered a great deal of attention, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said: "My message today is not about the defense budget or military power ... I am here to make the case for strengthening our capacity to use 'soft' power and for better integrating it with 'hard' power".¹⁷

Fourteen months later, in her January 13, 2009 confirmation hearing before the U.S. Senate as the Obama administration's nominee for Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton said: "We must use what has been called 'smart power,' the full range of tools at our disposal - diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural - picking the right tool, or combination of tools, for each situation. With smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy."¹⁸

¹⁶ Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009.

¹⁷ Landon Lecture, November 26, 2007: <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1199> (accessed 6 July 2010).

¹⁸ CBS News, January 13, 2009: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/01/13/politics/main4718044.shtml> (accessed 1 July 2010).

More recently, in an interview with al-Jazeera, NASA Administrator Charles Bolden said that one of the top three priorities given to him by President Obama was "... to find a way to reach out to the Muslim world and engage much more with dominantly Muslim nations to help them feel good about their historic contribution to science, math, and engineering". The U.S. Science Envoy to the Middle East, Ahmed Zewail, subsequently explained that the U.S. was attempting build better relations with the Muslim world by "harnessing the soft power of science in the service of diplomacy".¹⁹ Can there be a clearer example of the influence of soft power theory than it being cited by a government official as an important element of the American *space program*?

Nevertheless, the concept of soft power is so poorly defined that, despite its prevalence in the policy lexicon, it has little explanatory value. It may have rhetorical utility to sell policies to the public, but from an analytical perspective it tends to be either banal or tautological. Similarly, the term "smart power" derives much of its influence from what it implies regarding alternatives. Along these lines, military analyst Rich Berkebile has suggested that "calling the term 'smart power' appears to be an attempt to give it a protective shield as anyone who argues against smart power must be, by implication, dumb".²⁰

In an article called "The Human Element: When Gadgetry Becomes Strategy",²¹ H.R. McMaster argued that "advocates of the Revolution in Military Affairs applied business analogies to war and borrowed heavily from the disciplines of economics and systems

¹⁹ Byron York, "NASA's New Mission: Building Ties to the Muslim World", *Washington Examiner*, July 6, 2010: http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/NASA_s-new-mission_-Building-ties-to-Muslim-world-97817909.html

²⁰ Combined Arms Center Blog, Reflections from Dr. Jack, "Life is a Rheostat: The Use of Smart Power", March 25, 2009 at: <http://usacac.army.mil/blog/blogs/reflectionsfromfront/archive/2009/03/25/life-is-a-rheostat.aspx> (accessed July 7, 2010).

²¹ *World Affairs*, Winter 2009, available at: <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/articles/2009-Winter/full-McMaster.html>

analysis” to create unrealistic expectations of precision and efficiency that would bring the present war in Iraq to a rapid end at a relatively low cost. These unsound assumptions, according to McMaster, meant that “America dramatically underestimated the complexity of war and the level of effort and time required to achieve its wartime objectives”.

It might be argued that the concepts of “Soft Power” and “Smart Power” are affecting current policy in a manner similar to the influence wielded by the purported Revolution in Military Affairs 20 years ago. It appears to me that in many respects the idea of “Soft Power” is a mirror image of the RMA. Champions of the RMA argued it would “revolutionize” warfare with technological advances that would give the U.S. complete dominance in future military conflict, obviating the need for traditional concepts of strategy and simplifying the use of force to achieve national security objectives. Similarly, numerous soft power proponents draw from marketing techniques and individual psychology and argue that it can largely replace hard power or be used to overcome a relative paucity of hard power. Thus, many argue for a shifting of resources away from hard power capabilities and changes in policy to be more favorable to accruing and wielding soft power.

Nye, however, recognizes that hard and soft power can be complementary and that hard power can exert a positive influence on the level of soft power. He states that they “are related because they are both aspects of the ability to achieve one’s purpose by affecting the behavior of others”.²² Nonetheless, many soft power advocates, especially in the context of the European Union’s relatively weak military capabilities, argue that it can be used to achieve security objectives in lieu of hard power.²³ It is often asserted that the U.S.

²² *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p. 7.

²³ For example, T.R. Reid *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*, New York, Penguin, 2004; Mark Leonard *Why Europe Will Run the 21st Century*, London: Fourth Estate, 2005; and Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe’s Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream*, New York, Tarcher/Penguin, 2004; see Terence Casey’s review of these books: “Of Power and Plenty? Europe, Soft Power, and “Genteel Stagnation” in *Comparative*

budget for the State Department's Public Diplomacy programs should be doubled with funds taken from the Defense Department if necessary.²⁴

The problem of defining “soft power” will be addressed in greater detail below, but a significant number – probably a majority – of soft power advocates define it differently than does its progenitor Nye, whose typology is shown below.

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	coercion deterrence protection	threats force	coercive diplomacy war alliance
	inducement coercion	payments sanctions	aid bribes sanctions
Soft Power	attraction agenda setting	values culture policies institutions	public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

Figure 1. Three Types of Power²⁵

The most popular conception seems to be that soft power is synonymous with “non-military” power, to include the use of economic incentives and sanctions (“carrots and sticks”) – both of which Nye actually categorizes under hard power as shown above.

European Politics 4, 2006, pp. 399-422.

²⁴ See, for example, S. Enders Wimbush, “Fixing Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications”, *Perspectives for the New Administration*, Hudson Institute, p. 6, available at: [http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/Wimbush%20-%20final%20low%20res%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/Wimbush%20-%20final%20low%20res%20(2).pdf)

²⁵ *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p. 31.

For example, Council on Foreign Relations fellow Elizabeth Pond describes the attraction of the economic benefits of joining the European Union as an element of the EU's soft power. During a lecture at Kansas State University in March 2010, the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, implied that soft power equates to non-military power, arguing that "the United States should seek balance in military and nonmilitary efforts".²⁶ The editor-in-chief of *World Politics Review*, Judah Grunstein, described the creation of "a retaliatory trade tool" as an example of the "EU's ability to toughen up its soft power approach in order to more strategically defend its interests" in response to allegations that China is excluding European businesses from contracts.²⁷

Instead of the problem of gadgetry replacing strategy, we now have the problem of an ambiguous catchphrase becoming strategy. Soft power and smart power have become seductive mantras, frequently producing the avoidance of strategic thought rather than being a concept that helps to clarify, refine, or guide the development of strategy. Elizabeth Dickinson has written that "...smart power is now not just a theoretical construct but a way to cash in. The U.S. defense industry has seized on smart-power-style contracts, monetizing a catchphrase that has become the hallmark of the Obama administration".²⁸ Daniel Drezner suggests that "... the term 'soft power' is sufficiently vague to seem attractive, even though I bet no two people hold the exact same definition of the term".²⁹ (Yet, on the other hand, Ilan Goldenberg argues that it is "horribly named" and that

²⁶ "Semi-Victory in the Balkans: The Success of European Soft Power in the Region" in *International Politics*, Summer 2006, pp. 30-36, and John J. Kruzal, "Mullen Urges More 'Soft Power' in Afghanistan", American Forces Press Service, March 3, 2010 at: <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=58170>

²⁷ "EU Gets Tough with Soft Power", *World Politics Review*, November 12, 2010 at: <http://www.world-politicsreview.com/trend-lines/7030/eu-gets-tough-with-soft-power>

²⁸ "Anthropology of an Idea: Brainer Brawn" *Foreign Policy* May/June 2010, p. 29.

²⁹ "Renaming 'Soft Power'", December 3, 2008 at: http://drezner.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2008/12/03/renaming_soft_power

progressives should embrace the underlying ideas but “permanently and completely abolish ‘Soft Power’ from the progressive vocabulary” because it reinforces Republican stereotypes about Democrats being soft on national security issues.³⁰)

Because the concept of soft power is fuzzy and used haphazardly, discussions tend to confound cause and effect and thus tend toward tautological arguments. If soft power means getting an actor to want the same things that you want, but without using carrots or sticks, how can an observed shift in behavior be attributed to soft power rather than hard power, or exclude other unrelated causes as the reason for the change in preferences?

This presents epistemological and methodological problems because Nye generally argues that soft power causes a shift in the preferences of the target actor. Assuming this to be true, how can an observer distinguish between a change in an actor’s preferences, which would be effected by soft power, versus a change in the actor’s utilities, which would be effected by hard power? How can we distinguish between numerous possible influences to determine which are driving an actor’s behavior? Critical questions include: how do an actor’s preferences influence its behavior, and how does an actor attempt to realize its preferences?

A typical model for understanding the behavior of a rational unitary actor is cost-benefit analysis. The deterrence literature provides some useful examples. Alexander George and Richard Smoke³¹ suggested that deterrence is the art of convincing an opponent that the

³⁰ “It’s Time to Stop Talking About Soft Power”, *The American Prospect* May 29, 2008 at: http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=its_time_to_stop_talking_about_soft_power

³¹ *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, p. 60. This is a bare bones formulation. There are a tremendous number of much more complex models, going back to at least Thomas Schelling’s *The Strategy of Conflict*, Cambridge, The Harvard University Press, 1960, which raises the question of credibility and its effect upon perceived threats.

costs and risks of a particular course of action outweigh the benefits, that:

$$C \text{ (costs)} + R \text{ (risks)} > B \text{ (benefits)}.$$

Thus, deterrence (which can include incentives as well as threats) attempts to manipulate the expected utilities of an actor by threat or application of power (hard power within Nye's terminology). Nye's approach is radically different. Instead of trying to change an actor's behavior by changing its perception of the net benefits likely to result from a particular course of action, he suggests that soft power can be used to change an actor's preferences and thus the benefits it seeks. Within this admittedly simplified and limited example of deterrence theory, there would no longer be a need to deter the target actor because its interests and those of the actor threatening the use of hard power would be aligned. But again, we are faced with the fundamental challenge of distinguishing whether the actor in question changed its behavior because it decided to pursue different benefits in response to the influence of soft power, or its preferences remained the same but the threat of hard power caused the actor to stop pursuing them.

Definitional Problems

According to a study commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies and co-chaired by Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye, *smart power* is: "... neither hard nor soft – it is the skillful combination of both. Smart power means developing an integrated strategy, resource base and tool kit to achieve American objectives, drawing on both hard and soft power. It is an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships and institutions at all levels to expand American influence

and establish the legitimacy of American actions”.³²

The same study states:

- **Power** is “the ability to influence the behavior of others to get a desired outcome. Historically, power has been measured by such criteria as population size and territory, natural resources, economic strength, military force, and social stability”.
- “**Hard power** enables countries to wield carrots and sticks to get what they want. The Pentagon’s budget is ... many times more than the nearest competitor. ... There is no other global power, and yet American hard power does not always translate into influence”.
- “**Soft power** is the ability to attract people to our side without coercion. Legitimacy is central to soft power. If a people or nation believes American objectives to be legitimate, we are more likely to persuade them to follow our lead without using threats and bribes. Legitimacy can also reduce opposition to – and the costs of – using hard power when the situation demands. Appealing to others’ values, interests, and preference can, in certain circumstances, replace the dependence on carrots and sticks”.

Nye’s own definition of power in *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* is problematic:

The dictionary tells us that power is the

³² Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye Jr., co-chairs, Carola McGiffert and Craig Cohen, contributors, “A Smarter, More Secure America”, CSIS Commission on Smart Power, Washington DC, 6 November 2007, p. 7, <http://www.csis.org/smartpower/> (accessed 7 July 2010).

capacity to do things. At the most general level, power means the ability to get the outcomes one wants. The dictionary also tells us that power means the having the capabilities to affect the behavior of others to make those things happen. So more specifically, power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes one wants.³³

Missing from this particular definition – but essential to Nye’s thesis about the nature of soft power – is explicit reference to the preferences of the actor whose behavior is the target of the power being exercised.

The chart below, taken from *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*,³⁴ illustrates the inter-relationship and composition of hard and soft power according to Nye.

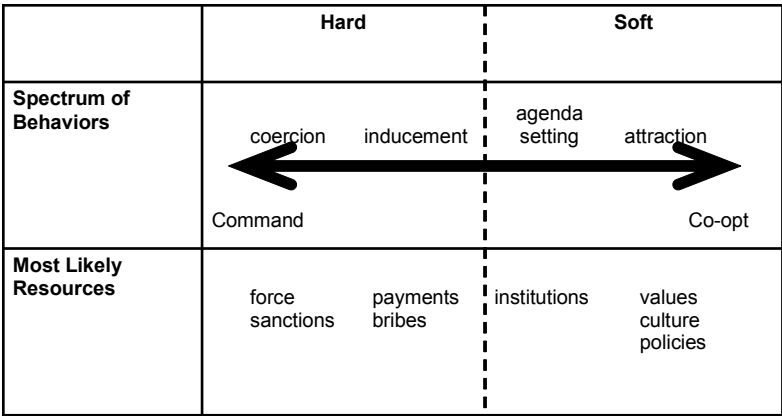


Figure 2. Power

³³ Page 1.

³⁴ Page 8.

Assessing Soft Power Theory

In his *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*,³⁵ Stephen Van Evera lists seven criteria for assessing a theory's quality:

1. Explanatory Power in terms of Importance, Explanatory Range, and Applicability
2. Parsimony
3. Satisfying
4. Clear Framing
5. Falsifiability
6. Explains Important Phenomena
7. Prescriptive Richness.

Soft power fares poorly in many of these respects, especially explanatory power.³⁶

According to Van Evera, a good theory's "independent variable has a large effect on a wide range of phenomena under a wide range of conditions". One of the governing characteristics is "importance", which can be summarized as amount of change in the dependent variable that is produced by a change in the independent variable. In other words: "An important theory points to a cause that has a large impact". Soft power enthusiasts have yet to effectively demonstrate how the ability of a nation to get what it wants varies with its attractiveness or popularity. This is a crucial epistemological failing.

Nye provides empirical data in the form of snapshot polling about attitudes towards the U.S. For example, the chart

³⁵ Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1997, pp. 17-21.

³⁶ In fairness to Nye, it's hard to find him using the word "theory" in relation to soft power. Instead, he refers to it as a "concept" or a "term". However, I would argue this weakens rather than strengthens the case for soft power being a sound basis for security policy or strategy.

reproduced below shows the “Percentage of Western Europeans Who Say They Have a Very or Somewhat Favorable Opinion of the United States, 1982 to 2003”.³⁷ This chart shows measurable changes in the value of the independent variable (public opinion being a proxy for attractiveness) over time, but Nye does not correlate this to measurable variations in the dependent variable (U.S. ability to get what it wants).³⁸

In other words, Nye illustrates the ebb and flow of U.S. “attractiveness” but does not demonstrate a coincident rise and fall in U.S. policy’s success rate. Instead, he argues that difficulty in achieving certain specific policies was due to a slide in American popularity at the time of policy failure.

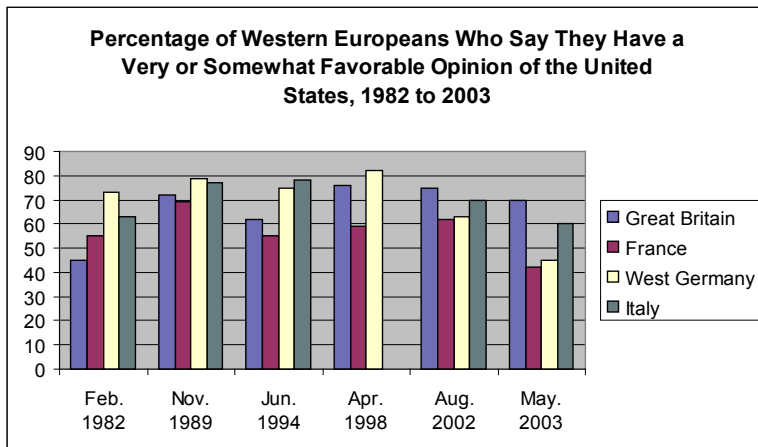


Figure 3. U.S. Favorability Among Western Europeans

Because Nye doesn’t effectively demonstrate how the ability to attain desired policy outcomes changed over time in concert with changes in soft power, the explanation that a drop in

³⁷ *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p. 37.

³⁸ Of course, correlation alone does not imply causation. But without correlation, causation is logically extremely difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate.

soft power was to blame for policy failures is not compelling.

In terms of “explanatory range” and “applicability”, as well as “explaining important phenomenon”, soft power has significant potential to help social scientists understand a great deal of international interactions and the effectiveness of security policy. This has certainly contributed to its popularity. Yet, without clearer evidence that changes in soft power over time correlate with *changes* in the ability of an actor to get what it wants, soft power cannot realize this potential. Soft power theory offers to explain a lot, but upon closer examination the explanations are so far unconvincing.

A related problem is a lack of “parsimony”. Although the basic concept can be explained in a few sentences, often an indicator of being parsimonious, it’s not yet clear that it contributes to our understanding of power outcomes because it doesn’t meet another test of parsimony: Occam’s Razor. The key question is: what outcomes does soft power explain that cannot be explained with hard power alone?

The mere attractiveness of a *particular policy* may fully explain its acceptance or rejection. An overarching theory of soft power is not necessary in such cases. To demonstrate otherwise requires instances where soft power broadly helped to achieve the implementation of unpopular policies whose success could not be explained by hard power alone. Otherwise, we are left with the circular argument that the pursuit of unpopular policies reduces soft power, and those policies fail due to insufficient soft power. To be meaningful, soft power must result in behavior that would not otherwise have occurred.

Especially perplexing is Nye’s example of Reagan

administration policies regarding nuclear weapons. He writes:

In a 1983 *Newsweek* poll, pluralities of around 40 percent of the people polled in France, Britain, Germany, and Japan disapproved of American policies. At the same time, majorities in all those countries approved of the American people. President Reagan was able to get European agreement for the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear forces, but there was considerable European resistance to his policy efforts to isolate the Soviet Union economically.³⁹

Nye doesn't clearly explain the causal relationship between soft power and policy outcomes in this example. He seems to imply that the Reagan administration achieved 50% of its policy goals vis-à-vis European support for efforts to deter or contain the Soviet Union because most Europeans liked the American people despite the policies themselves being unpopular: thus, a win on deploying Pershing-II and Tomahawk cruise missiles in Germany, but a loss on economic sanctions against the USSR. Yet this seems incongruent. Nye specifically says it was the *nuclear weapons* policies that were unpopular. Why did these succeed while the economic policy did not? Would not a traditional hard power argument be a far better explanation of this outcome?⁴⁰

Van Evera argues that “a good theory has *prescriptive richness*”, which is gained by “pointing to manipulable causes, since manipulable

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ This seems doubly so in this case because NATO adopted the so-called “double-track” decision in December 1979 (while Jimmy Carter was U.S. President) to pursue an arms limitation treaty (seemingly a classic soft power tool), while committing to intermediate range missile deployments (certainly an exercise in hard power) if negotiations didn't bear fruit. After almost two years of negotiations without Soviet agreement to withdraw its SS-20 missiles, the West German Parliament approved the deployment of US Pershing II missiles in November 1983. See Federation of American Scientists Intermediate Nuclear Weapons Chronology at: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/inf/inf-chron.htm>

causes might be controlled by human action”. This standard is particularly challenging because soft power theorists recognize that cultural and commercial activities – which are primarily the product of private individuals and organizations – play a key role in making a nation attractive (or unattractive, as the case may be). Hollywood films and McDonald’s food are frequently mentioned as prime examples of U.S. “soft power” elements. Yet, to have any policy utility the concept of power must entail taking purposive action to shift the behavior of another actor.⁴¹ If something is not under the control of the U.S. Government, if U.S. policy cannot shape it to the ends desired by policy makers, can it really be called “power”? For power to be conceived as something other than a tool (or potential tool) would entail an entirely new paradigm rather than an enhancement of our existing theories about power. Soft power enthusiasts – especially Nye, who argues that soft power and hard power are interdependent – do not suggest a complete overthrow of traditional concepts of power.

Left with little else that can be manipulated, Nye and other advocates commonly prescribe greater expenditures on public diplomacy to maintain and build soft power.⁴² But the problem then becomes determining what the correct amount is, what tradeoffs must be accepted (e.g., should money be spent on advertising U.S. efforts to combat AIDS across the globe, or devoted to the actual fight itself?), and determining whether it is marginally effective in improving attractiveness. This recommendation also adds another layer of abstraction. Soft power theorists assume that polling for attitudes about America provides a proxy for attraction. Their main policy proposal assumes that more public diplomacy efforts will produce a

⁴¹ It can also mean a decision not to take action, as in deterrence theory, particularly when an actor perceives that it is overmatched or that the projected cost of exercising power exceeds the expected benefits.

⁴² For example, see Nye, “Public Diplomacy and Soft Power”, *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, March 2008, pp. 94-109. The CSIS Commission on Soft Power also recommends the adoption of policies to encourage alliances, partnerships, and institutions; global development, economic integration, and technology and innovation (“A Smarter, More Secure America”, p.1).

rise in the polls.

Soft power advocates also say that America should live up to its own stated values, such as respecting international law and treating prisoners properly. An opportunity to veil normative arguments with the guise of *realpolitik* can make soft power theory more attractive to those who wish to criticize specific policies or presidential administrations.⁴³ The invasion of Iraq and the Abu Ghraib prison scandal are prominently mentioned examples of actions and events, along with allegations of a “unilateralist” foreign policy under President Bush, which have supposedly reduced American soft power.

Certainly, American officials should act in accordance with U.S. and international law and behave in a manner that reflects the values for which America is often admired. But while this should be done for moral and legal reasons, it is not clear that doing so actually results in an increase of power that makes it easier for the U.S. to achieve its national security and foreign policy objectives. Yes, America and its NATO allies and partners should act in a manner compatible with their claims and desires to be “The Good Guys”. However, this is a normative argument rather than a logical one.

Being liable to allegations of hypocrisy – i.e. engaging in behavior that does not live up to stated values – no doubt makes it more difficult to get support from others who subscribe to these values. However, this entails a disagreement over the appropriate means to an end rather than the end per se. If soft power works by getting actors to agree upon the ends, we need to be able to distinguish between policy differences regarding “how” versus “what”, since soft power focuses on the “what”.

⁴³ The normative aspects of promoting desirable values through efforts such as increasing development efforts in the poorer parts of the world may be one of the reasons that the idea of soft power carries so much influence despite little evidence it works as a policy tool.

Nonetheless, there is a peculiar dissonance in assertions by Nye and others who claim that Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups exercise most of their influence via soft power despite the fact that they engage in barbaric acts like beheading captives and routinely encouraging the murder of civilians.⁴⁴ The underlying argument may be that the extremist ideology makes them attractive, yet their ideology is inseparable from their despicable conduct. There is a long association between violent acts and extremism: the concept of “Propaganda of the Deed” dates back to at least the anarchist movements of the 18th Century and later became associated with European and American terrorist groups in the 1960s and 70s.

U.S. policy in relation to the state of Israel is often mentioned as another example that hurts American soft power.⁴⁵ Yet this assertion seems to be a reversal of cause and effect. If the foreign policy goal is to support Israel, stepping away from that preference would be the functional equivalent of a loss of power. Other actors would be causing the U.S. to shift its objectives rather than vice versa.

Another example, to quote Nye, is that: “Some domestic policies, such as capital punishment and the absence of gun controls, reduce the attractiveness of the United States in other countries, but are the results of differences in values that may persist for some time”.⁴⁶ Again, an increase in soft power would supposedly result from other actors causing the U.S. to shift its objectives rather than vice versa. Nye seems to be conflating a convergence of values or policies with a meaningful conception of power.

⁴⁴ Nye in *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, pp. 25, 95-97. Also see Steven Lukes’ comparative analysis of Nye and Gilles Kepel (*The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2004) in “Power and the Battle for Hearts and Minds” in *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, 2005, pp. 487-489.

⁴⁵ In *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Nye writes that among the reasons for a loss of U.S. attractiveness within Muslim countries are “unpopular U.S. policies regarding...the Israel-Palestine conflict” (page 43).

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 143.

Drawing upon Max Weber, Gerald Schneider states that “actors are powerful if they possess some capacity to withstand pressure or, to put it the other way around, to force other actors to give in”.⁴⁷ Yet Nye and his cohorts are frequently telling us that to accrue or wield soft power means giving in and allowing *others* to shape one’s agenda. This presents a conundrum. Power means the ability to get what you want by getting other actors to behave as you would like them to. Soft power is getting other people to want what you want so they wish to behave in the manner that you desire. However, if accruing soft power means changing what *you* want, which is the independent variable and which is the dependent variable? Who is the object and who is the verb?

A Test

For various reasons subject to methodological debate, negative findings rarely get published. However, as argued above, there is a dearth of rigorous empirical research that supports soft power theory. What follows is a proposed test of soft power’s usefulness as an explanation for state behavior. Proponents of soft power theory are welcome to refute this example or provide others where the predicted effect of soft power can clearly be demonstrated.

If favorable views of the U.S. and soft power are strongly related, as Nye and others argue, then large shifts in attitudes toward the U.S. should correlate with shifts in American power. In other words, a significant change in the value of the independent variable (soft power, using favorable attitudes as a proxy) should produce a change in the value of the dependent variable (the ability of the U.S. to get what it wants).

⁴⁷ “Capacity and Concessions: Bargaining Power in Multilateral Negotiations”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, 2005, p. 672.

This is a specific argument that Nye and others make, particularly in regard to the negative turn in attitude toward the U.S. in other countries during the George W. Bush administration. Equally, when views become favorable this should either represent or produce an increase in soft power. If the logic of soft power and attractiveness is correct, the challenge then becomes how to test for evidence of a corresponding increase in U.S. ability to get what it wants.

The positive shift in attitudes toward the U.S. following the election of Barack Obama as President presents the opportunity for a natural experiment. If advocates of the concept are correct, the U.S. should be experiencing an increase of soft power that correlates with the significant increase in the independent variable represented by the favorable ratings in the Pew Global Attitudes program depicted below. Indeed, Nye has written that “it is difficult to think of any single act that would do more to restore America’s soft power than the election of Obama to the presidency”.⁴⁸

The table below was extracted from the Pew Global Attitudes Survey released on June 17, 2010 and indicates the NATO members covered by the survey.⁴⁹ It shows that, as predicted by Nye, the election of Obama was followed by a substantial improvement of attitudes regarding the U.S.

⁴⁸ “Barack Obama and Soft Power”, *Huffington Post*, June 12, 2008 at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joseph-nye/barack-obama-and-soft-pow_b_106717.html

⁴⁹ “Obama More Popular Abroad Than at Home, Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit”, p. 1. Available at: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1630/obama-more-popular-abroad-global-american-image-benefit-22-nation-global-survey>

<u>Country</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
<u>Britain</u>	75	70	58	55	56	51	53	69	65
<u>Canada</u>	72	63	-	59	-	55	-	68	-
<u>Czech Republic</u>	71	-	-	-	-	45	-	-	-
<u>France</u>	62	42	37	43	39	39	42	75	73
<u>Germany</u>	60	45	38	42	37	30	31	64	63
<u>Italy</u>	70	60	-	-	-	53	-	-	-
<u>Poland</u>	79	-	-	62	-	61	68	67	74
<u>Slovakia</u>	60	-	-	-	-	41	-	-	-
<u>Spain</u>	-	38	-	41	23	34	33	58	61
<u>Turkey</u>	30	15	30	23	12	9	12	14	17

Figure 4. U.S. Favorability Ratings Among NATO Members

The greatest shift in U.S. favorability indicated among NATO members was within Britain, France, Germany and Spain. As depicted below, the attractiveness of the U.S. as viewed by the Germans in the survey apparently doubled with the election of President Obama, close to doubled among the French and the Spanish, and increased by nearly a third in Britain.

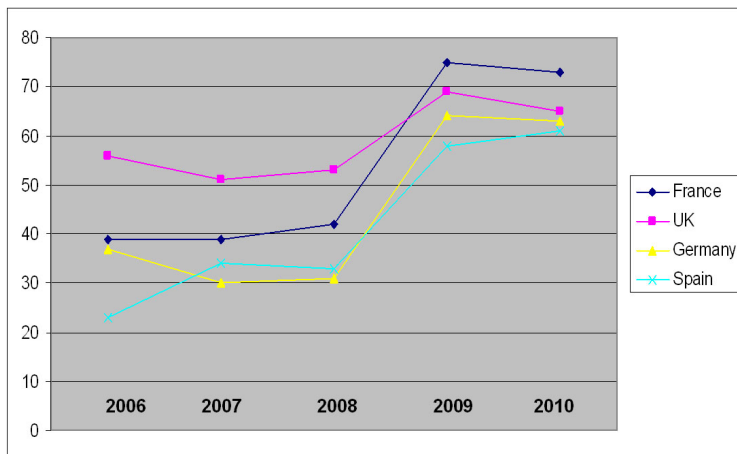


Figure 5. U.S. Favorability in France, Britain, Germany, and Spain

It seems clear that, at least as conceived by Nye, the attractiveness of the U.S. and thus its soft power should have experienced a significant increase following the end of the George W. Bush administration and assumption of the Presidency by Barack Obama. This begs the question: where can we see evidence of this soft power?

A good candidate for dependent variable is one of President Obama's major foreign policy goals: an increase in ISAF troop contributions.⁵⁰ As a candidate for the U.S. Presidency, "Obama ... made Afghanistan a key focus of his foreign policy, saying he would make it the central front in the 'war on terror' if elected".⁵¹ As President,

⁵⁰ A workshop participant discussing this paper suggested that France's return to the NATO integrated military command structure could be a sign of Obama's soft power. However, French President Sarkozy was indicating his intention for reintegration in 2007, well before Obama was viewed as likely to win the US election. (See Pascal Boniface, "Sarkozy wants a greater role in NATO" *Institut de Relations Internationales et Strategiques* October 2, 2007 at: <http://iris-france.org/en/news/2007-10-02.php>; and Ben Hall, "Sarkozy calls for strong dollar policy", *Financial Times* 7 November 2007 at: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/feb02706-8d58-11dc-a398-0000779fd2ac.html#axzz1C8Cq02bZ>).

⁵¹ "Obama calls situation in Afghanistan 'urgent,'" CNN Election Center 2008, July 21, 2008 at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/07/20/obama.afghanistan/>

he had “made clear that he is counting on America’s NATO allies for greater military contributions in Afghanistan”.⁵² According to the logic of soft power theory, President Obama should have been more successful in getting what he wanted in the form of additional troops from allies than was President Bush. This should be a particularly interesting test because Nye specifically used a similar dependent variable when he wrote:

Loss of attractiveness hindered President Lyndon Johnson’s effort to obtain support from other countries for the war in Vietnam, and the drop in soft power hurt other policies as well. In France, for example, Vietnam “contributed to the popular support that sustained de Gaulle’s increasingly anti-NATO and anti-U.S. stance”.⁵³

As the following charts indicate, the trajectory of Allied contributions remained at the nearly the same slope under Obama as in the years of the Bush administration. There is no statistically significant shift in total non-U.S. force contributions that correlates with the election of President Obama and the change in attitudes about the U.S. In the case of the four NATO countries with the largest favorability increase indicated by the poll, the German and Spanish contingents grew much faster the first two years after Obama was elected but the total for all four was actually larger during the last two years of the Bush administration. As for all non-US troops, the increase under Obama was less than 1% better than what Bush had accomplished over an equivalent period and the ratio of non-US to US troops was far less under Obama.

⁵² Ken Fireman, “Obama Call for More NATO Afghan May Be Spurned (Update 1)” Bloomberg News, February 2, 2009 at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aomFcprHhaTM>

⁵³ *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p. 36-37. Nye quotes Thomas Alan Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2003, p. 85.

	Bush Increase Jan 2007 – Nov 2008	Obama Increase Dec 2008 - Oct 2010
France	1785	1065
Britain	3130	755
Germany	310	788
Spain	230	757
Subtotal	5455	3365
Non-US Total	9690	9780

Figure 6. Troop increases twenty-three months before and after Obama’s election

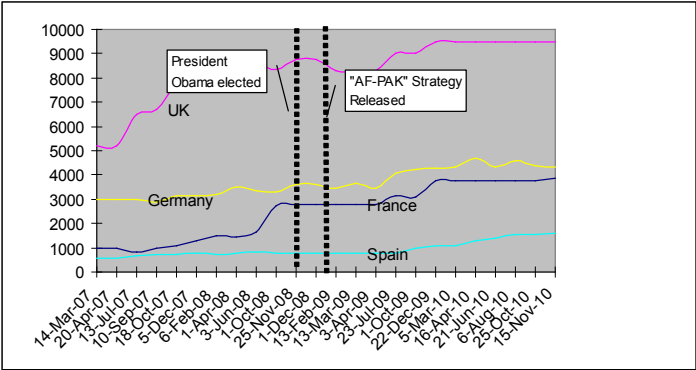


Figure 7. British, German, French, and Spanish ISAF Troop Contributions⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Source: ISAF Placemat archives <http://www.isaf.nato.int/en/isaf-placemat-archives.html>

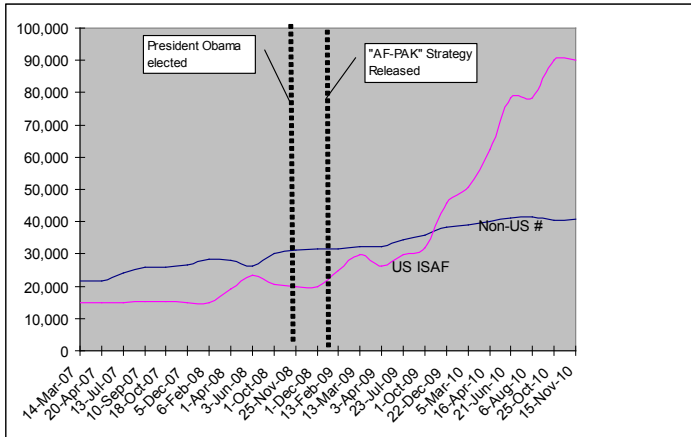


Figure 8. U.S. and Non-U.S. ISAF Troop Contributions

Arguably, President Obama may have been slightly more successful in gaining additional ISAF troop commitments compared to his predecessor. However, the amount of change – if any – in the dependent variable (ability of the U.S. to get what it wanted in this case) is nowhere close to the posited increase in soft power. Further complicating a soft power explanation is that the strongest correlation appears to be with increasing U.S. troop levels rather than the particular occupant of the Oval Office. This seems to indicate hard power is more likely to be the key causal factor.

Perhaps much better tests are possible. We need to see more of them being conducted. The social science literature is filled with empirical analyses of hard power concepts such as deterrence, balancing theories, and balance of power theories. It is well past time for methodologically rigorous scrutiny of soft power too.

Conclusions

I suggest that, at best, “soft power” is an environmental factor like terrain and weather. It influences the exercise of traditionally conceived power – “carrots and sticks”, if you will – and makes it easier or more difficult for actors to achieve their goals through the application of power. It is not a discrete component that can be deliberately applied to achieve specific foreign policy objectives and not a type of “power” in the sense of being a casual factor with independent value. (Perhaps it could be reconceived as an intervening variable.)

The conception of smart power as proposed by Nye is a detour from policy practicality and, at least to date, scholarly research. Especially with its current basis in fuzzy definitions, lack of observable outcomes, and – perhaps most importantly – avoidance of tradeoffs, it does not represent a useful tool for making foreign policy decisions and pursuing national security objectives.

A key idea to keep in mind is the nature of *power* as defined in a manner useful to understanding international relations and developing national security strategy. If an actor does what it was inclined to do anyway, there is no identifiable exercise of power by another actor wishing to affect the behavior of the first actor. Drawing on the work of Robert Dahl, Jack Nagel and others, David Baldwin argues that power is exercised when “A gets B to do something he would not otherwise do...”. In other words, power should be conceived as causation. Among the advantages of this approach is that it is “less likely to lead to tautologies”.⁵⁵

Further research may shift the balance in favor of the interrelated concepts of soft power and smart power but, at least for

⁵⁵ Op.Cit., pp 162-3; also see footnote 2.

the present, a more traditional conception of the elements of national and international power – which primarily fall under “hard power” tools within Nye’s typology – provides a better guide to policy and a better understanding of international relations. Admittedly, there is no consensus on defining the elements of power. Nonetheless, they generally entail the diplomatic, informational, military and economic tools that can be applied to obtain national objectives. These are often summarized by the acronym “DIME”.⁵⁶

Some contemporary authors have expanded the roster of tools to add financial, intelligence and law enforcement (DIMEFIL) categories, or proposed different or re-ordered sets, such as military, intelligence, diplomatic, law enforcement, information, finance, and economic (MIDLIFE).⁵⁷ My personal opinion is that these additions lose in parsimony more than they add to understanding. Nonetheless, a more concrete framework such as “DIME” or one of these variations is more likely to result in a better integration of military and civilian approaches to planning and strategy than the nebulous concepts of soft power and smart power.

⁵⁶ See Bartholomees, J. Boone Jr., “A Survey of the Theory of Strategy” in *The U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues, Volume 1: Theory of War and Strategy*, 4th edition, J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr (editor), Strategic Studies Institute, July 2010, p. 18. <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1004> (accessed March 7, 2011).

⁵⁷ Jack Kem, “Understanding the Operational Environment: The Expansion of the DIME”, University of Military Intelligence, at: <http://www.universityofmilitaryintelligence.us/mipb/article.asp?articleID=578&issueID=45> (accessed January 9, 2009). Alternatively, the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defense notes that “National Strategy is delivered by appropriate application of the 3 national instruments of power (diplomatic, military and economic). See: “The Comprehensive Approach”, *Joint Discussion Note 4/05*, January 2006. Available at: http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BEE7F0A4-C1DA-45F8-9FDC-7FBD25750EE3/0/dcdc21_jdn4_05.pdf

NATO's New Strategic Concept: An Integration of Civil and Military Approaches?

Karl-Heinz Kamp

For a while now, the catchphrase “Comprehensive Approach” (CA) has been wafting through NATO’s strategic discussions - be it with regard to Afghanistan or to future missions of the Alliance. Notwithstanding that different allies interpret the CA differently, there seems to be a consensus that in general it describes the combination or even integration of civil and military efforts in crisis management, peace enforcement or nation building.

Until today, NATO members have not been overly successful in coordinating civil and military measures in the various NATO missions inside and outside of Europe. The reasons for the gap between rhetoric and practice are manifold. There are fundamental differences between military and civilian cultures which lead to mutual reluctance to engage in practical cooperation. Moreover, there is an ongoing dispute on the question of who is coordinating and who is to be coordinated. Given these difficulties on the ground, which might take a long time to overcome, it is worth asking whether the idea of “comprehensiveness” is at least finding its way into the conceptual debates on the future of the Alliance. Is NATO on the right track towards truly capturing the combination of civil and military action in its strategic thinking?

Coincidentally, NATO began reassessing its strategic foundations in 2009. Recognizing that NATO’s core strategic document – the so-called Strategic Concept – was written in 1999 and no longer matched NATO’s future security requirements, the Alliance’s Heads of State and Government initiated the development of a new NATO strategy at their meeting in Strasbourg/Kehl in 2009. This new Strategic Concept, intended to define NATO’s roles and tasks in the 21st century, was to

be approved at the November 2010 summit in Lisbon.

At the time of writing, NATO was in the midst of the discussion process on what its future roles and missions should be. Neither the final strategy nor draft version was yet available. Still, it seemed appropriate to take NATO's path toward the new strategy as a case study on whether or not the Alliance is able to sincerely include the basic logic of the CA in its strategic thinking. Is NATO prepared to coordinate military and non-military actions right from the outset in order to cope with the requirements of complex operations beyond the territorial boundaries of the Alliance? Did this issue range prominently in strategic evolutions?

This chapter examines these questions in three steps. The first explains the process NATO has chosen to develop its new strategic foundations. The second takes on the so-called "Group of Experts" report, which was a core document designed to shape NATO's thinking on the way to the new strategy. The third step speculates on the role that the CA and civil-military cooperation will play in the new Strategic Concept. Finally, the conclusion presents a long-term vision of NATO and hypothesizes whether the CA will remain relevant in the long run.

The Process toward the Strategic Concept

The process that would lead to the new NATO strategy differed significantly from the Alliance's previous efforts in developing strategy documents. Unlike past procedure, when documents were written by internal Alliance committees, the development of the new Strategic Concept was meant to be an open and transparent process including not only NATO's political and military decision-making circles but also civilian experts, the media and the public. The widening of

participation in NATO's strategic discussions was supposed to increase the public acceptance of security policy requirements. It was also a response to the new security environment of the 21st century, where stability and security can no longer be provided primarily by military efforts but only by the collective efforts of military and non-military institutions. Thus, the method NATO intended to use to work out its strategic foundations for the next decade already contained the seeds of a successful combination of military and civilian approaches.

The NATO 2009 summit in Strasburg/Kehl had led to a detailed schedule for the new strategy. The summit document, the "Declaration on Alliance Security",⁵⁸ emphasized the leading role of the Secretary General in the entire process and thereby highlighted the dominance of the civil/political side in the forging of a new strategy. After the summit, Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer had agreed to leave the entire project to his successor, Secretary General Designate Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Rasmussen, as a former Prime Minister of Denmark, brought the necessary political weight to steer the process toward the new strategy through the complex debates in an Alliance of 28 independent member states.

The first step was to elect a group of security experts to advise the Secretary General in his difficult task by providing him with proposals on the content of the new strategy. According to the Declaration on Atlantic Security a "... broad-based group of qualified experts ..." should "... lay the ground for the Secretary General to develop a new Strategic Concept ...".

Rasmussen advocated that the "Group of Experts" (GOE) should be small enough to be able to agree on concrete suggestions - less than half of the number of NATO members was his base line. He issued a note to NATO members stating that the GOE members

⁵⁸ Official text, see: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52838.htm?mode=pressrelease

should be diverse in their expertise – not only security experts but also “outsiders” from non-governmental institutions, academics and representatives from the private sector. Before the Group was handpicked by the Secretary General, NATO had agreed to ask the former US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, to be the Chair of the Group. On July 7, 2009, three months after the Strasbourg/Kehl summit, the new Strategic Concept was officially launched with a high-level conference in Brussels, presenting Ms. Albright in her new role.

In the weeks that followed, the Secretary General appointed another 11 members of the Group (known in NATO jargon as “the twelve apostles”), which had its inaugural meeting on September 4, 2009 in Brussels. All twelve experts – although they had been nominated by their countries – were to act independently without receiving guidance from their capitals. As almost all member states intended to send a representative, the fact that the group was kept comparatively small was already a surprise and was certainly due to the political weight of the Secretary General. However, there was also criticism with regard to the members of the GOE. The fact that some of them had only sketchy expertise in NATO affairs was not regarded as a disadvantage per se, but it was felt that it could make debates difficult if it came to very specific issues such as how to combine civil and military elements in future stabilization missions. More serious was the fact that there was no military representative among the twelve experts. Even if the primacy of the political level was undoubted in NATO, at least one or two experts in uniform could have decisively enriched the debates on the future of the politico-military Alliance. The several briefings given by NATO generals and admirals to the experts were regarded by some as merely a weak substitute for the permanent presence of a military representative in the Group.

From October 2009 to February 2010 the GOE participated

in a number of seminars on various aspects of the new strategy and convened with many decision-makers and officials inside and outside of the Alliance. In February the Group started drafting its final report. In parallel with the drafting, members of the GOE discussed their preliminary findings with NATO member states, partners like Russia and key international organizations like the United Nations and the OSCE.

On May 17, 2010, the GOE presented its final report with its key findings and recommendations to the Secretary General. Following NATO's transparency rule, the document was published on the same day.

The GOE Report

The twelve members of the GOE and a small number of "Civilian Advisors" held very intensive discussions for eight months on the various aspects of NATO's future roles and missions. As expected, the "classic" security issues – how to deal with Russia, the future of nuclear deterrence, prospects for partnership and enlargement – took up most of the time.

The issue of civil-military relations, however, was much less debated and was taken mostly as a "given" that did not require further scrutiny. The frequently quoted "CA" was regarded as inevitable for an Alliance that has to cope with today's threats and challenges to the security of its member states. Thus, the topic of civil-military cooperation was included in the report without major controversies.

In the summary of the findings, the wording on civil-military cooperation remains very generic. It states that NATO could join in "healthy partnerships" with international organizations or

nongovernmental entities in order to “pursue solutions to complex problems that affect its security”. The Alliance could serve as the “principal organizer of a collaborative effort or as a source of specialized assistance or in some other complementary role”.⁵⁹ In its military part, chapter 5, the GOE Report is more specific and calls for a small civilian planning unit within NATO to prepare the Alliance for integrated civilian-military missions. Moreover, it is stated that NATO should work out memoranda of understanding with the EU, the UN or the OSCE to foster links between the military and the civilian side. In addition, NATO member states should identify a cadre of civilian specialists who could be rapidly deployed in crisis situations should personnel from partner institutions not be available.

It was surprising that these ambitious and politically highly contentious recommendations (drafted by a very small sub-group) were accepted by the GOE without major discussion. Questions like whether or not non-military institutions, non-governmental bodies or international organizations are willing to cooperate with the military at all, or the problem of who is in the driver’s seat in common efforts were not an issue in the GOE’s meetings. Likewise, the issue of how to harmonize NATO military efforts and EU civilian efforts if some NATO and EU members are blocking genuine cooperation between the two organizations was not touched upon, nor was the fact that – at least at that time – some allies strongly rejected the suggestion that NATO should obtain civilian capabilities, as this could weaken the political role of the much more civilian EU.

Did NATO succeed?

As this article was being written, the strategic debate on

⁵⁹ All quotes, see: NATO 2020 - Assured Security; Dynamic Management, Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, NATO Brussels, May 17, 2010, p. 10.

NATO's future roles and missions was in full swing. NATO Secretary General Rasmussen was in the process of producing the first draft of the new Strategic Concept. Thus, this article could not be based on analysis of a final document but refers to the ongoing debates among the member states.

After its publication on May 17, the Albright Report met with mixed reactions. The public – or those parts of it which took note at all – welcomed it as a comprehensive attempt to provide the basis of a “grand strategy” for NATO. Inside NATO, though, some member states expressed a degree of disappointment. The fact, they argued, that the public reaction was rather positive was due not least to the generic character of the report, which provided “motherhood and apple-pie”, in the sense that everybody could find parts to agree with. Therefore, according to the critics, the report would not provide clear political guidance for military planning processes.

Arguably, writing a report that would satisfy the demands of the public, respond to the needs of the experts in the NATO headquarters and meet the military's need for political guidance for proper military planning was a “mission impossible”.

Despite the criticism that it was too generic to provide strategic guidelines, and regardless of the fact that the GOE Report was always qualified as just one of many contributions to the process of drawing up a new NATO strategy, it attracted disproportionate attention. This was mostly due to the fact that Secretary General Rasmussen decided to write the first draft more or less on his own, supported only by very few individuals from his Private Office. As a result, he banked crucially on a few documents and supporting papers – primarily the GOE Report. Furthermore, Rasmussen himself and an increasing number of NATO members came to the conclusion that the new Strategic Concept should be kept very short and concise – only eight to ten pages long. It should

be more “mission statement” than “blueprint” for military planning. This implies that the document is of a very general character, leaving all the specific questions to follow-on documents to be drafted later by lower levels of the NATO hierarchy.

Another factor that led to the generic character of the strategy was the dense schedule of the entire process. The Secretary General had announced that he would present his first draft by early October 2010. Since a “Jumbo-Ministerial” (a meeting of Foreign and Defense Ministers) was already planned for October 14, there were only a few days left to assess the first draft and to align it with the various national positions. After October 14, the Alliance had only a month to agree on the final draft of arguably the most important document of the last decade. These factors resulted in very general wording that papered over the existence of significant differences.

Notwithstanding recognition that the new strategy could not be very specific on many of the contentious issues in NATO, a fierce debate started among the member states after the GOE Report was published. Among many items, the two most contentious issues were the question of how to deal with Russia and how to promote NATO’s nuclear deterrence capabilities. Important but much less disputed issues such as the meaning of Article V of the Washington Treaty and the relevance of territorial defense (vis-à-vis expeditionary operations far beyond NATO’s geographical boundaries) went surprisingly smoothly.

The issue of integrating civil and military efforts was also debated but experienced an interesting evolution. As within the GOE, the general wisdom of a “CA” was never seriously disputed. Instead, the discussions focused on the underlying question of whether or not NATO should acquire its own civil capabilities instead of referring to the civil expertise of the EU (or other international organizations). This

was much more than an issue of organizational structure – it touched on the political relevance of NATO vis-à-vis the European Union. Surprisingly, though, this almost theological debate was suddenly solved by reality: in early September 2010, NATO allies were asked to provide 60 civilian experts to work under the authority of the NATO Commander of the International Security and Assistance Force (COMISAF). The number of civilian personnel (experts on water supply and agricultural issues) was to increase in subsequent months to 160. By doing so, NATO created a *fait accompli* in an area which was previously highly defended by allies like France and Germany who were afraid of devaluing the international role of the EU.

At the time of writing one can only speculate about the reasons for this change in the national positions. Certainly, NATO's difficulties in Afghanistan put tremendous pressure on Allies to bid farewell to ideological positions or national preferences. Whereas NATO enjoys tremendous military superiority in Afghanistan, the mission is becoming increasingly difficult, since civil reconstruction, stability, good governance or fighting corruption are not perceived as proceeding rapidly enough to win the lasting support of the public. As a result, domestic support for ISAF in NATO countries has been constantly diminishing. Hence, any pragmatic approach that eased the difficulties on the spot was welcome.

A second reason for the drop in resistance to NATO's acquisition of civilian capabilities appeared to be recognition that NATO-EU cooperation, as necessary as it might be in Afghanistan or elsewhere, remained stalled. Despite the myriads of political declarations on the need to combine the capabilities of these institutions, and although 21 countries are members of both of them, true cooperation had yet to take place. What sounded like mostly theoretical rivalry between two institutions had, and still has, grave consequences in practice. Pirates captured by NATO cannot be submitted to jurisdiction in

Kenya, as only the EU has an agreement with the Kenyan government – a corresponding arrangement between NATO and EU is blocked. In Afghanistan, people's lives are at risk since NATO is not able to protect EU civilian personnel or share classified information with EU representatives; the necessary formal agreements have been blocked by a few NATO members.

In the past, there were two main reasons for the long-lasting gridlock between NATO and EU. First, there was the almost classic French-American dispute on the role of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy on the one hand and NATO's tasks and missions on the other. Second, there was the longstanding quarrel between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus.

With new governments in France and in the United States, the former stumbling block has been almost completely removed. Paris has returned to the Transatlantic military structure and Washington no longer sees an evolving European military capability as a threat to NATO's primacy. The second reason for the obstacle, though, still exists and there seems to be no quick fix in sight. Turkey and Greece will go on blocking any measure of NATO or EU that brings the two organizations closer together. Hence, practical solutions circumventing the institutional paralysis have to be found. However, they are cumbersome and consume energies and resources which would be better invested in the stabilization missions on the ground – be it in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

In a surprisingly swift step hardly noticed by the public, NATO had agreed to create some civil expertise on the ground by hiring a significant number of civilian experts for Afghanistan. It seems very likely that the new strategy will belatedly legitimize this step by explicitly stating that the Alliance – albeit primarily engaged in military tasks – needs limited civilian capabilities for planning and

execution of urgent steps before a formal institutional cooperation with civilian partners can come into effect.

Perspectives for the Alliance

The preliminary analysis on the one hand, and some emerging trends regarding NATO's future on the other, permit the conclusion that NATO will fully include the CA in its core strategic documents. The need for a coordination of military and civil measures right at the beginning of a stabilization mission is no longer seriously disputed. Hence, NATO takes note of this change in the security landscape and plans for the inclusion of non-military activities in the early planning stages of future missions. By doing so, the Alliance recognizes the fact that in the security environment of the 21st century, NATO is no longer the only security provider but is crucially dependent on the capabilities and the expertise of other, non-military partners.

This positive assessment, though, is overshadowed by two elements of doubt. The first one is the already mentioned practicability of the concept. Many civilian actors have already publicly indicated that they are not willing to cooperate with NATO or any other military organization. The reasons differ, ranging from traditional skepticism with regard to military force, to a general concern about being instrumentalized for the political interests of the nations involved and having their neutrality as aid organizations threatened. Furthermore, the incapability of the EU to truly cooperate with NATO is not going to change soon – hence the preferred partner for civil-military cooperation will not actually be available for the foreseeable future. One can only hope that these practical problems do not render the idea of CA in future stabilization missions futile. Instead, these problems must be overcome pragmatically to enable NATO to cope more efficiently with the challenges of complex operations beyond territorial self-defense.

A second legitimate question is whether or not NATO in future will be ready to engage in any further stabilization efforts at all, once the fighting in Afghanistan has come to an end. Will NATO take on another crisis management operation beyond the geographical borders of its member states, or will it concentrate much more on its classic task of self-defense? Circumstantial evidence suggests the latter. We are likely to see a NATO that reorients itself to a restrictive definition of its core business and reverts to an institution for the defense of the territory, the people and the security interests of its members.

The main reason for NATO's likely regression back to a classic territorial security alliance will be the sobering and disillusioning effect that the decade-long Afghanistan mission has had over time on all NATO members. This is by no means a criticism of the operation itself: NATO's military engagement in Afghanistan was right and inevitable. There was no alternative to ousting the Taliban regime in Kabul which provided safe havens for the Al Qaeda network. But NATO's mission in Afghanistan will remain a trauma for the Alliance, not only because of the price paid in blood and treasure. Disillusionment will spread even further among those engaged in Afghanistan, simply because any nation-building effort in such a poor and war-torn country can ultimately accomplish relatively little, far below initial expectations. Even if the international community manages to bring about stability and economic growth in the region over the next decade, Afghanistan will hardly be able to outstrip the economic power of an African state like Chad and it will always be crucially dependent on external development aid. A sobering outcome of this kind can hardly be attributed to lack of international engagement, but is a result of circumstances; it is arguably the maximum that can be achieved in countries that are among the least developed in the world.

Consequently, no one will have any more illusions about the

prospects of nation-building in deprived regions. The willingness to engage militarily in troubled areas will shrink dramatically – despite the atrocities in Congo, Sudan and elsewhere. Instead, NATO's path will be determined by its members' awareness of their own limitations. In many respects, NATO after Afghanistan will be a different and less ambitious alliance.

With regard to its self-image, the pendulum will swing from a global engagement for peace and stability back to security provisions for its members in a narrower sense. This might in exceptional cases require military action beyond NATO's territory. NATO cannot focus on its geographical boundaries alone, as in today's world the buzzword "globalization" also applies to the security realm. Geographical distance is an ever decreasing factor in any threat analysis and NATO has to have a global perspective. Nevertheless, the model of a NATO providing its services for worldwide crisis management in lieu of the United Nations is *passé*. Energy security, climate change and competition for natural resources like water will be merely peripheral to the NATO spectrum of missions, regardless of how much in vogue these buzzwords are. Instead, the mutual security commitment enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty will continue to remain quintessential. The future NATO will be first and foremost an alliance for the defense of the population, the territory and the vital interests of its member nations.

As the termination of NATO's mission in Afghanistan will be the trigger for the reorientation of NATO back to its roots, there will be other trends which will indicate or even accelerate the backward movement of the Alliance: the internal economy, relations with Russia, nuclear developments and, finally, future threat perceptions.

The international economy will influence NATO's future direction most dramatically. The consequences of the international financial crisis will burden the budgets of the NATO members

for many years to come. What is more, military expenditures will suffer disproportionately. All NATO members are democracies with a strong public opinion, where it is politically easier to cut military procurements than social projects. Thus, defense expenditures will be used as quarries to fill budgetary gaps in other areas. Even the United States, currently the biggest spender in defense, will have to cut its military budget considerably.

The results are obvious. First, the share of military expenditures in the overall budgets of NATO states will go down further. Already today, only five of the 28 members fulfil NATO's self-commitment to spending at least two percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for defense. NATO's average is less than 1.7 percent and even this figure is distorted by the tremendous military expenditures of the United States. Some NATO members spend less than one percent, having at the same time social expenditures of 30 percent and more. Moreover, the fact that economies and therefore GDPs are shrinking almost everywhere makes comparisons in percentages less and less meaningful. The amount of money available for the military will generally decline.

Given that some NATO members spend more than two thirds of their defense budgets on personnel costs, there will be hardly any funds for a military transformation toward expeditionary forces that can be rapidly deployed and sustained over long distances. The vast majority of NATO's members will have to cope with the capabilities currently available and previously procured for territorial defense missions. As a result, many Alliance members will shun costly military missions abroad for financial reasons.

A second reason for NATO's trend toward a more narrow interpretation of its defensive mission is its relationship with Russia. For historical reasons, NATO's Eastern European members in particular still regard Russia as a threat and as one of the reasons they applied

for NATO membership in the first place. For many of them, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which codifies mutual solidarity in the case of a military attack, is primarily directed against Russia. In their view, no other country adjacent to NATO is seriously able to conduct major offensive operations against NATO. Moscow's occasional predilection for harsh rhetoric and provocative actions like military exercises close to the Baltic borders does nothing to alleviate such concerns.

Strong words and insulting behavior on Russia's part are not likely to abate. As a result, lingering subliminal anxieties in the Eastern countries of NATO, which will continue to regard territorial defense as NATO's core mission, will need to be allayed by assurances that the Alliance is willing and able to fulfill this particular mission if needed. Merely emphasizing security commitments will not be enough. NATO members with security concerns vis-à-vis Russia would like to see evidence of NATO's military readiness and political resolve. This does not exclude cooperation with Russia in clearly defined areas of common concern. However, true cooperation, or even the frequently quoted 'strategic partnership', will only be possible if all NATO countries feel safe and secure. Thus, NATO's core mission of providing security for its members, their populations and their interests will gain relevance.

Third, an orientation back to traditional patterns will also occur with respect to nuclear deterrence. Currently fashionable concepts of a nuclear-weapon-free world (Global Zero) cannot alter the fact that nuclear weapons will remain a factor in international relations for the foreseeable future. What is more, the number of nuclear-armed countries is indeed likely to rise instead of going down. North Korea has already proven its nuclear status with a test explosion of an atomic device in October 2006 and Pyongyang also claims another successful nuclear test in May 2009. Iran pursues its military nuclear program despite international threats and sanctions, and is apparently closer to success than expected – even, fairly recently, by pessimistic observers.

As soon as Tehran has gone nuclear, other countries in the region might follow. Currently, twelve Middle Eastern States are pursuing civil nuclear energy programs, which could be upgraded to weapons projects. The same holds true for East Asia. Countries like South Korea or Japan are already “virtual” nuclear powers, in the sense that they are technically capable of producing nuclear weapons should they choose to do so. They might seriously consider such an option, depending on how the situation in North Korea evolves.

A trend toward an even more ‘multinuclear’ world would have two consequences. First, the concept of nuclear deterrence – which some had already written off after the end of the Cold War – is likely to undergo a renaissance. The lessons of deterrence during the East-West conflict, when both sides managed to prevent a military exchange despite fierce competition between political systems, need to be dragged out of the history books and adapted to the new security environment. Second, the notion of nuclear commitments – another classic NATO role – will gain relevance as well. The United States has in the past extended its nuclear umbrella to its NATO allies as well as to South Korea and Japan. Under this policy of ‘extended deterrence’, as it is known, any attack on one of these allies would imply the risk of American nuclear retaliation against the aggressor. The result was twofold. On the one hand, this meant nuclear protection for non-nuclear allies, and on the other it was a means of non-proliferation, as it kept the nuclear have-nots from striving for their own nuclear capabilities. A nuclear Iran would raise the issue of non-proliferation, as it would require the extension of the American umbrella (or the umbrella of other nuclear powers like France or the United Kingdom) to the countries in the region that might otherwise aspire to their own nuclear deterrence capabilities.

Fourth and finally, NATO’s spectrum of risks and threats is likely to be supplemented by a further danger, which will abet NATO’s

trend back to its roots. So far, NATO threat analyses focus on dangers posed by international terrorism, non-state actors, failed states, regional instabilities or the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In this account, a fundamental future danger is mostly factored out: the danger of major interstate war. It is not only regional actors or failed regimes that could resort to the use of military force. Major functioning states outside of Europe could also attack one other. This would not be a direct threat to NATO, but could first and foremost pose a threat to international stability that NATO could not ignore.

The scenario is a realistic one, given the mutual amplification of three international predicaments. Should the predictions of climate experts become reality, rising sea levels will threaten coastal areas and desertification of entire regions will sharply reduce the habitable areas. Many of the affected countries are poor and politically unstable but militarily well equipped – some even possess weapons of mass destruction. Their governments could aggressively use military force either in their struggle for land and resources or in order to channel the discontent of their people. Moreover, according to forecasts on international energy demands, economic growth in Asia and elsewhere will lead to an unprecedented competition for energy at affordable prices. China already acts in a very aggressive manner to secure its oil and gas supplies in the longer run, thereby countering international attempts to promote good governance in Africa and elsewhere. Lastly, weapons proliferation and the spread of missile technology will enable an increasing number of countries to project devastating power – even nuclear destructive power – over vast distances. Any detonation of a nuclear weapon, however, even if it occurs far beyond NATO's territory, would alter the international security landscape even more profoundly than the attacks of September 11 did.

If we take these three dangers together, it is difficult to imagine that future emanating rivalries and interstate tensions can always be

solved by diplomatic means. Thus, the contingency of major nations being at war with one other will make it back to the international stage. The perception of NATO as a classic security alliance will gain importance.

A reorientation of NATO to its classic mission of the defense of the security and the vital interests of its members – albeit in an enlightened way – is neither “good” nor “bad” per se. Moreover, it does not completely rule out the possibility of stabilization missions. However, the knowledge that NATO might alter its long term orientation away from the notion of being a global stability provider should put the bumper sticker slogan of the “CA” into perspective. The notion of combining civil and military efforts – almost a no-brainer in contemporary security policy – is important but will not be a panacea for all forthcoming threats and challenges. Even if the CA finds its way into NATO’s core documents, it still needs to be fully defined, implemented in practice, and seen as only one of the many instruments NATO should have in its toolbox. In particular, we should remember the wise dictum that military planners always tend to prepare for the “last war”. Even if NATO has fully embraced the CA, it might discover that it will need more of the classic elements of deterrence or defense to assure the security of its members.

Strategy, Segmentation and Incrementalism – A Corporate Approach

Allen Burch

We face a tough fight in Afghanistan. Any insurgency that is confronted with a direct challenge will turn to new tactics. And from Marja to Kandahar, that is what the Taliban has done through assassination and indiscriminate killing and intimidation. Moreover, any country that has known decades of war will be tested in finding political solutions to its problems, and providing governance that can sustain progress and serve the needs of its people...We have supported the election of a sovereign government – now we must strengthen its capacities.¹

President Barack Obama

Afghanistan

Much has been written about the NATO situation in Afghanistan. In fact, a rather quick catalog of current woes could be easily assembled²:

- The war is entering its tenth year with no sign of a clear victory.
- General Stanley McChrystal, NATO's senior Commander, has been forced to resign over discourteous (some say "mild and childish wisecracks") and insubordinate comments made to *Rolling Stone* magazine.³

¹ President Barack Obama, speech delivered to West Point cadets, May 1, 2010.

² The opinions expressed throughout this article are my own and not those of the Nielsen Company.

³ "McChrystal Firing Is a Sign of Afghanistan Problems", *US News and World Report*, June 24, 2010.

- Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's President, demonstrates less than whole-hearted support for the United States and NATO while courting hardliners at home.
- Pakistan, our putative ally, is actively aiding the Taliban through elements of the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) division.
- The Taliban, the original "enemy", has returned as a potential rival to the democratically elected government.
- Al-Qaeda, though weakened substantially, still plays an active belligerent role against NATO forces.
- Corruption and fraud are common, with accusations even involving the family of Hamid Karzai, the current President.
- Tribalism is a persistent feature with Pashtuns in the south, and with Uzbek, Hazara and Tajik in the north, all with their own militia, agenda and leadership structures.
- Foreign aid has been only partially effective at reaching its intended targets, as a significant portion has been redirected out of the country.
- Social ills seem intractable. These include illiteracy, poverty, hunger, drug addiction and the subjugation of women.
- Opium poppies, nearly eradicated under the Taliban, are again one of the few viable cash crops for Afghan farmers.⁴

All of these issues conspire to make success in Afghanistan not just difficult, but nearly impossible. A recent collection of 68 Foreign Ministers and delegates met in Kabul in July to confront these very issues. There was widespread pessimism about the outcome. *The Economist* observed:

Sadly for Afghanistan, the predominant view among diplomats and long-term observers of the country is that the counterinsurgency strategy will probably fail – and certainly

⁴ For a pointed look at the history of the Afghanistan War see: Seth G. Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*, New York, W.W. Norton, 2010.

do so if foreign powers have now decided not to take the time needed to build an Afghan state able to resist the insurgency and the nefarious activities of meddling neighbours. A sense of gloom was evident in some quarters.⁵

Usually an optimist in foreign affairs, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton opined: "...citizens of many nations represented here, including my own, wonder whether success is even possible—and if so, whether we all have the commitment to achieve it".⁶

Right on the heels of this meeting was the inopportune leaking of six years of classified military documents outlining the lack of progress on the war. They paint a bleaker picture of Afghanistan than the current administration has heretofore disclosed, including new details that suggest an even more cozy relationship between the Taliban and members of Pakistan's spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). According to *The New York Times*, the 92,000 reports "...illustrate in mosaic detail why, after the United States has spent almost \$300 billion on the war in Afghanistan, the Taliban are stronger than at any time since 2001".⁷ Massachusetts Democratic Senator John Kerry alluded to the timing and import of these disclosures: "These [Afghan] policies are at a critical stage, and these documents may very well underscore the stakes and make the calibrations needed to get the policy right more urgent".⁸

Despite General Petraeus' initial assurance that there would be no strategic departure from his predecessor General McChrystal, it seems clear that the moment is right for just such a departure to be considered. A recent *Newsweek* magazine feature, "Rethinking Afghanistan", argued for a complete overhaul and rethinking of

⁵ "Afghanistan's prospects, the great endgame", *The Economist*, July 22, 2010.

⁶ "Afghanistan's prospects, the great endgame", *The Economist*, July 22, 2010.

⁷ "View is Bleaker Than Official Portrayal of War in Afghanistan", *The New York Times*, July 25, 2010.

⁸ "Leaks add to Pressure on White House Over Strategy", *The New York Times*, July 26, 2010.

strategy in Afghanistan as being central to any solution there.⁹

NATO

Winston Churchill once quipped that “there is only one thing worse than fighting with allies and that is fighting without them”.¹⁰ The principal western alliance is, of course, NATO. At age 61, NATO is facing a considerable set of changing dynamics. Its membership has grown from 12 initial members in 1949 to 28 today, including many nations from the former Soviet Union’s sphere of influence. These new countries have a very different view of the Alliance than that of the original signatories. This argues for a re-thinking of core strategy.¹¹ More recently, NATO has done an abrupt about-face on significant issues such as missile defenses intended for Poland and the Czech Republic.¹² Furthermore, NATO’s Article 5 (addressing collective defense) never anticipated the events of September 11, 2001, nor did it directly confront the changing nature of warfare or counter-insurgency.¹³

NATO’s mission and strategy documents were last updated in 1999. A recent committee led by former US Secretary of State Madeline Albright issued some broad guidelines for a new effort.¹⁴ It falls upon Secretary General Rasmussen to delineate this new approach in a document expected by year’s end.¹⁵

⁹ “Rethinking Afghanistan” and “Nation building isn’t working. New strategies for the war on terror”, *Newsweek*, July 26, 2010.

¹⁰ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life*, New York, Holt and Company 2002, p. 693.

¹¹ For a review of relative inputs and outputs and burden-sharing, see Joel R. Hillison, *New NATO Members, Security Consumers or Producers*, Strategic Studies Institute, April 2009.

¹² “US Replaces Bush plan for Europe missile shield”, *Reuters*, September 17, 2009

¹³ Michael Knigge, “New NATO strategy must square the circle between old and new threats”, *Deutsche Welle*, May 15, 2010.

¹⁴ *NATO 2020, Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement. Analysis and recommendations of the group of experts on a new strategic concept for NATO*, NATO Public Diplomacy, Brussels, May 17, 2010.

¹⁵ “Experts group presents report on new Strategic Concept for NATO”, NATO Website, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_63644.htm, accessed August 15, 2010. For an in-depth analysis, see the chapter by Karl-Heinz Kamp on page 52 in this volume.

With regard to Afghanistan, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, while recognizing that past declarations about the war were overly optimistic, believes that things are becoming better in Afghanistan and that, with General David Petraus now in charge of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the situation will greatly improve. His optimism is not based on new strategic approaches, as he states that "...our strategy hasn't changed, because it is the right one".¹⁶ Even when hostilities end, Rasmussen believes there will be a role for NATO, assisting the Afghan government in asserting self-rule.¹⁷

It is against this backdrop that a review of strategy development from different perspectives can be valuable. There is growing support in the literature for cross-functional approaches to problem-solving, as it often yields unexpected and creative solutions to intractable problems.¹⁸ While exploring strategy development from a consumer products perspective may seem "too corporate", it may just as likely provide useful insight and inform forthcoming strategy changes and decision-making. This article is intended to provide such an outside perspective.

Strategy Continuum

There is no single definition or uniform operational use of the word *strategy* within the consumer products goods (CPG) industry. That said, most follow a broad definition created by Alfred Chandler of the Harvard Business School in the 1960s:

Strategy is the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of course

¹⁶ "Moving On in Afghanistan", *New York Times*, July 19, 2010.

¹⁷ "Afghanistan's prospects, the great endgame", *The Economist*, July 22, 2010,

¹⁸ For an excellent example of cross functional synergy see "Soldiers of Fortune", *Newsweek*, November 14, 2009.

of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals.¹⁹

CPG companies follow this straightforward definition when they create strategies for their firms, because it incorporates best practices, including a focus on the long term, on adequate resourcing of the task at hand and on being action-oriented. Most firms operationalize these concepts by following a strategy continuum that ranges through *mission, objectives, strategies and tactics*.

Mission

All CPG companies have a mission, whether stated or not. Most have the desire to remain a going concern in perpetuity, one that generates a growing profit stream over time. The mission is the highest level of strategy and incorporates the ultimate purpose of an organization, its *raison d'être*.²⁰ It provides “the framework or context within which the company’s strategies are formulated” and is often a short, direct preamble to a company’s actions.²¹

One good example (and one that will be used throughout this discussion) is the well-run, ably led and highly respected firm of H.J. Heinz. Heinz is a multinational food company best recognized by its iconic Heinz Ketchup brand. The firm was started in 1869 and the focus has remained on its central mission:

“We aim to enrich people’s lives with great-tasting, convenient, and healthy foods every day”.²²

¹⁹ AD Chandler, *Strategy and Structure*, Cambridge, MIT Press 1962, p. 383.

²⁰ The terminology typically used by business when discussing strategy is different than that of the military. In military doctrine, rather than being the top level construct the “mission” is usually derived from a strategy or from higher-level guidance or orders.

²¹ Hill, Jones, et. al. *Strategic Management*, New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 11.

²² H.J. Heinz Website, <http://www.heinz.com/our-food.aspx>, accessed August 15, 2010.

Objectives

While a firm's mission changes infrequently and is intended to continue in perpetuity, its objectives take on a more distinct time period, usually measured in years. They often include a financial component. Here, Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman's oft-quoted maxim goes hand in hand with objective-setting: "The moral obligation of business is to increase its profits".²³ In order to do this, specific objectives must be set. Good ones are typically aspirational and offer a "stretch" goal for an organization. Heinz has the following 2011 objectives:²⁴

1. Drive sales growth of between 3% and 4%.
2. Seek operating income growth of between 7% and 10%.
3. Achieve earnings per share growth of between 7% and 10%.
4. Surpass \$1 billion in operating free cash flow.

Strategies

A strategy is a subset of the objectives. It breaks down the task into smaller planning units. Heinz adopted a "strategic pillars" approach to strategy.²⁵ These are broadly written strategy areas from which they build their tactical plans. The pillars are:

1. **Grow the core portfolio** – The Company's top 15 brands represent just under 70% of sales. Heinz Ketchup, its biggest brand, is the number one brand in seven of the top ten ketchup markets. This strategy has led to twenty consecutive quarters of sales growth. It comprises the following points:
 - Launch new innovative products;
 - Maintain a high level of consumer marketing investments.

²³ David Campbell, *Business Strategy*, Oxford, Elsevier Ltd., 2002, p. 24.

²⁴ 2010 H.J. Heinz Company Annual Report and 10-K, p. 4.

²⁵ 2010 H.J. Heinz Company Annual Report and 10-K, p. 2.

2. **Accelerate growth in emerging markets** – Emerging markets contribute a disproportionate share of total sales growth for Heinz and are expected to approach 25% of total sales by 2016. Objectives here are the following:
 - Introduce new products to new markets;
 - Focus on markets with manufacturing and distribution infrastructure;
 - Seek suitable acquisition targets.
3. **Strengthen and leverage global scale** – Heinz is committed to driving both top-line growth and profit margins. Using global scale is critical to these objectives, with a focus on these points:
 - Create global supply chain;
 - Seek economies of scale;
 - Enhance productivity.
4. **Make talent an advantage** – Management is a people business and Heinz aspires to have the highest caliber leaders. Emphasis here is on the following points:
 - Hire multinational top talent;
 - Expand global development and training;
 - Retain high-potential leaders.

Tactics

The tactical level, in business terms, is the operational level. It's where the "rubber meets the road". These are the small advances and the actual means to carry out the various strategies. Because they tend to be a numerous and diverse set of actions, care must be taken to ensure that tactics support the strategies.

Heinz doesn't publish a complete tactical plan, for obvious

competitive reasons. They do, however, allow a glimpse through public sources such as SEC filings and investor conference call presentations.²⁶ Heinz also participates in the Consumer Analysts Group of New York (CAGNY). CAGNY creates a forum whereby companies can share their direction and projections to investors and analysts. These presentations are likewise instructive.²⁷

Heinz Tactical Plan²⁸

GROW CORE PORTFOLIO	EMERGING MARKETS	GLOBAL SCALE	TALENT ADVANTAGE
Launch Dip& Squeeze™ Ketchup in February.	Further develop Glucon D nutritional beverages in India	Use Project Keystone to harmonize global processes and systems.	Expand global leadership development program.
Launch Ore-Ida® Sweet Potato Fries.	Develop ABC® products in Indonesia	Institute vigilant cost management system.	Expand training program with an eye to attracting key talent.
Reduce sodium 15% in US ketchup products.	Expand Ketchup and infant nutrition in Russia.	Appoint Bob Ostryniec and Chris Stockwell to global supply chain initiative.	Continue global sustainability initiatives to enhance Heinz reputation and values.
New UK ad Campaign <i>It Has to Be Heinz</i>	Identify and recommend “bolt-on” acquisitions.	Move to local manufacturing where feasible.	Improve bench strength initiative.
Increase advertising, return to household couponing and promotions.	Expand into the Philippines, Turkey, Vietnam and Brazil.	Simplify product assortment. Rationalize slow- moving SKUs.	Reconfigure executive incentive program.

²⁶ Heinz, *Continuing the Momentum*”, Investor Presentation, Spring 2010.

²⁷ Heinz, *Presentation to CAGNY*, February 17, 2010.

²⁸ This is a small and illustrative subset of Heinz tactics. It is not exhaustive and all information has been gleaned from published materials. No Heinz internal documents were used.

It bears saying that tactics must support the strategies, which must in turn support stated objectives, which must in turn be aligned with the firm's mission. Well run firms fit these elements tightly together much like a Russian nesting doll. Quarterly strategy reviews are a routine way of ensuring this alignment.



Outlined here is the traditional, planned, practical approach taken by CPG companies with regard to strategy formation. There are other emergent approaches that are beginning to find their way into boardrooms in large firms and deserve additional exploration. These include:

- Competitive Positioning
- Core Competence-Based Approach
- Emergent Learning
- Knowledge-Based Approach.²⁹

Among these, Competitive Positioning seems the most likely to bear fruit in a military or geopolitical setting.

There are also a few additional strategic tools that are useful in developing go-to-market strategies in a CPG environment. They include the SWOT analysis, Demand Analysis and Segmentation.

SWOT

SWOT stands for *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities* and

²⁹ Various new approaches can be reviewed in: David Campbell, *Business Strategy*, Oxford, Elsevier Ltd., 2002, pp. 15-18.

Threats. A SWOT analysis allows for a concise way of surveying the current business situation and supports optimal resource allocation. The SWOT analysis is usually displayed in a simple two-by-two table that looks like this:

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Continuing the Heinz example, we can construct a sample SWOT analysis using information in the public domain:

HEINZ SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths Solid financials High caliber leaders Brand-loyal consumers Iconic brands	Weaknesses Limited portfolio Reliance on key brands Activity concentrated in developed markets
Opportunities Organic products Health and wellness Emerging markets New product development	Threats Private label products Retailer strength

Demand Analysis

During the last 30 years, businesses have placed their focus on their supply chain. In other words, they've looked to take costs out of every aspect of their enterprise. Much has been done to reduce inventory, streamline logistics and raise the productivity of manufacturing. This approach has led to a focus on selling what the firm manufactures productively. This has generally meant fewer consumer choices.

Increasingly, firms are now giving equal attention to the “demand chain”. In other words, they're trying to assess what forces and factors affect consumer demand and are adjusting their enterprises to take advantage of this. This approach may be particularly relevant to military counterinsurgency doctrine, given its focus on protecting and influencing the population rather than being mostly oriented toward attacking the enemy as is the case in other types of combat operations. Since both the insurgents and counterinsurgents are competing for the same population, better analysis could help NATO keep ahead of an enemy that is constantly adapting its own tactics.³⁰

The forces and factor approach was introduced by The Cambridge Group, a prestigious US-based consulting firm.³¹ Demand analysis requires a rigorous exploration of why events have happened and what factors caused the change.

“[Winning leaders] understand that plans must include fact-based explanations for why specific phenomena take place. Demand Strategy involves a rigorous process to analyze

³⁰ Of course, I do not mean to imply that business and war are synonymous. Among the many important differences, although businesses are in competition with one another economics is rarely a zero-sum game and increasing the total size of the “pie” can be as important as increasing one's slice of it. Nonetheless, in the sense that there is a competition for the population, techniques to improve the understanding of the desires of that population could make counterinsurgency efforts more effective.

³¹ Full disclosure: The Cambridge Group is owned by The Nielsen Company, the firm for which I work.

demand forces and [outside] factors. In combination, demand forces and industry factors are the causal elements that are responsible for changes to demand. We look at what has created demand in the past, what is causing it now, and what is most likely to influence emerging demand”.³²

Forces and factors can include anything that affects demand, such as economic factors, cultural and religious views, available technology, demographics, lifestyle and even intention or motivation. The forces and factors approach to demand analysis was used effectively during the Cold War, in an approach to defense spending vs. the Soviet Union.³³ The approach is straightforward:

“Constructing a proprietary forces and factors analysis consists of three critical steps. First you need to discover what has shaped demand in the past. Next, you need to examine your current situation to see if those forces and factors are continuing to influence demand, or if they have been replaced or modified by new ones. Finally, you must develop hypotheses about emerging demand based on the forces and factors that have the potential to shape or influence demand and are becoming more visible”.³⁴

Because each situation is different, and some factors and forces are more important than others, it’s important to take this process beyond the demand analysis to a relevant segmentation approach.

Segmentation

With the advent of mass marketing, companies initially took

³² Rick Kash, *The New Law of Demand and Supply*, New York, Doubleday, 2002, p. 64.

³³ Pentagon analyst Andrew Marshall suggested the strategy of spending Moscow into bankruptcy. See Rick Kash, *The New Law of Demand and Supply*, New York, Doubleday, 2002, p. 74.

³⁴ Rick Kash, *The New Law of Demand and Supply*, New York, Doubleday, 2002, p. 67.

the position that to be one thing to all people was the preferred go-to-market strategy. This made sense given the potential for capturing the largest market possible, but it offered a limited product line. This approach lowered manufacturing costs and drove up margins. Henry Ford's famous position that consumers could buy a Model T in any color they liked so long as it was black embodies this approach.

Rarely, though, is a product so on the mark that this works in the current world. Consumers have become more sophisticated and demanding in their needs and desires. After all, different features and brand positions appeal to different consumers. As a solution to fragmented demand and a desire to compete in new ways, companies turned to segmentation.

Segmentation addresses consumers where they are. With this approach firms abandon trying to persuade consumers to accept whatever is offered. Instead, they turn to existing subsets of a market in an attempt to better suit unique needs. Segmentation allows the business leader to fine-tune product features, advertising, price, promotion and channel of distribution to meet consumer demand.

Staying with the automobile example, it's easy to see how this works in practice. If Ford is trying to attract young affluent men to its brand, they will offer them a product such as the Ford Mustang. Presumably it would be priced to the ability of this segment to pay, appeal to the segment's sense of adventure and bravado, and be advertised in upscale magazines that these men read and on shows that they watch. It would be promoted in dealerships where these men represent a disproportionate share of the community. It would also be available in nearly any color they would want, even black.

Similarly, other consumer segments will prefer economy cars, trucks, mini-vans or SUVs, and products and advertising must be

tailored to these audiences as well.

There is no right way to segment consumers, as there are many approaches. The only real guideline is that the resulting segmentation is relevant to the outcome desired. Below are some of the most common approaches to segmenting a market³⁵:

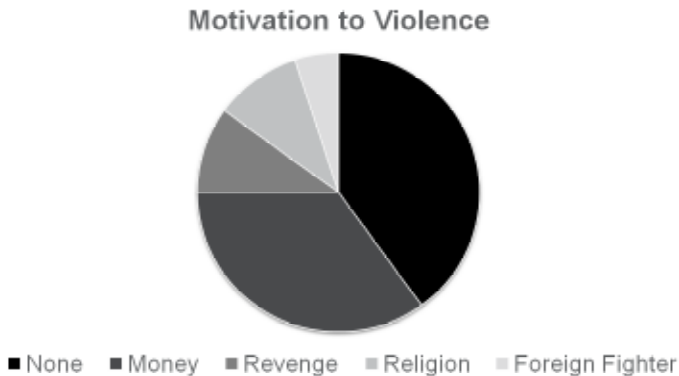
- **Geographic.** Where consumers live, work or congregate – often an urban vs. rural break scenario.
- **Demographic.** Age, gender, income, occupation, education, marital status and family composition.
- **Psychographic.** Psychological traits, personality, value system and approach to decision-making.
- **Lifestyle.** Culture, language, behaviors, interests and activities.
- **Life Stages.** College, newlywed, married with children, mid-career, empty-nesters and retired.
- **Behavioral.** Attitude, usage patterns, frequency and occasion of purchase.

Bringing this back to practical application, a provocative question in the case of Afghanistan is how NATO could segment the “consumer” in a way that would lead to a new way forward. One could imagine, for example, a segmentation of Afghan people that determined their differing motivations to hostility. In other words, primary researchers, through interviews, focus groups and polling (to the degree these would be feasible), could determine under which circumstances people would take up arms, be motivated to violence or support those who do. To some extent, NATO’s International Security Assistance Force has been using polling and other efforts to collect such information. The use of Female Engagement Teams is a noteworthy initiative in this

³⁵ For an excellent review of segmentation including alternative approaches see Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, *Marketing Management*, Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall, 13th Edition, 2009, pp. 208-233.

regard.³⁶ However, it is unclear how the data gathered are being used to adjust counterinsurgency operations and tactics.

For illustrative purposes, suppose that the primary research led to a segmentation that resembled the figure below:



Practitioners would use the segmentation analysis and determine which sub-segments would yield the outcome desired. In our example, that could mean focusing on segments where actions would lead to a reduction or cessation of violence. Typically at this stage, a strategic business unit (SBU) would be formed to address the segments. Where this isn't feasible a sub-group would be organized with the resources and authority to address each segment. In our example it wouldn't be too great a stretch of the imagination to envisage one strategic sub-group tasked with addressing the "Money" segment, with job training and outright cash payments. One sub-group could be tasked with addressing the "Religion" segment through alternative message creation and the support of moderate clerics, madrassas and

³⁶ See, for example, Elisabeth Bumiller, "Letting Women Reach Women in Afghan War", *The New York Times*, March 6, 2010.

publications. One sub-group could address the “Foreign Fighters” segment with a straightforward combat-and-kill mission.

Dividing up the segments into opportunity areas allows for a practical but effective way of tailoring the message, approach and resources to those with the highest potential. While “combat and kill” clearly remains one of the approaches to the conflict, segmentation leads to other possibilities for a peaceful resolution of the war.

Incrementalism

“Our strategy in going after this army is very simple. First we are going to cut it off, and then we are going to kill it”.³⁷

This stark and vivid statement was made by Colin Powell, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during a Pentagon press briefing just before the original Gulf War. It is jarring in its honesty, and simplicity. It was not personal bravado so much as the new normal interpretation of US go-to-war strategy under Powell. It was based on the notion of intervening only with an overwhelming “shock and awe” approach to battle.³⁸

In the privacy of their own fantasies, business leaders would love to deploy the “shock and awe” approach. Given virtually unlimited resources and few restraints, they would relish the opportunity to go after the competition with the same power, vigor and speed as NATO warriors. In a business context, it would surely seem surreal.

One can’t quite imagine Bill Gates approving the bombing of

³⁷ Colin Powell, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pentagon press briefing, January 23, 1991.

³⁸ “Shock and awe” entered the vernacular after a book by the same name was written by Harmin Ullman in 1996.

Google's command and control operation in Mountain View, California. Instead, businesses operate on numerous constraints. These include legal and logistic considerations, resource limitations, economic forces, talent, established markets, existing preferences, etc. But for huge game-changers, and these are generally quite rare and short-lived, these constraints limit the ground a firm can take quickly. This relegates businesses to an incrementalist mentality. In other words, a firm like Heinz would be satisfied, even ebullient over a 5-point increase in market share over a competitor. This focus on making small but meaningful gains over several decades is the hallmark of successful firms. These same firms are set up for just such activity and their compensation structures reward these small incremental gains.

The incremental approach is something that should be considered more readily in the US military in general, and in NATO operations in Afghanistan in particular. While not the prevailing approach in thinking about conflict, operations in Afghanistan face many constraints that are at least partially analogous to what companies face every day. This may be a key, but under-appreciated implication of the contemporary operational environment. The old Cold War approach of "win the first battle" and "decisive operations" that "finish fast" may no longer be possible in our present and most likely future conflicts.

It has become apparent that an overwhelming force approach is unworkable and unfeasible, given the number of troops deployed, constraints on the ground and the political will at home. President Obama acknowledged this in his speech to West Point Cadets in May of this year:

"But this is a different kind of war. There will be no simple moment of surrender to mark the journey's end – no armistice, no banner headline. Though we have had more

success in eliminating al Qaeda leaders in recent months than in recent years, they will continue to recruit, and plot, and exploit our open society”.³⁹

An incremental approach, informed by solid strategy creation, demand analysis and segmentation, should be considered as one way forward in the continued conflict in Afghanistan and those conflicts in which NATO is most likely to become embroiled in the foreseeable future.

³⁹ President Barack Obama, speech delivered to West Point cadets, May 1, 2010.

All for One and One for All? – Forging Development, Diplomatic and Defense Partnerships Under NATO's New Strategic Concept

Christopher A. Jennings

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an enduring political-military alliance of democratic, modern and economically developed states. Since creating the alliance in 1949, member states have often adjusted the mandate, mission and organizational ties of NATO to protect their shared national security, economic, territorial and other geo-political interests. At the 60th anniversary of NATO in Strasbourg/Kehl, the alliance's leaders decided to adapt NATO's mission and mandate to emerging 21st Century challenges. *NATO 2020: Assured Security, Dynamic Engagement* – the analysis and recommendations of a group of experts tasked by alliance leaders to prepare the ground for a new NATO Strategic Concept – identified a number of new challenges that have emerged since 1999, when the current concept was adopted:

- failed states, militant non-state actors and the threat of terrorism, requiring a different approach to national security;
- increasing stress on the global nuclear non-proliferation regime;
- revival of historic tensions and instability along Europe's periphery;
- increasing evidence of the security implications of piracy, energy supply risks and environmental neglect; and
- increased budgetary constraints on national security assets as a result of the worldwide economic downturn.

These security challenges present fiscal, military, political, economic and social dimensions that are beyond the capacity of the

defense ministries and militaries of NATO member states to address alone.

Other multilateral organizations, civilian arms of NATO member states, other national governments and nongovernmental entities have a shared interest with (and sometimes a comparative advantage over) NATO in addressing some of these challenges. In the light of these realities, there is an emerging consensus within NATO (and reflected in *NATO 2020*) that addressing 21st Century challenges will require work with a mix of partners pursuing diverse civilian-military elements of a shared strategy. Coined as “the comprehensive approach” within NATO, this call to integrate civilian-military planning is apparent in the *National Security Strategy* of both Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama of the United States, as well as French President Nicolas Sarkozy’s *White Paper on Defense and National Security*, the United Kingdom’s first ever *National Security Strategy* issued in March 2008, and the national strategies of other alliance members.

Even if the need for broader partnerships and a “comprehensive approach” is widely agreed upon, the problem remains of how best to build effective collaborative relationships at the strategic level. This paper addresses the challenges of identifying opportunities for – and constraints on – forging “shared strategies” across the civilian-military divide.

NATO has a number of natural partners for integrated civilian-military planning. Development institutions – like the World Bank, the United Nations Development Fund and the United States Agency for International Development – offer promising expertise and capacity for NATO forces responding to complex security challenges like insurgency, counter-terrorism, humanitarian response and stabilization operations. Section 1 of this paper identifies these opportunities and

potential institutional partners.

“Partnership” is the key word. Civilian-military relationships are disjointed across the Alliance. Civilian-development agencies typically use different approaches than military organizations when it comes to planning, prioritizing, recruiting, deploying, operating, and evaluating. Not only are differences from their military counterparts apparent, but also from their diplomatic and civilian line-ministry counterparts (e.g., trade, agriculture, energy and other ministries involved in international affairs). These differences stem from competing institutional mandates, missions, legal and resource constraints, as well as culture, mind-set, strategic outlook and expectant time horizons.

Section 2 argues that the core issue in institutionalizing a “comprehensive approach” to civilian-military strategic planning is ensuring *policy coherence* across interagency lines rather than merely “plussing up” civilian capacity with more resources to complement military security operations. Section 3 identifies institutional and other structural constraints that inhibit the forging of coherent strategies through civilian-military policy dialogs. Finally, the paper concludes with a note on institutional competition for resources: *if the need for a “comprehensive” approach does not force national policymakers across the NATO alliance to improve the coherence of foreign policy and the overall interagency division of labor, inescapable budget realities will.*

1. Development Agencies and Opportunities for Civilian-Military Strategic Partnerships

Fourteen members¹ of the NATO alliance are concurrently

¹ Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom and United States.

members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the world's principal development assistance donor forum. The DAC's overall aim is to strengthen economic, social and political development assistance to poor countries. Comprising 24 major bilateral donor countries, members periodically review both the amount and the nature of their contributions to aid programs (bilateral and multilateral) and consult each other on all other relevant aspects of their development assistance policies. While not members of the DAC, six other NATO members have full observer status and participate in DAC meetings.² *Since 1993, these 20 NATO member states have delivered nearly 500 billion USD in official development assistance (ODA) – see table below.*

Not only do NATO-aligned countries finance the vast majority of official development assistance (in 2008, 83% of ODA was from a NATO-aligned country), but they also house – country by country – the professional cadres and institutional opinion leaders who drive world-wide development policy.

These cadres were a major force behind the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs – eight targets to end extreme poverty worldwide by 2015, set by 118 world leaders at the 2000 UN Millennium Summit), the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, which set broad parameters on development assistance and program architecture (see table below).

The DAC issues analysis and guidance in key areas of development and forges ties with other policy communities to coordinate efforts. The DAC recognizes that the development community needs to become less insular and better communicate the function of development cooperation across interagency and institutional lines. For instance, in May 2009, the DAC conducted a strategic review of

² They are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Turkey.

issues facing the development community over the next 10-15 years. It highlighted the following issues and challenges:

- fragile states, instability and conflict-trap countries;
- control of infectious diseases;
- economic development and environmental standards (financial stability, accessibility of markets and world trade, access to knowledge and information flows, climate change, energy, agriculture (including food-security) and water resources);
- poverty and the widening gap in countries meeting MDG standards³

The DAC's strategic review recognized that aid alone is insufficient to address these challenges and meet the needs of the developing world. To address these challenges, the strategic review concluded that development professionals need to do a better job of (1) communicating the function of development co-operation to policy professionals in the security, trade, public health, finance, energy and other sectors touching on foreign policy; (2) matching the talk with joint action beyond the "development industry"; and (3) becoming involved in a wider sphere of traditional development partnerships. NATO, through member delegations, is a natural ally.

³ OECD, *Investing in Development – A Common Cause in a Changing World*, 2009, available at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/1/43854787.pdf

Net Official Development Assistance by NATO Member States (USD million)							
	1992-93	1997-98	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Belgium	840	823	1,463	1,963	1,977	1,951	2,386
Canada	2,457	1,876	2,599	3,756	3,683	4,080	4,785
Czech Republic*			108	135	161	179	249
Denmark	1,366	1,670	2,037	2,109	2,236	2,562	2,803
France	8,093	6,024	8,473	10,026	10,601	9,884	10,908
Germany	7,269	5,719	7,534	10,082	10,435	12,291	13,981
Greece	0	176	321	384	424	501	703
Hungary*			70	100	149	103	107
Iceland*			21	27	41	48	48
Italy	3,583	1,772	2,462	5,091	3,641	3,971	4,861
Luxembourg	44	103	236	256	291	376	415
Netherlands	2,639	2,994	4,204	5,115	5,452	6,224	6,993
Norway	1,144	1,314	2,199	2,786	2,954	3,728	3,963
Poland*			118	205	297	363	372
Portugal	264	255	1,031	377	396	471	620
Slovak Republic*			28	56	55	67	92
Spain	1,411	1,305	2,437	3,018	3,814	5,140	6,867
Turkey			339	601	714	602	780
United Kingdom	3,082	3,648	7,905	10,772	12,459	9,849	11,500
United States	10,916	7,832	19,705	27,935	23,532	21,787	26,842
TOTAL	43,106	35,511	63,288	84,795	83,311	84,174	99,274
Adapted from Table 4 of the OECD Development Co-operation Report 2010, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/20747721							
* Non-DAC members							

ODA is defined as the following flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions: (i) those provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and (ii) those for which each transaction: a) is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and b) is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25 percent (calculated at a rate of discount of 10 percent). The data are reported on a calendar year (January 1 to December 31) basis.

Guiding Principles on Aid Effectiveness:

- **Ownership** - Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.
- **Alignment** - Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.
- **Harmonization** - Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.
- **Results** - Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results, and these are measured.
- **Mutual Accountability** - Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

Not only do NATO member states possess significant development expertise and resources in their own right, but they are also patrons of the world's leading multilateral development institutions, such as the World Bank; Regional Development Banks in Asia, Africa and the Americas; United Nation Agencies; and other multilaterals like the International Monetary Fund. For instance, the table below shows that in 2008 NATO member states contributed over 27 billion USD (or approximately 79% of all DAC ODA) to multilateral organizations.

ODA from NATO Countries to Multilateral Organizations in 2008

	Total	World Bank Group	Reg. Dev Banks	United Nations Agencies	EU Institutions	Other Multi-laterals
TOTAL DAC (USD Million)	35,029	8,516	3,083	5,759	13,040	4,632
NATO Support	27,548	6,247	2,142	3,496	12,010	3,653
<i>Belgium</i>	1,010	275	45	78	549	63
<i>Canada</i>	1,428	689	285	229	0	225
<i>Denmark</i>	975	183	58	346	271	117
<i>France</i>	4,446	547	244	274	2,528	853
<i>Germany</i>	4,918	1,136	270	295	2,813	405
<i>Greece</i>	391	80	44	14	239	14
<i>Italy</i>	3,022	645	351	210	1,713	103
<i>Luxembourg</i>	136	17	2	68	35	14
<i>Netherlands</i>	1,793	316	75	575	630	198
<i>Portugal</i>	247	41	25	11	161	9
<i>Spain</i>	2,065	342	197	267	1,037	223
<i>United Kingdom</i>	4,133	1,129	315	436	2,034	219
<i>United States</i>	2,983	848	232	692	0	1,210

Adapted from Table 15 of the OECD Development Co-operation Report 2010,
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/20747721>

NATO and the EU already operate under detailed mechanisms for cooperation. And NATO has worked with the UN's development agencies in Afghanistan, the Balkans and other conflict zones. In these partnerships, the Alliance generally: (1) leads the security portfolio; (2) provides logistic and operational support to the UN's humanitarian, reconstruction, stabilization and governance-building activities. There is thus a simplistic division of labor: "We break it, you fix it".

Institutional ties between NATO and other multilateral development agencies are less apparent, however. And even where NATO collaborates with development agencies, the scope and depth of these ties neither lend themselves to a “comprehensive” approach to strategy development, nor translate into a coherent division of labor when strategy moves on to operations in theater. The result is what a 1997 Stanley Foundation report on post-conflict/rule-of-law operations describes:

A veritable ‘circus atmosphere’ of UN agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and individual donor governments all engaged in the often uncoordinated monitoring of human rights, policing assistance, judicial rehabilitation, investigating war crimes, training police, and administering prisons.⁴

Division within the international community creates opportunities for spoilers to co-opt aid and assistance instruments – derailing them or playing them off against each other, diverting resources toward parochial ends or, worse, fueling the underlying division and conflict which drive the domestic struggle for power.⁵

As a 2000 United Nations report on peace operations notes, “post-conflict operations” in the modern context is generally a misnomer and represents more of a goal than a description of the operating context:

United Nations operations since [the 1990s] have tended to deploy where conflict has not resulted in victory for any side: it may be that the conflict is

⁴ Post-conflict justice: the role of the international community at 7, 1997.

⁵ Stromseth, Jane, et al, *Can Might Make Rights? Building Rule of Law After Military Interventions* at 351, 2006.

staleminated militarily or that international pressure has brought fighting to a halt, but in any event the conflict is unfinished. United Nations operations thus do not deploy into post-conflict situations so much as they deploy to create such situations. That is, they work to divert the unfinished conflict, and the personal, political or other agendas that drove it, from the military to the political arena, and to make that diversion permanent.⁶

Learning from these lessons, NATO and the UN signed a framework agreement in 2008, which has improved practical cooperation in some cases. However, as *NATO 2020* documents, problems remain: “UN personnel have been disappointed, on occasion, with the level of security and support that NATO provides. NATO tends to wait until a mission begins before starting to coordinate with the UN. When in theatre, the two institutions sometimes engage in disputes over their respective responsibilities”.⁷

The risks posed by the failed integration of all the elements of national and international civilian-military assets in reconstruction and stabilization operations are, therefore, considerably greater than mere administrative waste (duplication of effort, lost time, gaps in assistance). Failed integration means a risk of overall policy incoherence (mixed messages, elements of national power acting at cross purposes).

In this light, NATO’s aspiration to a “comprehensive approach” to emerging security threats requires considerably more than mere administrative interoperability among civilian-military institutions and actors, or a more efficient allocation of resources at national and multilateral levels. The ultimate goal of a “comprehensive approach” is policy coherence among Alliance members in terms of emerging

⁶ S/2000/809, para. 20, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, August 21, 2000.

⁷ *NATO 2020* at 25.

threats.

2. “Policy Coherence” and the Comprehensive Approach

Somewhat akin to NATO’s push for a “comprehensive approach” to emerging security threats, there is an emerging consensus in the development community for greater coherence in policies across sectors. National security, agriculture, trade, investment, migration and other foreign policies impact developing countries, yet they often work at cross-purposes. Two examples illustrate the point:

1. It makes little sense, but is not uncommon for one arm of government to sink substantial sums of development assistance into a developing country’s agriculture sector to improve its economic competitiveness, but then have another arm of the same government erect tariffs on agricultural imports or other protectionist measures like domestic agricultural subsidies.
2. Vanderbilt University recently conducted a study on the effectiveness of US foreign assistance on democracy promotion and governance reforms in the developing world. On average, in the period 1990-2003, the study found that “investments in democracy promotion produced significant increases in the national level of democracy as measured by Freedom House and Polity IV indicators”. This was the first effort to study the question on a worldwide basis, encompassing the entire post-Cold War period. The study also found the “coefficient for the interaction between US Military Assistance Priority and democracy assistance [to be] negative,” suggesting that democracy programs are less effective when the US provides larger amounts of military assistance. (The study did not reach the question of why there is negative correlation between a country’s democracy score and being a “priority country” for

US Military Assistance.)⁸

Post-conflict and transitional phases present an acute need for a coherent division of labor between the security sector and the development community. Pragmatic civilian development professionals appreciate the primacy of sustainable security over what would otherwise be long-term development orthodoxy. This point is underscored in a USAID/UNDP report, “First Steps in Post-Conflict State Building”. Using East Timor and Liberia as case studies, the report elevates security as the *sine qua non* in post-conflict operations: “without the state’s legitimate monopoly on the means of violence, nothing else can work”.⁹

Development professionals put a premium on “greater coherence between security and development policies”, and see it as “as key to establishing an effective [whole of government approach] on fragile states”.¹⁰ This finding, from OECD’s 2006 assessment of the “whole of government” policies of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, emphasizes unity of effort as a critical means of maintaining policy coherence across “whole of government” operations. The study, evaluating stability and development initiatives implemented within “fragile states”¹¹ also found:

In terms of benefits, it is apparent that in order to be more effective, policy coherence and [whole of government approaches] should go beyond providing a collection of independent policies

⁸ Finkel, Steve, et al. *Deepening Our Understanding of the Effects of US Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building*, Final Report, January 28, 2008, available at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/pdfs/SORA_FinalReport_June08_508c.pdf

⁹ First Steps in Post-Conflict State Building: A UNDP-USAID Study at 23 February 2007.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Democratic Republic of Congo (linked with Belgium and France), Haiti (linked with Canada), Solomon Islands (linked with Australia), Sudan (linked with Sweden and the Netherlands), and Yemen (linked with the UK).

guided by departmental mandates. If not, the risk of policy incoherence is magnified. The advantages of coherence are clear: more coherent policies and activities can contribute to the overall objective of long-term development and stability in fragile states at a lower overall fiscal cost. In addition, the risk of these objectives either being compromised, or simply not being met, is reduced. Finally, from the perspective of harmonization and alignment, coherent policies and activities may have greater legitimacy in the eyes of the recipient country and will therefore be more likely to receive a positive response.¹²

The issue at the core of institutionalizing a “comprehensive approach” is, therefore, *policy coherence across interagency lines, not mere “plussing up” of civilian capacity* with more resources to complement military security operations.

The evolution of the “whole of government” approach since the end of the Cold War in the United States illustrates the point. The United States’ recent push for “whole of government” approaches to national security problem sets has been driven by interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as counterterrorism missions in Yemen, the Horn of Africa and elsewhere. These interventions – as explored in other papers in this volume – have put in sharp relief issues about the capacity and ability of civilians to strategically plan and operate across the civilian-military divide (not to mention across civilian interagency lines).

The impetus for improved civilian capacity, in the US context, was driven by the Department of Defense (DOD) – based on what

¹² Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States*, 7, 2006, herein after, “OECD WGA Study”.

it thought it needed and did not have to (1) stabilize and reconstruct Iraq and Afghanistan, but also (2) interdict or contain threats in fragile or failing states, especially those with a nexus to terrorist activities. As detailed by the US Government Accountability Office, “DOD was frustrated by the absence of a significant, flexible, well-funded civilian capacity at the State Department ... [one that is] able to take responsibility for post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization after US combat operations concluded”.¹³

DOD’s dissatisfaction was outlined in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), highlighting the lack of deployable specialists in other US government agencies. The QDR assessed that this civilian incapacity has left the DOD as the “default responder” for post-conflict crises.

DOD is correct on one score: there cannot be an interagency process that is truly “whole of government”, absent stronger mission statements for civilian agencies that are clear and adequately resourced. Throughout the Cold War, as the US Department of Defense came to dominate resources and policy control over US national security policy, the State Department and the nation’s foreign policy institutions lagged behind. After the Cold War, “the number of State Department employees, including the diplomatic corps, shrank 8 percent from 1990 to 1997, despite a proliferation of new countries and international organizations”.¹⁴ In the same period, the Clinton Administration emphasized the promotion of “sustainable development” as the new, post-Cold War strategy for foreign aid under the aegis of the US Agency for International Development. A skeptical Congress, who did not see a nexus between development assistance to poor countries

¹³ Written Testimony of the Government Accountability Office before the U.S. Senate Arms Services Committee, June 9, 2010, available at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/OI060910/Adams_Testimony060910.pdf

¹⁴ Gordon Adams, *The Politics of National Security Budgets* (February 2007), available at <http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/pab07natsecbudget.pdf>

(like Afghanistan) and US national security, viewed foreign assistance increasingly as “public charity”. USAID’s budgets and staff were consequently slashed. When the George W. Bush Administration’s 2002 National Security Strategy established global development as the third “pillar” of US national security, along with defense and diplomacy, the institutional damage throughout the 1990s was already done. The US has spent the better part of the 2000s rebuilding that capacity, but civilian resources have been disproportionately focused on operating in two war theaters, not strengthening national institutions.

The strategic issues surrounding a “whole of government approach” to national security challenges, however, are not merely questions about the relative distribution of resources.

It is a mistake to interpret the DOD’s call for greater civilian capacity and participation in complex stabilization missions as a “we break it, you fix it” division of labor. This understanding miscomprehends the strategic challenges of working in fragile and failing states. As the OECD Fragile States Group charter study recognizes, the operational arch of post-conflict development is not linear or sequential (security then development), but a concurrent civilian-military process that pursues three broad goals in tandem: “a political process that legitimates the state; the development of the framework of the rule of law...; and the re-establishment of a framework of security, including but not limited to reconstitution of the state security apparatus. ... Efforts to achieve security first ... in the absence of legitimate political governance”, the OECD maintains, “have repeatedly failed”.¹⁵

US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine affirms the OECD’s “whole of government” concept of operations,

¹⁵ *From Fragility to Resilience: Concepts and Dilemmas of Statebuilding in Fragile States*, OECD Fragile States Group Framing Paper at 20, January 2007.

emphasizing (1) “unity of effort” between military-civilian actors, and (2) that it “must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation. Otherwise well-intentioned but uncoordinated actions can cancel each other or provide vulnerabilities for insurgents to exploit”.¹⁶

Robert Gates, one year into his appointment as the US Secretary of Defense, recognized the institutional reform calculus entailed by the non-linear, non-sequential nature of asymmetric threats:

What we do know is that the threats and challenges we will face abroad in the first decades of the 21st century will extend well beyond the traditional domain of any single government agency. The real challenges we have seen emerge since the end of the Cold War – from Somalia to the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere – make clear we in defense need to change our priorities to be better able to deal with the prevalence of what is called “asymmetric warfare”. **[T]hese new threats also require our government to operate as a whole differently – to act with unity, agility, and creativity.** And they will require considerably more resources devoted to America’s non-military instruments of power.¹⁷

Across civilian-military lines there are fiscal, human and institutional resources that can be better managed and balanced to address emerging 21st century security threats. More important, there is a joint recognition between civilian and military counterparts on the need to better coordinate their efforts to address commonly held challenges. However, these challenges cannot be resolved merely by increasing civilian staffing and having them do more of

¹⁶ United States Army and Marine Corps, *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24 at 1-121, December 2006.

¹⁷ Remarks of Secretary Robert Gates at Kansas State University, November 26, 2007.

the same. It requires, as Secretary Gates notes, a wholesale change to how governments operate at a national level, and how, by extension, their commonly funded multilateral institutions (NATO, EU, UN, development banks, etc) integrate their operations. Short of operational change, at minimum, this shift requires civilian and military agents to better integrate their strategic approaches to emerging threats and challenges – and be prepared to do so with fewer resources.

In this light, a “comprehensive” approach is less a substantive policy construct, and more of a process for integrating resources to carry out a coherent set of foreign policy preferences of national government leadership and affiliated multi-lateral institutions. Stated another way: while emerging national security challenges cut across multi-disciplinary civilian/military competencies, a “comprehensive” solution is an empty vessel without strategic guidance from national level political leadership. In the absence of an integrated strategic vision, agencies go rogue – driven by mandates, not strategy.

The OECD affirms that “effective political leadership is key for the implementation of all-encompassing approaches such as whole-of-government approaches ... ”.¹⁸ Only political leadership has the elevation to identify a clear focus and a coherent agenda for the crosscutting government actors involved. The different actors need to understand from their political leadership the importance of their involvement:

This is confirmed by the case of the UK, where sustained joined-up working on Yemen is related to Cabinet attention, as well as by other cases such as Canada’s involvement in Haiti. The report on the Netherlands states that the Minister for Development Cooperation and the Minister of Defence have led the

¹⁸ *OECD WGA Study* at 22.

way in creating greater collaboration between the two policy fields, by publicly acknowledging the interaction and interdependence between both fields, by stepping out of their comfort zones and by advocating greater cohesion.¹⁹

“This implies”, the OECD continues, “building coalitions among policy communities and negotiating various policy options ... different actors will have different perspectives ... (and stakes) ... [ranging from] counter-terrorism to governance, conflict prevention and peace building, or trade promotion”.²⁰ The challenge is balancing these different rationales and perspectives through clear, coherent strategic planning at the policy level.

3. Constraints on Promoting Policy Coherence Across the Civilian-Military Divide

Papers in this volume identify a number of challenges that hinder the ability of civilian-military agencies to improve coordination, collaboration and the overall strategic orientation of foreign policy instruments. Some of these include:

- formalizing coordination mechanisms to overcome organizational differences – e.g., by establishing joint-strategic planning cells or by improving civilian planning capacity;
- developing a well-trained workforce, and expanding the instrumental reach of the civilian workforce beyond corps who mainly focus on managing outside contractors;
- sharing and integrating national security information across agencies;
- rationalizing the steady proliferation of aid programs, accounts,

¹⁹ Id.

²⁰ Id.

- instruments, and initiatives across multiple agencies and departments;
- developing mechanisms to ensure that development assistance programs (and other forms of so-called “soft-power” such as public diplomacy) are definable, achievable, measurable and sustainable.

At least in the US context, the vacuum created by these institutional and operational shortcomings within civilian agencies is not being filled by a reformed foreign aid system, but by parallel structures in the DOD. One example of this strain and imbalance is the Defense Department’s Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), which includes substantial development elements rather than just military assistance. An audit conducted by the US Government Accountability Office found that CJTF-HOA personnel “lack needed skills for (1) applying funding to activities, (2) understanding African cultural issues, and (3) working with interagency partners at US embassies”.²¹

While the US and other NATO members must bolster their foreign aid systems, restructure their agencies, expand civilian personnel, and undertake other reforms noted above, another major challenge to improved civilian-military strategic planning will be the devolution of military structures such as CJTF-HOA that have “crept” into the foreign aid business. The issue of DOD “mission creep” and crowding out of civilian agencies was highlighted by a US Congressional oversight panel and its written report, *Foreign Embassies Grapple to Guide Foreign Aid*.²²

These findings constituted a basis for recent legislation

²¹ “DOD needs to determine the future of its Horn of Africa task force”, GAO (GAO-10-504), April 2010, pp. 21-22.

²² US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Minority Staff Report*, 110-33, November 16, 2007.

sponsored by the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and ranking opposition member. The legislation would enact substantial reforms to the US foreign aid system. The oversight report called for (1) the development of a “national strategy for aid/foreign assistance” that is driven primarily by the needs of beneficiaries; (2) giving the Department of State primary authority for all foreign assistance (including assistance coming from military agencies); (3) increasing aid resources to civilian agencies; (4) increasing the role of Congress in Foreign Aid; and (5) ensuring local ownership of aid programs.²³

Another US Congressional Report underscored the need for a “national strategy” that would encompass “all foreign aid activities” and guide “the decisions of US policy makers”.²⁴ Such a document, the report found, “would provide much-needed coherence to the currently fragmented system of foreign assistance”.²⁵ This finding was affirmed by a recent Center for Strategic International Studies report, *Integrating 21st Century Development and Security Assistance*, which recommends an overall cross-agency strategy for security assistance in particular.²⁶

The absence of a broad national accord and strategic vision on the ends, ways, and means of foreign assistance acts as a major constraint on efforts of development, defense and diplomatic technocrats to cobble together coherent “downstream” strategies in discrete foreign policy contexts.

Two other major constraints on ensuring policy coherence across civilian-military lines include: (1) differences in the expectant

²³ Id.

²⁴ CRS Report for Congress, *Foreign Aid Reform: Studies and Recommendations*, July 28, 2009.

²⁵ Id.

²⁶ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Integrating 21st Century Development and Security Assistance*, January 2008.

time horizons of development assistance strategists versus military strategists, and (2) challenges involving multi-agent decision-making and the complexities inherent in environments where civilian-military cooperation is required:

(1) Expectant Time Horizons. Civilian intervention and development methods are generally structured around long-term, sustainable development models, and are less sensitive to the immediate demands of transitioning responsibility for security and peace enforcement to a domestic civilian authority. As a consequence, civilian planning rhythms and strategies are less sensitive to the time pressures that their military counterparts face and are more inclined to invest in strategies that have a long-term impact. By contrast, military planning rhythms and strategies tend to be hypersensitive to time and will err on the side of quick impact strategies to facilitate a rapid “exit” without regard to their long-term sustainability.

In their extreme forms, neither orientation can calibrate a coherent strategy to stabilize a country in the grips of an insurgency, for instance. As a result, the civilian-military conversation on planning issues tends to be deaf to the subtle tradeoffs in the promotion of long-term sustainable development and concessions to promote near-term stability. Civilian-military planners require a common assessment framework to identify and reconcile these tradeoffs and the respective priorities of defense, diplomatic and development agencies.²⁷

Decentralization of planning structures to the theater will enhance the ability of civilian-military planners to reconcile tradeoffs and set reasonable targets and goals. Alliance embassies, aid missions of member countries and multilateral institutions that are present

²⁷ I have argued for such a framework in *Counterinsurgency: the Challenge for NATO Strategy and Operations, Forum Paper No. 11*, NATO Defense College, November 2009, <http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=139>

in theater with NATO forces should be accorded a central role in planning, budgeting and decision-making with respect to development assistance to those countries. Assistance should not be seen as an end in itself, but be part of a larger scheme to create conditions under which it is no longer needed.

Consequently, programs must include monitoring and evaluation structures that are conducted systematically to ensure financial accountability, evaluate performance, assess impact, determine lessons learned, disseminate findings, and identify steps for improvement. Most importantly, planners must engage beneficiaries of assistance; enlist them in the planning process; and, to the maximum extent practicable, leverage host-government structures and systems in the delivery of assistance.

Brian Atwood, M. Peter McPherson, and Andrew Natsios – three former administrators of USAID – affirm these requirements. In an article entitled “Arrested Development, Making Foreign Aid a More Effective Tool”, they identify an inability to balance short-term interventions with long-term development assistance as a major shortcoming of US foreign assistance policy and strategic planning. They argue that this balance can be best struck through individual country aid plans – ones that address immediate needs while building the capacity of such countries to sustain themselves.²⁸

Domestically, national level policy-makers could improve strategic and budgetary planning over a three- to five-year period. This would enable the disbursement of civilian assistance in a more timely and predictable manner. Public disclosure of detailed and timely information on national budgets, disbursements, and planned future allocations of assistance (including the amounts, objectives, categories and types, countries, conditionality, implementing partners, and, when

²⁸ Foreign Affairs, Volume 87, No. 6, November/December, 2008.

available, results) will promote greater transparency across the NATO alliance and enable more accurate budgeting and planning with respect to the timing and expectant duration of civilian-military activities. In other words, national capitals should (1) put down their 3,000 mile screwdrivers, (2) undertake a longer-term view of assistance needs, and (3) communicate their judgments to key policy stakeholders in the interagency, across the Alliance, and in concert with appropriators.

(2) Environmental Constraints. The complexity of strategic decision-making processes can be affected by a number of different environmental issues where proposed “joined-up” civilian-military activities will occur. Many of these issues pose substantial exogenous challenges to coherent planning and are beyond the manageable interests of planners to control. These issues include:

- *Is the environment primarily accessible or inaccessible?* In an accessible environment – one where planners have access to complete, accurate, up-to-date information about the operating environment – the task of civilian-military strategic planning is considerably easier. However, many national security environments are inaccessible – presenting, in US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s famous turn-of-phrase, a series of “known unknowns” and “unknown unknowns” that will frustrate even the most well informed, tightly coordinated, and lavishly resourced civilian-military planning efforts.
- *Is the environment primarily deterministic or non-deterministic?* In a deterministic environment – one where any action has a single guaranteed effect (or at least a reasonably predictable range of effects) – there is little uncertainty about the end-state that will result from civilian and military interventions. However, the non-deterministic nature of asymmetric environments presents greater difficulties for

civilian-military planning teams in (1) agreeing on the problem set posed by the environment and (2) arriving at a common understanding or consensus on the proper mix of civilian-military tools to address the problem set.

- *Is the environment episodic or non-episodic?* An episodic environment – where the performance of an agent is dependent on a number of discrete episodes, with no link between the performance of an agent in different scenarios – lends itself to a “neat” catalog of essential activities for planning purposes. These environments are particularly attractive for civilian-military planners because they permit the definition of *a priori* divisions of labor between multiple agents playing to their comparative institutional strengths. Episodic environments are simpler from an interagency planning perspective because the civilian-military agents can decide what action to perform – more or less – based only on the current episode. It need not reason about the interactions between this and future episodes, and the actions and reactions of other agents in the system. Modern operating environments – especially in counter-insurgency operations – tend to be non-episodic, however: multiple actions must occur in concert, thereby frustrating the ability of interagency planners to settle on a coherent division of labor.

- *Is the environment static or dynamic?* In a static environment – one that can reasonably be assumed to remain unchanged except by the performance of actions by the agent (e.g., a “surgical strike” against a military target with no collateral damage) – a planner can be reasonably assured that an intervention will produce no material changes to the underlying environment (beyond the intervention itself). However, in a complex civilian-military strategic context, the environment is

usually dynamic – i.e., one that has other processes operating on it, and which hence changes in ways beyond a civilian-military agent's control. Planning challenges posed by the “law of unintended consequences” are particularly acute in these environments.

Most of the emerging security challenges identified in NATO 2020 require civilian-military engagement of inaccessible, non-deterministic, non-episodic, and dynamic environments. This counsels – at best – humility in the prospects of effective integration of civilian-military planning structures and systems. Indeed, these environments confound interagency attempts to arrive at a common understanding of the problem (let alone a common strategic response). Hindsight (the luxury of auditors) is always 20/20, but looking forward in complex environments (the burden of planners) is like staring into a western horizon, with coke-bottle glasses, at dawn.

4. Conclusion: Institutional Competition for Resources.

If the need for a “comprehensive” approach does not force national policymakers across the NATO alliance to improve the coherence of foreign policy and the overall interagency division of labor, inescapable budget realities will. Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently identified US sovereign debt as “the biggest threat we have to our national security”. “Within two years, just the annual interest on the debt will be close to \$600 billion. And that’s, notionally, about the size of the Defense Department budget. It’s not sustainable”, he said.²⁹ Sovereign debt and the economic downturn have compelled austerity measures across the NATO alliance. This has already put pressure on revenue streams and will inevitably lead to cuts across the foreign affairs and security portfolios of alliance members. Either this dynamic will compel

²⁹ Comments of Adm. Mike Mullen, June 24, 2010 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FrJ1qzG0Ewk>

national policymakers to do a better job of making the interagency process work, or it will enflame rivalries across interagency lines – creating disincentives for a truly collaborative and integrated civilian-military planning process.

To put in context the point on resource disparities, the US DOD's real outlays in Fiscal Year 2010 (\$626.4b) will nearly double what it spent in FY2001 and will exceed (in inflation-adjusted dollars) any single year's spending since World War II – even during the height of the Cold War, where the conventional threats to US national security were the greatest. This also means that DOD's real outlays (in one year) will exceed by 25% the combined ODA of all NATO countries since the end of the Cold War – where threats posed by asymmetric sources, especially in the developing world, have been the greatest and most numerous. There is no magic algorithm for calibrating the proper distribution of resources between military and development assistance. The cost of funding a standing army, navy, air force and other elements of national defense will always outstrip the cost curve of development assistance (especially because foreign assistance instrumentalities tend to leverage indigenous systems and resources). However, in a global security context where the drivers of instability since the end of the Cold War have emerged from political, economic and social pathologies in the developing world, there appears to be an imbalance of resource allocation across the Alliance.

Interagency Challenges in Strategic Assessments

Kirk A. Johnson

Introduction

Contingency operations in the twenty-first century have generally embraced a “whole of government” approach, whereby military operations are paired with civilian reconstruction and stabilization programs that focus on such areas as political matters, governance, essential services, and economic and rule-of-law development. These interagency efforts pair military and civilian entities that, in the past, had often been stove-piped.

Military and civilian agencies have taken great strides to integrate themselves together in order to multiply their efforts, especially in the counterinsurgency environments of Iraq and Afghanistan. Assessing the progress – or lack thereof – in these operations has been more difficult, however, for a number of reasons. The two main U.S. agencies involved in these campaigns, the Departments of State and Defense, have a number of structural and cultural impediments to conducting combined assessments in these theaters. Over the past several years, the interagency process in these assessments has improved, but a number of challenges remain.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and evaluate these interagency challenges to strategic assessments. These challenges include variations in their preferred modes of assessments, differences in key metrics favored by civilian and military officials, and disconnects in linking assessments to strategic planning efforts. While this discussion largely centers on recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, these ideas have applicability for a broad range of contingency/reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) operations.

Interagency Assessments as a Useful Tool

Previous NATO Defense College (NDC) workshop papers have noted the importance of collecting metrics, even when this is dangerous and difficult because of high-threat environments.¹ As noted therein, “Without both quantitative and qualitative metrics, assessments on progress and therefore future policy decisions are reduced to mere rhetoric and conjecture”.² The key with the interagency assessment process is to link these assessments to the policy process. Broadly speaking, this process takes place on two levels:

1. strategic planning level (usually in theater); and
2. policy level (usually in Washington or allied political capitals).

Much of the discussion here will focus on the strategic planning level. On a policy level (at least in the United States), the National Security Council (NSC) generally brings the relevant interagency actors together on the most critical issues in a reasonable manner (see below). Its structure is such that officials from the Departments of State and Defense, various intelligence agencies and the White House come together for policy assessments at a very high level. The interagency process generally works at the NSC, but only where national security issues are concerned.

Interagency processes are generally much more difficult at the theater/strategic planning level, here defined as the senior levels in a contingency operations theater, for reasons discussed later. Yet, they are critically important. Strategic planning translates broad policy guidance into actionable goals. It provides a mechanism

¹ K. A. Johnson, Ph.D., “Measuring Counterinsurgency Effectiveness: Easier Said than Done” in *Counterinsurgency: The Challenge for NATO Strategy and Operations*, Forum Paper 11, NATO Defense College, October 2009, pp.94-112.

² Ibid, 95.

for determining what is important and what is not important for operational-level organizations. If done well, strategic planning efforts provide a feedback loop at regular intervals for assessment and planning review.

The disconnect is that at the highest levels of U.S. Government, namely at the NSC, the interagency works because of direct interaction by the Executive Office of the President on key issues in Washington. In the field, however, agencies may be able to work together, but this is not because of structure. Too often, this occurs primarily for personality-driven reasons. In theaters such as Iraq and Afghanistan, officials are answerable based on chains of command (e.g. the U.S. Ambassador in the case of State Department officials, the Commanding General in the case of Defense Department officers, and some civilian officials whose chains of command do not link together below the level of the President).

Campaign plans and other strategic planning documents in such theaters of operations deal with this by stressing a “unity of effort”, rather than a stronger “unity of command” structure. Much has been written on the problems associated with unified efforts vs. command structures; weak structures are prone to “personality-based” cooperation in ad-hoc arrangements and, as some believe, have high risks of failure.³

Even if the chain of command issue can be resolved (the discussion of this is left for another paper), institutional issues across the interagency make strategic assessments difficult in contingency operations. This paper describes some of these major issues, discusses

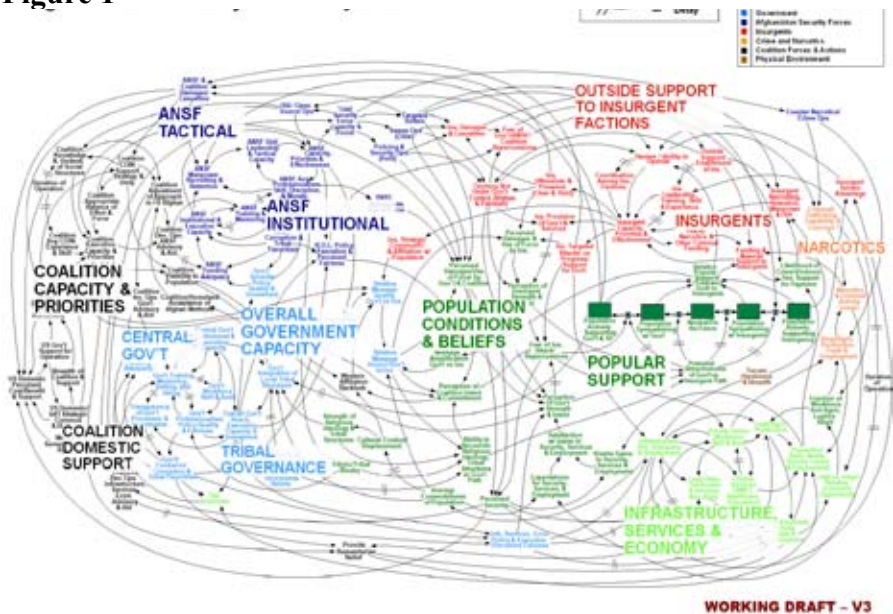
³ See, for example, M. A. Flournoy, “Achieving Unity of Effort in Interagency Operations”, Testimony to the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Hearing on Prospects for Effective Interagency Collaboration on National Security, January 29, 2008, at http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNASTestimony_Flournoy-HASCJan2908.pdf (accessed June 12, 2010).

current strategic assessments, and makes some recommendations for policymakers in the field.

State Writes Cables, Defense Does PowerPoint

One of the first major obstacles to strategic interagency assessments is cultural. Put simply, different agencies have different modes of conducting assessments, and these do not necessarily work well together. The U.S. Department of Defense has a famous penchant for PowerPoint, which at times has led to some startling slides being created. At one briefing in 2009, the following graphic was presented at a high-level briefing (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Source: Richard Engle, "So What Is the Actual Surge Strategy?" December 2, 2009, at <http://worldblog.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2009/12/02/2140281.aspx> (accessed June 12, 2010).

At that briefing, the (now former) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commander, General Stanley McCrystal, famously observed, “When we understand that slide, we’ll have won the war”.⁴ While the purpose of the “spaghetti slide” was to describe how the Afghanistan effort is a highly complex intersection of interests, conflicts, and institutions, it has become emblematic of the military’s reliance on PowerPoint as an informational and analytical tool. A number of military officers and observers have written on this topic, arguing that PowerPoint may be a good informational tool, but a poor analytical tool,⁵ consumes far too much time of junior and field grade officers,⁶ and at its extreme, “makes us stupid”.⁷

In comparison, analytical work conducted by U.S. State Department officials is typically in narrative form, often in short “cable” format consisting of a handful of numbered paragraphs. The format hearkens back to at least the 1860s,⁸ to a time when messages were “cabled” from posts around the world to Washington. The format has little in common with PowerPoint; while it does convey narrative information, cables have no pictures or the capacity for graphical representation.

Cables have their disadvantages as well. Even with advances in classified internet technologies that post and transmit information instantaneously from anywhere in the world, the format has not

⁴ E. Bumiller, “We Have Met the Enemy and He is PowerPoint”, *New York Times*, April 26, 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/27powerpoint.html?hp> (accessed June 12, 2010).

⁵ T.X. Hammes, “Essay: Dumb-Dumb Bullets: As a Decision-Making Aid, PowerPoint is a Poor Tool”, *Small Wars Journal*, July 2009, at <http://www.afji.com/2009/07/4061641> (accessed June 12, 2010).

⁶ E. Bumiller, *op. cit.*

⁷ Marine Corps Maj. Gen. James Mattis, as quoted by T. Ricks, “Gen. Mattis Warns Our Military Can Become Overpowering but Still Irrelevant”, *The Best Defense* (blog), April 12, 2010 at http://ricks.foreign-policy.com/posts/2010/04/12/gen_mattis_warns_our_military_can_become_overpowering_but_still_irrelevant (accessed June 12, 2010).

⁸ Ralph E. Weber, “America’s First Encrypted Cable” in *Unclassified Extracts of Classified Studies* Vol. 36, No. 4, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol36no4/pdf/v36i4a10p.pdf> (accessed June 12, 2010).

changed substantially in decades. Also, with the hundreds of thousands of cables issued by the State Department in Washington and by posts around the world, it can be exceptionally difficult to wade through and find the important information about a topic, notwithstanding advances in search technologies.

Important here, however, is the idea that the Departments of State and Defense have different modes of assessment that are not necessarily congruent with each other. Defense puts a high premium on graphical representations of phenomena, along with “bullet points” and other short commentary. Charts and graphs displaying quantitative information or event “storyboards” are easy to use with PowerPoint, but analytical discussion of such information is nearly impossible.

State Department cables have the opposite problem. While their text-only format is good for describing basic information, complex ideas can sometimes be difficult to describe without the use of a graphical device. Cables are, at times, analytical in nature, but too often this is the exception rather than the rule. The short nature of many cables tends to limit the level of analysis that can take place.

Besides the cable method, the State Department does conduct longer formal analyses. Usually these papers are written in Washington, often based on information culled from cables and other sources. In some rare circumstances, Embassies establish planning and analysis cells that have more of a capability for analysis. At the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, the Joint Strategic Planning and Assessment (JSPA) office met this role.⁹ The Civ-Mil Plans and Assessments Sub-Section (CMPASS) of the Political-Military section of U.S. Embassy Kabul currently performs a similar function there. Analytical cells such as these two, however, are the exception rather than the rule, and JSPA at

⁹ See Bradford H. Higgins, “Joint Strategic Planning in Iraq: Optimism is not a Plan – Needed Changes for a Long War”, on page 129 in this volume.

U.S. Embassy Baghdad was shuttered in 2009.

Important to this discussion is the idea that because the corporate cultures of the Departments of State and Defense differ when it comes to assessments, bringing officials together for the purpose of strategic planning and analysis has been difficult, to say the least. Reactions by State Department officials on combined assessment tasking have ranged from acquiescence to opposition and hostility, at times. The Economic Section of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad went so far in recent years as to print up t-shirts declaring that they “don’t do slides” but instead do content, implying that their brand of analysis is superior to PowerPoint.

At the same time, the Department of Defense has not, at times, been enthusiastic about moving away from the use of PowerPoint for assessments. For example, the major combined assessment in Baghdad, the Effects Assessment Synchronization Board (EASB, later called the Conditions Assessment Synchronization Board, or CASB), is a very long set of PowerPoint briefings.¹⁰

The culture clash may be subsiding, however. Because of Congressional requirements over the past several years, the Department of Defense has issued longer informational and analytical reports on progress in Iraq and Afghanistan on a regular basis. The two recurring reports, “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” and “Report on Progress toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan”, are the kinds of analytical pieces that one might expect as interagency strategic assessments. Because the Congressional requirement is leveled on the Department of Defense, however, these are not interagency-generated strategic assessments but DoD assessments with “coordination” from State and other interagency partners.¹¹ In addition, these assessments

¹⁰ The Iraq EASB/CASB assessments largely took place from 2006-09. More recently, these assessments were replaced by the somewhat trimmed-down Senior Leader’s Forum.

¹¹ See, for example, Department of Defense, “Report on Progress toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan”, Report to Congress, October 2009, 4, at http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/October_2009.

serve as historical reporting documents rather than strategic planning documents, although there are aspects of the reports that would be useful for strategic planning purposes. This criticism notwithstanding, these reports provide at least some common ground on which to base a true interagency strategic planning document.

“Stoplight” Assessments: Not Just for the DoD

Arguably the most maligned aspect of PowerPoint presentations is the use of the “stoplight” chart, whose colors represent levels of quality or concern – i.e. “green” represents a good or positive indicator while “amber” or “red” is of concern or bad, respectively. The benefit of a stoplight chart is that problem areas can be immediately identified in an expedient manner. The downside engenders, as one observer described it, a “Crayola analysis” of important issues. He continued by noting that “‘coloring within the lines’ does not explain or win wars”.¹² While this is perhaps somewhat unfair, there is a methodological rationale for the criticism; the difference between qualitative ratings (e.g. “green” vs. “amber”) is not usually consistent or even.¹³

While this kind of criticism is often leveled at the DoD, the State Department in Iraq has its own heavily qualitative assessment that functioned in a similar manner (i.e. a categorical assessment approach), but without the colors. The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) “maturity model”, which seeks to evaluate various important indicators across political, economic, governance and rule-of-law lines of operation, is drafted quarterly by each Iraq-based PRT.

[pdf](#) (accessed May 31, 2010).

¹² A. Cordesman, “The Afghan War: Metrics, Narratives, and Winning the War”, *CSIS Report*, revised June 7, 2010, pg. 45, at http://csis.org/files/publication/100524_AfghanCampaignMetrics_0.pdf (accessed June 12, 2010).

¹³ It should be noted here that, especially for qualitative indicators, the “cut-off points” between the assessment categories can be at least somewhat arbitrary. In addition, the distances between the thresholds (or the widths of the assessment categories) are not always the same across indicators.

The basic purpose, true to its name, is to assess the “maturity” of each province in providing for their own needs. As a report from the U.S. Institute of Peace noted, “the maturity model is a useful tool in theory”, but the model’s problems are in its application. In particular, “it is subjective per the individual perspectives of team leaders,” and “the model is limited because the PRT is only privy to a certain amount of information in the province”.¹⁴

This last point is especially important – while PRTs arguably have more information about their respective provinces than any other expatriate entity, this information is often gathered from political contacts, locally hired staff, tribal sheikhs, and other opinion leaders. These maturity model assessments do not typically include information from the broad-based surveys conducted in Iraq, which would add a welcome dimension to these assessments.¹⁵ Current development work on the next generation PRT assessment would include such quantitative information but, given that the PRTs are set to close down in mid-2011, the effort seems to be too little, too late.

Linking Assessments to the Strategy-Making Process

Civil/military counterinsurgency assessments are obviously a very important – and sometimes neglected – part of the planning and

¹⁴ R. Barber and S. Parker, “Evaluating Iraq’s Provincial Reconstruction Teams While Draw-down Looms: A USIP Trip Report”, December 2008, 15-16, at http://www.usip.org/files/re-sources/USIP_1208_6_0.PDF (accessed June 13, 2010).

¹⁵ In his confirmation hearing as Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN George W. Casey, Jr. discussed the existence of these polls. He noted specifically that the polls asked important questions on political confidence and essential service delivery that can be difficult to ascertain outside of polling. See “Nomination of GEN George W. Casey, Jr., USA, for Reappointment to the Grade of General and to be Chief of Staff, United States Army,” Senate Armed Services Committee, February 1, 2007, *S.Hrg. 110-370*, pg. 209 at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_senate_hearings&docid=f:42309.pdf (accessed May 12, 2009).

strategy-making processes. Counterinsurgency assessments, as has been noted previously, are commonly interested in measures of population security, winning the “hearts and minds” of the people, and other “measures of normalcy”.¹⁶ Actual metrics used in counterinsurgency assessments will vary, based on the dynamics in the particular country. In Afghanistan, a large part of the counterinsurgency campaign is concerned with the opium/poppies problem and transitioning Afghan farmers to other, legitimate cash crops. In Iraq, on the other hand, the drug trade is not a pressing problem. In both places, however, corruption is an issue, so therefore rule-of-law metrics are important to track. As noted elsewhere,¹⁷ not all counterinsurgencies are the same, so therefore leaders must tailor the assessment process to fit their particular situation.

Processes for generating the assessment questions must therefore be flexible and evolve with the conflict. As the *Counterinsurgency* manual notes, “Assessment ... design can be viewed as a perpetual design-learn-redesign activity”.¹⁸ Even if thoughtful and well-planned, assessment metrics can and should change as time passes. In late 2006, for example, measures of population security and safety were key on the minds of civilian and military leaders in Iraq as there were an average of 100 civilian deaths every day. By early 2009, a time when population security was far better,¹⁹ measures of normalcy and government legitimacy have risen in importance.

In many ways, gathering data and information in Afghanistan

¹⁶ These metrics are described in K. A. Johnson, Ph.D., op. cit.

¹⁷ See, for example, C. Schnaubelt, Ph.D., “Lessons from Iraq: New White House Must Face Cost of Afghan Fight” *Defense News*, February 8, 2009, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=3938404> (accessed June 12, 2010).

¹⁸ U.S. Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, December 2006, 4-6, available at <http://www.usgcoin.org/library/doctrine/COIN-FM3-24.pdf>

¹⁹ R. H. Reid, “Iraq is Doing Better, But the Future is Still Shaky” *Associated Press*, March 18, 2009, at http://www.cleveland.com/world/index.ssf/2009/03/iraq_is_doing_better_but_futur.html (accessed June 12, 2010).

– particularly via polls – will be far more complicated than in Iraq, mostly because of terrain. Even if a sufficient number of polling experts exists in-country, or could be trained quickly by international experts, coverage of the country, particularly in the mountainous regions, would be difficult. Many of these areas are sparsely populated, difficult to reach and therefore expensive to survey. Polling managers will need to weigh the value of having nationwide coverage in Afghanistan against the cost of interviewing relatively small populations in far-away places. Some surveys solve this problem by polling only major population areas. If such an operational decision is made in Afghanistan, the results should be noted as such. Naturally, this complicates the gathering of these important data. Nevertheless, over the past few years, a number of polls have been fielded in Afghanistan, with content improving over time, as indicated by recent public reports.²⁰

Most important in the strategic assessment process is its clear linkage to the strategic planning process. Now that the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns have been in effect for several years, both plans feature regular strategic assessments. The U.S. Embassies in Kabul and Baghdad both assign staff from their respective Political-Military sections to draft the civilian questions. Military counterparts have always had well-established plans and assessments (“J5”) offices, which to this day dwarf the civilian assessment personnel.

In Kabul, quarterly assessments are conducted through a division-of-labor approach whereby the civilian indicators (e.g. political, economic development, essential services and governance) are assessed by civilian offices, while military indicators (e.g. security, ANSF development) are assessed by military offices. Officials in Kabul report a high level of interagency cooperation and information-sharing in the development of these assessments. At the same time, these

²⁰ As noted by the Department of Defense, “Report on Progress toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan”, Report to Congress, various dates.

efforts are not “assessment by committee”; instead, the assessment comes from the office or entity related to the indicator. For example, budget issues are within the purview of the Treasury attaché’s office, corruption is assessed through the rule-of-law office, etc.

Over time, the assessment process has become more sophisticated, with quarterly reports to senior leaders in Kabul and Washington linked directly to indicators developed primarily by the National Security Council’s Af-Pak team in Washington (NSC/Af-Pak), but also by the Integrated Civ-Mil Campaign Plan objectives in Kabul. Civilian assessment staffers communicate regularly with the NSC, the Afghan Assessments Group (AAG) and the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) to coordinate the overall assessment efforts. While the campaign plan itself is a classified document, U.S. Embassy staff in Kabul indicates that topics include Afghan governance (institutional capacity, sub-national governance, rule of law, counter-narcotics, anti-corruption, human rights, etc.) and donor support and coordination for Afghan stabilization.²¹ Once cleared by senior civilian and military leaders in Kabul, the assessment goes to the NSC/Af-Pak team, which modifies/summarizes the assessment for transmission to other senior leaders.

In terms of the mode of assessment, recent Afghanistan efforts seem to have struck a balance across graphical, quantitative, and qualitative indicators. Each indicator has a color-coded score, but this is accompanied by a narrative description and justification for the overall assessment, with quantitative and/or qualitative data to support the assessment, depending on the indicator. In short, this approach tends to bring together many of the strengths of traditional civilian and military approaches.

²¹ E-mail correspondence with the author, May 23, 2010.

Where Should Assessments Take Place?

As a final note, it is perhaps important to discuss the position of strategic planning and assessment offices themselves. If these offices and personnel are not of sufficient standing in the organization, their efforts may not be given the due attention that is deserved. Usually among military plans and assessments offices, this is not an issue. In both Kabul and Baghdad, these planning and assessments offices have been headed by at least a Colonel.

On the civilian side, however, planning and assessments staff offices are no longer on an equal standing, from an organizational point-of-view. As noted previously, U.S. Embassy Baghdad established the Joint Strategic Planning and Assessment (JSPA) office,²² but this was shuttered in 2009, its staff reduced, and remaining personnel re-assigned to the Political-Military section. No similar stand-alone office ever existed at U.S. Embassy Kabul, although the pros and cons have been discussed.²³ Rather, in Kabul, the U.S. Embassy maintains a “Civ-Mil Planning and Assessments Sub-Section” (CMPASS) in its Pol-Mil section.

The drawback with downgrading the civilian strategic planning and assessments capabilities – by assigning them as tasks in one department, rather than a separate office – is twofold. First, planning and assessment tasks are relegated to one of many assignments for the Pol-Mil section (as U.S. Embassies in both Kabul and Baghdad are organized). Even if there are dedicated staff to accomplish those tasks, planning and assessment outputs have to compete against other departmental priorities within Pol-Mil. Second, having a Director of Strategic Planning and Assessments on the same level as the other Embassy sections (e.g. Economic, Political, Pol-Mil, etc.) may not

²² Bradford Higgins, *op. cit.*

²³ Telephone call between author and U.S. Embassy Pol-Mil staff member, August 16, 2010.

ensure that very senior civilian leaders (i.e. the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission) take planning and assessments seriously, but it would generally allow for access and consultation between the Director and Chief of Mission. On the other hand, if strategic planning and assessments are sufficiently important to the Chief and Deputy Chief of Mission, staff administrative location at the Embassy is almost moot; these efforts will receive adequate attention. On balance, though, the benefits of a stand-alone office in such a time of war seem to outweigh the drawbacks.

Conclusion

Over the past several years of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, integrating civilian and military assessment processes has been difficult, at best. The *Counterinsurgency* manual's mantra of assessment being "viewed as a perpetual design-learn-redesign activity" seems also to be applicable to the organization of assessment itself, rather than just the design of assessments. While assessment capabilities in Iraq are degrading with the exit of U.S. forces and the shuttering of the main civilian strategic planning and assessment office, the combined civ-mil assessment processes in Afghanistan appear to be improving.

These assessment processes, however, are only useful if properly and explicitly aligned with strategic planning efforts and flexible enough to change over time as the campaign evolves. In addition, sufficient civ-mil leadership buy-in and personnel resourcing is critical to success. As a final thought, the importance of strategic assessments cannot be understated. As noted before, without it, campaign plan assessment would consist of only rhetoric and conjecture.

Joint Strategic Planning in Iraq: ‘Optimism is not a Plan’ – Needed Changes for a Long War

Bradford R. Higgins

Introduction

This paper describes the origins, purpose, struggles and successes of the Joint Strategic Planning and Assessment office (JSPA) in U.S. Embassy Baghdad – from its conception in the fall of 2005, through its inception in February 2006 until its inaugural Director departed in April 2007. It concludes with a set of lessons learned and recommendations that the author believes need to be put into effect, if we expect to succeed in our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

JSPA was an innovative attempt to coordinate the planning, analysis and assessment efforts of the Multi-National Force - Iraq (MNF-I) and U.S. Embassy Baghdad in order to have a single cohesive approach to efforts in Iraq. The rationale was that it would be advantageous to have a single office, supporting not only MNF-I but also the U.S. Embassy, and with responsibility for planning, assessments and special areas of analysis and idea generation. Such an office was seen as able to provide faster, stronger and more integrated decision-making support for our senior decision-makers. This expanded capability was viewed as especially important in the extraordinarily complicated and rapidly evolving situation that we faced in Iraq – a challenge that went well beyond the U. S. Government’s (USG) bureaucratic and largely separate approaches to military, development and diplomatic planning and assessment capabilities.

The author of this paper was one of the two principal U.S.

officials responsible for identifying the need for a JSPA-like entity, conceptualizing the effort and staffing it through the Embassy, MNF-I and USG. He subsequently returned to Washington to serve as the Chief Financial Officer to the U.S. Department of State, where he continued to play an active role, overseeing the funding for Iraq as well as the Department's strategic planning and resource management reporting requirements. This paper is thus not an academic paper in the normal sense. Rather, it largely reflects the experiences and field observations of its author and others, such as his successor at JSPA, Dr. Terrence Kelly; it also documents the perspectives of someone from the private sector who, prior to going to Iraq, had no experience with the lead U.S. Agencies involved and then worked closely with both. As such, the paper hopefully brings a balanced as well as objective perspective on their respective strengths and weaknesses. It is not meant to be a comprehensive overview or history of JSPA during this time period; what it focuses on is a story about an effort that (eventually) had a positive effect on civilian-military relations in a very important setting – though it is clear that much remains to be done if we expect to prevail in Iraq, where success remains far from assured. Finally, the paper covers principally those efforts that the author thinks were of greatest importance. As such, it leaves out discussions that others may think important, as well as the efforts of great American and allied officers and civilians who work tirelessly to help Iraqis secure their own country and create a better future for it. My apologies to those whom I should have mentioned but do not.

Conception & Challenges – CPA's Strategic Planning Efforts

The need for an integrated planning and assessment capability in Iraq was identified early on by the Coalition Provisional Authority's (CPA) Administrator L. Paul Bremer III. By June of 2003 he had authorized the development of a strategic plan and the creation of the

CPA's Office of Policy Planning and Assessment.²⁴ The resulting plan was actively used by the Administrator as an internal management tool to guide both short- and long-term activities and priorities of CPA's staff, measuring progress on a regular basis; and then as an external tool, for communicating the field perspective to the U.S. Congress and the Administration. During the fall of 2003, the CPA strategic plan further evolved in response to the request of the Office of the Secretary of Defense for a unified 'campaign plan', bringing together civilian and military lines of operation, with close cooperation between the CPA civilian planners and their military counterparts. In addition to the strategic plan's important role as a decision-making and management tool, the CPA Office of Planning also played a key part in providing a quick-reacting analytical focus to the CPA's rapidly developing challenges.

Despite the considerable accomplishments of the CPA Office of Planning as a key decision-support tool to senior management at CPA, several fundamental challenges concerning the role of strategic planning and assessment began to develop – issues that continue to impact the effectiveness of the ongoing U.S. efforts in Iraq. Perhaps the most glaring was the questioning of assumptions and assessments, as best described in Dr. Rathmell's article: "that assumptions could not be effectively challenged in the coalition's political-military process. This unwillingness to challenge assumptions and question establish plans ... gave raise to the ironic refrain among disgruntled coalition planners that 'optimism is not a plan'. This failure was compounded by a persistent tendency in both the military and civilian chains of communication to avoid reporting bad news and not to plan for worst-case, or even other-case, contingencies".²⁵ In a hostile environment such as Iraq, where the enemy is constantly learning and seeking to

²⁴ Andrew Rathmell, "Planning post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq: what can we learn?", *International Affairs*, 81, 2005, pp. 1013-1038. This is an excellent analysis of the CPA's strategic planning efforts and lessons learned.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 1032.

capitalize on our weakness, the fundamental role of the planners must be to continuously and rigorously challenge and evolve their strategic plan, which requires not only the independence to think out of the box but also the support of our leadership to encourage it.

Another important impediment was the fact that, instead of having a single integrated planning effort that all Coalition parties participated in and followed, the CPA unit was only one of several planning groups operating in both Iraq and Washington, often with a different set of priorities (i.e. supply-driven – what they do vs. demand-driven – what the situation needs). One of the most frequently stated complaints about the U.S. effort in Iraq was that it lacked a strategic plan, yet one could fairly argue that the greater problem was that we actually had too many plans and too many planners. More importantly, no single group had the government-wide mandate along with the overall mission oversight and field presence needed to make objective and often painful assessments regarding the shortcomings of the various civilian and military efforts.

Without this strong and continuing “ground truth” capability, the Iraq planning and assessment efforts were unduly influenced by Washington-based policy planners operating at the 30,000 foot perspective, who often disregarded – but more frequently simply misunderstood – the harsh realities of executing poorly vetted policy in a hostile environment. This shift away from actual field results also unfortunately tended to shift the focus away from critical self-assessments and towards the natural tendency of all bureaucracies to defend turf by issuing overly positive reports in response to increasingly scathing Congressional or IG criticism. While that approach may be politically useful and acceptable in peacetime, it is not acceptable or particularly helpful in addressing highly complex and evolving situations involving numerous Federal Agencies; and where our adversaries are acutely aware of our shortcomings and able to react

quickly to related opportunities.

Transition from CPA to U.S. Department of State

This shift to a more traditional bureaucratic mindset became even more pronounced with the opening of the U.S. Mission¹ in Baghdad at the end of June 2004. State's often repeated view during the transition from the CPA was their desire to stand-up a traditional embassy structure as quickly as possible, which normally would not include a formal planning office. Under the State Department lead, the CPA's Office of Planning and Assessment was shut down and its responsibilities subsumed by the front office staff of the U.S. Mission's newly-created Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO). IRMO's primary mandate was the management of thousands of unfinished construction projects, and making sure the \$20+ billion Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund ("IRRF") was well spent. Unfortunately, it left little time and no dedicated staff to perform the independent planning and assessment that the CPA planning office had previously pursued.

Immediately upon the arrival of Ambassador John Negroponte, the U.S. Mission embarked on a full review of the IRRF program, led by IRMO, which brought a number of important improvements to the reconstruction program in direct response to the numerous shortcomings identified in the first year of the IRRF. Unfortunately, beyond this extremely valuable assessment and restructuring, IRMO was simply not organized or staffed sufficiently to both implement a broad-based reconstruction effort and conduct an objective and continuing assessment of the U.S. Mission and Coalition efforts. Instead, much of IRMO's time was taken up in preparing the Congressional reports

¹ The term "U.S. Mission" includes the U.S. Embassy and all other U.S. functions other than intelligence that fell under Chief-of-Mission Authority. Although there is a technical and legal distinction between "mission" and "embassy", it is common to use the terms synonymously.

that were required rather than the internal assessments that were needed. This need for assessment capability was met partially by various interagency assessment teams being sent out by Washington, who would issue reports but have little or no capability to enforce compliance or follow-up.

During one of these DC-based assessment efforts in April 2005, it became abundantly clear that a committed and ongoing planning and assessment effort operating in the field was essential if the USG expected to develop the momentum and continuity necessary for the success of its longer-term nation-building efforts. With an estimated annual staff turnover of 200%+ for CPA and 100%+ for the U.S. Mission and their military counterparts (with the former frequently having extended gaps in staff coverage), the ability to develop any reasonable level of institutional memory and continuity was at best problematic. This serious shortcoming became apparent when numerous action plans developed by the assessment team, with the active input and commitments of the responsible USG groups operating in Iraq, were found to be out of compliance within a month or two. A subsequent review revealed a constant problem: almost all of the Iraq-based USG managers involved in the process had completed their tours and returned home, and their replacements were unaware of or misinterpreted the commitments made by their predecessors. Having an in-country planning and assessment team, sufficiently staffed and specifically focused on providing this critical follow-up and expanding institutional memory, would have done much to provide the momentum and continuity needed for complex as well as rapidly evolving operations.

With his arrival in July 2005, U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad initiated a full management review of the U.S. Mission in Iraq. This was conducted by the author along with an interagency team of senior professionals, all of whom had served previously in Iraq

and were well aware of the institutional and bureaucratic challenges. Their report presented to Ambassador Khalilzad in October set forth a number of recommendations, focused primarily on better integrating and coordinating the civilian and military efforts in Iraq. At the core of these recommendations was the establishment of a joint civil/military strategic planning and assessment office that would report to both the U.S. Ambassador and the MNF-I Commanding General (CG).

Despite an initially good reception from both leaderships, a simple but serious organizational obstacle to standing up a truly joint effort quickly developed. MNF-I's Strategic Effects and Strategic Planning and Assessment ("SPA") groups were well established organizations within MNF-I, with combined staffs of well over 200; however, the civilian counterpart was a new, unfunded operation with an available staff numbering less than 5. More importantly, there was no apparent interest on the part of the military in changing their traditional organizational structures or combining staffs or leadership with the civilian side. Nor were they interested in providing any of their considerably larger staff to help support the portions of the multifaceted strategic plan that had been assigned to the civilian staff (on everything except security). This lack of "jointness" was made clear when the author, serving as the civilian lead, was informed that he could review SPA's work product only after it had been reviewed and approved by the MNF-I CG.

In short, a joint planning and assessment capability – especially one in the field – was undoubtedly a fundamental requirement for the complex environment of Iraq. At the same time, it proved impossible to overcome the institutional inertia or resistance to giving up any control of the planning and assessment process (at both the relevant Agency level and DC level) as a potential result of a formal joint field organization. While JSPA was viewed by the U.S. Mission as a much needed capability, even if not combined with the military, it

was also determined that for it to have any real effect a close working relationship with the military was absolutely essential. Consequently, finding the leadership and staff for JSPA that could bridge these troublesome cultural differences was made a top priority. With that in mind as JSPA was being set up in December 2005, the search for the initial Director focused on someone who not only had deep field experience in nation-building and counter-insurgency efforts, but also had extensive experience and knowledge of the U.S. military – in other words, preferably a retired military officer. The other quality that was viewed as critical was a high level of independence and objectivity, which would be needed in making often difficult assessments. This was an argument for recruiting a respected, senior professional whose career and work were largely outside the U.S. Government and, in particular, the agencies concerned. The search effort produced just such a candidate to serve as the inaugural JSPA Director: Dr. Terrence K. Kelly, a West Point graduate, a retired military officer and a RAND senior operations researcher who had extensive direct experience in Iraq with the CPA.

Inception, Stand-up, and Fighting for Acceptance

JSPA was formally created in February 2006, when its inaugural Director arrived. As noted above, JSPA was envisioned to report directly to the U.S. Ambassador and MNF-I (CG) but, because it could not have been done quickly in any other way, JSPA was administratively housed in the Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO).² Upon arrival, the incoming Director discovered that the original concept would not be implemented as planned. In particular, no one at MNF-I seemed to know about JSPA. Efforts to see General Casey to “report for duty” uncovered the fact that he had not signed up to share his Strategic Planning and Assessment (SPA)

² JSPA would later be moved directly into the Embassy, during a subsequent reorganization of the U.S. Mission.

office with the Embassy, and that the “J” in JSPA would be a misnomer (but one that would remain for the duration of the office). As a result, JSPA’s charter quickly changed from a planning and assessments office, led jointly by a military 2-star general or admiral and a civilian, to U.S. Embassy Baghdad’s policy, planning, assessments and analysis office. As such, its specific mission was to help the Embassy interact across all of its major lines of responsibility with the MNF-I. In hindsight, this may have been the more important role as, the way things actually developed, JSPA played a significant part in helping the military understand the full spectrum of efforts and concerns of the U.S. Mission, and vice versa. This role as policy translator would prove one of the most important contributions JSPA made during these 14 months.

JSPA also had another significant advantage that traditional embassy and military offices run by Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and military officers lacked. This was related to the fact that JSPA was staffed entirely by non-career employees (“3161s” in the wartime vernacular, after the paragraph in federal regulations that permits hiring personnel for temporary organizations for up to three years) and contractors. Because of this, JSPA’s Director and staff were able to reach conclusions and provide recommendations irrespective of institutional or bureaucratic prejudices such as deference to the “department” or “command” position on given issues, or of implications for promotion and future assignments (which, because of human nature, at times affect the behavior of even the best soldiers and FSOs). The importance of this freedom from bureaucratic blinders and constraints on JSPA’s ability to contribute to U.S. efforts cannot be over-emphasized.³

³ Two points of clarification are important here. First, “temporary” staff does not imply inexperienced staff. It was – and is – important for temporary staff to have a solid grounding in practical experience that will enable them to succeed. As subsequent paragraphs show, JSPA was able to hire such staff after about half a year of operations. Second, freedom to reach conclusions and make recommendations without bureaucratic constraints should not be interpreted as license to freelance. All work was done within the U.S. Embassy context, often jointly with the MNF-I and, once the leaders of those organizations to whom JSPA owed advice made their decisions, the JSPA Director and staff worked in line with these,

Formal Efforts

The challenges of physically creating a functioning office in the middle of a conflict were also substantial. While dedicated office space was available when the Director arrived in February 2006, furniture, safes, computers, printers and all physical items needed to run an office were missing. Significant time and effort were expended on getting the things that were needed to operate.⁴ The final pieces of office equipment needed to operate would not be in place for almost a year after JSPA began work.

Most importantly, however, the initial JSPA staff was not hired to work for a policy, planning and analysis office with the experience and skills that implies. What happened was that IRMO made available a number of very smart, young and energetic people; because of their relative youth, limited experience and lack of recognized credentials, these individuals could not do the kind of analysis that was needed or interact as peers with those with whom they needed to work in MNF-I or the Embassy staff. These young staffers were truly high-caliber people who would over time gain important experience and do good work. But they were simply not the right people for the task at hand. It would not be until August 2006 that staff hired specifically for their credentials would begin to arrive.⁵

as would any member of the foreign service, military or civil service. However, the freedom to tell the senior leadership things they did not want to hear without concerns over careers, assignments or other considerations was invaluable.

⁴ The most interesting effort came about when one member of JSPA's staff traded a case of beer for a cross-cut shredder to help facilitate the office's ability to work with classified information.

⁵ This group was a truly impressive one, consisting of three people with substantial experience in Iraq on previous tours, one Army National Guard colonel who had served as Chief of Policy in Combined Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7 – the name of the military organization in Iraq before the creation of the MNF-I), a senior intelligence analyst from the Defense Intelligence Agency with significant experience of Latin American drug cartels (a very good preparation for analyzing Iraqi militant groups and some political parties), a former Deputy Chief of a provincial reconstruction unit during the CPA time period, 4 personnel with doctorates, one with an MBA from Harvard, and a reserve Navy non-commissioned officer there in a civilian capacity. JSPA also benefitted from part-time help from an Army Civil Affairs officer who was a senior lawyer in private practice, and who had done tours of duty in the Balkans and Afghanistan

The plan for JSPA's staff reflected that of the Embassy's major areas of effort. The logic behind this was that JSPA's remit cut across all Embassy functions, and that to be well informed about Embassy efforts in all areas would require close links to all major Embassy sections. Besides the Director, there were Deputy Directors for National Security Affairs, Political Affairs, Economics and Development – and eventually for Rule of Law (it would only be after the initial Director left in April 2007 that this billet would be filled). The Rule of Law billet was partially filled by the loan of an extremely talented reserve officer who was a senior lawyer in private practice, and who had a lot of experience in the Balkans and Afghanistan on similar issues. In addition, there was a Deputy Director for Assessments and another for Intelligence. Finally, there was an Office Management Specialist to support the efforts of the entire team.⁶

JSPA's remit was in three broad categories. The first of these was to work with the MNF-I on formal planning. The major effort for this was the development of the MNF-I and U.S. Embassy Joint Campaign Plan (JCP) in 2006 for General Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad, and then again in 2007 for General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker. Additionally, JSPA was responsible to the Ambassador and DCM for coordinating with MNF-I on the follow-up of efforts that fell under the JCP throughout the year.⁷ In this, the Embassy's – and therefore JSPA's

prior to deployment to Iraq. Importantly, the State Department's office for supporting the administrative requirements for Iraq was also responsible for requirements in Afghanistan, and State processes for hiring and managing people for these conflicts did not appear to be designed for this large and complex task. Not only did it take months to get fully qualified personnel who already possessed the proper security clearances through the State hiring processes, but well qualified personnel were often informed that they did not meet the qualifications stipulated in the hiring announcement, while poorly qualified candidates were forwarded for consideration. Had this process worked better, quality people could have been on hand months earlier.

⁶ In the original staffing request, JSPA asked for a military deputy, and could have benefitted from one or more FSOs. Later, JSPA would have a former Ambassador on staff. However, the demand for human resources and the bureaucratic challenges of having military and foreign service officers rated by someone not from their community were likely the reasons that these personnel were not provided.

⁷ The JCP was under development when JSPA was created in February 2006. JSPA's first significant effort was in helping the Embassy provide input, and taking the lead for the staffing process of the JCP.

– efforts were primarily in those lines of operation (to use the technical military term for major efforts under the plan) for which the Embassy was responsible: political and governance issues, economic issues and rule of law. JSPA was not actively involved with the military planning, or the planning of the development of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), though these cut across all major efforts and would be important in other areas for which JSPA was responsible.

Second, JSPA was the Embassy lead for assessing progress on the JCP as well as other efforts. In this role, JSPA worked closely with the Embassy staff sections to develop and provide assessments for the Effects Assessment Synchronization Board (EASB), which was held every other month, co-chaired by General Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad. JSPA and MNF-I SPA would jointly present this assessment, then follow up in the off months with reports to the DCM and MNF-I Chief of Staff on issues raised by the CG and Ambassador in those meetings. In addition to routine, formal assessments, JSPA would also perform periodic assessments on other issues for the Ambassador, including weekly input to him on key aspects of the situation in Iraq. Examples of this would include updates on numbers and trends regarding Iraqi civilians killed by violence, refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as economic and budget projections for the Government of Iraq (GoI), and other factors as requested or of interest.

The most notable assessment during this 14-month period was a comprehensive review of the situation in Iraq, conducted by JSPA for the U.S. Ambassador. JSPA initiated this effort in September 2006, as the situation in Iraq deteriorated. Completed in October 2006, it painted the grim picture in stark frankness and provided an argument that the numbers of U.S. troops currently deployed were insufficient to

This is discussed in greater detail below. Importantly, this was a real, joint effort by the Embassy and the MNF-I, despite the popular belief that the first such effort occurred the following year under Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus.

achieve the expected outcomes.

JSPA's third formal task was to conduct studies and special efforts as needed by the Ambassador. In this it had either its greatest success or only partial success, depending on how one interprets "success". In particular, JSPA produced a number of analytical products that helped the Embassy and MNF-I understand the situation, but Ambassador Khalilzad rarely asked for specific analysis. Most such efforts, such as the comprehensive analysis of the situation in Iraq and white papers on such issues as the importance of a more robust effort to provide Iraqis with exposure to Western educations, were generated by JSPA independently and provided as needed to the Ambassador, the DCM, the Embassy staff principals, or MNF-I. Such analytic efforts were often small but critical contributions looking at particular problems or challenges, such as projections of Iraq's ability to eventually self-fund its reconstruction requirements and security forces; analysis of unemployment and under-employment in Iraq; the likely impact of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) on political resolution; and work done with the Iraqi government on plans to disband militant groups. Some of these efforts were recurring, such as those that brought several Embassy principal staff officers and certain MNF-I general officers/flag officers together weekly to discuss issues in an informal session. These sessions generated a lot of good ideas that led to analysis by JSPA and other Embassy and MNF-I offices. These meetings also paid off in improving relations between the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I, as well as in helping both the Embassy and MNF-I understand the full set of considerations involved with several major issues. Furthermore, the JSPA Director attended most major recurring meetings with the Ambassador, and JSPA worked closely every day with Embassy and MNF-I staff sections.

Finally, JSPA – like all offices in the Embassy – did a lot of things that were not in its formal remit. For example, the DCM

tasked JSPA with coordinating U.S. efforts to help Prime Minister-designate Nuri al-Maliki with his transition into office. This involved recruiting a team of senior advisors from the U.S. to coach Mr. al-Maliki's principal assistants, arranging daily contact with Iraqis for these officials, helping to orchestrate al-Maliki's presentation of his cabinet and swearing-in, providing daily reports to the Ambassador and senior Embassy staff on the status of the transition and suggestions for things they should do, and carrying out countless other small but time-consuming tasks.

Additionally, the JSPA Director became, after about four months, U.S. Embassy Baghdad's representative for the National Security Council (NSC) Iraq meetings (via secure video-conference), at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level (a role previously played by the DCM), and attended the NSC Deputy Committee meetings as well. In this setting, JSPA, along with other Embassy officials who attended these meetings as needed, had a role in helping the Embassy present a summarized set of positions to Washington in a well structured format, and thus had an effect on policy formulation in Washington.⁸

Relations with the Embassy Staff and MNF-I, and between the Embassy Staff and MNF-I

When JSPA was established, relations between the Embassy staff and MNF-I were confrontational and not as productive as they needed to be.⁹ Neither understood the position or efforts of the other, and each thought that the other should be better team players. It is not

⁸ MNF-I did not participate in these meetings. Though they were led by a 4-star general, there were still several layers of Pentagon bureaucracy between MNF-I and the NSC.

⁹ These are the impressions of the author, and the assumptions which existed in 2005-2007. No attempt is made to empirically prove these statements. For an assessment of civil-military relations between CPA and CJTF-7 leaders, see Christopher M. Schnaubelt, "After the Fight: Interagency Operations", *Parameters* 35, Winter 2005-06, pp. 47-61.

an exaggeration to say that senior Embassy officials thought that the MNF-I senior officers did not understand the situation in anything like a comprehensive manner, and that these military officers were bent on making the case for how the State Department was responsible in the event of failure. Similarly, senior military officers for their part seemed to see the role of the Embassy's efforts as supporting theirs, and did not understand the capabilities and limitations of the civilian side of government; they were also convinced that the State Department was not willing or able to function effectively in the unique environment of a combat zone and, as an institution, was not taking Iraq seriously. Unfortunately, there was a grain of truth in all these perspectives.

As a result, many senior members of both the U.S. Mission and MNF-I staffs were barely on talking terms in February 2006. Neither would adequately consult with the other on any of their core issues, despite the fact that there was a clear need for a U.S. rather than a DoD or DoS position and approach to critical issues; each spoke disdainfully of the other in private, and sometimes in public.¹⁰

One of JSPA's most important initial efforts, once it was determined that it would be working for the Ambassador and not for the Ambassador and the CG, was to establish its credibility with both the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I by demonstrating that it did in fact add value. JSPA considered that its position on the organizational wiring diagram as reporting directly to the Ambassador was useful for getting a seat at the table, but after that its ability to keep that seat would be entirely dependent on the recognized value of its contributions – both substantively and with respect to creating a more productive relationship between the civilian and military sides.

¹⁰ Yet another challenge was that MNF-I was truly a Coalition headquarters, with a British 3-star general as Deputy Commander, while the U.S. Embassy represented only the U.S. and rarely engaged with the embassies of other Coalition partners in Baghdad.

On the Embassy side, the first effort was to convince the U.S. Embassy section chiefs that JSPA was there to work collaboratively, to help the Ambassador and DCM work complex issues that involved multiple equities, to understand the situation holistically and, in concert with the staff, help devise solutions to key problems. The open and collegial atmosphere among the Mission's staffs was very helpful in this respect; JSPA's efforts were rarely seen as impinging on the territory of other staff sections, these staff sections contributed generously with their insights and efforts when asked, and the overall cooperation between JSPA and all Mission elements was good throughout. There were some difficulties with perceptions at the lower levels, since JSPA was staffed with temporary Civil Service "3161s" rather than career Foreign Service Officers. The two Deputy Chiefs of Mission during this period, Ambassador David Satterfield and then Ambassador Daniel Speckhard, nevertheless helped effectively integrate JSPA into the Embassy's decision-making process.

This was not initially the case with the MNF-I. JSPA stepped into a situation between the MNF-I and the Embassy that can fairly be described as poisonous and counterproductive. Embassy offices at times refused to cooperate with some MNF-I efforts, and MNF-I would plan and make decisions with enormous political and economic implications without consultation. Starting in the spring of 2006, however, JSPA was able to make some inroads on this problem by trying to educate each side on the valid positions and concerns of the other, and by providing a mechanism by which coordination could take place and support be requested.¹¹ During the summer of 2006,

¹¹ It should be noted that the Political-Military section of the Embassy under Ambassador David Litt had a good working relationship with the MNF-I and also facilitated coordination. But Pol-Mil's focus was principally on its specific issues, whereas JSPA's role covered the entire spectrum of challenges that affected success in Iraq. As such, JSPA played a more active role on the political and economic/development issues. After Ambassador Litt's departure in the summer of 2006, his replacement left his post shortly after arriving and was not replaced until the following summer. Although the acting Pol-Mil Counselor (a former U.S. Marine) did well in understanding the situation, he did not have the State Department "rank" to be perceived as equivalent to the other section counselors. This significantly hurt Pol-Mil's

most of the principal U.S. Mission and MNF-I staff rotated out, and the new group were better able to overcome animosities and work productively together, though tensions continued to exist throughout the time covered by this paper.¹²

Early on, some MNF-I senior officers also did not have a firm understanding of what the civilian side of government should be doing or what they were capable of. These officers seemed to believe that the State Department and USAID could send thousands of FSOs and other civilian workers to fix the political situation and the economy in the same way that the military was trying to fix security. They did not seem to understand that the model for the civilian side of government is radically different from that of the military,¹³ or that its manpower and fiscal resources simply would not permit the kind of efforts that they seemed to expect;¹⁴ they also seemed unable to grasp that, even if

ability to contribute for some time, and leaving this billet unfilled for almost a year is an example of a significant staffing failure on the part of the State Department.

¹² For example, during its staffing of JSPA's October 2006 comprehensive assessment of the situation in Iraq mentioned above, a draft was shared with the MNF-I's principal staff members, which resulted in surprising responses indicative of the relationship between the Embassy and MNF-I staffs (discussed below). The response from one MNF-I Major-General illustrates this well. He informed the JSPA Director that he could not provide feedback because the command had forbidden any MNF-I personnel from commenting on the assessment. Furthermore, he indicated that at least one of his senior colleagues believed that the Embassy had commissioned this study so they could leak it to the press and thus affect the upcoming mid-term elections. This lack of trust in the Embassy staff and unwillingness to face facts as the situation rapidly deteriorated were not *sui generis*. The top level at the Embassy was not much more willing to make the findings in this report available to Washington than was the MNF-I. JSPA was directed not to share it with Washington, and a limited distribution cable prepared by JSPA that summarized the report was never sent.

¹³ The military is designed so that forces exist to deploy when needed to areas around the world, whereas in the civilian side of government there are not people or other assets waiting around to be deployed. It is like the difference between firemen who train and await a call to respond to a fire, and police who are out performing their duty all the time. This seemed to be unintelligible to many senior officers in MNF-I in 2006.

¹⁴ The total Foreign Service manpower of the State Department and USAID is less than the deployed manpower of a single brigade or regimental combat team, primarily assigned to hundreds of small posts around the globe, with effectively no or very limited surge capacity in stark contrast to the military manpower plan. Counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen has written that "there are substantially more people employed as musicians in Defense bands than in the entire foreign service". (See: "New Paradigms for 21st Century Conflict", *Small Wars Journal*, June 23, 2007 at: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/06/new-paradigms-for-21st-century/>.) Furthermore, the fiscal resources required to hire temporary personnel

such efforts were possible, results cannot be achieved in politics and economics by direct action as they can be in security.¹⁵

Finally, during this period, and particularly after JSPA's specifically recruited versus initially "on hand" staff began to arrive, JSPA began to actively partner with MNF-I personnel below the level of the principal staff, which helped significantly to improve collaboration. This was made possible by the high quality of the JSPA staff who arrived late in the summer of 2006. They brought expertise, education, technical skills and life experiences that were comparable to – and complemented – the skills and experiences of the colonels and other officers they worked with on a daily basis. Furthermore, these interactions were daily, intense and substantive. They took the form of such things as co-leading standing working groups, commenting on work products destined for the Ambassador or the CG, and in some cases even social interactions. Selecting a high-quality staff and providing it with good direction made JSPA capable of creating the bonds of respect needed for cooperative efforts, and was perhaps the most important aspect of JSPA's success. Much, if not most, of JSPA's influence was due to informal rather than formal power.

were, until the summer of 2007, simply not available to the State Department. As a result, they could not do what was being demanded of them by the MNF-I staff principals, and making lengthy presentations about how State was failing to do this only heightened animosity.

¹⁵ Senior commanders and staff would often demand that the Embassy get the economy in a given area going, or fix a particular political situation, apparently believing that this could be done by direct action rather than by setting conditions and providing incentives – things that often required MNF-I to play a major role (e.g., establishing security so that markets, businesses and banks could open). Furthermore, many military officers had no problem weighing in on issues concerning "State Department turf", such as political and economic development; the vast majority (with the exception of Reservists and National Guard officers) actually had no experience in these areas, though they resented any input from the Embassy concerning military issues.

Conclusions

JSPA had a positive effect on U.S. civilian-military cooperation in Iraq between February 2006 and April 2007, which resulted in much better U.S. planning, analysis, assessments and other tasks. In February 2006 the U.S. Mission and MNF-I had a relationship of mutual suspicion and in some cases even hostility, but by April 2007 there were positive working relationships across the board that resulted in joint strategies, sharing of expertise, and real cooperation. Some of this was due to new personalities on both sides and a significant increase in resources on the civilian side, that did much to support the MNF-I's view of what the coalition's response to events in Iraq should be; but some of it was also related to a combination of frank conversations and the right-sizing of expectations that JSPA was able to foster with both the MNF-I and Embassy staffs, JSPA's demonstrated ability to add value, and everyone's desire to create a winning effort.

In the final analysis, one asks: did JSPA go far enough to meet the original intent – to become a single objective voice that could bring to all senior USG decision-makers the views of the various agencies involved in U.S. efforts? Even more importantly, could JSPA provide the rigor needed to point out and demand improvements when the efforts of both the military and their civilian counterparts fell short? Regrettably, the answer is no. However, as often happens “in the field”, when it became clear that a formal joint organization was not going to be established, JSPA improvised and adapted, focusing on getting the right type of staff with both the independence and communications skills to help bridge the gaps between the organizations; this did make a significant difference.

Another obvious question is: did JSPA help set the stage to change the way the USG conducts its planning and assessment efforts as they go forward in Iraq and Afghanistan, or will the respective

agencies revert back to their more traditional self-assessments that look to defend their turf rather than to innovate? The answer is a qualified yes. The military has made some efforts to provide a more comprehensive focus, such as General Petraeus' efforts to bring in numerous civilian subject-matter experts into his headquarters, first in Iraq and now Afghanistan. But these efforts are still very much biased towards a military perspective, and their retaining the lead and control, and not always carried out in tandem with the civilian side of the team¹⁶.

The State Department, however, appears to have returned to the more traditional embassy structure, regardless of the operational environment or the tasks required by the situation; it had shut down the JSPA effort in Baghdad in 2008 and shifted a reduced planning and assessment effort to the Pol-Mil section of the Embassy. With the rampdown of the U.S. effort and the departure of all U.S. troops from Iraq by August 2011, it is important to note that serious challenges remain and that success in Iraq remains far from assured. Consequently, State may want to reconsider its decision to shut down JSPA and suggest to the military that the time has come to finally establish a joint assessment capability as was envisioned in the fall of 2005; this would make it possible to provide a single-objective planning and assessment capability to the entire USG effort during this critical final – but uncertain – transition phase. At a minimum, providing U.S. Embassy Baghdad with some active duty military planners and asking FSOs, military officers and intelligence analysts to work in teams to help the Ambassador understand and plan for the future might be a very worthwhile endeavor.

¹⁶ Of note, while civilians participated in the military efforts, the CG was unwilling to assign military officers to the Embassy or permit a DIA presence there, as would have been normal practice at any other U.S. Embassy.

Lessons Learned – Recommendations

If history has taught us anything, it is that our continuing inability to learn from our mistakes, particularly our unwillingness to change our institutions to meet today's rapidly changing world, makes success in complex efforts such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan much more difficult to achieve. Almost all of the problems cited in Dr. Rathmell's 2005 paper on CPA's planning and assessment efforts continue to be problems today.¹⁷ While progress has been made in the joint planning arena, it has to be continuously relearned because of constant rotation of civilian and military personnel into Iraq and Afghanistan and the still very strong tendency of institutions to revert to past practice. With that admonition clearly in mind, four fundamental recommendations are set forth below, which warrant careful consideration and rigorous discussion by military and civilian leaders committed to making sure we send our best and brightest into harm's way with clearly defined missions and the most effective and realistic plans possible.

1. Establish a permanent civil-military strategic planning and assessment office in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Based in the theater with a support office in Washington, it should be clearly defined on the organizational chart, next to and reporting directly to both the Ambassador and the CG. The Director should be a proven senior leader,¹⁸ with a strong record of independence, out-of-the-box thinking and related field experience. Whether that individual is from the military, the Foreign Service or from the private sector/think-tank community, the key factor should be not simply his or her ability to ask the hard questions and criticize when warranted; also essential are the creativity to find new approaches, and the credibility with senior

¹⁷ Rathmell pp.1030-1034. Also see the classic work by Robert W. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: Institutional Constraints on U.S.-GVN Performance in Vietnam*, RAND, Santa Monica, 1972.

¹⁸ This individual must be able to leave his or her agency loyalty and mindset behind, representing the best interests of the integrated operation that demands honest, impartial assessments if we expect to succeed.

leadership to get their support to make changes when needed.

The Director should be interviewed and selected jointly by the Ambassador, the CG and the Deputy National Security Advisor to serve as a senior member of the joint management team. If a military officer is selected, the deputy should be a civilian and some level of rotation between civilian and military lead should be maintained. Staffing should also be equally balanced between civil and military personnel and made as competitive as possible, much like the staff that is routinely sent to work at the NSC or White House. Significantly, the Director and his staff should be assigned for a sufficient time period to have a meaningful impact as well as to develop the needed high level of “on-the-ground” knowledge (2-3 years). To help facilitate these longer assignments, a job-sharing approach should be considered (4-6 months in the country concerned, 4-6 months in Washington). A somewhat similar approach has been highly successful with the military’s Special Operations Group, with shorter (3-4 months) but more numerous tours to the theater that allow a high level of continuity of effort and critical institutional memory.

In addition to conducting rigorous and continuous ground assessments on behalf of the Ambassador and CG, the proposed JSPA would be responsible for developing or identifying new and more effective efforts and making sure these field improvements evolve and are replicated on a broader scale. In the highly fluid environment of Iraq and Afghanistan, this ability to observe and adapt to unfolding circumstances is reasonably well engrained in the military’s operational doctrine (continuous improvement). It is, however, not nearly as evolved at either the State Department or USAID, where most programs have changed little over time despite the great need for – and poor record of – results. It is the integration and efficacy of these nation-building efforts and development programs that will need to be a primary focus of this proposed JSPA. In both Iraq and

Afghanistan, the critical assessments/ observations are based on changing information requiring a bottom-up, fluid process. To be effective and timely, this simply can't be done in Washington; it must be driven from the field and reported directly to both the civil and military leaders in theater accountable for executing the changes.

It should be recognized that the USG has been spending approximately \$400 million a day between Iraq and Afghanistan for a number of years. Anything that could better integrate and hopefully better optimize these massive efforts, while also helping shift our focus from a 'top-down', budget-driven mindset to a more reflective 'bottom-up' approach, will not only save billions of dollars but also save many lives and be more likely to achieve U.S. policy objectives. With an annual cost well below that of just one of our personal security details in Iraq (\$12-14 million), a well-led and fully staffed JSPA will, without question, be the most cost-effective investment the USG could make toward winning the long war against extremism.

2. Constantly challenge the assumptions. Today's Fourth Generation Warfare¹⁹ of violent, non-state actors has not only blurred the lines between countries but also blurred the distinctions between war and politics, and military and civilian. Consequently, the traditional military, diplomatic and development approaches and structures that we are most comfortable with have been made obsolete. The insurgents fully recognize they don't have to win in traditional combat terms; they just have to maintain the chaos to prevail. And more importantly, they believe that time is on their side.²⁰ The impact of suicide bombers and tactics specifically designed to inflame the civilian population has created a level of complexity that calls for an integrated response as

¹⁹ See William Lind, et al, "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation", *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 1989, pp. 22-27.

²⁰ A favorite Iraqi expression in 2004-7 was 'the Americans have the watches, but we have the time', which perhaps better describes the reality of our dealing in a foreign culture that measures progress in decades if not millenniums, while we demand immediate results.

well, as one that looks carefully at the harsh realities of the situation. The military has spent considerable time developing planning tools to help operate in rapidly changing, uncertain environments but these require a willingness to internally challenge our assumptions and question established plans. Such was not always the case, in the period 2004 thru 2007, for the combined military and civilian efforts in Iraq. Success in this ever-changing environment requires not only an integrated strategic planning effort that is constantly being revised and adapted, but also one that encourages and even demands challenges.²¹ Unfortunately, these requirements don't fit particularly well inside the traditional bureaucratic structures at DoD, State or USAID; this further argues for a separate, integrated in-theater planning office whose primary purpose is to challenge every assumption as an integral part of the Ambassador and CG's joint decision-support process.

3. Get the organizations right. Perhaps the most important step in developing a coherent integrated plan for a long war is to first identify and address our own shortcomings. The most challenging organizational weakness observed in the 2004-2007 timeframe was the difficulty of getting the U.S. military to subordinate itself to the U.S. Embassy Baghdad's civil authority. The military had often stated its recognition that there was "no military solution", and that stabilization, reconstruction and counter-insurgency efforts, as fundamentally political challenges, must in such situations eventually be controlled and led by the host nation in a way consistent with their culture. Admittedly there are many counterarguments to this view. In fairness, when your organization has approximately 600 personnel for every

²¹ A good example of how such challenges are perceived occurred at the Effects Assessment Synchronization Board (EASB) presentation late in 2005. In response to a question by the CG regarding MNF-I's strategic goals for success in Iraq, this author – while concurring with the stated goals – noted that every one of them required an Iraqi lead in order to succeed but that, after 2½ years of Operation Iraqi Freedom, there were still no Iraqis in the room. Afterwards, several officers in attendance told him that he was fortunate he wasn't in the military because it was dangerous to one's career to tell a general that he's wrong. In fairness to the CG, however, it should be noted that senior Iraqis were in attendance during subsequent EASB meetings.

State Department person in theater, and almost 50 times the available funding, it is difficult to envision any scenario in which – given this enormous disparity in staffing – the military wouldn't dominate if not overwhelm all other efforts, including the civilian-led diplomatic and development areas.

The issue of unity of command was further complicated in December 2005 with NSPD 44, where President Bush assigned to the State Department the lead for U.S. reconstruction and stabilization efforts. Unfortunately the Presidential Directive didn't include the authorization and funding for the State Department to staff up so as to take on that major responsibility. This mismatch in resources and duties remains an issue and, because of the very different manpower demands of the military and civilian agencies, it is not going to change in the near future. A more realistic approach to the integrated effort needed to provide the necessary balance and emphasis on the required political solution would be the proposed JSPA, equally staffed with both civilians and military, reporting jointly to the Ambassador and CG.

Another serious shortcoming during the 2004-2007 timeframe was the State Department's approach to staffing in Iraq and Afghanistan, a problem which continues today, albeit to a lesser extent. Prior to 9/11, the State Department had less than 100 recognized hardship positions worldwide.²² Since then, that number has grown to approximately 800 positions, many of them in Iraq and Afghanistan. This has put a major strain on the Foreign Service, shortening tours elsewhere from 3 to 2 years to increase the float necessary to staff these 1-year hardship assignments.²³ It also produced some negative press when it appeared directed assignments would be necessary to fill some of the required

²² A hardship tour is typically a one-year assignment on which, because of the danger, dependants are not permitted to accompany the Foreign Service Officer.

²³ Shortening tours has also had the negative, unintended effect of making the Foreign Service less effective elsewhere, rotating them just as they are realizing maximum situational awareness.

positions in Iraq and Afghanistan, which reflected unfairly on the many thousands of FSO's who have served proudly at these difficult posts.

Despite these efforts, and as noted earlier in this paper, the Department had a considerable number of vacancies and long lags in staffing positions – a situation that was creating considerable friction with the military. While staffing has improved along with the living conditions at the new U.S. Embassies in both Baghdad and Kabul, it is far from an optimum long-term situation. A key problem is the one-year hardship tour, defined as ten months and one day (i.e. excluding two 30-day home leaves over the one-year tour), which is not sufficient time to have the level of continuity and impact needed. Potential solutions would be to pursue job-sharing (as noted previously in the JSPA discussion) or to create a separate career track that would permit retiring military with related field experience to move laterally into the Foreign Service and serve at these posts at a Civil Service pay grade commensurate with their experience.

Under the current Foreign Service regulations, retired military personnel would, at best, have to start near the bottom as an FS-4 (which is equivalent to a GS-11 or a military O-3). In contrast, upon retirement military personnel can be hired into USAID or the Civil Service at any grade for which they are qualified. Recognizing that these hardship posts will likely be around for the foreseeable future, having a dedicated group of high-quality professionals comfortable operating in war zones, who would serve either for longer tours or rotate more frequently, could help reduce (but not eliminate) the staffing pressure at these posts.

It should also be noted that many of the civilian roles (not just Foreign Service) that are currently staffed by Americans or other nationalities could be filled in the long term by locally employed staff with adequate training. Much as the military has focused its efforts on

training local security, a similar focused approach should be made to train locals to transition to the senior positions in our civil programs. This would do much to provide an effective transition to the needed longer-term local solution, as well as dramatically reducing our costs.²⁴

The last observation involves relooking at NSPD 44, to see if it reflects the best delegation of responsibility with the State Department taking the lead in post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization efforts. As noted above, the Directive was given without affording State the staffing and funding to provide the necessary lead, which remains an issue to date. While not recommending that responsibility be shifted to the military, consideration perhaps should be given to other alternatives, recognizing that both agencies are large bureaucratic organizations with very different cultures that may be ill suited to the need. The creation of a separate temporary entity such as CPA, or perhaps better the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) which was set up to manage the Marshall Plan in 1947, might also be a viable option to mitigate some of these challenges. While State proposed the idea of the Marshall Plan, it and DoD were viewed by Congress as large bureaucratic organizations which lacked the creativity and initiative that they believed existed in the private sector and would be needed for the Marshall Plan to succeed. Much of the ultimate success of the Marshall Plan was attributable to the outstanding senior business executives who were brought in to build and run the operation. While not recommending any changes to the current situation, a much fuller discussion is needed regarding the right type of in-theater organization going forward. This should recognize the lessons of both Iraq and the Marshall Plan, and have the right organization, able not only to develop well thought-out policy but also to execute it effectively. This matters greatly in the success or failure of the increasingly complicated

²⁴ The fully-loaded cost of a single American in Iraq in 2005, most of it security expenses, would employ over 150 equivalently-trained Iraqis at the prevailing local wages.

challenges we are facing as a nation.

4. Factor in the critical role of funding in a Long War strategy. Whether we like it or not, we are in a long war where the last man standing wins. Bin Laden has repeatedly stated that his goal is to break the U.S. financially, much in the same way that President Reagan bankrupted the Russians to win the Cold War. While it is highly unlikely we will be defeated militarily in either Iraq or Afghanistan, it is equally clear the enormous cost of the combined conflicts, all of which is borrowed, cannot be sustained at current levels for the long run. This is a serious weakness our enemies are well aware of. Consequently, it is essential in any long war planning pursued by the USG that we do a much better job of understanding the fully loaded costs of each effort and program. This is critical if we are to determine what programs are giving us the best returns and provide analysis that will then go into developing an affordable, longer-term strategy needed for a successful transition to the host country.

It is also important to note, speaking as the former CFO of the State Department, that there is almost no correlation between the amounts being spent and the results that are realized.²⁵ The lack of integration and coordination amongst the planners, the budgeters and

²⁵ In fact it is almost an inverse correlation. Our historically most cost-effective programs were invariably small, local efforts that had quick and visible impacts as well as fewer layers of bureaucracy (both U.S. and the host country), and consequently lower costs with less opportunity for corruption. The unintended but very serious role that the U.S. funding approach has played in fueling corruption in both Iraq and Afghanistan, often exacerbating the situation, needs to be addressed in a separate and much longer article. Our most expensive need was security for our in-country U.S. personnel, which begs the question how quickly we can replace them with local personnel and eliminate this expense. It is worth noting that a focus on local efforts, whether security, diplomacy or development, has yielded the best overall results (not just financial). The problem is the bulk of the IRRF programs were \$100+ million projects, as have been many of our subsequent assistance programs, largely DC-driven with a heavy central government focus and limited effects in contrast to what the field has experienced with local or provincial programs. Unfortunately, our DC-based Congressional budget process is simply not set up for numerous small local programs, which is utterly unacceptable and needs to be changed. Having this detailed as well as timely cost/benefit analysis as part of the decision-making support is absolutely fundamental and would not only significantly impact the way we make our resource allocations but very likely improve the overall results.

the final decision-makers who determine resource allocation (Congress) is evident; combined with the frenzy associated with compiling and submitting Federal budget requests, this has effectively assured that minimal time will be spent determining the most cost-effective way of achieving a desired result. Going forward, it is highly recommended that the proposed JSPA office or similar planning operation include a strong financial management section that looks closely at individual program costs and returns, so that senior decision-makers can finally make allocations based on maximum impact and best value for our finite resources. Funding will undoubtedly become more constrained in the light of the huge deficits the USG will be incurring for the foreseeable future. At some point we may very well get to a situation where the Congress will say that all we can afford is a fraction of what we currently spend – but we need you to make it work.

What is interesting is how many of our highest value efforts and programs are not all that expensive, but without such a joint in-theater planning and budgeting effort as proposed the battle over funding will likely be driven by the respective agency interests – which has in past practice produced negative consequences. This will require a major rethink of our traditional budgeting approaches and resource allocation efforts in Washington, but it can be done. If that enables us to sustain the needed effort to prevail, we had better start now.

In summary, while optimism is key to any successful campaign, particularly the challenging ones, it must be backed by strong leaders who have the courage as well as the ground truth needed to make the right but often difficult decisions. The debates described above, between the roles, responsibilities and resources of the military and civilian agencies, will undoubtedly continue to rage on and will not be decided by this paper. All of these issues have to varying degrees adversely impacted our effectiveness in Iraq and Afghanistan and need to be addressed. The bottom line, however, is indisputable: for the USG

to prevail in the fourth generation warfare we are currently engaged in, our senior leaders will need to create and support an integrated planning and assessment capability. This must challenge both the tunnel-vision, stove-piped thinking of our bureaucracies and the highly adaptive adversaries we are engaging in Iraq and Afghanistan. The only way to do that is out in the field, with a dedicated team of top civilian and military thinkers working together to provide our senior decision-makers with the ground truth, balance and objectivity needed for a comprehensive solution.

Perhaps the most accurate closing statement on a way forward and the serious challenges we face came recently from former Senator Charles Hagel, speaking about the importance of program evaluation: “You can’t make something better unless you are honest. You have to challenge every frame of reference, every reference point, every assumption. And if there was ever a time in the history of America – probably the world, that that is true, it is right now. You must challenge everything. ... You have to. The world is shifting at that dramatic a rate of change”.²⁶

²⁶ Hagel, Charles, speech given at the State Department’s Conference on Program Evaluation, June 8, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/rm/2010/147422.htm>

About the Contributors

The views expressed in these chapters are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of the NATO Defense College, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or any of the institutions or governments represented by the contributors.

All information and sources are drawn from unclassified material.

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He started his career in 1986 at the German Council of Foreign Affairs (DGAP) in Bonn. In 1988 he was a research fellow with the Center for Science and International Affairs (CSIA), John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA. In September 1988 he joined the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Bonn, where he became in 1992 Head of the Foreign and Security Policy Research Section and later the Director of its International Planning Staff. In 2003 he became the Security Policy Coordinator of the Foundation in Berlin.

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He is a member of numerous international institutions and academic bodies. In 2005 the German Minister of Defense appointed him to the Advisory Board of the Federal Academy for Security Policy. In 2009, Secretary Madeleine Albright selected him as one of the Advisors for the NATO Expert Group on the New Strategic Concept.

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Nadia Schadow

Dr. Nadia Schadow is Senior Program Officer in the International Security and Foreign Policy Program of the Smith Richardson Foundation in Westport, Connecticut. The Smith Richardson Foundation operates one of the country's largest grant programs on national security and foreign policy issues. She plays a central role at the Foundation in identifying strategic issues which warrant further attention from the U.S. policy community and manages and develops programs and projects related to these issues. As Senior Program Officer she is responsible for areas related to U.S. defense policy, including military force posture; the challenges posed by cyber conflict; the changing character of warfare; and non-military instruments of American power. Dr. Schadow began her career in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) as a Presidential Management Fellow, where her last assignment was as OSD's first country director for

Ukraine. In that capacity, during 1991-95, she played a central role in the development of a denuclearization strategy for Ukraine.

Dr. Schadlow received a B.A. degree in Government and Soviet Studies from Cornell University and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the Johns Hopkins Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Her dissertation, “War and the Art of Governance: The U.S. Army’s Role in Military Government from the Mexican War to Operation Just Cause”, examined thirteen cases of the U.S. Army’s experiences with political and economic reconstruction. Her articles have appeared in *Parameters*, *The American Interest*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Philanthropy*, *Armed Forces Journal*, and several edited volumes. Dr. Schadlow has been a frequent guest lecturer at the United States Military Academy and often makes presentations to high-level audiences.

Dr. Schadlow served on the Defense Policy Board from September 2006 to June 2009. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Christopher M. Schnaubelt

Christopher (Chris) Schnaubelt was born in San Diego, California, USA. He received a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California Santa Barbara with specializations in International Relations Theory, American Politics, and Public Policy. His dissertation analyzed the effectiveness of US policy in deterring international terrorism. Additionally, he holds a Master of Strategic Studies degree and is a graduate of the US Army War College.

Dr. Schnaubelt worked for the US Department of State as the Deputy Director for National Security Affairs, Joint Strategic Planning

and Assessment Office, in the US Embassy Baghdad, Iraq. He served as the Embassy's lead for writing the 2006 Joint Campaign Action Plan and the 2007-09 Joint Campaign Plan, in coordination with HQ Multi-National Force-Iraq and was also a co-director of the Joint Strategic Assessment Team. In recognition of his accomplishments, General David Petraeus presented the Commander's Award for Public Service to Dr. Schnaubelt.

Dr. Schnaubelt served more than 24 years in the California Army National Guard before transferring to the US Army Individual Ready Reserve as a colonel in 2005. His military assignments included training regiment and installation commander, tank battalion commander, tank company commander, and combat support company commander. In 2004, he was the Chief of Policy in the Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate (C-5) of Combined Joint Task Force Seven (CJTF-7) in Baghdad, Iraq and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Action Badge. In 2010, he performed a four-month assignment as a US Army Reserve colonel in support of KFOR and was awarded the Kosovo Campaign Medal and the NATO Non-Article 5 Medal.

During 2000-2003, Dr. Schnaubelt was an instructor for Columbia College and taught courses on U.S. legislative processes, public administration and policy, the American presidency, and the dynamics of terrorism. He also was on the adjunct faculty of the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, lecturing on civil-military operations and the principles of democratic civilian control of the military as part of Mobile Education Teams to Beirut, Lebanon and Cotonou, Benin.

From 1990 through 2001, he was assigned to the National Interagency Civil-Military Institute (NICI) at Camp San Luis Obispo, California. As senior policy analyst and later as chief of the Research

and Analysis Division, he directed the development and publishing of lessons learned from military counter-drug support and military support to civil authorities operations; he also collaborated with the Center for Civil-Military Relations at the US Naval Postgraduate School to help develop and instruct education programs designed to build and strengthen democratic institutions. In 2000, he was assigned as chief of the Training Division with responsibilities that included the direction and supervision of curriculum development, exercise development, and conduct of courses as well as leading and managing a full-time training staff of 21 instructors and approximately 100 contracted/guest instructors focused on graduating 1500 civilian and military students per year.

Dr. Schnaubelt has published numerous articles on security issues and interagency and civil-military operations, including: “Whither the RMA?” in the Autumn 2007 issue of *Parameters*; NDC Research Paper #40 “What NATO can learn from ‘the surge’ in Iraq”; NDC Research Paper #51 “The new US ‘Af-Pak’ strategy: implications for NATO”, and “Complex Operations and Interagency Operational Art” in the December 2009 issue of *PRISM*. He has also contributed Op-Eds to the *International Herald Tribune* and *Defense News*, as well as editing and writing chapters for NDC Forum Paper #9 “Operationalizing a Comprehensive Approach in Semi-Permissive Environments”, Forum Paper #11 “Counterinsurgency: The Challenge for NATO Strategy and Operations”, and Forum Paper #14, “Complex Operations: NATO at War and on the Margins of War”.

