SUCCEEDING IN PHASE IV:
BRITISH PERSPECTIVES ON THE U.S. EFFORT
TO STABILIZE AND RECONSTRUCT IRAQ

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Introductory Note

In the wake of 9/11, President George W. Bush announced that those states that harbored or fostered terrorism would be held as accountable as the terrorists. Moving the war on terror from groups to states meant either changing governments' behavior or, failing that, the governments themselves. Military force might overthrow a regime such as the Taliban's or Saddam's, but what would be put in their place? And how could the U.S. and its allies assure the success of the new political order?

The transition between operations of war and the initial postwar phase is crucial to the success of subsequent nation-building. It demands a military force whose leaders understand the difference, whose troops are trained in that difference, and who can rely on broad-based, coordinated political and economic programs of which they are a necessary but not sufficient part. It is generally acknowledged now that U.S. and Coalition forces brought too little understanding to this enterprise, receiving in the process a rude and bloody education, one still in motion.

In 2005, FPRI commissioned a pair of studies that would analyze the lessons learned thus far from what the military calls Phase IV, or stabilization and reconstruction following the end of major conflict. American military expert Frank G. Hoffman surveyed U.S. Marine efforts in Phase IV, while Andrew Garfield led a British and American research team that interviewed British officers and officials for their perspectives on the efforts of their U.S. Coalition partner in Iraq. The Smith Richardson Foundation provided material and moral support essential to the team's success. The Terrorism Research Center in northern Virginia and King's College in London provided research support.

A coherent and integrated national level framework for stability operations and postconflict reconstruction has eluded the United States for far too long. We hope that these studies will help U.S. military and civilian planners to refine a set of best practices, including a set of principles that can become a consensus as we confront a long and difficult struggle.

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Harvey Sicherman
President, FPRI

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Succeeding in Phase IV:
British Perspectives on the U.S. Effort
To Stabilize and Reconstruct Iraq

Executive Summary

By invading Iraq, the U.S. and its Coalition partners have undertaken probably the most challenging nation-building exercise since the end of World War II. The Coalition has set itself the task of fundamentally transforming Iraqi society, restoring stability to a war- and sanctions-ravaged country and reconstructing Iraq's political order. This monumental task has been further complicated by a succession of well-documented strategic errors, tactical blunders, and operational shortcomings. The list would surely include: the commitment of too few troops, often with the wrong equipment and training for counterinsurgency warfare; hasty turnover of responsibility to unready Iraqis in the search for an early exit; and failure to seal the borders as part of a larger strategy to gain regional support for the project. Further aggravating the situation is the predictable emergence of a tenacious, resilient, and complex insurgency. This enemy continues to demonstrate its ability to challenge the most powerful conventional military in the world. So far, the U.S. military has achieved only tactical parity with this adversary.

The U.S. government and military are now learning from their experience in Iraq, but the danger remains that not all of the right lessons will be learned, especially by a military that retains a strong conventional-warfare bias. The perspectives of observers who can objectively highlight strengths and weaknesses might be useful in this regard. We interviewed British officials and officers, U.S. military officers, and both British and American subject-matter experts for this study. British interviewees freely acknowledged U.S. preeminence in conventional warfare, but also felt that the greatest strength of the British military—unconventional warfare against asymmetric adversaries—was the greatest weakness of the U.S. military. This is troubling, because the U.S. will not always be able to rely on allies for support in long asymmetric conflicts.

British Doctrine and Observations

The core principles underpinning UK stabilization and reconstruction (S&R) doctrine is founded on its postcolonial operations, beginning with India in 1947, and from experience gained during the Northern Ireland intervention (1969–97) and from numerous interventions undertaken since 1990, including Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan. This British Army doctrine has been validated in Iraq, but it

has required significant adaptation to meet the challenges there, not least because each new counterinsurgency operation is as different from those that have preceded it as it is similar.

Realistic Objective. The British consider the early development of a domestically and internationally recognized political end-state to be an essential part of any S&R operation. Three outcomes are seen as desirable: an honorable withdrawal after a limited but positive effect has been achieved; the restoration of stability before handing responsibility for the reconstruction effort over to an international agency; or, less popularly, the complete transformation of a society—the most difficult. The U.S. strategic approach in Iraq is seen as idealistic, ideologically driven, and not based on a pragmatic assessment of the situation on the ground. The planned end-state for Iraq has therefore failed to secure sufficient Iraqi or international community acceptance.

Most interviews felt that both the U.S. and UK political leadership unrealistically expected to be welcomed as liberators. a blind optimism that persisted for a considerable time after the invasion, despite an obviously growing Sunni insurgency and the emergence of Shia militias and sectarian violence. There was also broad consensus that the Bush administration failed to appreciate the difference between good government and democracy, which cannot develop and mature without adequate security and effective governance. Other oft-cited flawed decisions included the rush to disband the Iraqi military and the effort to rapidly implement regime change through de-Baathification, encouraged by Shia émigré advisors chosen as interim leaders well before the invasion.

Legitimacy of the Intervening Force. The British believe that for any S&R operation to be successful, the intervening force's legitimacy must be established. This legitimacy is derived from three key sources: domestic support for the intervention (in this case, the American and British people); the international community; and most important, the community being rebuilt. Most interviewees felt that in Iraq the Coalition had even today far less legitimacy than was the minimum necessary for success, for reasons including the lack of a second UN resolution; the failure to locate any WMD; excessive civilian casualties owing to the indiscriminate use of force; the failure to properly secure Iraq after the invasion, mainly because of insufficient forces and misunderstanding the situation; a lack of cultural awareness; hugely underestimating the degree of likely opposition; a continued inability to protect ordinary Iraqis; and failure to quell the growing insurgency.

Legitimacy of the Supported Government. Similarly, the local government must be accepted as legitimate by a significant proportion of the population. Clearly, establishing such

legitimacy in an ethnically divided country such as Iraq is difficult. Most interviewees felt that a succession of errors had undermined the Coalition's efforts to establish the legitimacy of the Iraqi authorities, including the promotion to powerful positions of Shia émigrés and opposition spokespersons who had little support within Iraq; continued attempts to install leaders acceptable to the U.S.; promoting a democratic system that favored the Shia majority; focusing on national rather than local and regional governance; a premature handover of power to the Iraqis; failure to plan for and prevent the government's succumbing to preexisting ethnic, tribal, and religious divisions; and an inability or unwillingness to control the corrupt parts of the Iraqi government (e.g. Ministry of Interior). Most interviewees believed that even the current Iraqi government lacked sufficient legitimacy to prevent Iraq from descending into civil war, especially if the Coalition withdrew from Iraq in the next two to three years.

Patience. The British military understands that asymmetric conflicts are likely to be protracted undertakings in which patience is a virtue. This patience has to be demonstrated at all levels, both to the adversary and the local population, who must be able to trust both their government and the intervening force to "stay the course." The consensus view was that what Iraqis really want is not an immediate U.S. withdrawal but a U.S. withdrawal as soon as security and good governance have been reestablished. If the insurgent leaders actually thought the U.S. would be willing to fight on in Iraq for "as long as it takes," some feel that the war could be over in as little as three years. That is because, the extremists excepted, most Iraqis want a "long war" no more than the Coalition does. Showing the fortitude to battle on indefinitely creates the conditions for a much earlier political settlement, a solution less costly to all parties than a war of indeterminate cost and length.

Winning the Support of the People. British doctrine recognizes that the center of gravity in any S&R operation is the people, who must be persuaded to reject the insurgents. The population can only be won over by a combination of soft and hard power: force alone is insufficient for this task. Most interviewees perceived that the Coalition never secured sufficient support from the Shia community, let alone the much more disaffected Sunni. Iraqis still lack sufficient confidence in their government, and by extension in the Coalition, to be sufficiently emboldened to reject the insurgents and militias.

Many Iraqis believe that the Iraqi government and the Coalition have failed them. They do not feel safe, essential services are intermittent at best, their standard of living has declined, and they have lost hope that the future will be any better. For most, the objective is simply to make it safely through the day. Worse still, many now see parts of their government as a threat to their well-being.

Information/Communications Campaign. As General Sir Frank Kitson, who served in Kenya, Malaya, Cyprus, and Northern Ireland, wrote in 1971, the main characteristic that distinguishes S&R operations from other forms of war is that "they are primarily concerned with the struggle for men's minds." S&R operations require engaging in effective dialogue with key segments of the local population, waging an information campaign that challenges the propaganda deployed by the insurgents. Similarly, David Galula, a French army officer who served in China, Southeast Asia and Algeria, wrote, "If there is a field in which we were definitely and infinitely more stupid than our opponents it was propaganda." The project team's research in Iraq has highlighted a number of serious challenges in the information domain.

Because the words and deeds of individual soldiers and marines can have far greater effect than even the most sophisticated and well-executed information campaign, all personnel must be adequately prepared for their role in the Coalition's information campaign. Yet even today few are. Other fundamental problems identified included: lines of persuasion too often relate to abstract concepts such as democracy and citizenship that have little or no relevance to Iraqis; most Coalition campaigns are aimed at a nonexistent "generic" Iraqi audience; the campaigns are too often assessed based on measures of performance, not effectiveness (numbers over impact); the failure to monitor and counter enemy propaganda; and a lengthy approval process that hinders the timely execution of information campaigns.

The consensus British perspective is that the Coalition is losing the war of ideas to the insurgents, who are unencumbered by a public and political reticence to use information as a weapon or by the obstacles that impede the Coalition from rapidly developing and disseminating messages that resonate with target audiences.

Cultural Awareness. The British need no reminding of the importance of cultural awareness, as many of their earlier failures resulted from a lack of understanding of the communities and countries in which they were operating. It is not so much that the British military is particularly culturally attuned but that it is culturally pragmatic, acknowledging the importance of cultural understanding and at least appearing to be culturally sensitive. Its current doctrine can be seen in its military education, pre-deployment training, and organizational culture.

In contrast, most interviewees and some U.S. analysts noted that in March 2003, at the time of the Iraq invasion, cultural understanding within the U.S. military was woefully inadequate, and it may remain so. More cultural training is now being provided, but this is generally simplistic and inadequate. The education program was also not being reinforced in the field.

A surprising number of interviewees also criticized the U.S. military for presenting a sometimes arrogant attitude, even to allies. While interviewees admired the self-assurance of their U.S. counterparts, they also noted that the U.S. soldiers' largely uncritical belief that they belong to the "best military" from the "best country in the world" seemed elitist toward all foreigners, not just Iraqis.

Some more experienced British observers also noted that American culture itself also impeded harmonious relations in the Arab world. Many U.S. personnel did not appreciate that they were simply not understood by key target audiences. For example, the can-do, cut-to-the-chase attitude can be seen as brusque in interpersonal relationships in the Middle East. To Iraqis, many Americans appeared disinclined to modify their own cultural behavior while in their country.

While the British military system has made a sustained effort to develop institutional cultural awareness, one cannot underestimate the importance of the deeper cultural awareness that the British enjoy by dint of their history and geography. Conversely, the U.S. military has only recently renewed its appreciation for cultural understanding in S&R operations. Training and education still lag behind operational requirements and have not overcome the cultural unawareness that results from America's own history and geography.

Involvement of the Local Population. While the British believe in involving the local population as much as possible in the solutions being developed to stabilize and reconstruct their society, they also recognize that local, regional, and national institutions must be sufficiently mature before complete control is handed back to the local population.

British officers were highly critical of the U.S. approach in this regard. Their view, which is shared by the project team, is that in the rush to exit Iraq, the Coalition handed far too much power back to the Iraqis far too quickly. As a result, some elements of the police, the military, and most notoriously the Ministry of Interior security forces promptly divided along ethnic and tribal lines. Some have even become instruments of repression and sectarian violence, thereby undermining public confidence.

The Coalition might have thought that not handing over control would foster Shia resistance. However, from discussions with Iraqi Shia, the review team concluded that this would probably not have been the case. Had realistic expectations regarding the timetable for the handover been set from the outset, had good governance and security been provided immediately, and had Sunnis been included in the transitional

process, most Iraqis would probably have accepted a slower transition in return for peace and prosperity.

A number of senior officers and officials felt that in the rush to secure their own early exit from Iraq, the British had far too rapidly handed over authority to local leaders, who had then used that power to consolidate their own positions and to confront and attack their traditional rivals. This transfer of control had also allowed the Iranians to significantly increase their influence in southern Iraq. As a result, the British sector has divided down ethnic, tribal, and political lines, with two powerful militias now vying for control of this key region, leaving the British with little option but to use force to reassert control, thereby becoming one of the protagonists in the conflict.

Population Control. The British believe that on occasions it is still necessary to temporarily control the population by means of inducements and coercion. The British effort in southern Iraq to try to drive a wedge between the people and the insurgents and to isolate the population both physically and psychologically has enjoyed localized success, but overall, most officers interviewed felt the Coalition had done a poor job of using either physical or psychological tools to separate the local population from the insurgents and extremists.

Most interviewees felt the Coalition had failed to achieve any meaningful degree of population control, for reasons including inadequate troop levels; a force-protection obsession that encouraged seeing all Iraqis as potential threats; the lack of cultural awareness; the excessive use of force and indiscriminate and poorly targeted cordon-and-search operations; and the failure to provide adequate security for most Iraqis, which encouraged many to form or join militias, resulting in the creation of virtual no-go areas. The Coalition's inability to control the population has allowed the insurgents to train, organize, and operate with relative impunity.

Setting Realistic Expectations. Interveners must quickly demonstrate the potential benefits to the local population, while avoiding dislocating expectations by promising more than they can actually deliver. The rule should be to promise less but deliver more, and more quickly. However, prior to and immediately after the invasion, the Iraqi people were subjected to what one officer described as a "symphony of positive messaging," creating the impression that their lives would be immeasurably improved in short order. In reality, Iraq was in far worse shape than almost anyone expected and the Coalition was unable even to maintain a basic level of security. This disloca-tion of expectations quickly resulted in disillusionment and an increased willingness to entertain the arguments of the insurgents.

Civilian Primacy. To the extent possible, civilian authorities must take the lead in S&R and counterinsurgency operations. This is because most of the soft power that must be applied is political, economic, diplomatic, and informational, not military. Giving overarching authority to military commanders runs the risk that they will seek exclusively military solutions. The consensus view is that the Coalition has not effectively implemented the principle of civilian primacy. Too much control still devolves to the U.S. military, which unsurprisingly continues to pursue a largely coercive solution to the insurgency.

Unity of Effort. Unity of effort means bringing the full extent of state power (soft and hard) to bear in the S&R effort. The committee system has evolved as a uniquely British institution to ensure this unity of effort. While imperfect, this system has proven effective down to the tactical level for the coordination of S&R and counterinsurgency operations. Many of those interviewed felt that unity of effort was missing from the U.S. approach in Iraq. Many interviewees acknowledged that things had much improved since 2005, thanks largely to the efforts of U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad. However, even now it is felt that the U.S. military is still able to plan and conduct combat operations with insufficient non-DoD civilian oversight. As a result, the military was able to use what many British officers considered to be excessive force to the detriment of the other lines of operation.

Minimum Force. The one principle that is enshrined not only in doctrine but in the psyche of all British officers is that of minimum force, i.e., that the military should apply the absolute minimum level of force deemed necessary to stabilize a situation or achieve operational objectives. This is because excessive force will almost always be counterproductive. And yet the perception remains that the U.S. military continues to employ excessive force in Iraq.

A number of officers noted that they had observed that most U.S. military personnel did not understand, nor were they mandated to follow, the British concept of graduated response, which escalates from no action to some action to major action. The U.S. response seemed to be the reverse: to deescalate from major action to some action and finally disengagement. To implement graduated response requires education and training, and officers familiar with U.S. predeployment training commented that it was inadequate to ensure that U.S. troops would and could employ a graduated response to threats.

Many interviewees observed that the differing British and American military perceptions of their role may indirectly lead each to use lethal force. American soldiers see themselves as warriors whose duty it is to close with and destroy America's enemies, while British soldiers are cognizant that they may be warfighting today and

peacekeeping tomorrow. The difference between the "warrior ethic" and "soldiering" is that the U.S. warrior is too ready to resort to force.

Another factor that many British interviewees believed contributes to the U.S. military's perceived excessive use of firepower is its obsession with force protection, which emphasizes minimizing U.S. casualties over avoiding Iraqi casualties. This strategy quickly alienates the local population, who are then unwilling to support the Coalition, instead lending their support to the insurgency.

The Limited Utility of Military Power. Experience has conditioned the British to understand the limited utility of military power in S&R and counterinsurgency operations. In the words of Sir Robert Thompson, "priority should be given to defeating the political subversion, not the guerrillas." Indeed, the indiscriminate use of force can quickly provoke a desire for revenge, perpetuating the cycle of violence.

Interviewees consistently articulated the theme that the U.S. military did not seem to understand that it was not fighting an army in Iraq, but was dealing with a disaffected people. They praised those U.S. officers who did "get it," but the consensus was that the U.S. military still did not fully accept the limits of military power against an asymmetric adversary. Many officers commented on the "gung-ho" and overly aggressive attitude of individual soldiers.

It was also noted that the U.S. military often became frustrated when asymmetric adversaries would not engage in "force on force" confrontations. As a result, they sometimes labeled their opponents as cowardly rather than the shrewd fighters they actually are. Interviewees were concerned that the U.S. military will continue to underestimate an intelligent and deadly adversary they do not respect.

Intelligence-led Operations. Conducting intelligence-led operations is a key principle of British counterinsurgency operations. Underestimating the benefits of intelligence had disastrous consequences in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s, from indiscriminate internment to the failure of untargeted cordon-and-search operations. Almost all operations in Northern Ireland were eventually intelligence led. Indeed, terrorist suspects were often allowed to escape or British operations postponed or cancelled when insufficient intelligence was available to justify aggressive action. This principle has continued in Iraq with some success.

The British feel that too many U.S. operations in Iraq are mounted with insufficient intelligence. As a result, the local populace is severely disrupted, property damaged, and innocents detained or injured, thereby providing countless propaganda coups to the insurgents. One senior British officer noted a vicious circle he had observed

where insufficient intelligence, resulting from a disharmonious relationship with the population, encouraged largely random, aggressive cordon-and-search operations that affected more innocent than guilty persons. This further alienated an already disaffected community, which reduced the supply of actionable intelligence.

Several British officers familiar with U.S. operations noted that the U.S. military faces a terrible conundrum. Now under constant threat from IEDs and suicide bombers, it has adopted a highly defensive force posture that has distanced units from the local populace. Yet these units need to engage with the local population, which means taking significant risks and accepting increased casualties in the short term in order to reinvigorate the intelligence process and enhance force protection in the long term.

Military Culture. British success in counterinsurgency and S&R operations is also made possible by an organizational culture that embraces this form of warfare. As academic Alum Gwynne Jones noted, the British Army "achieved an enviable expertise [in counterinsurgency] partly because of its imaginative use of past experience, and partly because operations of this type were quite its favorite occupation." It also recognizes that asymmetric warfare places a premium on selecting, training, and empowering personnel at all levels who can "adapt and overcome."

The U.S. Army culture in contrast is regarded by most military analysts to eschew "operations other than war" in favor of large-scale, force-on-force conflicts between "worthy adversaries." This phenomenon has long been recognized by American military analysts. Brian Jenkins noted in his work for the RAND Corporation in 1970 that "the Army's doctrine, its tactics, its organizations, its weapons—its entire repertoire of warfare was designed for conventional war." More recently, in *Peacekeeping in the Abyss* (2004), Robert Cassidy noted, "for about 125 out of the 138 years since the Civil War, the mainstream U.S. Army has consistently failed to seriously consider any type of war except a European-style conventional conflict." Despite three years of asymmetric combat in Iraq, the U.S. military still retains a largely conventional organizational culture.

Most interviewees also felt that the U.S. military's retention of a conventional "big army" mindset and organizational culture has limited the freedom of command of more junior officers and stifled low-level adaptation and innovation. Because it remains essentially a peacetime organization, the U.S. military appears to exhibit a "zero-defect" culture that further limits innovation and punishes mistakes. In asymmetric conflict, trial and error is one primary tool of learning, but the culture disincentivizes officers from taking risks and encourages the type of conformity that is so often exploited by insurgents.

Policy Recommendations

Revised policies, strategy doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures need to be developed to prevail in Iraq and to be applied in the inevitable next such operation. Key among our recommendations are the following:

Realistic Objective. For each operation, a realistic and achievable plan and end-state should be developed, based on a detailed understanding of the country that is to be stabilized and rebuilt. The justification should be self-evident to the majority of the domestic population, the international community, and the society being reconstructed. Additionally, the first priority in any S&R operation should be to stabilize the community without unduly alienating the local populace in the process. This will likely require deploying a large, culturally attuned follow-on force capable of controlling the population and denying operating space to the insurgents, while using minimum force and taking greater risks in order to minimize collateral damage. Moreover, the U.S. must develop multiethnic solutions to future situations like Iraq, including offering disproportionate influence to minority groups in order to bring them onboard. A certain degree of coercive diplomacy will be needed to persuade the majority ethnic group to settle for less than total control, but the alternative is minority exclusion and conflict.

Patience. Asymmetric conflicts are almost always "long wars," and the intervention force must therefore be willing and able to outlast all who would oppose it. If a country does not have the patience and endurance needed for such a protracted, costly, and dangerous endeavor, it may not want to commence the operation in the first place.

Winning the Support of the People. If an operation like Iraqi Freedom is considered again, during the preplanning phase, an intimate understanding of the country/community that forces will soon occupy must be developed. Planning must take account of the likely impact of operations on the local populace. The combat-phase formations have to be trained for peace enforcement as well. The intervention force also needs to be large enough to dominate and prepared to interact with the foreign culture.

All personnel must be constantly reminded that their every word and action will have an effect, positive or negative, on the attitudes of the local populace. Serious consideration should be given to creating a national-level Director for Strategic Communication, possibly serving on the National Security Council. A new discipline should be created that includes tactical, operational, and strategic level communications and PsyOps.

The U.S. needs to design a comprehensive cultural awareness program to provide staff at all levels with the sensitivity and understanding they will need in the field. This should include developing (1) integrated, comprehensive cultural surveys, or human-terrain maps; (2) a comprehensive training and education program for all personnel; and (3) a cultural immersion program to provide personnel with the tools and confidence needed to engage effectively with the local populace.

Every effort should be made to involve the local populace as much possible; however, complete control should only be handed over when local officials have demonstrated their competency and impartiality. While public expectations regarding the timing of the handover can be managed if progress is being achieved, the loss of control resulting from the premature handover of authority is almost impossible to reverse.

A certain degree of population control is essential to ensure that vital facilities and installations, along with individuals, are protected, law is maintained, and freedom of maneuver is denied to opponents, particularly insurgents. This requires deploying a force large and capable enough to secure the country, not just defeat its conventional military forces.

At the outset of an S&R operation, the U.S. government should develop a realistic understanding of the challenges it will likely encounter; the mantra thereafter should be to promise less and deliver more, and more quickly.

Civilian Primacy. While the military will almost certainly have initial control of postconflict stabilization in any intervention, civilian leadership should be installed as quickly as possible. A senior civilian leader can ensure that all the lines of operation are coordinated and in particular that the military end is in harmony with the political, economic, and informational ends.

Minimum Force. Senior defense officials and military commanders should undertake an immediate and thorough review of existing doctrine and rules of engagement and tighten both in order to encourage personnel to see the use of lethal force as the last resort, not the first option. Predeployment and in-country training should also be modified to include a dedicated component that highlights the negative consequences of the disproportionate use of force. Moreover, the limited utility of military power in counterinsurgency and S&R operations must be accepted. There are no decisive battles against an insurgency; the defeat of this adaptable and resourceful adversary will likely take years to achieve.

Intelligence-led Operations. Wherever possible, operations must be intelligence-led. Doctrine must be modified accordingly. Operational planning should begin with the

questions, is there sufficient intelligence for this operation to be undertaken at all? Do the benefits outweigh the risks? This new risk-management culture is essential in S&R operations in order to avoid the temptation to do something when doing nothing may be the best option.

Organizational Culture. Changing the organizational culture of the U.S. military would be a huge, lengthy, and in some respects counterproductive undertaking, if it undermines the preeminence of the U.S. military in conventional warfare. That said, the existing culture does undermine its ability to successfully execute counter-insurgency and S&R operations. A detailed, high-level DoD study should therefore be undertaken to determine how the existing culture can be modified to enable the U.S. military to fight and win America's symmetric and asymmetric wars.

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TO STABILIZE AND RECONSTRUCT IRAQ

Introduction

Since 1990, the United States has engaged in six major nation-building exercises[1]—five of which were in Muslim countries and smaller interventions including in Liberia. Yet despite having made a significant investment during the 1990s to improve the U.S. military's combat effectiveness, prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in 2003 there had been no comparable increase in the capacity of the U.S. military or civilian agencies to conduct nation-building operations or to undertake a major counter-insurgency operation. Similarly, successive administrations have treated each new mission as if it were the first, and more importantly, the last, such operation. As a result, despite modest improvement in performance for each operation, no coherent integrated national or departmental doctrine had been developed and few standing capabilities established and maintained. Russell F. Weigley, describing the U.S. Army in 1835 in his seminal history of this venerable institution, suggested that it was ever thus:

> A historical pattern was beginning to work itself out: occasionally the American Army has had to wage a guerrilla war, but guerrilla warfare is so incongruous to the natural methods and habits of a well-to-do society that the American Army has tended to regard it as abnormal and to forget about it whenever possible. Each new experience with irregular warfare has required then that the appropriate techniques be learned all over again.[2]

Despite this lack of interest in and commitment to S&R missions, by invading Iraq, the United States and its Coalition partners have become embroiled in probably the most challenging example of nation-building undertaken since World War II. The U.S.-led Coalition has set itself the task of fundamentally transforming Iraqi society; restoring stability to a war- and sanctions-ravaged country; and leading and under-writing a comprehensive reconstruction of Iraq's political and social order and economic and physical infrastructure. This is a monumental task that has been made even more complicated by a succession of well-documented strategic errors, tactical blunders, and operational shortcomings. And given that the enemy also gets a vote, the challenge has also been immeasurably complicated by the predictable emergence of an exceptionally tenacious, resilient, and complex insurgency which has successfully

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[1] Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, Afghanistan, and Iraq.
[2] Russell F. Weigley, *The History of the United States Army* (Macmillan, 1967).

resisted the U.S.-led Coalition and the Iraqi authorities. When planning the invasion of Iraq, Coalition leaders clearly failed to heed the warning of Winston Churchill, "No matter how enmeshed a commander becomes in the elaboration of his own thoughts, it is sometimes necessary to take the enemy into account."

These blunders and shortcomings have occurred in large part because, prior to the invasion of Iraq, the United States had not developed an integrated national strategy and lacked coherent, well-founded doctrine for stabilization and postconflict reconstruction operations. The key government departments, State and Defense, were disinclined toward the type of commitment that predictably was necessary in post-Saddam Iraq. The United States seriously underestimated the task it was taking on, failed to plan for the worst-case scenario, was ill-prepared to face the challenges it would likely encounter; and was imbued with an over optimistic belief that they would be welcomed as liberators by the majority of the population—a myth encouraged by Iraqi exiles who understandably wanted the United State to invade. And yet, as any student of Machiavelli's *The Prince* could attest, the complexity, scale, and scope of this challenge was entirely predictable. In regard to the challenges likely to be encountered and the level of local support that might be expected, Machiavelli cautioned thus:

> There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. Because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new.[3]

When considering the likelihood of resistance, Machiavelli argued, "Whoever so desires to found a state and give it laws, must start by assuming that all men are bad and ever ready to display their vicious nature, whenever they may find occasion for it."[4] And with regard to the failure to undertake planning for all contingencies, he warned, "He who has not first laid his foundation may be able with great ability to lay them afterwards, but they will be laid with trouble to the architect and danger to the building."[5]

Much has already been written regarding the shortcomings of prewar planning and postwar operations. The task now is to develop new doctrine and capabilities to ensure that such mistakes are not made in the future. This represents a formidable challenge, as many of the institutions that must change, such as the U.S. military, remain reluctant to do so. The U.S. Army's reluctance to change in large part stems from a two-centuries-old organizational culture based on a commitment to

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[3] *The Prince*, Ch. VI.
[4] *Discourse upon the First Ten Books of Livy.*
[5] *The Prince*, Ch. VII.

conventional warfare and the warrior ethos. As Eliot Cohen noted in his work on the U.S. way of war, "The preference [of the U.S. Army] is for massing a large number of men and machines and the predilection for direct and violent assault."[6] Changing such an ingrained culture remains a huge task despite the progress that has undoubtedly been made since March 2003. As John Nagl notes, "Even under the pressures for change presented by ongoing military conflict, a strong organizational culture can prohibit learning the lessons of the present and can even prevent the organizations acknowledgement that its current polices are anything other than completely successful."[7]

To overcome this change-resistant organizational culture and operational ethos, one must undertake a fundamental, objective analysis of existing culture, strategy, doctrine, and capabilities to determine what works and what needs to be changed. This is not an easy exercise—after all, the U.S. Army has an extensive and vibrant body of experience upon which to draw, but as an institution singularly failed to do so before deploying to Iraq. The Vietnam War provided innumerable well-known examples of what not to do and what one should do (e.g. the Civil Operations & Rural Development Support–CORDS program). And yet many of the same mistakes that blighted U.S. engagement in that war have been repeated, albeit to a lesser extent, in Iraq. Compare the comments of a Vietnam veteran made shortly after the war (left column) with those of a recently returned Marine Corps captain (right column):

We fought a military war; our opponents fought a political one. We sought physical attrition; our opponents aimed for our psychological exhaustion. In the process, we lost sight of one of the cardinal maxims of guerrilla warfare: the guerrilla wins if he does not lose. The conventional army loses if it does not win.	What we did little of, however, was execute the basic principles that must be applied to defeat an insurgency. We were never intimately familiar with the millions of people, languages, cultures, and terrain in any of the five provinces that we operated in for two weeks or longer. And we did little to help indigenous security forces protect the populace from the insurgency.

Most of the comparisons that have been made between the Vietnam War and Iraq are seriously flawed. The point here is only that many of the lessons of past counterinsurgency campaigns had not been well learned and it is vitally important that, in the context of the next such operation, the same mistake not be repeated yet again.

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[6] Eliot Cohen, "The Strategy of Innocence: The United States Army 1920-1945," in *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, ed. Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); quoted in John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Praeger, 2002), p. 44.

[7] Ibid., p. 217.

One way to ensure that we do not miss the lessons from, or draw the wrong conclusions about our performance in Iraq is to elicit the perspectives of informed observers who are able to objectively highlight perceived strengths and weaknesses. In this respect, an assessment of the British experience in Iraq and British perspectives on U.S. performance in Iraq is likely to be particularly beneficial. The UK has a long and largely successful track record in such operations and has continued to employ an approach that differs from that of the U.S., significantly so in some key areas—for example, in its understanding of the limited utility of force and in the use of minimum force in counterinsurgency operations.

Concept

In early 2005, a British-American research team sponsored by the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) in Philadelphia commenced a study of British and U.S. approaches to S&R operations as demonstrated in Iraq. FPRI acknowledges the research contributions of King's College in London and the Terrorism Research Center in northern Virginia, and the financial support provided by the Smith Richardson Foundation (SRF). This study was considered to be particularly valuable because at that time, the focus for studies of British "operations other than war" was limited to past campaigns such as the Malaya Emergency. The aim of this study was therefore to focus on contemporary experience, where the performance of the two countries could be directly compared. Capturing the impressions and assessments of British officials and military officers regarding both British and U.S. performance in Iraq would assist in the development of coherent, integrated, and credible policy and doctrine for postconflict S&R that would have great utility for the United States both now and in the future. This body of doctrine is urgently needed because, as a recent RAND study concluded, nation-building has become the inescapable responsibility of the world's sole superpower, and the country must therefore plan accordingly. SRF agreed to fund this project, which began in the early summer of 2005.

Methodology

The research team for this project comprised two dedicated researchers, Andrew Garfield, a British senior fellow at FPRI, and Prof. Randolph Kent, an American academic based in London with King's College. They were supported by a team of U.S.- and UK-based subject-matter experts and researchers. The study began with an extensive literature search of relevant contemporary and historical publications and official papers, which has continued right up until the completion of this monograph. Indeed, so much has been published in the last 18 months on the twin topics of U.S. performance in Iraq and British counterinsurgency experience that the proposed

format for the final report has been changed several times to avoid repeating well-stated arguments.

The main phase of the project involved the conduct of formal interviews with over 100 British officials and officers, a number of U.S. military officers, and both British and American subject-matter experts. All of the British officers and officials had been or are directly involved in the planning and/or execution of the British contribution to OIF, and many had observed firsthand either U.S. operations or the effects of those operations. The original intention had been to visit the British sector in Iraq, but in the end this was not possible for security reasons, so interviews conducted in Iraq were limited to the Baghdad area. However, a significant number of the British civilian and military interviewees had served in Iraq with British formations, on U.S. Command Staffs, or in the case of the Black Watch, directly under the command of a U.S. formation (22 Marine Expeditionary Unit). Civilian interviewees were drawn from the Cabinet Office and all key government departments, including the Ministry of Defense, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Department for International Development. Military interviewees had either served on the staffs of UK and U.S. headquarters or had commanded battalions or companies in Iraq as part of Operation Telic, the British codename for OIF. Unfortunately, only one British flag-rank officer agreed to be interviewed.

All interviews were conducted on the basis of non-attribution in order to secure the most forthright views and opinions. The views expressed by interviewees did not, of course, represent the official position of their respective governments, but in the case of the British interviewees did at least represent a significant body of opinion of British officialdom.

In almost all cases, the British interviewees began each conversation with a lengthy explanation of how much they respected their American colleagues, how much they thought the U.S. had progressed in only three years of war, and how concerned they were not to cause undue offense. Indeed, after Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster's critique of U.S. performance in Iraq ("Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations") was published in the November-December 2005 *Military Review*, British officers became far more reluctant to criticize the UK's closest ally. While none expressed any fundamental disagreement with the Brigadier's assessment, most were concerned that he had made his views so public.

This study identifies those opinions that are widely shared by most of the British officers and officials and are therefore worthy of serious consideration. If the views are inaccurate, then at minimum the study suggests where U.S. actions and performance in Iraq are being misunderstood. If officers and officials from what is

the United States' closest ally share such views, then U.S. actions and intentions are probably being similarly misunderstood by Iraqis and others.

While all interviewees voiced some criticism of U.S. performance in Iraq, almost all were equally critical of British shortcomings, particularly in Phases I–III of Operation Telic. These interviewees were also lavish in their praise for the U.S. in the initial combat phases of OIF and acutely aware of the technology and capability gaps between the two armies. The realization of the contrasting strengths and weaknesses of the two armies was a common theme in all interviews. Almost to a person, British interviewees acknowledged that the U.S. military was preeminent in conventional warfare and superior to the British military in almost every respect; not simply in terms of technology and numbers but also in terms of doctrine, organizational culture, and ethos. However, most also expressed the view that the greatest strength of the British military—unconventional warfare against tenacious and entrenched asymmetric adversaries—was the great weakness of the U.S. military.

This is deeply concerning because the U.S. cannot afford the luxury of only being good at conventional warfare, not least because all too often it cannot rely on allies for support in asymmetric conflicts. While many allies are likely to support such engagements, most also lack the political will to fight long wars and all, including the British, lack the financial, material, and human resources to replace the U.S. in such costly operations. It is therefore essential that the U.S. evolve and improve so that it can fight both symmetric and asymmetric wars with equal effectiveness.

Rationale

The research team's most important challenge was the potential for a largely negative response to what would be viewed as yet another British critique of U.S. efforts in Iraq. In some respects such a response is inevitable, but the team hopes that this study will be judged on its merits. And to put the comments in perspective, we are the first to agree that "the success of British counterinsurgency has stemmed from a combination of fortuitous circumstances and historical development that produced a military establishment well suited to combating internal unrest."[8]

It must also be remembered that British expertise is based as much on failure as it is on success. For every Malaya there has been an Aden or Palestine; for every Oman, a Northern Ireland (circa 1970–75). It was not for nothing that the IRA Chief of Staff is reputed to have said in 1972, after the failure of internment, mass cordon, and search

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[8] Thomas R. Mockaitis, "Low Intensity Conflict: the British Experience," *Conflict Quarterly*, Winter 1993, p 14.

operations, and after Bloody Sunday that "the best recruiting sergeant the IRA has is the British Army."[9]

Some contemporary British critics of the U.S. effort in Iraq, particularly from the media and junior officialdom, have displayed a somewhat superior attitude regarding a form of warfare that has become a British forte. Most of them have not served in Iraq, where British performance has been less than optimal, especially in the first year of the occupation.[10] They are also often unaware of past failures, including in Northern Ireland. By and large this attitude is not shared by British senior officers and officials who served as platoon commanders and junior civil servants in Northern Ireland during the 1970s. The British expertise in counterinsurgency has evolved from hard-won experience, and it is in that spirit that this monograph and the British perspectives contained within it are presented.

Overview

After laying out the background of the U.S. military performance in Iraq in 2003 and 2004 and the British planning process leading up to and after the invasion of Iraq, the monograph is then subdivided into three main parts. The first identifies the principles of S&R operations that are accepted formally (in doctrine) and informally (in practice) by the British government and military and discusses the military culture that underpins the British approach to S&R operations. This analysis provides a conceptual framework in which to place the comments of the interviewees regarding performance in Iraq. The second part provides a summary of performance to date as viewed by interviewees and as described in relevant literature. The third offers recommendations as to how perceived shortcomings could be corrected and good practices improved still further, each recommendation linked to one of the commonly agreed principles of S&R operations and the cultural factors identified above.

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[9] Comment attributed to Sean MacStiofain, the Provisional IRA's first chief of staff.

[10] The term occupation is used here although it should be noted that initially the Coalition presented itself as liberators not occupiers. Attitudes and terminology changed as Iraqi (both Sunni and Shia) resistance increased and greater realism set in.

Background

A.   U.S. Operations in Iraq

The first three years of the U.S.-led S&R effort in Iraq have not gone smoothly, despite abundant, recent, and relevant U.S. and international experience in such undertakings. Numerous problems were encountered prior to deployment, during combat operations, and in the subsequent occupation that have seriously undermined efforts to stabilize Iraq and significantly delayed the reconstruction effort. A review of articles and research published in the United States over the last two years identifies the following common and widely held perspectives, which are detailed in order to place the comments of the British officers and officials (Part 2) into context and to demonstrate that they are in large part commonly held views, shared by many Americans military experts and serving officers and officials.

First, most experts agree that the prewar planning for this operation was wholly inadequate. Sound advice based on past U.S. and international experience regarding the likely challenges and requirements for the postconflict phase of OIF was largely ignored. There were also simply too few troops in Iraq at the conclusion of the battlefield phase of OIF, and many of them were inadequately prepared to transition quickly from warfighting to stability operations, a task that many experts believe the U.S. military was reluctant to accept in the first place. In part, this situation developed because such operations were not at the time considered to be a core military mission. However, another significant contributing factor was the failure of the civil administrations—the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, renamed the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in May 2003—deployed to Iraq, which were woefully ill-prepared and under-resourced and often disconnected from both the military effort and the Iraqi people.

It has also been argued that too few high-level decision-makers understood the nature of Iraqi society sufficiently to anticipate and plan for the likely level of Iraqi resistance. Too many also pinned their hopes on exiled leaders who had little credibility in Iraq, while they rejected traditional tribal and local political leaders who did possess the credibility to fill the leadership vacuum left after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. This lack of cultural awareness extended to all levels of the U.S. military and civilian entities in Iraq, seriously complicating efforts to engage with an ethnically and culturally diverse society. Some argue that this lack of cultural awareness still plagues U.S. efforts in Iraq today.

Decisions taken immediately before and after the invasion further compounded the problem. The failure to adequately prepare much of the follow-on force for stability operations and then to increase the size of the stabilization force made containment of what was always likely to be a growing insurgency almost impossible. The preoccupation with force protection and the use of disproportionate and sometimes indiscriminate force is also considered by many experts to have undermined efforts to win hearts and minds. The decision to disband and discard the Iraqi military, intelligence, security, and police forces and to instigate a purge led by the now somewhat discredited Ahmed Chalabi, who used the exercise as a means to eliminate rivals and consolidate his power, was also a significant error for which the price is still being paid today. And the failure to provide much more than basic training for military and police replacements has kept the Iraqi security forces still a long way from being a credible replacement for Coalition troops.

As the occupation has continued, other problems have arisen. The duration of the mission has regularly been called into question by U.S. politicians, senior officers, and officials who appear unwilling to admit that it takes a minimum of five to seven (and more likely 10-15) years to build a competent civilian administration and democratic institutions in such a chaotic environment. As a result, most planning is short-term in nature, and many Iraqis lack confidence in the Coalition's willingness to remain engaged for the long haul. According to several Iraqi politicians,[11] the sad irony of this U.S.—and it has to be said British—government preoccupation with an exit strategy is that such talk is actually lengthening the intensity and duration of the conflict. According to these Iraqi observers, if the bulk of the insurgents (which excludes both Sunni and Shia Islamists extremists) believed that the U.S. would remain in Iraq for twenty years, the war would be over in two. But because most Iraqis believe the U.S. will be gone within five years, many insurgents are inclined to hang on knowing that all they have to do is "last one day longer than the Americans,"[12] a day that is "not far away." Similarly, many moderate Iraqis are unwilling to take the risks associated with supporting the Coalition because they are not confident that it will remain long enough to see stability restored.

There is still insufficient unity of effort between the military and civilian authorities both in the U.S. and in Iraq and on occasion among Coalition partners including between the two closest—the U.S. and UK. There has also been a significant failure to create legitimate and effective local governance or to actively involve local community and tribal leaders in the reconstruction effort. This has further alienated these traditional authority figures and their communities, thereby mitigating the positive

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[11] Opinions expressed in off-the-record interviews with two Iraqi ministers conducted in early 2006.
[12] Comment made by Iraqi police offer to project researcher in February 2006.

effect of some reconstruction efforts. It has also been argued that Coalition influence operations have been largely based on American-centric constructs and ever-changing message themes. Such messages are structured around abstract concepts like democracy and freedom, themes that resonate poorly with an audience whose greatest and most imminent fears and needs are much more basic: fear of chaos, the desire for safety, and the need for jobs.

As noted by the Defense Science Board in its Summer 2004 study, the capacity to bring and maintain stability and to promote political and economic reform, in Iraq and elsewhere, exists within the U.S. military, in many civil agencies in the United States, in nongovernmental organizations, and internationally. However, these disparate strands need to be galvanized by and organized around a common vision and a coordinated strategy, which at the present, and despite the problems encountered in Iraq, is still not adequate. That is why the Board concluded that a "new coordination and integration mechanism is needed to bring management discipline to the continuum of peacetime, combat and S&R operations." Unfortunately, with no national command authority responsible for coordinating this effort and with the key departments only now beginning to make this type of operation a core mission, it is hard to see who will urgently develop the necessary strategy and doctrine.

B.   UK Operations in Iraq

Notwithstanding the fact that the UK's area of responsibility in Iraq is less hostile than many of the areas occupied by U.S. forces, informed opinion suggests that the British approach to S&R, which differs significantly from that of the U.S., has achieved some success in Iraq, ensuring greater stability, fewer casualties, less alienation, and more rapid reconstruction. This success has been achieved as a direct result of the effective adaptation of existing doctrine for peace-support operations (PSOs); an organizational culture best suited for such operations; and a much more integrated national approach to stability and reconstruction operations. That is not to say, however, that the UK, even with its rich history in this area, has not itself encountered serious difficulties.

A recent British military review concluded that the size of the task in Iraq came as a major surprise and, as a result, prewar planning was totally inadequate. Indeed, the lack of a coherent campaign plan for Phase IV was probably the biggest shortcoming of this operation so far. At the outset of Phase IV, the British encountered numerous problems with establishing a civilian administration adequate to the task, because of a lack of suitably trained officials. This task therefore had to be undertaken by poorly prepared military officers who lacked the resources needed to start reconstruction efforts quickly. Insufficient resources, which it a problem that has always blighted British PSOs, impaired subsequent reconstruction efforts. Cultural awareness among

those troops that participated in Phase III was also surprisingly poor, and the force was seriously deficient in linguists. This lack of cultural awareness appears to have come as a surprise to senior officers who had served in Northern Ireland in ranks ranging from platoon commander to flag rank. But few officers below company grade or noncommissioned officers below the rank of sergeant major had served in Ireland during the insurgent phase of that conflict (1970–90). This shortcoming was quickly rectified: subsequent troop rotations were preceded with a lengthy period of training conducted at a modified version of the highly successful Northern Ireland Training Center.

There was also a tendency in the early stages of the occupation for British forces to seek templated solutions based on existing doctrine rather than adapting that doctrine and extensive past experience to meet the new challenges being faced in Iraq. Indeed, some experts have argued that the British Army's efforts from the late 1980s to follow the U.S. example and introduce formalized doctrine has significantly improved its ability to conduct conventional operations but somewhat undermined the qualities that are most valuable for counterinsurgency operations—independent thought, innovation, pragmatism, and improvisation. The scale and complexity of the task in Iraq has necessitated significant and continuing revisions of British doctrine and the active encouragement of innovation and imagination in order to avoid doctrine becoming a straitjacket. As Robert Cassidy noted in *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, historically one of the greatest strengths of the British Army in conduct counterinsurgency operations was the lack of formal doctrine.[13]

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[13] Robert M Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss* (Praeger, 2004).

Part 1. Principles of British S&R Doctrine

Current British doctrine is founded on three bodies of past experience. First, postcolonial operations conducted by the British Army beginning with India in 1947 and including Palestine, Malaya, Borneo, Aden, Kenya, Oman, Doha, Brunei, and Cyprus. Second, both the negative and positive experience gained during the Northern Ireland intervention (1969–97); and third, from experience gained from operations undertaken since 1990, this includes 11 intervention operations, the most significant of which include Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

The early years of the Northern Ireland struggle are particularly relevant because they were characterized by numerous military and political failures similar to those occurring in Iraqi today. Only after the UK developed an integrated and holistic strategy that included an effective hearts-and-minds campaign, political reform, economic reconstruction and the use of legitimate and minimum force did it begin to prevail against Republican terrorism forcing the Provisional Irish Republican Army to the negotiating table. This was recognized by John Strawson, who stated, "Despite subsequent distractions like the Falklands Islands and the Gulf, we should not underestimate the profound influence of Ulster on soldiers' lives"[14]

The core principles that underpin UK postconflict S&R doctrine have now been validated in Iraq, although practices needed to be adapted significantly to meet the challenges there, not least because the British learned, as countless others have, that each new counterinsurgency operation is as different from those that have preceded it as it is similar. We identified the following principles from studying British counter-insurgency and stabilization operations since 1945. Not all of them have been applied in every campaign, and some are not specifically identified in the histories of those campaigns even when they have been evident. Nonetheless, they would appear to have become core values on which current doctrine and practice is based or underpinned.

1.1   Realistic Objective

A domestically and internationally recognized and accepted political outcome or end-state should be a part of any S&R operation. It is not always possible, but ideally, there should be an international agreement on the desired end-state for a nation-building exercise even before intervening, which would go a long way to establishing

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[14] John Strawson, "The British Way of War," p. 348.

the legitimacy of the whole operation. There is, however, a significant degree of pragmatism in the UK regarding what an acceptable end-state might look like, born out of almost two centuries of experience and, frankly, cynicism. There are three desirable outcomes: an honorable withdrawal after a limited but positive effect has been achieved; the restoration of stability before handing responsibility for the reconstruction effort over to an international agency; or the complete transformation of a society. The British generally have lower ambitions than Americans and would normally avoid seeking more lofty and problematic societal change. Britain does not have that choice in Iraq and is still trying to adapt to a goal of "regime change." It is involved in a transformational operation that it would probably have preferred to avoid; one that many interviewees did not believe could succeed, at least not in the form that the United States desired.

One of the most oft-voiced criticisms from both the British interviewees and some American analysts was that the end-state desired by the United States for Iraq had neither internal nor international recognition and was based far more on idealism and self-interest than on either a pragmatic assessment of what was possible in Iraq or desired by Iraqis. In a country riven by ethnic, tribal, and religious divisions and where many fundamentalist Muslims opposed either religious freedom or gender equality, the idea of a Wilsonian democracy is viewed as a utopian pipedream. It was felt by many Iraqi and Western interviewees that the end-state for Iraq needs to be a far more pragmatic form of democracy better suited to the realities of the country. A form of democracy that took far more account for example of the dreams, demands, and influence of each of the major ethnic groups and political entities. Such an end-state just might gain sufficient internal and international support to be realizable. Several interviewees cited the example of the 1997 Good Friday Accord which brought peace to Northern Ireland as a far more pragmatic approach that could work in Iraq. This peace settlement gave disproportionate influence and power to the Catholic minority and also a say in a the future of Northern Ireland to the Irish government in return for an end to violence and the disbandment and disarming of the IRA, an outcome that was largely achieved seven years later. A number of inter-viewees argued that a similar end-state for Iraq that gave more power to the Sunnis and which involved Iraq's neighbors, including Iran, is needed.

Legitimacy of the Intervening Force

Legitimacy must be secured for any operation. This legitimacy is derived from three key sources: the domestic population, the international community; and the local community. In the first instance, the UK electorate must support any nation-building operation, as domestic support is needed to allow the government to commit the necessary resources for what will almost certainly be a protracted engagement. The

British government therefore devotes considerable efforts to winning that essential domestic support. This has proved extremely problematic in the context of Iraq, with huge protest marches against the war prior to March 2003 and rapidly declining electoral support since. Polls overwhelmingly indicate that only a minority of the British electorate now support the war in Iraq.

International legitimacy is essential, in particular to encourage burden-sharing and to make it harder for those external actors with a vested interest in undermining an operation to pursue destructive policies and actions. The UK and U.S. have been largely unsuccessful in their attempts to secure broad and unequivocal international legitimacy for the occupation of Iraq and this has, as the British see it, undermined both domestic and international support for the war.

Most important, consent is needed from those communities in which or between which UK forces will intervene. This is seen as critical to the success of any S&R effort because in the end it is only with the support of the local population that an insurgency can be defeated and stability restored. Again, the Coalition has struggled to convince many Iraqis, Sunnis in particular, of the legitimacy of the occupation. This lack of legitimacy is thought to have fueled the insurgency, as it has given the insurgents ample excuse to attack both the Iraqi authorities and the Coalition. The challenge is severely complicated because the arguments that need to be presented to secure this legitimacy are different for each of the main ethnic groups in Iraq. What resonates with the Shia will not necessarily resonate with the Sunni.

Legitimacy of the Supported Government

It is also critically important to quickly establish the legitimacy of the government that is being defended and/or established. This government must be accepted as legitimate by a significant proportion of the population. Establishing that credibility in an ethnically divided country such as Iraq is especially difficult. If introduced on the basis of one man, one vote, democracy will not necessarily ensure a government's legitimacy, if an ethnic minority cannot secure what they believe to be adequate representation because they are numerically too small.

British officials were sometimes at odds with their American counterparts in Iraq, who would point out that democracy was a success and that the new Iraqi government was legitimate because more than 79 percent of the population had voted in the most recent legislative elections held in December 2005, a more powerful mandate than, say, for the American president, who was elected with only 51 percent of the vote in 2004, in an election in which only 60 percent of eligible voters participated. However, what this statistic fails to take account of, as some British

observers have noted, is that the elections consolidated the power of the main Shia voting bloc (United Iraqi Alliance), which secured 128 seats (almost an outright majority) compared to 44 seats for the ethnic Sunni parties. Even within a Coalition government that shares some power with the Kurds and Sunni, Shia domination is therefore assured and Sunni power and influence greatly reduced. This is a recipe for resistance and ethnic confrontation.

To be considered legitimate, the government being supported by an intervention force must be willing to embrace the changes needed to gain and retain the support and trust of the electorate. This includes severely limiting corruption, cronyism, and the misuse of power, including the intimidation of political opponents. In order to do this, it must embrace basic human rights and the right of free expression. It must also be willing to compromise on key issues to placate those who might otherwise support the insurgency, and it must demonstrate the robustness and moral fiber to resist intimidation (often violent) from both its opponents and vested interests within its own support base. On numerous occasions, the stabilization efforts of an intervening power have been seriously undermined because the government being defended has failed to secure legitimacy in these ways. History and ethics strongly suggest that one should seriously question the efficacy of continuing to support a government that is unable or unwilling to do what it takes to secure legitimacy with its own electorate/population.

1.2.   Patience

As early as 1972, only three years after the latest "troubles" had begun, Gerry Adams, the leader of the Provisional IRA and later its political wing Sinn Fein, knew that the Republicans were likely engaged in a decades-long struggle. Like other insurgent leaders before him, he termed this struggle a "long war." Few counterinsurgency experts would disagree with the statement that an asymmetric conflict is indeed a protracted affair. Much has been made of the statistic that no operation of the type being undertaken in Iraq today has been successfully concluded in less than five to seven years. In fact, given the complexity of the Iraqi occupation, this particular conflict is unlikely to be fully stabilized in less than ten years and more probably fifteen. Strategic patience is therefore required. There are no quick solutions to end or shorten this type of conflict, assuming that the intervening force does not simply seek a face-saving exit strategy, leaving the formerly occupied country to its own fate.

The British have in the past demonstrated this type of patience, or resilience, not always out of moral fortitude but often out of necessity. Most of the protracted asymmetric engagements it has endured have been in colonies or, in the case of Northern Ireland, within the UK itself. Indeed, some observers have argued that the

UK has demonstrated an indecent haste in Iraq in its efforts to temporarily stabilize its sector in order to achieve a rapid draw-down of forces and an early exit—most likely because the government's Iraq "adventure" is deeply unpopular with a majority of the British electorate. This reality notwithstanding, the British instinctively know that engagement in an asymmetric conflict is likely to be protracted and patience is therefore a virtue. This patience needs to be demonstrated at all levels and should be vividly demonstrated to the local population and the adversary, who must all believe that their government and the intervening force are willing and able to outlast the insurgents and "stay the course."

1.3   Winning the Support of the People

British policy and doctrine recognize that the center of gravity in any S&R operation is the people. If the indigenous government and intervening force cannot ultimately persuade the majority of the population to reject the insurgents, then S&R efforts will fail. The bulk of this community is only ever likely to be, at best, ambivalent towards the intervening force, but it is still possible, over time, to secure their acceptance of a "preferred" outcome. The most important strategic component in this type of operation must therefore be winning the population away from the insurgents. This can be achieved in a number of ways using a combination of both soft and hard power. It will definitely not be achieved through a strategy that overemphasizes the use of force. The British therefore see the expert exploitation of soft power as the key to success in asymmetric conflicts. This would include both political and economic reform at the national level.

However, it is also accepted that one must make a difference in the lives of as many people as possible as early as possible. This necessitates a significant effort to ensure fair treatment, the creation of jobs, improvements in education and medical services (in the short term, getting an education and being treated is far more important than the construction of new schools and hospitals), providing a bearable standard of living, basic personal security, and some form of legitimate representative governance. Military action is still vital for coercive purposes and to establish a minimum level of security but this is only a strategy to buy the time needed for the benefits of political and economic reform to become tangible for most of the population.

The British consider that the application of this principle must be based on the seamless integration of the political, economic, and military lines of operation. This can only be achieved through unity of effort and integrated command and control (C2).

Information/Communications Campaign

> *The main characteristic that distinguishes campaigns of insurgency from other forms of war is that they are primarily concerned with the struggle for men's minds.*[15]

S&R operations require engaging in effective dialogue with key segments of the population through a comprehensive information campaign.[16] This dialogue must extol the virtues of the government (suitably reformed, legitimate and representative) and intervention force while repeatedly highlighting the vices of the insurgency. It must also focus on challenging the propaganda of the insurgency, which has traditionally been far more effective than the authorities at engaging the local population. As David Galula (d. 1967), a French army officer who served in China, Southeast Asia and Algeria, pointed out in his seminal work on counterinsurgency, "If there is a field in which we were definitely and infinitely more stupid than our opponents it was propaganda."[17]

Such a campaign sets the expectations of target audiences, which most would agree the Coalition failed to do prior to and immediately after the invasion of Iraq. Most Iraqis suffered from the "man on the moon syndrome," expecting the most powerful nation on earth to quickly solve all of their country's ills. Indeed, some statements from senior American officials encouraged such a perception. The reality is that it was always going to take years to reconstruct Iraq, even if stabilization had been achieved quickly. This necessitated the setting of expectations of the population because the material benefits of political and economic reforms were going to take months and years to be fully manifest. The dislocation of expectations of most Iraqis, which is what actually occurred, undermined the limited successes that were achieved because these are no where near as much or as fast as the Iraqis had expected and perceived that they had been promised.

Moreover, such a campaign explains the actions that the government and/or intervention force must take in order to stabilize the security situation. The aim is to win support for such actions or at least the acquiescence of the affected population. It also bolsters morale, which may be severely stressed by shock, unwelcome or unfamiliar change, deprivation, loss, and intimidation. This campaign must also challenge the personal appeal, ideology, and propaganda of the insurgents who will seek to

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[15] General Sir Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Peacekeeping*, New York: Stackpole, 1971, p. 290.

[16] This type of campaign has variously been described as Information Operations, Propaganda, Strategic Communications, Influence Operations, Psychological Operations and Perception Management. While the terminology may vary, the intent is the same: to influence the hearts and minds of key target audiences through the effective use of information.

[17] David Galula, *Counter Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, New York, Praeger, 1964.

promote their own agenda to encourage supporters or coerce the uncommitted and who will attempt to portray every government action negatively or steal the credit for rare successes—for example, to portray political improvements or redress of grievances as only resulting from their violent campaigns.

The key to a successful information campaign is developing lines of persuasion and messages that will resonate with the target audiences; using culturally sensitive and relevant narratives which exploit all possible avenues to reach key audiences. The counterinsurgents' information campaign has to be timely, exploiting all successes and rapidly challenging enemy propaganda before opportunities are lost and the lies and deceits of the insurgents gain credibility because of any information vacuum. These campaigns cannot simply extol government ideology and vague abstractions such as the benefits of democracy or a free-market economy, when what really matters to people are local and personal issues such safety, jobs and representation. To achieve these objectives requires the coordination of a broad range of capacities and expertise, little of which is found in sufficient numbers or quality within either the government in general or the military in particular. This includes the types of skills and experience found in the advertising, marketing, public relations, lobbying, political campaigning and broadcast, print and new media industries. And of course this all has to be done in a foreign language to an audience that is culturally alien to the intervening force.

Cultural Awareness

After two centuries of abject failure as well as significant success in counterinsurgency operations, the British need no reminding of the importance of cultural awareness. Many British failures have resulted directly from a lack of understanding of the communities and countries in which they were operating. Even the Irish proved to be something of a mystery to the first British Army units deployed to Northern Ireland in 1969, despite the fact that a fifth of the British population has a Celtic heritage and notwithstanding that Ireland has been the subject of British hegemony for centuries. Institutionally, the British therefore place a premium on the development of culture awareness in military education, predeployment training, and operational planning and execution.

That said, several senior British officers reported their surprise at the cultural ignorance of some of the young officers and soldiers who deployed to Iraq in the spring-summer of 2003. In large part this was attributed to two key factors that are relevant to the U.S. military. First, senior officers had underestimated how quickly operational lessons can be forgotten if the bulk of a force is no longer engaged in counterinsurgency operations. Almost all the officers and soldiers below the age of 30 had only served in Northern Ireland, if at all, after the intense insurgency phase of

that conflict had concluded in the early 1990s. The British Army also discovered that unless soldiers receive comprehensive predeployment training they will not be culturally attuned for counterinsurgency operations. This is especially true of soldiers serving in armored formations for extended periods. The armored and mechanized infantry formations prepared for the conventional conflict phase of OIF received very little predeployment training for counterinsurgency operations and this clearly hindered their ability to execute such complex operations in Phase IV of the operation. This was quickly rectified and all subsequent units received excellent pre-deployment training on a par with the highly regarded Northern Ireland training program.

Some officers also commented that the declining standard of British education and the impact of globalization, which has noticeably homogenized European culture, further reduced the cultural awareness of the typical British soldier. The veracity of this argument is impossible to determine but is worth following up given that some American analysts have similarly agued that the lack of cultural sensitivity of many U.S. military personnel is due in large part to declining education standards and their cultural isolation.

Involvement of the Local Population

The British approach to S&R operations relies on building on a country's existing political fabric. This often means working with traditional tribal and political leaders who have community legitimacy but who are not necessarily supportive of the UK position. In Basra and the surrounding area, the UK therefore moved quickly to identify the power structures in that area and to determine who were the power brokers and de facto community leaders. Then, reportedly through a process of judgment and trial and error, the UK attempted to establish a positive relationship with key local leaders. Those leaders who were most cooperative were built up, while those who were disruptive were placed in a position of disadvantage and delegitimized. Aid, for example, was distributed to those leaders who were willing to work with the British and reduced or denied to those who were not. Rivalries were also manipulated to that end.

Wherever possible, the UK government eschewed imposing an alien political system or an outside leader on a community. As time progressed, a significant effort was devoted to the establishment of local governments as the next step in the process towards democracy. At first these local governmental institutions were not necessarily elected but did have local legitimacy.

The British see this process as being in marked contrast to the U.S. approach, which often brought in compliant exiles to fill leadership positions and which has placed far more emphasis on establishing an elected national government rather than representative local authorities. The British officers and officials interviewed felt that this delegitimized traditional authority figures and was far too idealistic. At least one British academic noted that the U.S. was itself created first at the state level with initially a much weaker federal government being formed to govern those functions devolved to it by the states. In Iraq it is argued the United States attempted to implement a 21st-century version of its government when an 18th-century version would have been more relevant. However, these criticisms notwithstanding, the significant danger of the British approach is that in the name of pragmatism and expedience the empowerment of traditional authority figures at the regional and local level can be a divisive approach, creating long-term tensions and rivalries. This approach also inhibits national-level reconstruction efforts and risks loss of power as uninhibited factions become too powerful to control.

Population Control

Even as an intervening force seeks to win over the local people, it needs to be able to control the population to reduce the level of practical support they willingly or unwillingly provide to the insurgency. In the past, in places like Malaya, this has included the relocation (sometimes by force) of populations into protected locations that can be more easily controlled by government forces. In the 21st century and especially in Iraq, such physical measures are not possible or desirable. An alternative therefore had to be found. Although it is not widely discussed in public, the British believe that it is possible to use a combination of inducements and coercion to psychologically control the population.

In areas where there is a high level of insurgent activity, for example, the British strategy in Iraq, as in past campaigns, has been to isolate those communities and the tribal leaders that are providing support to the insurgents. This is done by denying them any aid or reconstruction assistance; by maintaining a permanent and intrusive presence in their areas; when necessary, by effectively laying siege to an area or town; and by undermining their personal or tribal influence and power, often to the advantage of another group or leader. In contrast, significant aid is given to surrounding and cooperative communities and tribal leaders, thereby demonstrating the tangible benefits of cooperation and the negative consequences of conflict. The officers spoken to in this study indicated that this approach had proven successful but cautioned that it was a short-term expediency that could only succeed for a finite amount of time. Other measures were needed to bring long-term stability to a given area.

Setting Realistic Expectations: Promise Less, Deliver More

The benefits of an intervention must quickly become self-evident to as much of the local population as possible, while avoiding dislocating expectations by promising more than can be delivered. As major initiatives can take many years to come to fruition, it is therefore necessary to implement numerous micro initiatives, wherever possible involving local leaders, communities and contractors. The aim is to secure trust, not gratitude. UK military civil affairs teams usually disburse money to local contractors and then supervise their activities with the approval of local leaders, who take much of the credit for the work. This creates a mutually beneficial relationship that can be exploited to good effect. In contrast, much of the early U.S. reconstruction effort (with notable exceptions such as the efforts of the 82nd Airborne Division under General David Petraeus and the 1st Cavalry Division under General Peter Chiarelli) has been directed at much larger longer-term projects and instigated by the military and private contractors with only limited local involvement. Often such projects, which are often not a priority to the locals, are developed without their involvement or approval, creating unnecessary tensions, and not meeting urgent community needs.

1.4 Civilian Primacy

Wherever possible, civilian authorities must take the lead in S&R and even purely counterinsurgency operations. This is because most of the national power that can be applied to succeed in such operations is civilian (political, economic, diplomatic, and informational), not military. There is no purely military solution to defeating an insurgency, and giving overarching authority to a military commander runs the risk that he will seek exclusively military solutions to the challenges that will be encountered. It is not always possible to achieve civilian primacy, but even where it is not—for example, in Malaya, where Templar was given the responsibilities of both high commissioner and chief of operations—then a senior professional civilian leader should be assigned as the formal deputy to the military commander as was the case in Malaya.

In Northern Ireland, responsibility for the British government's effort to defeat the IRA was given to a dedicated minister of state. Below him was a senior civil servant and below that a standing committee chaired by the minister himself, which included the heads of relevant agencies such as the police and military.

This real-world experience taught the British that whenever possible, overall authority for this type of campaign or operation should be transferred to a civilian official who

then takes ownership of all aspects of the campaign to include coordination if not actual direction of the supporting military effort. The British also recognized that this person needs a direct line to the cabinet and prime minister not via an individual government department and minister. To coordinate the operation within the UK and to address the challenges of the interdepartmental process, a dedicated committee would be formed, usually with primacy given to a single department or alternatively some committees are coordinated by a senior civil servant from the Cabinet Office, which answers directly to the cabinet of ministers and the prime minister, for example, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) which includes all of the UK intelligence agencies. The chairperson of the JIC serves in the Cabinet Office and answer directly to the prime minister. This differs from the U.S. interagency process because traditionally, in the UK a single department is given the operational lead on a coordinating committee and that committee actually sets policy, rather than simply fulfilling an interagency coordinating function.

Unity of Effort

Unity of effort means bringing the full extent of state power (soft and hard) to bear against insurgents and in an S&R effort. A uniquely British institution has been exploited to ensure this unity of effort. As illustrated above, the committee system has evolved as perhaps the optimal structure to effectively leverage the efforts of a disparate community of interested parties from across government, the local population, and NGOs. It is not unlike the U.S. interagency process, but it offers much more than the simple coordination and deconfliction of individual departmental and agency programs. The committee system operates on the basis of first among equals. There is always a chairman of the committee, who is usually given command authority to direct the efforts of all of the other departments and agencies. This process is agreed upon in advance and articulated within a committee's terms of reference. For higher level committees such terms are usually agreed at the ministerial level. The committees may even be chaired at the ministerial level. This process ensures that operational and policy decisions are actually taken and that someone is held accountable for the execution of those decisions. At the higher level, the concept of collective responsibility is also adopted, which means that everyone on the committee, once a majority decision has been taken, agrees to support that decision. It is not a perfect system, but it has proven effective down to the tactical level for the coordination of political, economic, military, and intelligence operations. This committee system was refined over many years in Northern Ireland and is now widely accepted as the most effective way of ensuring unity of effort for a multi-department/agency operation.

Another key element of unity of effort is what has officially been called "joined-up government." This is a largely successful effort to coordinate the postconflict reconstruction efforts of the key government departments: the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the Department for International Development (DFID). A joint standing committee under a lead agency has also been formed to develop policy and coordinate activities. A Postconflict Reconstruction Unit, under the lead of DFID (ensuring civilian primacy) and staffed by DFID, FCO, and MoD personnel, has also been created to conduct planning at the operational level. Due to some procedural shortcomings and departmental politics, this approach has been sorely tested, particularly in Iraq, but has, with adaptation, provided a successful framework for a coordinated national effort in Southern Iraq.

The point of this approach is to ensure that S&R operations are coordinated across government, so that individual agencies do not act independently of each other. Unity of effort is particularly crucial in defeating an entrenched insurgency that requires effective orchestration of all of the assets of the state. This effort also needs to be underpinned by a comprehensive and integrated intelligence picture, which itself requires effective coordination of all intelligence capabilities and agencies. From its long experience in Northern Ireland, the UK has also developed a successful approach to coordinating intelligence activities using a version of the committee system. Joint intelligence and operations committees also unify the efforts of these two key functions.

1.5   Minimum Force

Minimum force is he one principle that not only is enshrined in official policy and doctrine, but also was listed as one of the central principles of counterinsurgency operations by every single British officer interviewed. Not minimal force, which could still imply a higher threshold, but quite clearly minimum force. The principle allows no interpretation: in all circumstances the military should apply only the absolute minimum level of force deemed necessary to stabilize a given situation or achieve operational objectives. Even when using force as a means of influence it should be the minimum amount needed to achieve the desired effect. This is not to suggest, as Brigadier Aylwin-Foster rightly pointed out, that the British Army is averse to the use of significant deadly force when the situation and rules of engagement (ROE) necessitate or that they do not view force as an effective tool of influence when applied at the right time and against the right target (based on solid intelligence). Indeed, during both the Shia uprising of 2004 and the deployment of the Black Watch to Baghdad in support of U.S. forces in the fall of 2004, a significant amount of lethal

force was used. However, even when under significant attack, the inclination and doctrine of British Forces remains the use of minimum force.

This reflects not idealism, sentimentality regarding the resort to violence, or the tight legal framework under which British troops must now operate, but rather the realization that excessive force, as perceived by the local population and/or other interested parties, will almost always be counterproductive. Some interviewees called it the Bloody Sunday syndrome. As one battalion commander pointed out:

> I could always redeem a situation where one of my soldiers used too little force and a situation got out of hand; simply by escalating the engagement on my terms. An adversary emboldened by one act of hesitation is easily dispatched the next time he foolishly presents himself as a target. Also, my mission was never undermined because I allowed a suspect to escape rather than break ROE or risk collateral damage. However, the single application of excessive deadly force could never be taken back and almost always undermined the legitimacy of our mission and severely alienated the very communities we were trying to win over.[18]

A company commander from a Scottish battalion also pointed out that "while it can seem expedient to use excessive force to achieve a short-term operational success or to extricate oneself safely from an engagement, these things always come back to bite ya on ya bum in the long run."[19] A "long in the tooth" sergeant major from the same Scottish Regiment, who undertook the first of many tours of duty in Northern Ireland in the late 1980s, pointed out that in "long wars"[20] "it is often yer own bum that gets bitten" the next time you get sent back to place you stirred up the last time yer was there." These colorful comments highlight the pragmatism of the British acceptance of the principle of minimum force.

The British military appreciates that one must be equally able to conduct both combat and peace support operations. It therefore emphasizes both conventional and counterinsurgency training that will allow troops to rapidly transition between highly aggressive combat operations and lower tempo, lower profile peacekeeping duties. There are a number of examples of this capability to conduct simultaneous combat and PSOs, for example, during the British advance through southern Iraq, where on several occasions companies from the same battalion were simultaneously engaged in combat operations in one part of a town and PSOs in another. This approach is similar to the "three-block war" developed by the U.S. Marine Corps to describe a concurrent three-phase operation involving war fighting, peace enforcement and

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[18] Comment by an infantry battalion commander who served in Southern Iraq during 2004.

[19] Quote from a Company commander with the Black Watch who served in Iraq in 2004.

[20] Gerry Adams, leader of the Provisional IRA and more recently the leader of its political wing Sinn Fein, first called the struggle in Northern Ireland the "long war" in the early 1970s.

peacekeeping. However, the UK appears to be willing to take far greater risks with its personnel, particular when fired upon, in order to avoid collateral damage and the alienation of the local population when executing this concept.

The British also stress that force protection is best achieved through what are described as "soft effects" resulting from effective hearts-and-minds operations and reconstruction efforts rather than simply through the application of force. Every member of the British military must understand and accept the necessity to use minimum force under almost all circumstances. British soldiers have been guilty of the use of excessive or illegitimate force in Iraq, but as this has been the exception, even well publicized incidents of the use of excessive force have not undermined the overall legitimacy of the British contingent with Iraqis.

The Limited Utility of Military Power

Historical and contemporary experience has conditioned the British to understand the limited utility of military power in S&R and counterinsurgency operations. It is recognized that, in the words of Sir Robert Thompson, "priority should be given to defeating the political subversion, not the guerrillas." It is also widely understood that a population cannot be forced to accept a new political and social order but must be persuaded through arguments and inducements and only occasionally coercion, which will never by itself secure the hearts and minds of the population. Indeed, bitter experience has repeatedly shown the British that the use of what is perceived as excessive or indiscriminate force can quickly alienate a population and provoke a desire for revenge, perpetuating the cycle of violence. This is especially true if, as is so often the case, a conventional military is provoked by the insurgents into the use of disproportionate force to subdue, to punish or for revenge.

The lesson of Bloody Sunday (January 30, 1972) is ingrained into the souls of almost every British soldier, not least because it has been used as a rallying cry for Irish Republicans ever since. This tragic event (13 unarmed Catholic protestors were killed, including a priest) resulted in a wave of revenge attacks including against the Parachute Regiment involved, which culminated in the Warren Point attack against a II Parachute Battalion convoy. This attack killed 18 soldiers, including the commanding officer of the Queen's Own Highlanders, who led the relief force. It was the Parachute Regiments' worst combat losses in a single incident since Arnhem in September 1944. As Peter Taylor has pointed out, for the Provisional IRA, "it was revenge for what the Paras had done on Bloody Sunday"; a slogan soon appeared on a wall opposite Sinn Fein's headquarters in Belfast, "Thirteen done and not forgotten –

we got eighteen and Mountbatten."[21] Such lessons are taught to British Officer cadets at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst during their first year in the Army, continuing a long tradition of counterinsurgency-related education. Such lessons have now proved to be as invaluable on the streets of Basra as they have on the streets of Belfast because as one British officer irreverently observed, "Why would an Iraqi kebab shop owner be any less pissed off than a Paddy chip shop owner if we killed is brother uncle and imam?"[22]

1.6   Intelligence-led Operations

Not a single British officer or official interviewed failed to list intelligence-led operations as a key principle of counterinsurgency operations. For them, the importance of this principle has been reinforced by sixty years of postwar experience and is burned into the psyche of every British officer. All are painfully aware of the disastrous effect of policies such as indiscriminate internment in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s and the strategic failure of untargeted and largely speculative cordon-and-search operations. All know that because of poor or no intelligence and because advance warning was being given by IRA informants, few senior terrorist leaders were netted in the roundup of IRA suspects that preceded internment without trial. Instead, a large number of relatively innocent.[23] Republicans and even innocent moderate Catholics were arrested, many of whom became terrorists or active supporters after they had "graduated" bitter, indoctrinated, and "trained" from the interment camps. Most British officers also understood that the type of random cordon-and-search operations that characterized British military operations in the early 1970s only made matters worse. They made very few lasting gains and largely alienated the Catholic populations of the housing estates that were targeted, swelling the ranks of the IRA. Even the modest gains achieved were short-lived, as the weapons caches recovered were easily replaced and the few terrorists captured were replaced by three times that number of "pissed-off Catholics."

As a result of this experience, almost all operations in Northern Ireland were eventually "intelligence led." Indeed, terrorist suspects were often allowed to escape or British operations postponed or cancelled when insufficient intelligence was available to justify the commitment of aggressive action that might include the use of deadly force. This principle has continued in Iraq. Although it has not always been

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[21] Peter Taylor, *Provos, the IRA & Sinn Fein*, Bloomsbury, 1997, p. 228. Lord Mountbatten, the Queen's uncle, a decorated war hero, and Viceroy to India, was killed the same day on his boat by an IRA bomb.

[22] Comment made by a company commander who served in Basra in 2004.

[23] While many of those arrested were not members of the IRA, they could be described as Republican sympathizers. However, having not actually committed a criminal offense their internment was considered an illegitimate action provoking international condemnation and significant hostility even among moderate nationalist Catholics.

possible to follow it, the point made by British officers, is that they make the conscious decision to deploy speculatively only after they have failed to acquire adequate intelligence and then only after having done a thorough cost/benefit analysis. A controversial aspect of this principle is the necessity to develop an extensive network of local informers and agents who will provide vital intelligence on insurgency activities. Developing such a network and other intelligence sources places a premium on cultural awareness and sensitivity and on access to the necessary language skills.

The military's ability to recruit locals will ultimately depend on the attitude of the local population towards the intervention force. The information informants provide allows the focusing of operations, which reduces insurgent capacity, thereby improving the security situation and allowing the commencement of the reconstruction effort, which in turn encourages a further increase in popular support for the authorities and further improvement in HUMINT (human intelligence) collection. But this process only begins with a concerted effort to collect intelligence without alienating the local population.

Another benefit of the intelligence-led approach to counterinsurgency operations is that it ensures that all levels of command fully understand the nature of the conflict in which they are engaged. Asymmetric conflicts rarely involve only one protagonist on either side. More often than not these conflicts are characterized by the involvement of numerous factions, few of whom could actually be called allies and not all of whom may be enemies. Loyalties and allegiances may also change depending on circumstances, and the enemy may comprise numerous groups with widely differing agendas that are often united by one common factor—usually a shared enemy, which is all too often the intervening force. When involved in such complex operations, it is vital that operations are based on the most detailed intelligence and an intimate understanding of the nature of the conflict. Without that level of understanding, it is all too easy to see the enemy as an amorphous mass that can be handled with a single strategy, to make enemies, and to trust those whose motives may not be benign.

By way of example, in the early days of the Northern Ireland conflict the British Army often regarded Catholics as being Republican sympathizers simply because they expressed nationalist opinions. This attitude, based on both prejudice and ignorance resulting from poor intelligence, was expertly manipulated by the IRA to swell its ranks with converts who might otherwise have eschewed the use of violence to secure political change. And though neither the British government nor Army acknowledge it, the loyalties of a small but dangerous minority of Protestant officials and security force personnel was always considered suspect, despite their being part of the British establishment in Northern Ireland. Yet by the standards of Iraq, Ireland was simplicity

itself. In Iraq numerous factions are vying for power and using violence to achieve it, even though the objectives of many of these factions could be achieved, at least in part, by political means if the groups can be convinced to follow such a path. These groups therefore need to be identified, their motives understood, and strategies developed that split them off from the hardcore insurgency. This can only be achieved by adhering to the principle of intelligence-led operations and the development of a multi-layered understanding of the human terrain.

1.7   British Military Culture

The core principles underpinning the British approach to S&R operations are more than just doctrinal guidelines; to the British Army they are in fact articles of faith. Every British officer interviewed considered most of these principles to be the immutable basis for all planning and command decisions at all levels. Not one questioned for example the principle of minimum force. Many of the company-grade officers interviewed were too young to have served in Northern Ireland during the most intense phases of that conflict (1969–89), and not all had served in Bosnia or Kosovo; yet they all understood that anything other than minimum force would most likely alienate a local population, thereby undermining the operation. In our view, this understanding does not result simply from good doctrine and TTPs (tactics, techniques, and procedures). It flows from an organizational culture that wholeheartedly embraces this form of warfare. As academic Alum Gwynne Jones noted, the British Army "achieved an enviable expertise [in counterinsurgency], partly because of its imaginative use of past experience, and partly because operations of this type were quite its favorite occupation."[24]

The U.S. Army's own culture is regarded by most military analysts to eschew "operations other than war" in favor of large-scale, force-on-force conflicts between "worthy adversaries." As John Nagl puts it: "The Gulf War simply confirmed the Army's Jominian concept of fighting purely military battles using high technology weapons and overwhelming firepower."[25] This is not a new phenomenon and has long been recognized by American military analysts. Brian Jenkins noted in his work for the RAND Corporation in 1970 that "the Army's doctrine, its tactics, its organizations, its weapons—its entire repertoire of warfare was designed for conventional war."[26] In 2004, Robert Cassidy noted that "for about 125 out of the 138 years since the Civil War, the mainstream U.S. Army has consistently failed to seriously consider any type of war except a European-style conventional conflict."[27]

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[24] Alum Gwynne Jones, "The Training of the British Army Since 1945," in *The Theory and Practice of War*, p. 318.
[25] John Nagl, *The Eagle in the Desert*, Praeger, 1996, p. 253.
[26] Brian M. Jenkins, *The Unchangeable War*, RM-6278-2-ARPA (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1970).
[27] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*.

Unfortunately, the very culture and principles that have underpinned Britain's largely successful approach to S&R and counterinsurgency operations have also inhibited its ability to prepare for conventional conflict. As Cassidy again noted, "The culture and organization that made the British Army amenable to changes required to successfully undertake counterinsurgencies or control internal unrest also made it difficult … to prepare, innovate and successfully conduct symmetric/conventional wars in Europe…. Although the British Army was ultimately victorious in all of these wars [Napoleonic, Crimean, and World Wars] it embarked on each one unprepared in size, doctrine or mindset."[28] This inadequate ability to prepare for conventional warfare has persisted to this day, albeit to a much lesser extent, and was demonstrated even in the buildup to OIF. Several British officers noted that, yet again, the UK had struggled to "cobble together" an effective brigade-sized, all-arms formation with sufficient firepower, logistics support and functioning equipment (particularly C4I) to fight alongside the U.S. Army in its advance into Iraq. In contrast, the U.S. military's culture, doctrine, and capabilities have been refined to the point where it can reasonably be described as optimally configured for conventional combat and thus able to successfully invade a large and still relatively well-armed country in only three weeks, an achievement probably only surpassed in the annuals of military history by the German invasion of France in the late spring of 1940.

But the U.S. military appears to have the wrong organizational culture to fight the war in which it is currently engaged, which is the most likely type of warfare it will face over the next twenty years. Postconflict S&R operations require an organizational culture that has truly embraced this type of complex operation. Arguably, despite some success in Iraq and the changes that are occurring in doctrine and TTP, the U.S. military has still not undertaken a far-reaching cultural change; and may not do so if the war ends before those that have understood what is required have reached positions where they can instigate the necessary cultural change within the U.S. military. One of the hoped-for values of this study is that will further invigorate the growing debate on this topic, a debate that is essential in order to encourage the very difficult but necessary changes in U.S. organizational culture. Without that change, it is quite possible that most of the hard-won lessons of Iraq will, as in past conflicts of this type, be lost, not least because as James Dewar and his colleagues at RAND point out, "the beliefs and attitudes that comprise culture can block change and cause organizations to fail."[29] The U.S. and British Armies have much to learn from each other because, as Robert Cassidy points out, "B-52 Arc-light strikes don't win hearts and minds, and foot infantry regiments don't defeat armored divisions."[30]

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[28] Ibid.

[29] James Dewar et al., *Army Culture and Planning in a Time of Great Change*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996).

[30] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*.

Adaptation and Innovation

The British have long understood that both civilian and military professionals engaged in counterinsurgency and S&R operations must be able to routinely adapt, improvise, and innovate in order to meet the unique challenges presented in this type of operation, given the complexity and unpredictability of such operations and the adaptive nature of the insurgent adversary. Templated solutions are usually inappropriate or will quickly become so; not least because the adversary will rapidly exploit weaknesses and adapt to overcome their opponents' successful strategies and tactics. This places a premium on the selection, training, and empowerment of personnel at all levels who can "adapt and overcome."

Some cynics would argue that the British have always had to adapt, improvise, and innovate because they are always so badly prepared and under-resourced for most operations, either symmetric or asymmetric. Indeed, the ability to "muddle through" adversity has become a defining characteristic of the British. However, the British success in finding generations of adaptive counterinsurgency soldiers and bureaucrats is not simply a matter of happenstance. An organizational culture and professional education system, particular in the British military, has evolved in order to facilitate the emergence of these individuals. This process begins during the officer selection process and continues through basic training, ongoing education, and in the field. A key element of this approach is the empowerment of junior commanders to make command decisions with operational and even strategic consequences and a concerted effort to distill the principle of mission command down to the lowest levels. This culture reached its maturity in Northern Ireland, which was referred to by one interviewee, an infantry battalion commander who had first served in Northern Ireland as a platoon commander in the late 1990s, as "a war of platoon commanders and generals."

Ironically, two important qualities that would probably be considered insubordination in the U.S. Army are actively encouraged in the British system. One is what the British would call a "healthy questioning of authority," even by junior commanders; most importantly, without the fear of sanction. This quality is most commonly demonstrated at the Army Command and Staff College where senior commanders up to and including four-star rank are regularly subjected to intellectual challenges by students who are either senior captains or junior majors. On occasions such questioning does border on insubordination, even for the British, but this is a self-regulating system with peer pressure usually applied to rein in those who are considered to have "sailed too close to the wind."

The other valued quality is individuality, for officers and units alike. This ensures that no two British officers or regiments look alike or think exactly alike. Such individuality can be a significant positive quality when engaged in S&R operations and when confronted by adaptive asymmetric adversities. However, this individuality can and has been a considerable detriment to the formation of cohesive brigade and divisional-level formations and the conduct of operations at that level. By contrast, the U.S. Army system is designed to produce cohesive division-level formations whose subcomponents conform to pre-established norms, thereby ensuring organizational synergy. This is essential for large-scale conventional operations but is often a detriment to operations against asymmetric adversaries, which places a premium on small-unit actions and adaptive platoon and company commanders.

Tolerance of Error

The British believe an acceptance of error and even failure on the part of officers fosters innovation. This may not entirely be the case in the modern British Army, as reality does not always match the ideal. However, this culture is considered important, as there is a strong feeling that a "zero-defect" approach actively discourages innovation and encourages conformity, which is a major weakness in counterinsurgency operations. In a zero-defect culture there is no encouragement to take risks or to vary from a successful strategy or tactic, even though evidence strongly suggests that adaptive asymmetric adversaries often prevail by trumping successful approaches that have become predictable and therefore vulnerable.

Decentralized Military Command and Control

In describing the "stated British principles of counterinsurgency," Thomas Mockaitis identified "decentralization of command and control" as one of the most important.[31] Most counterinsurgency operations are inherently small-scale undertakings, even when encompassing an entire country. Enemy actions are usually limited to the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), snipers, suicide bombers, and some small-scale ambushes and attacks involving between 10-50 insurgents. As a result, most counterinsurgency operations will be conducted at the section (squad), platoon, and company level. Indeed, it can be argued that the requirement to mount battalion-sized and larger operations generally reflects a fundamental failure to control an insurgency and the loss of the initiative to the insurgents. The need for larger-scale operations may result when inadequate intelligence prevents the conduct of more focused small-unit operations or where control has been lost in a given area, thereby allowing the insurgents to mass their forces. For most counterinsurgency operations to be

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[31] Thomas R. Mockaitis, "A New Era of Counter Insurgency," *The RU.S.I Journal 136*, (Spring 1991), p. 75

conducted at the company level and below, as they should, significant command authority must be delegated to the most junior commanders so that they can make the instant decisions needed. Unnecessarily restrictive orders and templated TTPs, combined with higher-level command interference and micromanagement, can severely limit the operational freedom of a junior officer to the detriment of overall operational effectiveness in counterinsurgency campaigns.

British experience has reinforced and institutionalized the imperative of decentralized command. Battalion commanders are given significant delegated authority. Even company commanders have a level of delegated authority not normally given to battalion commanders in the U.S. Army. Platoon commanders, sergeants, and even corporals are also given significant delegated authority and allowed to make decisions that can often have operational and even strategic level consequences. Such command latitude places a premium on adequate training and education, flexible doctrine, and TTPs. The British perspective is that in this type of operation, generals set strategy and this strategy is best executed by captains and corporals.

Regimental System

> By employing small units and small unit tactics without a significant amount of air or artillery support, the British seemed to meet success more often than the Americans who tended to do the obverse in their operations other than war"[32]

Small-unit actions require an Army organized for maximum flexibility and independent operations. Many experts and most British officers argue that the regimental system is the ideal structure to provide that flexibility and independence. Much has been written about the British regimental system, not all of it positive, but for S&R operations we believe it affords a number of significant advantages.

Soldiers typically join and stay with a regiment for most of their military careers. Similarly, officers will likely serve with the same regiment until they are selected for battalion command, excepting a two-year staff appointment. When promoted to LTC, most officers would greatly prefer to command their own regiment, and many of the officers interviewed stated that they would define career success far more by achieving command of their regiment than from subsequent, more senior appointments. With most personnel spending many years in the same regiment, up to 22 years for enlisted men, unit cohesion is excellent, and trust among colleagues and subordinates is unparalleled compared to other militaries. This cohesion and trust allow for the delegation of authority and the effective use of independent small units that are so vital in counterinsurgency operations.

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[32] James Dewar, quoted in Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss.*

The regimental system also ensures the retention of significant levels of experience, particularly in relation to small-unit operations. Even though turnover of the most junior personnel is high, with many soldiers only serving for three or six years, junior and senior NCOs will likely have served together for between 5 and 15 years. They retain not only their own personal experience of operations but also the collective experience gained serving in the same sections, platoons, and companies. This can be invaluable when preparing inexperienced personnel for operations, for small-unit cohesion, and for building trust—both command trust and trust of colleagues' reactions under fire and in other stressful situations.

The regimental system provides a more robust framework for dealing with combat stress, as colleagues are better able to judge an individual's state of mind and are familiar with the personal and regimental factors that can undermine self-confidence and mental stability.

The downside to the regimental system is that the significant diversity among battalion-sized units that the regimental system fosters makes it far more difficult to effectively amalgamate regiments into larger formations at the divisional and corps level. Indeed, this may be a greater problem for the British Army today than during the Cold War years. Since 1989, most deployments have been peace-support and peace-enforcement operations, where command may notionally be at the brigade level but in reality are battalion and even company-level deployments. There are few opportunities for brigade and especially divisional-level training, which training is key to ensuring cohesion at the formation level.

In contrast to the British Army, the primary building block of the U.S. Army remains the division or at the very least large brigades. As a 1996 RAND study pointed out, "The combat division is the centerpiece of Army war-fighting doctrine and the focus of its operational plans." This can be seen in Iraq, where rotations are usually at the brigade and even divisional-level. The division figures prominently for individual officers. As the RAND study points out, "The division is the most prestigious Army assignment and the most sought-after organization in which to command troops."[33] The U.S. Army is organized, trained, and equipped to fight conventional wars at the formation level. Individual officer training is geared towards developing formation commanders and staff officers, doctrine and TTPs are designed to orchestrate the application of power at the formation level, and significant command authority is retained at the formation level to ensure that the formation is greater than the sum of

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[33] Both quotes in Dewar, et al., *Army Culture and Planning.*

its parts. While ideally suited to conventional large-scale conflicts, this may not be the best approach to asymmetric warfare.

Professional Bureaucrats

A postconflict S&R operation is not the exclusive preserve of the military. It should be civilian-led. The elements of state power that can secure success are soft instruments such as effective governance and economic investment, not the "big stick" of combat power. Critical to the success of these operations is the quality of the human resources that can be deployed to execute the civilian as well as military lines of operation. Although often derided in the UK press and by comedians (see the BBC sitcom "Yes, Prime Minister"), the British Civil Service is a significant asset for this type of operation. First, senior civil servants at the ambassadorial and permanent secretary level can be deployed for periods of up to two and even three years to lead the civilian effort. These personnel often have extensive experience of working in foreign countries, interacting with diverse cultures, and a lifetime's experience, education, and training in the organization and operation of government departments. They are supported by more junior staff, many of whom have also served in developing countries. This pool of professional bureaucrats supplemented by industry experts is considered to be far better suited to leading S&R efforts than personnel recruited directly out of industry or academia and by political appointees.

Continuity

Another factor that has contributed to British success in S&R operations is an appreciation of the value of continuity. Although not always demonstrated in Iraq, where all six of Britain's armored and mechanized brigades have served six-month tours, the British have traditionally understood that continuity is vital on a number of levels. Constantly changing objectives and the strategy and tactics employed to achieve them undermines the operation and confuses all parties involved, especially the locals. The right strategy needs to be devised early and then persisted with, with only minor modifications being made to exploit obvious successes or to rectify significant failure.

The urge to change in the face of setbacks must be tempered by the knowledge that setbacks will occur; and that they do not mean the strategy is flawed. For example, a strategy that advocates the use of minimum force has not necessarily failed if there has been a significant upsurge in violence, even a sustained one. Rather, the upsurge might indicate that a significant success has been achieved (e.g. growing support of the local population), which has forced the insurgents into using large-scale violence in an attempt to provoke the "authorities" into a disproportionate response. If the

authorities do not change their strategy, resist the provocations, and continue to use minimum force, even greater success can be achieved, not least because the insurgents will probably have expended their limited resources and alienated those in the community they have injured by their actions. They will only have succeeded in demonstrating their impotency, which will in time further undermine popular support for them and their cause.

In the command and deployment of personnel, constant changeovers of either civilian or military personnel will ensure that hard-won lessons are continually lost and valuable relationships, especially with locals, are never established, or lost if they were. It can take years to secure the trust of local leaders and populations and that trust has to be re-earned when key personnel are changed. This is particularly true of civilian personnel, who must work with local bureaucrats and civic and business leaders. Tours of duty of less than six months are insufficient to establish respect and trust, and tours of less than 120 days are barely enough time to learn "who's who" in any organization.

The same is also true of military units, where wholesale troop rotations can undo months of experience and arbitrarily end carefully built relationships and networks. Proper handoffs can help but are no substitute for actual experience. Establishing and maintaining relationships requires months of painstaking effort. This problem is particularly acute when formation-sized units and the bulk of the command staff of a higher-level headquarters rotate in total. Traditionally, the British approach has been to semi-permanently deploy a formation headquarters to a theatre and then develop a rotational cycle that has individual battalions and even companies rotating out of sequence with other units within the same brigade or division. This ensures that within a brigade area of operation (AO), for example, there is always at least one battalion that has been in theatre for an extended period, with a second having been deployed for at least two to three months. Similarly, a headquarters may remain fixed but individual personnel rotate in and out. At the command level, the aim is to ensure that while a brigade commander may change, the chief of staff and some key staff officers will not. This approach is copied in key enabling functions such as intelligence and signals, where rotation is usually undertaken on an individual basis. In some theatres, the British have also deployed what are commonly referred to continuity officers who are often attached to incoming units to provide extensive in-country experience.

Even in Iraq, which has seen relatively large rotations compared to, say, Northern Ireland, a significant effort has been made to achieve a certain level of continuity through the extensive use of individual rotations of key personnel. The British have also benefited from adversity, in that the relatively small size of the British Army and

the much shorter duration of deployments (typically six months) have ensured that units have completed two or more tours in the same part of Iraq with largely the same personnel remaining within the unit. More than 50,000 army personnel have already served in Iraq out of a force of a little over 100,000. One reason this percentage is higher than for the U.S. Army is that the British make less use of expensive, but for the U.S. politically more acceptable, private contractors to undertake tasks previously undertaken by military personnel.

Part 2. British Interviewees' Comments

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak;
Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.

Winston Churchill

We interviewed more than 100 British government officials and military (Army, Royal Marines, and RAF) officers over nine months, beginning in June 2005. Most had at some point in their career come into close contact with the U.S. military in Iraq and elsewhere, and many have also interacted with Iraqis who shared their own experiences and perspectives about U.S. military operations with the British. Their comments on the U.S. doctrine, TTPs, and operations follow, under the same headings as used above.

2.1   Realistic Objective

Brigadier Aylwin-Foster noted that the U.S. strategic approach in Iraq was both idealistically and ideologically driven and not based on a pragmatic assessment of the realties of the situation on the ground. This viewpoint was shared by most of the British officers and officials we interviewed. Most felt that the U.S. political leadership unrealistically expected to be welcomed as liberators by most Iraqis, despite the fact that the Sunnis were sure to resist losing the power and status they held under Saddam, while the Shia would be suspicious at best of a foreign military intervention, even if it did remove Saddam's regime. Most of the interviewees noted that Prime Minister Blair's government had similarly miscalculated the likely reaction of the Iraqi people despite intelligence to the contrary. However, all expressed surprise that this optimism had persisted within the U.S. government and military for a considerable time after the invasion, despite the significant amount of evidence to the contrary, including a growing Sunni insurgency and Shia militias.

The U.S. approach was also perceived by most interviewees as ideologically driven, rather than based on an informed and realistic assessment of the situation in Iraq—as, for example, with the U.S. attempt to introduce a liberal democracy in a country that had no experience of such a model and was riven by ethnic divisions. Many saw it as a case of "too much democracy too fast." The U.S.-favored one man, one vote electoral system, for example, simply ensured the election of a Shia-dominated government and the exclusion of the Sunni minority. It also initially failed to take adequate account of the importance of Islamic law or Iraq's tribal structure, both of which are powerful complicating factors that needed to be better reflected in an Iraqi constitution. The

U.S. also attempted to consolidate authority at the national level, largely ignoring the regional and local levels of government despite their importance in Iraq.

Most interviewees also felt that the Bush administration failed to appreciate the significant difference between good governance and democracy. In their view, democracy cannot develop and mature without adequate security and good governance, which must be established before or at least in parallel with the democratic process.

Other decisions seen as ideology-based were the rush to introduce a free-market economy in a country that had endured a command economy for over forty years and that had suffered the devastating effect of sanctions for more than a decade; the disbanding of the Iraqi military; and the effort to rapidly complete the process of regime change through a concerted and blanket de-Baathification program, encouraged it appeared by Shia émigré advisors chosen as interim leaders well before the invasion.

The British feel that their approach to postconflict S&R operations is more pragmatic. Their highest priorities are:

- Establishing effective representative governance
- Achieving a basic level of security
- Restoring essential services
- Getting the population back to work

These priorities do not require the creation of a mature democracy or early national elections. More important than national government is the introduction of representative local government, which has a far greater effect on citizens' lives and is less likely to result in ethnic disputes. As these locally and later regionally elected governments mature, a national electoral system can be developed. The model for this approach is the Good Friday Accord and the resulting Northern Ireland Assembly, which was developed as an electoral system designed to ensure that the Catholic minority was disproportionately represented in government.

In Iraq, after early UK government idealism and optimism had given way to the more typical cynicism and pragmatism, the British by and large reverted to their traditional approach to S&R operations. However, they noted that this much more limited (than the U.S.) approach was necessitated as much by a lack of resources and waning public support for the war as it was by greater realism based on experience and a better military appreciation of challenge.

A minority of interviewees, all of whom had served in Iraq, complained that rather then being allowed to employ the time-honored principles of counterinsurgency and set a realistic end-state for the Iraqi people, the British Army was forced to develop a strategy based on the political imperative of the earliest possible withdrawal of British forces. As a result, local tribal leaders and militias had been too quickly allowed to assume power in their local areas, and this had destabilized the local power structures and allowed the creation of virtual no-go areas in some parts of the British-controlled south. The British were therefore forced to reengage sometimes violently in order to restore order, thereby losing the support of more moderate Shias. These officers also reported that political pressure from London led to their having too few personnel and resources and having to control areas far more complex and dangerous than Northern Ireland with a fraction of the personnel deployed to that AO. Time did not permit us to thoroughly investigate this point, but it is worthy of further study, not least because in this respect the experience of the British and U.S. militaries may have been very similar.

Many of the interviewees noted that, having had international coalitions, resolutions, and mandates for operations such as Bosnia and Kosovo, they felt deeply concerned that OIF lacked the legitimacy afforded by the endorsement of relevant international bodies, most importantly the UN. Of great concern was the lack of an internationally recognized end-state. Even if that end-state had been rejected by a minority of Iraqis, its chance to succeed would have been greater had it carried the support of the global community. As it was, opponents of the U.S. plan for Iraq were able to frame their opposition under the banner of anti-Americanism, which would not have been the case had the process been backed by the international community. Moreover, without this international agreement, the U.S. had been unable to secure the full support of Iraq's neighbors, who clearly were not in harmony with the end-state being implemented by the United States. Those interviewees old enough to have served in Northern Ireland in the late 1980s and early 1990s noted the importance of winning the support of the government and people of the Republican of Ireland for the peace process and the end-state that the U.S. helped broker and which was therefore internationally recognized. This southern Irish support progressively closed the IRA's main safe haven and a primary source of its funding, training, and weapons. It also reduced support for the IRA around the world, most notably within Irish American communities. All felt that this international support was sadly lacking when it came to the end-state for Iraq.

> **British Consensus.** The end-state developed by the United States for Iraq was primarily ideologically driven and not based on an objective and pragmatic assessment of what would be best for Iraq. This planned end-state has therefore failed to secure sufficient Iraqi or international community recognition and acceptance.

Legitimacy of the Intervening Force

For most British officers, the legitimacy of the intervening force is an ideal that must be aimed for but can rarely be uniformly achieved. Most felt that there would always be some segment of the population that would perceive the intervention force to be illegitimate, no matter what efforts had been taken to convince them otherwise. The overall aim, however, should always be to convince the domestic (e.g. UK) audience, the international community, and needless to say the population of the country being occupied that the intervening force had legitimacy for its actions. Without singling out the United States on this issue, most interviewees expressed the view that the Coalition in general had far less legitimacy at the outset of the war and even today than they considered was necessary for this type of S&R operation.

The reasons for this are well documented but are worth briefly recounting: (1) the failure to secure a second UN resolution and with it broad international community support for the war made it more difficult to secure the support of Iraq's neighbors; (2) the failure to locate any weapons of mass destruction, a primary justification for war, which eroded popular support for the war in the UK and elsewhere and reduced still further the number of countries willing to supply and/or maintain meaningful forces to the Coalition; and (3) the excessive use of force. Other reasons cited included the failure to properly secure Iraq after the invasion (thereby allowing large-scale looting); the failure to quickly establish proper governance; the lack of cultural understanding; underestimating the degree of opposition; the failure to quickly establish security for the bulk of Iraqis; poor decisions regarding favored Iraqi leaders; and the failure to quell the growing insurgency.

Most interviewees claimed that they never expected to be able to convince most Sunni of the legitimacy of the Coalition's actions, likening them to Irish Republicans who would never accept the British Army's presence in Ireland (although, as with many Republicans, it was felt that it might still have been possible to negotiate with many of leaders of this community). However, the British had expected to be viewed as legitimate by the Shia, and most interviewees felt this had not been the case. Indeed, many considered it only a matter of time before what little legitimacy remained with the Shia population was completely eroded.

British Consensus: **The Coalition has failed to secure sufficient legitimacy with some domestic audiences (e.g. UK), with much of the international community, and most importantly with many Iraqis. This is due in large part to three factors: the failure to find WMD; the Coalition's inability to protect the Iraqi population, and the excessive use of force.**

Legitimacy of the Supported Government

An occupied people must perceive their own government to be legitimate, as well. Most interviewees felt that a succession of errors had undermined the Coalition's efforts to establish the legitimacy of the Iraqi authorities, even among Iraqi supporters in the Shia and Kurdish communities.

First, the promotion to positions of power of Shia émigrés and opposition spokespersons, most of whom had little or no support within Iraq, seriously undermined the legitimacy of the first Iraqi authorities. Thereafter attempts to install leaders who were perceived as acceptable to the United States further undermined the legitimacy of the Iraqi authorities within Iraq and abroad. The promotion of a democratic system based on the one man, one vote system, which favored the Shia majority, also seriously undermined the legitimacy of the new Iraqi authorities with most Sunni and some Kurds.

The failure to fully understand the importance of tribal and religious leaders, leading to their early exclusion from the governance process, and the focus on national rather than local and regional government made legitimacy that much more difficult to secure in the first two years of the occupation. The case of Muqtada al Sadr was often quoted by British officers as an example of the Coalition's failure to appreciate the importance of family, clan, tribal and religious affiliations and the necessity to secure the support of both traditional and nontraditional leaders in order to gain legitimacy for any national government.

The democratic process, although clearly endorsed by Shia majority and by the Kurds, has further alienated many Sunni, who were at least initially unlikely to accept any government that displaced the one that had for so long favored them. Veterans of Northern Ireland pointed out that the British failure to introduce a political system in Northern Ireland that gave the minority Catholic population a real say in the future of that province had prolonged that conflict by at least a decade. It was only after the governments of Margaret Thatcher, John Major and finally Tony Blair had progressively developed a political system that gave disproportionate representation to the Catholics in general and Republicans in particular had peace become possible in Northern Ireland. This included allowing the neighboring Republic of Ireland to have

a key role in the future of the province. The majority Protestant community strongly opposed this accommodation, but in the end agreement was achieved, thanks in large part to U.S. efforts leading up to the 1997 Good Friday Peace Accord and most recently in the disarming and disbandment of the Provisional IRA. Many interviewees argued that a similar approach should have been followed in Iraq, in an attempt to win over the more moderate Sunni, so that they would accept the legitimacy of a new Iraqi government. The formation of a "national unity" government in May 2006 may finally be a step in that direction but the level of ongoing violence among and even within the various ethnic groupings suggests that the new government is not yet perceived as legitimate by many Iraqis, particularly the Sunnis.

Some interviewees argued that this was because, as the occupation has progressed and an elected Iraqi government formed, the Coalition, in its rush to hand over power to the Iraqis, failed to consider that the instruments of state power in Iraq would succumb to the ethnic, tribal, and religious divisions that have long existed in that divided country. As a result, newly independent Iraqi institutions such as the Ministry of the Interior, the police, and to a lesser extent the National Guard and Army, simply became extensions of ethnic, tribal, and militia groups. Indeed, some then participated in, rather than prevented, the ethnic, political, and religious repression that has become prevalent over the last year. This failure to control the excesses of the Iraqi government or at least parts thereof has also seriously undermined the perceived legitimacy of the Iraqi government in Iraq and abroad. Overall, most interviewees believed that the even the current Iraqi government lacked sufficient legitimacy to prevent Iraq from descending into civil war especially if the Coalition withdrew from Iraq in the next two to three years.

> **British Consensus:** **The legitimacy of the Iraqi government has been severely undermined at least for the Sunni population by a succession of poor policy decisions and most recently because of the complicity of Iraqi government entities in the mounting ethnic violence.**

2.2.   Patience

Few if any of the British officers and officials interviewed believed that either the U.S. or British governments had the patience needed to complete the task in Iraq. Most believed that even under optimal conditions, the occupation would need to last for at least five to seven more years. Given the setbacks of the last three years, the duration of OIF is now more likely to be ten to fifteen years. And yet almost from the outset, Coalition leaders have talked about an exit strategy and a timetable for withdrawal. This has been presented to the public as being necessary to reassure Iraqis and the

world that our intention was not to indefinitely occupy Iraq. However, what Iraqis really want is not an immediate U.S. withdrawal but a U.S. withdrawal immediately after security and good governance has been reestablished. There is a big difference. Several national polls have shown that many Iraqis want the U.S. to leave soon, but only after stability had been achieved and the benefits of reconstruction manifest.

Many Iraqis and certainly the insurgents themselves believe that the U.S. will soon tire of this war and will then find a face-saving excuse to draw down their forces and eventually withdraw completely—long before the country has actually been stabilized, let alone reconstructed. As a result, the insurgents believe all they have to do is to last one day longer than the U.S. The irony is that research suggests that if many of the insurgent leaders actually thought the U.S. would be willing to fight on in Iraq for twenty years or more, the war could be over in as little as two years. That is because few of them, the extremists excepted, want a "long war" any more than the Coalition does. They are, however, willing to fight on for another three to five more years until the U.S. has withdrawn. Patience in this type of war really is a virtue. Showing the moral fortitude to battle on indefinitely creates the conditions for a much earlier political settlement, because that solution ultimately becomes less costly to all parties than a war of indeterminate cost and length.

It is assessed that the Provisional IRA agreed to the terms of the Good Friday Accord for two main reasons. First, the British eventually became so good at counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations that the IRA knew that it could not bomb the British out of Ireland. Second, the British government demonstrated that it would and could fight a twenty-, thirty-, or even fifty-year war. The difference between then and now is that Northern Ireland was part of the UK and the British government had no choice but to stay engaged. In Iraq, the British and U.S. governments do have a choice to stay or go, and so do the electorates of both countries, who can vote out the governments that took both countries to war. This constrains the patience either government can show. It may well be that governments should eschew engaging at all in a conflict as open-ended as this one without public support. If it does decide to go to war, then a government would do well to plan how to achieve stabilization and commence reconstruction long before the inevitable insurgency becomes entrenched.

British Consensus: **The Coalition probably does not have the strategic patience needed to defeat an asymmetric adversary who is willing to fight a long war. If the enemy perceived that the Coalition did have the necessary resilience, it might seek a political solution much earlier. If on the other hand, the insurgents detect a cut-and-run attitude, they will continue to resist, knowing that all they have to do is last one day longer than the Coalition.**

2.3 Winning the Support of the People

Just before leaving for Iraq to begin the last round of interviews in January 2006, the research team was given a copy of an unclassified weekly Iraq brief produced by the State Department. This brief outlined the success that had been achieved by the Coalition and Iraqi government during the previous week. It listed the numbers of insurgents killed and captured and weapons found. It detailed the establishment of a loan guarantee company, the completion of a new sewer and water treatment plant, and the release of 500 detainees from Abu Ghraib. This "upbeat" brief presented a picture of significant progress. Once on the ground, however, the project team found a very different picture. The vast majority of the Iraqis the team met in Baghdad told stories of a people who did not feel better off that week, or frankly did not feel that any progress had been achieved in the last year let alone the last week. These Iraqis lacked personal security, adequate essential services, economic security, and, as many saw it, proper governance. There appeared to be a complete disconnect between the perspective of the Coalition, or at least some of its senior leaders and analysts, and the perspective of Iraqis. This disconnect was commented on extensively by British officers and officials, who felt that the Coalition effort to win the support of the people had fallen well short of even the minimum needed.

According to most interviewees, Iraqis lacked confidence in their government and by extension the Coalition. Many Iraqis believed that the Iraqi authorities and the Coalition had failed to provide them with the key components of "human security."[34] They did not feel safe, essential services were intermittent at best, their standard of living was greatly reduced, and they had lost hope that the future would be any better. For most, the objective was simply to make it through the day safely. Worse still, many saw their government not as the provider of security and prosperity, but as a threat to their way of life and well-being. For many Sunni, this stemmed from a belief that the government was dominated by Shia intent on subjugating the Sunni minority. However, many Shia and Sunni alike expressed great concern that key government

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[34] The UNDP states that human security consists of two basic pillars: the *freedom from want* and the *freedom from fear*. This means the absence of hunger and illness as well as of violence and war. Possible threats to human security were categorized into seven main categories: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security.

entities such as the Ministry of Interior had been taken over by the radicals and militias and were complicit in the persecution of various ethnic groups. Many blamed the Coalition in general and the United States in particular for all of their losses and deprivations.

There was therefore little basis to argue that the Coalition had secured the support of the Iraqi people. As perceived by the vast majority of British interviewees, the keys reasons for this, which are discussed separately herein, included over-reliance on military force; the disproportionate use of force, resulting in numerous civilian casualties; various flawed policies such as the disbandment of the Iraqi military; an ideological approach to occupation rather than one based on understanding and pragmatism (including an attempt to rapidly impose an alien form of democracy that guaranteed Shia dominance and Sunni rejection and exclusion); statements that created unrealistic expectations; a divided chain of command; insufficient force numbers; failure to adopt the principle of intelligence-led operations; and a significant lack of cultural awareness and understanding.

While this is a damning and extensive list of perceived shortcomings, many British officers admitted that the UK had also been guilty of its own serious errors of judgment and approach. However, the impact had been insignificant because of the limited scope and size of the UK's contribution to the Coalition.

> **British Consensus: Due to, among other things, a lack of prewar planning, flawed polices and an over-reliance on the use of military force, the Coalition has never secured sufficient support from the Shia community in Iraq, let alone the much more disaffected Sunni.**

Information/Communications Campaign

A number of the officers and officials interviewed expressed the view that the most important component of any information campaign is the attitude and behavior of the soldiers on the ground, which was likely to have the greatest effect on the local populace. This included the willingness of soldiers to engage in a culturally sensitive dialogue with locals but more importantly the message that their actions communicated to the civilian population. Several officers noted a considerable disdain for the Iraqis on the part of some U.S. personnel, which was picked up on by Iraqis and colored their perceptions of all Americans. However, at least one officer noted that similar problems had occurred with some of the British army units deployed in the summer of 2003. As a result, predeployment training was modified to include even more cultural awareness training and a better explanation of why engagement with the local population is so important.

The project team's research in Iraq indicated a number of challenges that the Coalition needs to overcome in order to win a war of ideas with the insurgents and extremists. Because the words and deeds of soldiers and marines can have far greater effect for good or bad than even the most sophisticated and well executed information campaign, all personnel in the first instance must be adequately prepared to execute their role in the Coalition's information—or as it should more appropriately be called, influence—campaign.

With regard to the Coalition's information campaign, six fundamental problems were identified. First, the lines of persuasion on which most of these campaigns are built relate to somewhat abstract concepts such as the promotion of democracy, citizenship or the Iraqi Security Forces; issues that have little or no relevance to the majority of Iraqis. As a result, these campaigns simply do not resonate with most Iraqis and are unlikely to change attitudes let alone behavior. Most Iraqis care about real-life issues such as personal security and jobs. The Coalition's information campaigns therefore need to do a far better job of linking Coalition objectives to issues that matter to Iraqis. The Coalition needs to follow the political principle of thinking strategically but acting locally.

Second, most Coalition campaigns are aimed at a generic Iraqi audience that simply does not exist. There seems to be an assumption that all Iraqis are broadly similar and therefore the same messages and emotional appeals will resonate with them all. In reality, Iraq is an exceptionally ethnically and ideologically diverse—one could even say divided—country and overarching, national-level message campaigns are not going to appeal to everyone except on few issues such as general elections. Even campaigns aimed at the three main ethnic groups are not going to resonate with everyone within that group because there are also significant intragroup differences. For example, significant divisions exist within the Shia community mainly along tribal and ideological lines that necessitate much more focused and nuanced campaigning. The difference between the supporters of the Madi Army and SCRI (Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq) are profound, and Coalition messages need to take due account of this in order to achieve the desired effect. Indeed, a positive message for one community may be received negatively by another. The challenge of developing such focused campaigns is compounded by the fact that the primary means of reaching many key audiences is television and the preponderance of national and international satellite stations makes it very difficult to develop broadcast media products aimed at the right audience. Developing the right types of programming also places a premium on extensive cultural knowledge of audience preferences derived from attitudinal research that has not always been available to Coalition planners.

Third, Coalition information campaigns have been hindered by a preference for measures of performance over efficiency. Most of the information campaigns deployed in Iraq have been executed at the national level by large international advertising firms that have made countless expensive, mostly television advertising spots of 30 or 60 second duration that, from the limited amount of research that has been done, seem to have had little effect on attitudes and none on behavior. These same firms have undertaken some more localized advertising using billboards and newspaper advertisements, but using the same abstract concepts drawn from the Coalition's lines of persuasion, which simply do not resonate with most Iraqis. The success of these expensive campaigns is not measured on the basis of their impact but simply on statistics. How many were made? How quickly were they released? How often they were aired? How many people were watching? All these types of indicators show is that messages were seen, not what impact they had. Coalition officials perpetuate this failure by describing the success of the Information Operations effort on the basis of the amount of commercials shown and the amount of money spent, not on what immediate or lasting effect had been achieved. Some success has been achieved, often by units themselves, which have undertaken grassroots campaigns using leaflets, billboards, comics, and newspaper placements promoting issues that matter to the people in their AO. But these successes have been few and far between.

A fourth and alarming shortcoming has been the failure to counter enemy propaganda either by responding with counter messaging or more proactively by challenging the issues, ideology, and vision for Iraq that the insurgents and extremists promote and exploit. The insurgents, extremists, and militia groups in Iraq have shown themselves to be highly adept at releasing timely and effective messages that undermine support for the Iraqi government and Coalition and bolster their own reputation and perceived potency. They are quick to exploit Coalition failures and excesses; they respond quickly to defend their own actions, often by shifting blame to the authorities; and they are able to hijack Coalition successes and present them as proof that change only occurs as a result of their own violent campaign. They have also shown an increasing ability to respond to Iraqi government and Coalition messaging with their own counterarguments. They do all of this far faster than the Coalition—deploying messages that resonate with the local populace in real and near real time. Until the Coalition is able to counter this enemy propaganda and seize the influence initiative, the adversary will continue to be in the ascendancy in the war of ideas.

A fifth problem undermining the Coalition's ability to deploy timely and effective arguments is its own approval process. Even excellent products developed by Iraqi authors for their own ethnic group, that will assuredly resonate with that audience, can take days and even weeks to be staffed through what can only be described as a Byzantine approval process. Even simple newspaper reports and advertisements

aimed at the readers of a newspaper with a circulation of less than 50,000 have to be sanctioned by an approval chain that includes numerous info ops and PsyOp staffs, lawyers, and senior officers up to the rank of three-star general. Imagery of critical events filmed by Coalition assets that could be used to highlight the atrocities being committed by the insurgents can take days to clear this approval process.

It has to be acknowledged that in part the approval process became so convoluted and required the involvement of the lawyers because of problems with the messages being developed and the means being used to deploy them; for example, the lack of cultural sensitivity, the use of inappropriate messages and themes, and the payment of Iraqi journalists. However, unless the approval process is radically overhauled, so that the time taken to secure release approval can be reduced to only a few hours and ideally minutes, the Coalition will continue to struggle to prevail in the battle for the hearts and minds of Iraqis.

The sixth failure in this war of ideas is the failure to win domestic public and political support. As the recent press controversy over the payment of Iraqi journalists has demonstrated, the case for the need to engage in a war of Ideas in Iraq has not been made. As a result, it sometimes appears that the American press and politicians are more comfortable with using violence than reasoned arguments to defeat this adversary. The issue of paid Iraqi journalists, for example, has generated far more moral outrage than the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of so-called accidental deaths in Iraq resulting from U.S. military action. And yet in the end this adversary can only be defeated, stability restored, and reconstruction completed if the influence war is won, and this must include an effective and timely information campaign. Whenever a limited public debate does occur on this topic, opponents often invoke the word "propaganda" to denigrate the use of information as a weapon, and yet the only alternative to dialogue is violence and intimidation. The U.S. government therefore has to make a compelling case to the public to justify the necessity for this type of operation and to gain political and public acceptance of the tools that must be deployed. Whether the public agrees or disagrees with the war, winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi public is the only way to bring peace to that country and this necessitates securing support for the various tools of an influence-based campaign. As one American interviewee noted, "If we cannot win this argument, how on earth are we going to succeed in stabilizing and reconstructing Iraq?"

> **British Consensus:** The Coalition is losing the war of ideas to the insurgents, who are unencumbered by a public and political reticence to use information as a weapon and the ideological, legal, and bureaucratic obstacles that impede the rapid development and dissemination of messaging that resonates with key

target audiences. As a result, the insurgents currently have the initiative and ascendancy in the battle for hearts and minds in Iraq.

Cultural Awareness

In his *Military Review* article, Brigadier Aylwin-Foster commented extensively on what he saw as the general "cultural insensitivity" of U.S. military personnel in Iraq. He went so far as to suggest that the U.S. Army evidenced what "arguably amounted to institutional racism," a highly contentious statement that understandably attracted a significant amount of indignation from personnel with the U.S. Army, an institution that has worked hard to eliminate racism. Most of the British officers interviewed were horrified that the Brigadier had published this comment and greatly concerned at the damage it might have done to British-U.S. Army relations. However, most also agreed that in their experience, U.S. military personnel were culturally insensitive, no matter what their own ethnic origins or color. The paradox is that while racial discrimination is still a serious problem within the British Army itself, when deployed overseas, the British Army in general and the officer corps in particular relate to foreign cultures much more easily and sensitively than their American counterparts.

Comparing British to American society, it is hard not to draw the conclusion that the British are more institutionally racist than Americans. Despite significant efforts to eliminate discrimination in Britain, examples of racial intolerance, discrimination, and conflict abound, and ethnic tensions remain high in many neighborhoods, especially those with large immigrant communities—for example, the cities of Leeds and Luton after the July 2005 London Underground bombings. The British have largely failed to come to terms with the effects of large-scale immigration, and many ethnic communities, especially from Islamic countries, have failed to assimilate, in part because of their own unwillingness to do so but also because Britain has failed to integrate its immigrant communities. This situation has become so acute in recent years that immigration is now one of the most contentious electoral issues, directly resulting in the reemergence of a far-right anti-immigration political party that has significantly increased its share of the vote in local elections, especially in those areas where large immigrant communities live. Such overt racism is also common across Europe, with most European governments in a state of denial (at least before the recent Paris riots and the riots generated by the Danish cartoon controversy).

In contrast, the United States has, by and large, far more successfully integrated huge waves of immigration for more than two centuries although more recently resentment towards immigrants has become more common. In large part this is because of the fact that the United States has made a concerted effort to assimilate its immigrants and actively encouraged them to assume an American identity, which is reinforced

through a kind of overt nationalism that some Europeans find disconcerting (for example, the regular recital of the pledge of allegiance, the much more prevalent display of flags, and the encouragement of solemn renditions of the national anthem at most public events). Certainly no one can deny the continued existence of a degree of racial tensions in the U.S., but the federal government has been at the forefront of efforts to reduce discrimination, and the U.S. Army has been at the lead of that effort. And yet, the study team found countless examples of cultural insensitivity among U.S. military personnel deployed to Iraq, a fact that is acknowledged by many U.S. experts and senior officers. Conversely, many U.S. counterinsurgency experts have acknowledged that the British Army is far more culturally attuned, a fact that was commented on extensively by the many Iraqis interviewed during this study.

This apparent role reversal has many sources. The typical British soldier is exposed to foreign cultures far more often than the typical American soldier or marine. In part because of the failure of ethnic communities to assume a British identity, even at home, the British can come into daily contact with a diverse range of cultures from all over the world. The cultural exposure of the typical British soldier also results from Britain's proximity to continental Europe, with its significant cultural differences, which Britons typically encounter on an almost daily basis, either in person or through the media. Political life is dominated as much by the European Union as it is by the British Parliament. Many Britons work for multinational companies or for companies that export extensively. The British education system still exposes its students to numerous foreign cultures, including regular overseas field trips for children as young as 11. Many Britons also make multiple trips to Europe and beyond. News programming includes extensive coverage of international events; and the arts and entertainment industries are becoming increasingly multicultural. International sporting competitions are also the culmination point for most domestic sporting seasons, which encourages many fans to travel extensively to locations as diverse as Turkey and the Ukraine. Also, the legacy of empire encourages the British to think internationally and to share a historical familiarity and imbued ease in dealing with alien cultures. When serving abroad, British soldiers are also far more exposed to foreign cultures than some of their American colleagues. Many live in the local communities, are paid in local currencies, and shop on the local economy.

In contrast, most U.S. personnel are often isolated from significant cultural interaction until they are actually deployed to an AO like Iraq either by dint of service in the United States or by living almost exclusively within large self supporting garrisons in foreign countries. U.S. immigration policy ensures that most nationalities are quickly subsumed into the American identity, often within one generation. Even though many minorities think of themselves in "hyphenated identity" terms (Mexican-American, African-American, etc.), the vast majority are still proud Americans first and foremost.

Although the national identity does assume some key facets of the culture of major immigrant waves, the vast majority of immigrants willingly subordinate their own cultural identity to that of their adopted country. This is perhaps the United States' greatest strength and achievement, but it also limits exposure to truly alien cultures.

The sheer size of the United States and its distance from most other countries also limits the opportunities for significant interaction with alien cultures. The opportunities to travel extensively are limited for most by distance and cost (not just the travel but the high cost of living overseas). The fact that one can enjoy most climates within the United States (a significant reason that many Britons travel abroad is to enjoy more temperate climates) and the limited amount of annual leave enjoyed by most Americans also limits the number and duration of holidays abroad. Additionally, an all-volunteer army might be weighted toward the lower socioeconomic groups, whose members tend to be less educated and who are able to travel less even within the United States. Other factors also limit exposure to foreign cultures. The media rarely covers international news that is not considered to be of direct importance to the U.S. or provides much access to foreign entertainment. The U.S. education system below university level generally provides less opportunity to interact or learn about foreign cultures than is typically the case in Europe. When U.S. military personnel are eventually deployed overseas, many British officers noted that a "little America mentality" persists that sees many soldiers work and live within the confines of large military complexes that afford little exposure to the local community.

The typical U.S. solder or marine therefore receives far less exposure to foreign cultures in their personal or professional lives prior to deployment than their European counterparts, which might explain at least in part what might better be called "cultural ignorance" than "institutional racism."

However, other factors need to be taken into account also. First, there might be something of a myth associated with the perceived British cultural sensitivity. Many of those interviewed did not appear to be more culturally sympathetic than their U.S. counterparts. Indeed, a number were clearly racist, albeit with a small r. However, what they all clearly understood was that in order to prevail in a counterinsurgency or stabilization operation one must intimately understand the culture being dealt with and to at least give the appearance of being sympathetic. Such an attitude does not exactly represent the moral high ground some British officers have claimed for themselves, but is nonetheless a vital understanding. A number of those interviewed also expressed a sometimes considerable disdain for aspects of some of the cultures they encountered on operations including in Iraq and a significant air of superiority. However, these same officers also realized that they had to conceal such attitudes from the local population in order to gain their cooperation. There is of course a

historical precedent for this contradiction (cultural understanding and latent racism), the British having developed the discipline of cultural anthropology largely to assist them to better manipulate and control their colonies.

Most British officers interviewed had developed or had been trained to have a healthy respect for the types of adversary being encountered in Iraq even though one or two did still openly refer to them in a racist manner. All, however, noted their enemies' considerable abilities as asymmetric warriors, which therefore necessitated the development of cultural understanding in order to defeat them.

The picture that emerges is not of an institution that is particularly culturally attuned but of one that is most definitely culturally pragmatic, acknowledging the importance of cultural understanding and the necessity to at least appear to be culturally sensitive. A key element of this cultural indoctrination is the British approach to military education and predeployment training. Military education, especially for officers, encompasses a significant amount of training in the principles of counterinsurgency, including the comprehensive study of past campaigns, which is a prerequisite for getting officers to accept core principles. Cultural training is also incorporated into predeployment programs in order to better prepare soldiers for operations in alien environments. This training is continually reinforced on operations. Most important, the overall organizational culture of the British Army is predisposed towards counterinsurgency operations and completely accepting of the necessity to develop and display cultural understanding as part of its strategy.

In contrast, most interviewees and some U.S. analysts noted that at the time of the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, the level of cultural understanding within the U.S. military was woefully inadequate, and it may remain so. More cultural training is being provided now than was the case three years ago, but it was felt by those British officers that had most recently served with U.S. units that it was generally simplistic and entirely inadequate to overcome the cultural ignorance of most personnel. This education was also not reinforced in the field, particularly by commanders who themselves lacked much cultural awareness and who had failed to embrace all of the principles of counterinsurgency.

Another criticism leveled at the U.S. by a surprising number of interviewees was the perception that the U.S. military was arrogant and presented an attitude, even to allies, of cultural superiority. All interviewees admired the self-assurance of their U.S. counterparts, but most interviewees also noted that typical U.S. soldiers' passionate and largely uncritical belief that they belong to the "best military" from the "best country in the world" created an elitist attitude toward all foreigners, not just Iraqis. When this perceived sense of superiority is combined with a significant level of

cultural ignorance, it is little wonder most interviewees felt that the U.S. military has generally failed to engage with Iraqis other than at the most superficial level. That said, several British observers noted that a small number of American officers and soldiers had been hugely successful at developing harmonious relationships with many Iraqis. By and large these personnel were well-educated and/or well-traveled and were entirely comfortable interacting with the locals.

Some more experienced British observers also noted that U.S. culture itself was also something of an impediment to harmonious relations with the Iraqis in particularly and Arabs in general. Many U.S. personnel did not appreciate that their words and deeds were simply not understood by the key target audiences and generally appeared to be totally alien and illogical to most Arabs. For example, qualities that are highly valued in the United States and which are the bedrock of U.S. commercial and military success can be an impediment to interpersonal relationships in the Middle East. The lack of emotional and physical intimacy can be perceived as disrespect or hostility. The desire to "cut to the chase" before a personal rapport and trust has been established can appear impolite and cause offense when none was intended. Divergent perceptions of honor and shame have also adversely affected relationships on a personal and community level. Very different attitudes towards the role of women have been a cause of significant cultural friction. Even Iraqis who were charitable in their comments, not meaning to cause offense, noted that many Americans appeared to show little inclination to modify their own cultural behavior to accommodate the cultural sensibilities of Iraqis, who view the occupation of their country rather differently than the Coalition does.

In summary, all British officers interviewed recognized on some level that cultural understanding is a key principle of successful counterinsurgency operations. They have therefore adapted their personal attitudes and behavior accordingly and at a minimum attempt to present the appearance of cultural sensitivity in their dealings with foreign societies. The British military system has also made a sustained effort to develop institutional cultural awareness and actively encourages its soldiers to display cultural sensitivity. However, one cannot underestimate the importance of a deeper societal level cultural awareness that the British enjoy by dint of their history, geography, and their own culture (good and bad).

Conversely, the U.S. military has only recently renewed its appreciation of the importance of cultural understanding in S&R operations. Training and education still lag well behind operational requirements and are probably insufficient to overcome the cultural ignorance that is a direct result of America's own history, geography, and culture (good and bad). This deficiency is only likely to be overcome if a systematic and comprehensive training and education program is introduced within the U.S.

military and most importantly only following a change in organizational culture that results in an unequivocal acceptance of the principles of counterinsurgency operations, including the need for intimate cultural understanding.

> ***British Consensus:*** **By dint of the country's history and geography, U.S. military personnel are generally culturally ignorant, which adversely affects their ability to easily relate to foreign cultures. Conversely, by accepting the need for cultural understanding and sensitivity, the British military has managed to largely overcome the racial prejudice that is inherent in British society.**

Involvement of the Local Population

There is always going to be a gap, sometimes significant, between the reality of past operations and an individual's own understanding of those operations. Significant myths have become accepted by the British officers interviewed regarding operations in places like Malaya, Borneo, and Kenya. Ironically, however, these myths reinforce the successful British approach to counterinsurgency. There is a perception, for example, among many of the officers interviewed that the core principles of counterinsurgency were followed religiously in these campaigns, and given the eventual successful outcome of most, these principles must work and therefore should be followed in future operations of this type. Of course, there were many shortcomings and some significant early failures, but the ultimate success of most campaigns has reinforced the British confidence in their approach to S&R operations and the counterinsurgency element thereof. One of the principles that almost all of the British officers mentioned was the early involvement of the local population wherever possible in the solutions developed for their communities, be it governance, security, or economic regeneration. This principle was similarly understood by most of the U.S. officers interviewed, especially those who had served in Iraq. The significant divergence occurred in the different interpretations of the implementation of this principle and as to the level and extent of local involvement.

Most of the more senior and experienced British officers understood that involvement of the local population did not mean handing over complete authority to local entities until such time as those entities (ministries, local authorities, police forces, the military, intelligence agencies, utilities, etc.) had consistently demonstrated their ability to function without what one officer rather condescendingly called "adult supervision." There was a somewhat arrogant but nonetheless probably realistic belief that for some time after an intervention had occurred, local entities simply could not be trusted or relied upon to control their own affairs without significant oversight. This oversight included professional support to enable local entities to develop the

skills and experience to function effectively. However, this oversight was also deemed necessary because ethnically divided communities or communities where corruption was rife simply could not be trusted to assume complete control of key governance functions until core principles such as political and public accountability, impartiality, ethnic and racial tolerance, and honesty had become ingrained within a society.

This oversight is now given politically correct labels such as "security sector reform," but in reality is an approach that can be traced back to the colonial era. In most campaigns such as Malaya and Borneo and in all of their colonies, British officials and officers were embedded down to the lowest level in order to both "assist" local entities and also to provide oversight as these entities matured to the point where local officials could be trusted to run them reasonably reliably, fairly and honestly. When pressed, senior officers admitted that they had observed firsthand in the Balkans or Northern Ireland the difficulty of ensuring impartiality in key agencies and ministries, which were effectively controlled by the majority ethnic grouping (in the case of Northern Ireland, by the Protestant community). Several British officers noted that within the Royal Ulster Constabulary, for example, a small but dangerous minority of police officers were supporters of extremist Protestant organizations and that a majority had some level of antipathy towards the Catholic minority. On various occasions this had necessitated a sometimes significant degree of "oversight" on the part of the Westminster-based authorities.

It was also noted by several academic experts that the local governance of Northern Ireland had to be suspended on a number of occasions, with power reverting to the Westminster Parliament, because of the failure of the local political entities to effectively govern that province.

The lesson that these officers and experts had therefore drawn was that it was essential to involve the local population and hand back to them significant powers as quickly as possible, because in the end only they could develop a long-term solution. However, at the same time a significant level of control needs to be maintained until such time as these entities have demonstrated that they can operate effectively.

These same British officers, when commenting on their experience in Iraq and the Coalition approach to involvement of the local population, were highly critical of the U.S. approach. Their view, which is shared by the project team, is that in the rush to develop an early exit strategy for Iraq, far too much power was handed back to the Iraqis far too quickly. Military and police forces were raised and new government ministries created which were then given complete autonomy long before they had demonstrated their competence or their willingness to act impartially, fairly, or legally. As a result, some elements of the police, the military, and most notoriously the

Ministry of the Interior security forces divided along ethnic and tribal lines and quickly began to act in the best interests of their own groups over the best interests of the country as a whole. Indeed, some have become instruments of repression and sectarian violence, thereby undermining public confidence in these institutions. Even the division and operation of key government ministries has occurred down ethnic and tribal as well as political lines and some of these ministries are now operating to enhance the reputation, authority, and power of some communities and leaders at the expense of others.

The failure to imbed Coalition officials and officers at every level of these local entities and then gradually transition to Iraqi control, as the maturity and integrity of these entities developed, was a significant mistake. To be sure, the failure to hand over control to the Iraqis might have fostered resistance to the Coalition, but from discussions with numerous Iraqis, the review team has concluded this would probably not have been the case. Had expectations regarding the timetable for the transition of authority been set from the outset of the occupation; had good governance and security been provided immediately; and had there been a greater effort to resist Shia demands and include Sunnis in the transitional process, most Iraqis would probably have accepted a much slower transition to a more democratic and independent form of governance.

The harshest British criticism regarding the involvement of the local population was however reserved for the British authorities in Southern Iraq and the British government in particular. The perception of a number of more senior officers and officials was that in the rush to secure an early exit from Iraq, the British had far too rapidly handed over significant authority to local leaders who had then used that power to consolidate their own positions and to confront and attack their traditional rivals. This transfer of control had also allowed the Iranians, for example, to significantly increase their influence in southern Iraq. As a result, the British sector has itself divided down ethnic, tribal, and political lines, with two powerful militias now vying for control of this key region, leaving the British with little option but to use force to reassert control, thereby becoming one of the protagonists in the conflict.

None of the more junior officers and officials picked up on this issue. This suggests that they had not been taught the importance of "oversight" as the local population becomes more directly involved in controlling its own affairs. This in turn would suggest that this perceived necessity was learned from experience in Northern Ireland and Bosnia, not from formal education and training.

Interviewees noted two other important issues in this regard. First, most interviewees considered that a significant failure of the U.S. approach was that it had not begun

with a comprehensive assessment of what really matters to the local population. As a result, many projects were undertaken that were important to the Coalition or to well-meaning U.S. and British officers but were of less or little importance to the local population. This situation often occurred because the Coalition relied on émigré Iraqi leaders and cultural advisors who lacked legitimacy with the local population or any understanding of the realities of life in Iraq. One example in particular stands out. Several officers noted that the effort to restore key utilities was undertaken on an egalitarian basis, with most areas receiving a similar amount of resources. This meant that while the length of time communities were without power slowly decreased, all communities were still without power for long periods. For those communities that had never had a reliable power supply, this was not as important. However, for the more affluent areas that had been used to no power outages at all under Saddam, the lack of power became a significant cause of hostility toward the Coalition. The lesson was that one must determine the needs of local communities and seek to meet their expectations, not simply try to do what you think is best.

Another observation focused on the fact that when undertaking reconstruction programs, the U.S. has a tendency to assign far too much of the effort to foreign contractors, who bring in large numbers of personnel to both oversee and conduct major reconstruction programs. Some considered the problem to be that the U.S. is action orientated and wants quicker results than local companies could not provide. However, using much larger numbers of even less efficient local labor is a far more effective way to undermine support for the insurgency than bringing in foreign contractors. Numerous examples were given of projects that the British and some U.S. units had funded that were entirely executed by local labor, including the construction of water and sewerage systems and pipelines. Such efforts gave the local population a sense of purpose and an income and were strongly believed to reduce the numbers of bored and angry young men who might otherwise join the insurgency.

Many interviewees advocated the "small is beautiful" approach to involving the local population. Reconstruction efforts should be focused not at the regional or national level, they maintain, but at the local and individual level, building success from the bottom up. Most commented on the British approach of providing funds and resources to individuals and small business. These assistance programs were most often implemented by junior officers empowered and funded to conduct such operations. The advantage of this approach is that success can be achieved quickly, bringing modest improvements in the standard of living for a large number of people. This success, which helps to win over the support of a community, comes far more quickly then the results of efforts to regenerate industries and macro-reconstruction measures. In the effort to keep individuals from supporting the insurgency and/or extremism, even a small improvement now is better than greater improvement

tomorrow. As one Western-educated Iraqi tribal leader pointed out to a British officer, "Providing people with bread today is far better than offering them jam tomorrow." Even if this successful approach stemmed as much from the lack of funds for reconstruction operations as from any understanding of the value of grassroots regeneration programs, the lesson is valid nonetheless.

Certain U.S. formations such as the 82nd Airborne Division and the 1st Calvary Division understood this and had similar programs which actively involved as much of the local population as possible. The reconstruction effort of these formations also focused on the provision of low-level assistance that really mattered to the populations in the respective AO. However, this was not a common approach nor institutionalized by the U.S. military and the focus on low-level programs has decreased as the bureaucracy of the occupation has increased and security decreased. For future operations, U.S. formations and personnel need to be organized, trained, funded, and equipped to rapidly implement a bottom-up reconstruction effort in parallel with other stabilization operations and ahead of the large-scale reconstruction effort that only the U.S. government and/or international bodies can fund and execute.

> ***British Consensus:*** **Even allowing for the need to involve the local population as quickly as possible, the Coalition handed over too much control too soon to Iraqi institutions that had not yet demonstrated the level of competency, impartiality, or integrity needed for such significant responsibility. Additionally, during the stabilization phase, a bottom-up rather than top-down approach to local involvement is preferable, as it delivers obvious results more quickly, thereby gaining popular support.**

Population Control

Most officers interviewed felt that the Coalition had done a generally poor job of using either physical or psychological tools to separate the local population from the insurgents and extremists. The British had employed a carrot-and-stick approach in southern Iraq to try and drive a wedge between the people and the insurgents and to isolate this population both physically and psychologically from the insurgents. However, such efforts have only had localized success. The view of most interviewees was the Coalition had failed to achieve any meaningful degree of population control for a number of reasons.

First, inadequate troop levels prevented the Coalition from physically denying the insurgents freedom of maneuver. As a result, the insurgents enjoy the freedom to operate relatively openly within the communities they are seeking to coopt and the

freedom to reinforce almost at will, including across Iraq's porous borders. Force protection concerns have also had a significant negative consequence. Such considerations have encouraged an operational posture that keeps the local population at a safe distance; encourages the perception among friendly forces that all Iraqis are potential threats; and cedes control of terrain and the night to the insurgents, as most Coalition forces pull back to the safety of their own large operating bases.

The lack of cultural awareness has prevented the Coalition from fully exploiting traditional and nontraditional leadership, tribal loyalties, and the Arab honor code in order to encourage the local population to isolate itself from the insurgents. The Coalition has also consistently failed to counter enemy propaganda, allowing the insurgents to promote themselves as the providers of hope, to discredit the Coalition, and to intimidate wavering communities. Coalition actions including the excessive use of force and indiscriminate and poorly targeted cordon-and-search operations have actually encouraged communities to embrace the terrorists, if not because of a belief in their cause, then for revenge.

Finally, the failure to provide security for many Iraqis has encouraged many to form or join militias, resulting in virtual no-go areas being created where the Iraqi government and Coalition have little or no control. As a result, most interviewees felt that the Coalition has largely been unable to exert any meaningful population control which has allowed the insurgents to train, organize and operate with relative impunity. The U.S. was not singled out for criticism in this case, as this was seen as a Coalition-wide problem.

> **British Consensus.** Even in the 21st century, there are tools (e.g. physical presence, information operations, coercion, and rewards) that can be applied to achieve a certain level of population control. However, the Coalition has not utilized these tools to optimal effect, and as a result, the insurgents can operate with relative impunity in much of Iraq today.

Setting Realistic Expectations: Promise Less, Deliver More

In advertising, one of the biggest mistakes one can commit is the dislocation of the consumer's expectations. If a company promises more than its product can deliver, it will quickly be found out when the consumer fails to get what was expected and paid for. Once that happens it is extremely difficult to get that consumer to buy another product from the same supplier. Many of those interviewed for this project expressed the view that the Coalition was definitely guilty of this marketing error. Even before the invasion had begun, Coalition leaders in both the U.S. and UK were raising the expectations of the Iraqis; that things would be much better for them soon after

Saddam was removed. As Coalition forces advanced across Iraq and in the first months after the invasion, the Iraqi people were subjected to what one officer described as a "symphony of positive messaging" that creating the impression that their lives would be immeasurably improved in short order. Of course, Iraq was in fact in far worse shape than almost anyone expected, and the Coalition lacked sufficient resources even to maintain a basic level of security for most of the population and to do much more than restore some basic essential services.

This dislocation of expectations quickly resulted in disillusionment and increased Iraqis' willingness to entertain the arguments of the insurgents and extremists. It also fostered the "man on the moon" syndrome, the belief that if the United States could put a man on the moon, then it could fix Iraq if it wanted to. The fact that it has not means for many Iraqis that clearly it does not want to. Such reasoning is openly encouraged by the insurgents, who have much to gain from any suggestion that the Coalition is only in Iraq for its own ends.

The reality of an S&R operation of this size and complexity was that the lives of most Iraqis was most likely going to get far worse before things got better; real improvement would take years and require significant effort and sacrifice. The lesson is that despite the temptation to try to justify an intervention by unduly raising the expectations of the population, it is far better to set realistic expectations, *to promise less and deliver more.*

> ***British Consensus:*** **The Coalition unwisely raised the expectations of most Iraqis, promising that, after the war, life would quickly become immeasurably better than it had been under Saddam Hussein. This was completely unrealistic and the resulted in the dislocation of Iraqi expectations, making the job of winning popular support infinitely more difficult. The lesson therefore is to *promise less and deliver more.***

2.4   Civilian Primacy

Most of the British officers and officials interviewed had little personal experience of the Coalition's senior command levels, so their knowledge was somewhat limited in respect of the principle of civilian primacy in the context of OIF. However, their collective perspective, gained from limited direct interactions, joint planning, and informed observation, was that their remained a significant disconnect between the U.S. civilian and military authorities in Iraq. The Department of Defense was perceived by most to be the lead authority in Iraq, and although it is led by a civilian, it was felt that this perceived DoD lead ensured that the military had excessive control on the conduct of Coalition activities. Additionally, it was felt that the military were

able to conduct operations independently of direct civilian control because there was no civilian authority in Iraq with overall control of the Coalition effort. The U.S. ambassador did have significant authority, but he was not perceived as the senior Coalition authority in Iraq. Instead, the commander of Multinational Force Iraq was viewed by many as the de facto "supreme Coalition authority." This view was shared by many of the Iraqis interviewed during the course of this project.

Even when considering the control of operations in Washington, some of the British officials interviewed felt that the DoD had a disproportionate influence within the U.S. government that did not reflect the necessity of civilian primacy in this type of operation. In large part it was felt that this situation persisted because of two factors: (1) that the U.S. still perceived Iraq to be a counterinsurgency problem requiring a largely military response (also connected to the failure to appreciate the limited utility of military force) and not therefore as a civilian-led S&R operation; and (2) because the Iraqi government was now being viewed as the primary civilian authority, even though it was still in its infancy as an instrument of governance and was riven with ethnic and ideological divisions.

> ***British Consensus:*** **The Coalition has not implemented effectively the principle of civilian primacy in Iraq by providing effective civilian-led leadership of the overall campaign. As a result, too much control is still devolved to the U.S. military, which continues to pursue a largely coercive solution.**

Unity of Effort

As previously explained, the British consider unity of effort to be a prerequisite for S&R operations. While the military may take the lead at the outset of an occupation, the aim is to transfer authority to civilian leadership as quickly as possible. In the British Sector in Iraq, this has fallen to a senior civil servant; in Northern Ireland, this leadership was provided by an elected minister of state. Below this level of command are a series of committees that comprise all of the key ministries and agencies involved. The chairman of the each committee has overall command authority, includeing over the military and intelligence services even where the chairman is a civilian. This approach ensures there is the unity of effort that is so vital to guarantee that the overall operation achieves maximum synergistic effect.

Many of those interviewed felt that for far too long, unity of effort was missing in the U.S. approach in Iraq. The U.S. military was perceived to be far too independent of the other elements of state power employed in Iraq, taking strategic decisions and actions without effective coordination with other agencies. This was compounded by the fact that military operations appeared to be largely directed from the United

States. Most interviewees believed that the U.S. DoD had far more real decision-making authority than the State Department. Worse, British officials and commanders reported that on occasions they felt like there were two entirely separate command authorities in Iraq with very different and sometimes conflicting agendas. This meant that the U.S. approach often appeared confusing, competing, and contradictory. The situation was considered particularly bad during the period when the CPA was theoretically in charge of the Coalition effort, during 2004–05. It was also felt that even when there was harmony in the U.S. interagency approach, it was only in those areas directed/controlled by the DoD, which as a result unduly favored military solutions.

Most interviewees with recent Iraq experience agreed that things had much improved since 2005, thanks largely to the efforts of U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad. However, even now it is felt that the military has far too much delegated authority and is still able to plan and conduct combat operations with insufficient civilian oversight. As a result, the military was viewed as being able to employ what many British officers still considered to be excessive force. Such tactics, it was felt, caused significant numbers of civilian casualties and the unnecessary detention of large numbers of sometimes innocent Iraqis.

It was also considered that any progress that had been made in achieving unity of command has now been undermined because control of the country has effectively been handed back to the Iraqis. For example, authority to provide security in Iraq has been handed over to institutions such as the Ministry of the Interior. As the Iraqi government is itself fractious in nature with numerous ethnic and political actors vying for power, unity of effort was now become next to impossible.

> **British Consensus:** **Even today, the Coalition's civilian and military efforts are not fully unified under a single civilian command authority. The situation has been compounded by the premature transfer of almost complete authority to immature Iraqi institutions.**

2.5   Minimum Force

The U.S. did not and still does not fully understand that when confronting an insurgency or terrorist adversary, battle is the action of last resort.

> At a recent visit to Quantico by the 2006 British Army Command and Staff Course, a Marine LTC stated that what the Corps really needed were people who wouldn't hesitate to shoot a petrol bomber in the head. This drew a sharp intake of breath from the British students. A U.S. officer later asked, "Why don't you Brits get it?"

The reply from the somewhat perplexed British officers was that while you shouldn't underestimate the UK willingness to employ force, lethal if necessary, it was always the last resort, not a first response.

British officers wanted their soldiers to carefully consider the degree of threat, other non-lethal options (including the option to do nothing), the potential collateral damage, ROE, and the broader implications (community relations, strategic impact, legal repercussions etc) before deciding whether or not to employ lethal force, while accepting that in some situations, lethal force would indeed be the appropriate response.

The British officers said this degree of understanding, restraint and judgment was expected of the most junior personnel and was being demonstrated on a regular basis in Iraq. They also pointed out that British troops had also employed a significant amount of lethal force when necessary including several now-famous bayonet charges. The discussion ended without either side's appearing to convince the other of the efficacy of either country's approach to the use of lethal force in S&R operations.

The above anecdote was provided by a senior U.S. instructor at Quantico and expert on counterinsurgency. It succinctly captures perhaps the most significant difference between the British and American approaches to counterinsurgency and S&R operations. Despite all relevant American military doctrine highlighting the importance of using proportionate force in counterinsurgency operations, the perceptions of the British military, many independent observers, and almost every Iraqi interviewed is that the U.S. military continues to employ excessive force in Iraq and elsewhere. Even in sustained insurgent operations involving hundreds of enemy fighters, the British for example have rarely resorted even to the use of crew-served weapons let alone heavy artillery and airpower. Conversely, the perception is that the U.S. military will use all of the weapons in its arsenal, even when the threat is relatively minimal.

One British officer who had served with MNC-I and had visited many U.S. forward operating bases used the example of the typical British three-vehicle patrol with its American counterpart to illustrate the different philosophies. Superficially, the firepower of both patrols is very similar. Each Hummer has a single turret equipped with a 7.62mm machine gun or a heavy 50 caliber machine gun. The British armored land rover is similarly equipped. However, in most circumstances, the British gunners are armed with their personal weapon, which is the first weapon they bring to bear on a potential target, whereas the U.S. gunner will resort immediately to the heavier caliber crew-served weapon. The British gunner typically will only resort to the heavy caliber weapon in extremis, especially as the difference in accuracy and lethality between a 5.56mm SA-80 with an advanced sighting system and a 50 cal HMG is

significant. The chances of significant collateral damage from the heavier weapon are many times greater than with a personal weapon such as an SA-80 or M-16 being used to fire well-aimed shots.

While it is always dangerous to draw conclusions from only one tactical example, the officer in question thought that this example did illustrate the difference in philosophy between the two armies. He also pointed out that the British approach dated back to experience gained during the earliest days of the Northern Ireland intervention. He recounted that on one occasion in 1969, a Shorland armored car operated by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and equipped with a 0.30 caliber weapon fired a short burst, one round of which traveled several miles, killing a child. This incident sparked nights of rioting and a number of deaths. The principle of minimum force came about as a result of such experiences, which became ingrained in every soldier's mind. British soldiers continue to be indoctrinated in this approach.

The commanding officer of the Black Watch and officers from other regiments reminded the research team that on several occasions in Iraq, the British Army had used extreme violence since April 2003, but only as the last resort, not the first option. Even when bases had come under sustained attacked during the Shia uprising of 2004, the British largely eschewed the use of artillery and airpower to respond. Using mostly small arms, hundreds of enemy combatants were killed during that uprising but civilian casualties were few. As a result, the British earned grudging respect from the enemy and not the broader community hostility common elsewhere.

A number of officers noted that one of the problems they had observed in Iraq was that most U.S. military personnel did not understand and were not mandated to follow the concept of graduated response, which is an escalating approach: no action – some action – major action. The U.S. response seemed to be the reverse: to deescalate from major action to some action and finally disengagement. To implement the British concept of graduated response requires extensive education (to understand why it is necessary) and training (to instill the necessary discipline). Those officers who had undertaken or observed U.S. predeployment training commented that training was inadequate to ensure that troops in the field would and could employ a graduated response to the threats they faced. They noted, for example, that the two armies' approaches to a threat to a checkpoint were doctrinally very similar: hand signal – verbal warning – warning shot – shot into engine – death shot. However, they observed that the typical U.S. checkpoint response to an attack often included the use of automatic and heavy weapons and sustained bursts of fire. By contrast, the British encouraged aim shots and bursts of short duration.

A number of interviewees acknowledged that in part, the heavier U.S. response was likely conditioned by the higher incidence of suicide bombers in the U.S. sector. The only extended British experience of this threat level occurred when the Black Watch deployed to the Baghdad environs late in the fall of 2004. That experience was too short to make a significant judgment. However, 30mm rounds were used against perceived suicide bombers' vehicles, which does strongly suggest that higher threats levels do necessitate on occasions a heaver response. That said, the principle of a graduated response was still considered by all of the officers of the Black Watch to be the best way to avoid significant collateral damage, as it is designed to dissuade soldiers from resorting to heavier weapons as their first option.

A number of British officers and both British and American counterinsurgency experts commented that the differing perceptions of the role of the British and American militaries may indirectly contribute to both countries' use of lethal force. Quite a few interviewees commented that the vast majority of the American military personnel they had met in Iraq and elsewhere viewed themselves as warriors whose job it was to kill the enemies of the United States. These warriors prided themselves on their aggression and their skills with their respective weaponry. Many British officers called this a "gung-ho" attitude. The Americans appeared to have few if any qualms about killing the enemy, and most openly expressed the desire that they would get the opportunity to close with and destroy the enemy. Many appeared to consider the other duties of a military in a typical counterinsurgency or postconflict S&R operation as unworthy of a warrior and beneath their dignity—what one could call the "peacekeeping is for wimps" syndrome.

In contrast, the British consider themselves first and foremost soldiers and recognized that the business of soldiering includes many essential tasks, most of which do not include fighting. That is not to say that many British officers would not like to "charge the enemy," but there was at least an appreciation of the necessity to develop all of the other soldierly skills, including but not limited to war fighting. The not too subtle implication of the difference between the "warrior ethic" and "soldiering" is that the U.S. warrior is to ready to resort to the use of violence rather than being willing to show restraint even when threatened. This of course is a sweeping generalization but the argument deserves much more investigation because if true it should be taken into account during predeployment training. Not necessarily to change the ethic, but simply to modify it for a different operational environment. If it is not true, then further investigation will help dispel an unhelpful myth. Whether based on fact or a myth, this perception was also shared by most of the Iraqis interviewed, who considered that the U.S. forces "shot first and sometimes asked questions later."[35]

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[35] A direct quote by an Iraqi politician in an interview conducted in January 2006.

Several officers who had served with or alongside American forces in Iraq cited the pursuit of insurgents as an example of the U.S. warrior ethic getting in the way of counterinsurgency operations. They noted that the inclination of U.S. forces when attacked, usually in insurgent hit-and-run operations, was to pursue the enemy until they had been hunted down and killed, even when this meant clearing (often destroying) the homes and businesses of the innocent, as well as the guilty, and even when continuing the firefight placed bystanders at risk. The response to an upsurge in violence also generally elicits a heavy-handed and aggressive military response which helps the enemy by further alienating the local population. Indeed, such responses are expected by the adversary and therefore encouraged so that they can manipulate this overreaction for their own purposes. In contrast, the British approach in Iraq is to carry out only highly selective, intelligence-led strikes; isolate the community providing actual or indirect support; and empower and protect those who refuse to support or harbor the insurgents.

The other factor that many British interviewees believed contributed to the U.S. military's perceived excessive use of firepower was an obsession with force protection. In the view of these officers, the priority assigned to force protection encouraged the attitude that U.S. lives were more important than Iraqis lives and therefore the use of excessive firepower was justified if it avoided U.S. casualties. It also encouraged the attitude that all immediate threats had to be eliminated, even if doing so damaged property or risked wounding or killing bystanders. It was felt that the concept of not shooting a deadly threat in order not to endanger bystanders was not a risk most U.S. personnel were willing or encouraged to take. However, the irony of this perceived U.S. obsession with force protection is that such a strategy quickly alienates the local population, who are then unwilling to support the Coalition and who instead offer their support to the insurgency or at least turn a blind eye to the insurgents' activities. As seen by the British, few U.S. commanders appeared willing to take the early higher losses that would be likely in the short term in order to win back the psychological initiative from the insurgents by taking risks and shooting less.

It is difficult to assess the validity of this argument without empirical evidence. However, the study team did talk extensively with Iraqis during several visits to Baghdad. Most expressed the view as quoted above that Americans shoot first and sometimes ask questions later. This view was held not only by Iraqis but by American contractors, who explained that you don't go near American patrols and you don't travel with the American military because, as one U.S. AID official put it, "Either way you're going to get shot at, if not by the insurgents then by the U.S. military." Again, this perception may be based on the actions of only a minority and may not reflect the behavior of the majority of the force, but the fact that so many allies and locals alike

perceive that the U.S. military is far too quick to resort to deadly force is deeply concerning. This is exactly the perception that our enemies want and would seek to reinforce. It leads to the frustration of friends and the alienation of key target audiences, the very audiences that have to be won over in order to defeat the insurgents and bring stability to Iraq. It is therefore imperative that the U.S. is seen to promote the concept of minimum force and reverse the perception that its own force protection is more important than the lives and property of Iraqis.

The most recent version of the U.S. Army's doctrine for counterinsurgency operations, FMI 3-07.22, has in section 2 the chapter "Command and Control in a Counterinsurgency Environment," section VI of which covers ROE. This is the first dedicated section in the doctrine that discusses limits on the use of force. Not once does it mention the use of minimum force or even minimal force. Instead, the section is largely devoted to an explanation on the development, refinement, and application of ROE. The first paragraph does state that "excessive or indiscriminate use of force is likely to alienate the local populace, thereby increasing support for insurgent forces." The very next sentence, however, states that "insufficient use of force results in in-creased risk to U.S. and multinational forces and perceived weaknesses that can jeopardize the mission by emboldening insurgents and undermining domestic popular support." These statements are fundamentally at odds with each other, and the latter statement indirectly encourages the use of increased force, albeit it under defined circumstances. It is in no way an unequivocal endorsement of the use of minimum force.

This latter sentence also links two fundamentally different issues in order to justify the use of force. Certainly a failure to use sufficient force can on certain occasions embolden an adversary. Unfortunately, this statement and the subsequent paragraphs do not define what the insurgent would define and understand to be insufficient force, which is the only opinion that really matters. If small arms could kill every insurgent with minimal civilian casualties, would the insurgent view their use as insufficient force and a sign of weakness? If other, heavier weapons were used only selectively, would the insurgent view that as a sign of weakness? Insurgents are far more likely to seek to provoke the authorities into a disproportionate response to their attacks in order to gain popular support. They gain far more from this strategy than they would the use "insufficient force." After all, if they were so emboldened, it would be relatively easy to increase the use of force and crush an overconfident adversary. Populations do not normally lose confidence in the authorities because they use insufficient force. They lose confidence when the authorities use too much force. The undermining of domestic American popular support is also far more likely to result from negative perceptions resulting from the use of excessive use of force rather than from insufficient force.

The fact that the admonition to be concerned about the negative effect of "excessive or indiscriminate force" is immediately followed by a statement that "insufficient use of force results in increased risks to U.S. forces" also completely undermines that warning. At a minimum it creates ambiguity about the level of force that should be used and encourages a perception that the protection of U.S. forces can trump the requirement to avoid "alienating the local populace." This force protection bias is unequivocally reinforced at the end of the same paragraph in the final two sentences:

> Achieving the proper balance requires a thorough understanding of the nature and causes of the insurgency, the end-state and the military's role in a counterinsurgency operation. Nevertheless U.S. forces always retain the right to use necessary and proportional force for individual and unit self-defense in response to a hostile act or demonstrated hostile intent.

Of course, the U.S. military must retain the right to defend itself, but this cannot trump the requirement to avoid the use of excessive force as perceived by the local populace and third parties. If it does, it will eventually undermine popular support for U.S. forces, which will likely place U.S. forces at far greater risk in a protracted campaign such as Iraq. Terms such as "necessary and proportional force" are also far too ambiguous and subjective to encourage the adoption of the principle of minimum force, which experience has led the British to believe is vital to avoid "alienating the local populace."

Part of the problem is that what can appear to be "necessary and proportional force" to the U.S. military and public is likely not viewed the same way by the local populace or for that matter allies and interested third parties. In counterinsurgency operations the opinions of the "local populace" are the ones that really matter. This is the audience that authorities are battling the insurgency for. Whoever wins that battle for hearts and minds of this population will ultimately prevail. The insurgency cannot survive if the local populace turns against it, but it cannot be defeated if they do not. If the local populace perceive the U.S. military's use of force to be excessive or indiscriminate, then it is. And if it is so perceived, then this will alienate them and they will provide increased support to the insurgents, placing more U.S. personnel at increasing risk. Protecting oneself early places everyone else at far greater risk later, as the local populace sides increasingly with the insurgents.

U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine does encourage its soldiers to show restraint in the use of force and to follow ROE. Unfortunately, however, it also consistently caveats this requirement, including actively encouraging commanders to "aggressively seek modifications to the ROE if the ROE are inadequate in the light of the mission and

anticipated threat level." When combined with the fact that the U.S. military (a) is still largely organized, trained, and equipped for high-intensity operations; (b) has a warrior ethic that encourages aggressive lethal action; and (c) has an operational posture that emphasizes force protection, planners and combat units will not be incentivized to use as little force as possible in counterinsurgency operations in order to get the job done without alienating the local population. In the field, some units and individuals have learned to show significant restraint. However, this under-standing has not been institutionalized into TTPs, and the danger remains that units deploying to Iraq and elsewhere will continue to use excessive force in combating insurgent activity. The insurgents will do everything in their power to provoke U.S. forces and will have their propaganda assets at the ready to exploit any "collateral damage," or perceived or reported atrocities if the U.S. accepts the bait, which according to most observers all too often it does.

British Consensus: **The organizational culture, warrior ethic, doctrine and TTPs of the U.S. military do not sufficiently emphasize the importance of minimum force in stabilization operations. As a result, many believe that the U.S. military uses excessive force, resulting in unnecessary civilian casualties and the increased alienation of the local populace. In the long term, this alienation will lead to increased U.S. casualties and lengthen the duration of the conflict.**

The Limited Utility of Military Power

The British officers and officials' comments reflected their lack of faith in military power alone to stabilize and reconstruct a war-torn society. This realism was particularly profound among officers of the rank of major and above; most of whom had served in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and Iraq during the last 15 years. Even the few officers who believed that the British Army in Iraq was on occasions too reticent to use deadly force accepted that military power in general and deadly force in particular had only limited utility. Most agreed that deadly force and aggressive action had to be used to reduce the level of insurgent activity to a point where soft power could be employed; but most saw military operations as simply "buying time" so that other solutions could be implemented.[36] If that time was not used to advantage to win over more supporters from among the local population using both hard and soft power, then eventually the military would have to increase the level of deadly force it used, and the stabilization campaign would be undermined, perhaps irrevocably.

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[36] This concept was first articulated to the research team by LTC Owen Walters INT CORPS, a former Chief G2 in Northern Ireland.

U.S. military experts and personnel have sometimes argued that the British experience is irrelevant because southern Iraq is far more benign than, for example, al Anbar province. Of course, the U.S. sector of Iraq is generally more deadly. However, the British have come under numerous attacks since March 2003, necessitating the use of deadly force far more frequently than reported in the U.S. media. Indeed, during the Shia uprising of 2004, one British base came under what has since been described as the most sustained attack on any British base since the Korean War. The British have also faced extremely hostile local populations in certain areas of southern Iraq who have resorted to deadly attacks resulting in the deaths of dozens of British troops. It is worth reviewing one of the most interesting case studies of British Army experience in Iraq, that of the Black Watch, a venerable Scottish Regiment now sadly amalgamated into the Royal Highland Regiment.

The Black Watch served in southern Iraq during the major Shia uprising in the summer of 2004 and was then deployed, albeit briefly, to Baghdad in support of U.S. forces during the second offensive against the insurgents in Fallujah in the late fall of 2004. This unit therefore conducted significant combat operations against both the Shia militia of Muqtada Sadr and against significant numbers of Sunni insurgents in the environs of Baghdad. In the process, it incurred higher casualties than most other British units and encountered the full range of threats typically faced by U.S. units, including suicide bombers, IEDs, regular mortar attacks, and major ambushes. This battalion was certainly not shy in its use of deadly force and was regarded by other British battalions as having had a very "robust" attitude towards the insurgents. However, in interviews with the officers of this battalion, including the commanding officer, and based on regimental records, it is clear that this regiment was acutely aware of the limits of military power and sought at every opportunity to reduce its military posture and return to "non-kinetic operations." Indeed, the commanding officer expressed a certain regret that the battalion had to leave its Baghdad deployment just as he felt that, having had to use substantial force at the outset of its deployment, it was beginning to be able to reduce its force posture and was starting to win support in the local community, particularly in the development of an informant network. The officers of the Black Watch and their colleagues in other battalions therefore had formed their views on the limited utility of military force through firsthand experience, and their comments regarding the U.S. Army's understanding of the utility of military force should therefore be considered in that context.

A consistent theme articulated by interviewees was that the U.S. Army did not seem to understand that it was not fighting an army in Iraq but was instead dealing with a disaffected people. Because they continue to see its adversary on a symmetric level, as a combatant force that could be defeated, many U.S. Army officers still appear to believe that deadly force and combat power can defeat an insurgency. Lavish praise

was heaped on some U.S. Army and Marine Corps officers who did "get it," but the consensus was that the U.S. military did not accept the limited utility of military power against an asymmetric adversary. Many officers commented on the "gung-ho" attitude displayed by senior officers and the rank-and-file alike and on the overly aggressive attitude of individual soldiers, who it was felt were far too inclined to resort to firepower rather than discretion when confronted by a threat. In large part, it was felt that this situation had arisen because the U.S. military does not seem to appreciate that they can only contain an insurgency, not defeat it; that all that could be hoped for was to reduce the level of insurgent activity to a point where the other instruments of power could be deployed effectively. Indeed, several British officers noted that the U.S. officers they had encountered were affronted by such a notion, which was labeled as cowardly and therefore dismissed without reasoned discussion. The constant theme encountered by these officers was that the role of the U.S. military was to "fight and win America's wars"—to close with and destroy the enemy.

It was also noted that the U.S. military often became extremely frustrated when asymmetric adversaries would not obligingly engage in "force on force" confrontations. As a result, they label their opponents as cowardly rather than the shrewd fighters they actually are. Several British officers compared the attitudes of their young soldiers towards the insurgents, which was one of a healthy albeit grudging respect, to that of young American soldiers, who seemed to largely view the "Muj" with derision because of their unwillingness to fight and their lack of soldierly skills. The bravery of someone who would jump out in front of a Bradley with only a rocket-propelled grenade and literally "a prayer" seemed to be lost on many young American soldiers according to British personnel that had served with them. The greatest ongoing concern with regard to this perceived condescending attitude toward the insurgents is that the U.S. military will continue to underestimate an intelligent and deadly adversary they do not respect. Several interviewees noted that after an extended period in country many U.S. personnel did revise their opinions of their adversary and the utility of military power, but once a unit or formation was replaced the incoming unit reverted to the default setting that this enemy was inferior and could be militarily defeated.

Overall, British interviewees concluded that the U.S. military had still not entirely come to terms with the realities and principles of asymmetric combat, including the limited utility of conventional military force. As a result, it was felt that far too many operations were still being conducted simply to kill or arrest insurgents, which because of the collateral damage, including hundreds perhaps thousands of inadvertent civilian deaths, are significantly reducing support for the Coalition and adding supporters to the enemy's ranks.

British Consensus: **The U.S. military still does not fully understand or accept the limited utility of military power to stabilize Iraq or defeat an insurgency. As a result, the main focus of the U.S. effort is still operations designed to kill or arrest insurgents, often using excessive force, which inevitably results in significant civilian casualties, collateral damage, and wrongful detentions.**

2.6   Intelligence-led Operations

In 1979, after ten years of operations in Northern Ireland, a high-level intelligence officer wrote a damning indictment of British Army intelligence failures in that conflict. These intelligence failures, combined with excessive and indiscriminate use of force (often because of the intelligence failures), significantly increased the level of support for the Provisional IRA and swelled the ranks of this terrorist group. The first decade following the British Army intervention in 1969 was characterized by aggressive, often large-scale operations rarely based on adequate intelligence, which alienated most of the Catholic minority of that troubled province—a community that had originally welcomed the British Army as liberators (from Protestant abuse). Cordon-and-search operations; large-scale internment, often of innocent persons; other miscarriages of justice; and the killing of innocent civilians, most famously of 13 people including a priest on Bloody Sunday, reinvigorated the IRA, which had been largely dormant since the early 1960s. British Army failures resulted in a huge upsurge in terrorist recruitment, operations, and lethality. In a province of only 1.5 million, only a third of them Catholic, by 1979, there was an average of over 8,000 terrorist incidents per year compared to less than 100 in 1969, the year of the intervention.

These intelligence failures prompted the British to complete a fundamental reform of the intelligence architecture used in their war against the Provisional IRA. In order to exploit the bow wave of high-quality intelligence that resulted from these reforms and to significantly reduce the use of indiscriminate force, the British also introduced (some would argue reintroduced) the concept of intelligence-led operations. This concept soon became one of the guiding principles of the British approach to counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, and the mantra of intelligence-led operations is as well understood today as it was in the 1980s when it was refined.

The central tenet of this approach is that all operations should be based on reliable intelligence that allows aggressive force to be applied with such fidelity that the chance of collateral damage or the arrest of innocent persons is minimized. Operations would be mounted without reliable intelligence only when the level of threat was so great that it warranted the risk of alienating the local populace and the likely gains significantly outweighed the likely risks. Using this cost/risk analysis, the

British Army sometimes allowed the terrorists to escape rather than risk alienating the local populace. Twenty years of subsequent evidence strongly indicates that this approach eventually led to a significant if gradual increase in support for the authorities that most importantly translated into a bow wave of new intelligence sources that allowed operations to be refined still further, thereby reducing both terrorist capacity and support—a true win-win situation.

It was difficult to get interviewees to talk about British intelligence operations in Iraq, for understandable reasons. The research team was also unable to secure official support for a fact-finding trip to Basra. However, every British officer interviewed who had served in Iraq noted that the principle of intelligence-led operations was still being followed there, despite the fact that Iraq was a far more difficult operating environment than Ireland. Several officers noted that, much to the consternation of other Coalition officers, it was still common for the British not to mount operations against known targets if insufficient intelligence was available to ensure that the innocent were not arrested or worse. While few would discuss the details of this approach, those who had served in Iraq noted that the UK had been able to develop a fairly sophisticated informant network precisely because most operations had been targeted with some fidelity, which had avoided alienating the local populace. A review of media reporting of the British zone suggests that the British have engaged in cordon-and-search operations on a far greater scale than was common in Northern Ireland but it is hard to tell if these operations were based on good intelligence or more speculative in nature.

The British approach to intelligence collection in counterinsurgency operations is underpinned by two key strategies: (1) a significant effort to cultivate human sources, with substantial resources devoted to this task both by national agencies and the British Army; and (2) and the realization that the soldier on the ground is usually the main "collector," being in daily contact with the local populace—a old concept now referred to as the "soldier as a sensor."

Coming up to date, it is known that the British have devoted a significant effort to the cultivation of human sources in southern Iraq, including according to one media report tapping into Saddam Hussein's own HUMINT networks. To undertake this task, a number of "capabilities" (covert intelligence assets) have been deployed and proven techniques utilized that were refined in Northern Ireland. Not much is known from open sources about these operations, but some sources suggest that the effort has enjoyed considerable success. One intelligence officer stated that this was due in no small part to the efforts of the Army to avoid alienating the local populace. When aggressive and violent operations had been mounted that were not perceived as

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justified by the local population, he noted that the numbers and quality of informants significant declined.

With regard to the value of the ordinary soldier as a key intelligence asset, the experience of the Black Watch after it was deployed to the North Babil area southwest of Baghdad along the Latifiyah Canal (Operation Bracken) provides some valuable insights into the British approach to intelligence-led operations. This deployment is the only time that a British unit has operated in a Sunni area and is therefore particularly illuminating.

When the unit's advance party deployed to the area, it discovered there was virtually no intelligence on insurgent operations in the AO and that ground reconnaissance was not being conducted by the Marine Corps unit they were to replace. The commanding officer's (LTC J. M. Cowan OBE) diary published in the Black Watch regimental magazine notes that "having arrived, the Black Watch wrestled with an area in which no detailed ground reconnaissance had been possible and for which no actionable intelligence existed."[37] A significant amount of effort was therefore devoted, once the Battle Group was fully deployed, to intelligence collection, initially entirely through ground reconnaissance in force. This elicited an entirely predictable response from the insurgents, including several suicide car bombings of a type that British units were not used to, resulting in a number of Warrior armored vehicles being damaged and destroyed and soldiers being killed. However, the effort to collect intelligence continued despite a much higher threat level than had been encountered in southern Iraq. The report of the Battle Groups intelligence officer, Captain R. F. Sandford, is illuminating in this regard and is therefore quoted in full:

> Paradoxically, as those with Northern Ireland experience I am sure will vouch, the best intelligence gatherers a battle group has are its own soldiers. Soldiers out patrolling on the ground can often deliver more useful information, more quickly than any high powered asset. This fact is always relied on; of soldiers getting in among the local population, bridging cultural differences and showing friendship. How to maintain that approach then, when it places soldiers in the line of suicide bombers? The armour and barriers that provide protection immediately actually distance the soldiers from the very situations that could provide the leads to tackle the threat. The answer, in part, was provided by the attitude of the Jocks [soldiers], who faced up to the sad events [suicide attacks] of the first week in Dogwood [British codename for their AO], stuck to their task and continued to reach out to the locals. By the end, their resolute work was starting to produce the information that enabled the battle group to mount intelligence-led operations against our implacable enemy. Had we conducted a full tour in North Babil, I am sure we would have amassed enough information about our surrounds to cultivate

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[37] *The Red Hackle,* no. 051, May 2005, p. 31.

the intelligence that crucially was absent when we first arrived. As it was we were able to pass over a great deal of good work to our American allies by the time we left.[38]

The British Army has long trained and empowered its soldiers as primary collectors in counterinsurgency operations, and it is refreshing to see the U.S. Army recently adopt the same with its "Every Soldier a Sensor" program.

In summary, after more than three years of operations in southern Iraq, the British Army does appear to have at least managed to not alienate the majority of local Shia population, other than when it has used aggressive force—for example, the forcible rescue from a Shia jail of two arrested British undercover operatives. Of course, the Shia population in southern Iraq was more favorably inclined to the Coalition at the outset of OIF than were the Sunni farther north. However, so was the Catholic population in Northern Ireland when the British Army arrived in the late summer of 1969, yet by 1972 the British Army had succeeded in alienating the majority of even moderate Catholics. The fact that the British Army has largely avoided alienating the Shia population even after three years of occupation does suggest that at least in part, the principles of intelligence-led operations combined with the use of only minimum force has been successfully applied.

The British perspective on U.S. operations is that, by and large, too many are mounted with insufficient intelligence. As a result, the local populace is severely disrupted, property damaged, and innocents detained, thereby providing countless propaganda coups to the insurgents. One senior British officer who had served in U.S. Headquarters noted what he had observed to be a vicious circle. Insufficient intelligence directly resulting from a disharmonious relationship with the local population encouraged the planning and execution of largely random cordon-and-search operations, executed aggressively, that targeted or at least affected many more innocent persons than the guilty. This further alienated an already disaffected community, which reduced the supply of actionable intelligence, thereby perpetuating a cycle the insurgents did all they could to encourage.

Other officers with some experience of working with U.S. units noted that the main focus of these units was not intelligence collection through extensive ground reconnaissance and the provision of security and protection of the local population, but kinetic operations intended to kill and capture insurgents, which seemed to be an obsession of many commanders. As a result, large numbers of individuals were arrested, many of whom had little or no direct involvement in the insurgency. Another officer noted that it seemed anathema to many Americans to let someone go

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[38] Ibid., p. 52.

just in case he was an insurgent. Yet this approach clearly alienated many local people, thereby reducing the numbers of informants. A number of British journalists who had visited Basra noted that they had observed some British units behaving in a similar manner. However, this British hypocrisy notwithstanding, it is concerning that a significant number of U.S. and UK observers commented on the failure of many U.S. units to undertake intelligence-led operations, relying instead on inadequate or absent intelligence to coordinate large-scale random cordon, sweep-and-search operations.

Several British officers with direct experience of serving with U.S. units or observing U.S. operations noted that the U.S. military faces a terrible conundrum. Phase IV shortcomings have created a situation where U.S. Army and Marine Corps units are under constant threat primarily from IEDs and suicide bombers. This has forced units to adopt a highly defensive force posture that has significantly distanced them from the local populace. As a result, far fewer U.S. military personnel are now engaging in the type of face-to-face encounters that generate enormous quantifies of useful low grade intelligence and which was much more common in the first year of the occupation. Such encounters can also be a primary source of leads for the development of human sources. As this distance grows, obviously actively encouraged by the insurgents, the reliance on less well targeted cordon, sweep and search operations increases and with it, the likely further alienation of the local population. Indeed, a number of Iraqis interviewed commented that meetings with Americans had declined significantly since the fall of 2004 and what encounters there were usually hostile, across a physical barrier or from a considerable distance. The conundrum therefore is how to allow military units to engage with the local population and remain protected. The reality is that this can only occur if significant risks are taken and increased casualties accepted in the short term in order to kick start the intelligence cycle which will increase force protection in the long term.

With respect to the overall intelligence effort, a number of British officials and some more senior British officers expressed grave concern that senior U.S. commanders and leaders often did not seem to appreciate that there was more than one conflict going on in Iraq and most certainly the important conflict was not the one with the "foreign fighters" and Islamists. Coalition briefings seemed to consider the insurgency an amorphous mass, with reports on successes talking about the total numbers of insurgents killed or arrested without any reference to the numbers from each insurgent group—a statistic that would give a far better sense of the progress being achieved against the different entities. The main focus was on the war against Al Qaeda and the "foreign fighters," when the real war was with the numerous domestic factions who were fighting for a multiplicity of reasons. Intelligence briefings also lacked granularity, failing to identify and detail the various groups, factions and militias; their motivations; their individual modus operandi and their respective

support bases. In some cases it appeared that senior Coalition commanders favored intelligence that supported their perspective of the situation over intelligence that suggested things were getting worse. (One recalls Winston Churchill's reminder that "No matter how involved a commander may become in the elaboration of his own thoughts, it is sometimes necessary to take the enemy into account.") The intelligence picture presented to commanders also focused on what the enemy had been doing rather than on what effects their operations were intended to or had achieved.

It also appeared that until the early summer of 2006, many senior U.S. senior officers and officials had little comprehension of the devastating effect on Iraqis of what Washington now calls "sectarian violence" and most others call a civil war. British officers were particular concerned that both the U.S. and UK governments were focusing on the insurgency, primarily the Islamist insurgency, while ignoring the growth of the militias which are now filling the security vacuum for many Iraqis. Insufficient intelligence was being collected or exploited detailing the extent of the growth and influence of these powerful entities, whose tentacles reached into the highest levels of the Iraqi government. In this respect the British government is particularly guilty because it appears to have ignored its own core principles of counterinsurgency and empowered, without checks and balances, local power groups in the Basra area who are now vying with each other to control the region.

The greatest British concern, shared by the research team, was that the U.S. military is increasingly conducting operations for which it had failed to collect sufficient intelligence—from human sources, from regular patrolling, and from face-to-face encounters with the local population. If this continues, many were concerned that a tipping point might be reached whereby the majority of the local populace would switch their alliance permanently to violent entities seeking to displace the Iraqi government and drive out the Coalition. Significant risks need to be taken and military lives lost in order to reengage with the Iraqi people; reinvigorate the intelligence process; and use the resulting intelligence to plan and execute effective operations.

> **British Consensus:** The U.S. military has not fully adopted the principle that operations should whenever possible be intelligence-led. As a result there has been an increasing reliance on cordon, sweep-and-search operations which have often alienated the local populace. The U.S. military in general still does not fully understand the nature of the asymmetric adversaries they are encountering nor the complexity of this type of conflict and therefore still overly focus on killing or arresting insurgents.

2.7   Organizational Culture

As previously mentioned, the British Army's organizational culture appears to be optimized to engage in S&R and to conduct and win counterinsurgency operations. The U.S. military, on the other hand, is still primarily trained, organized, and equipped to fight and win America's wars—that is, large-scale, relatively conventional wars. The British certainly fielded a competent conventional force capable of fighting alongside the U.S. in the invasion of Iraq, but pulling together and preparing this force to operate in Iraq stretched British capabilities and capacity to the limit. However, while the U.S. military was optimally configured to muster, deploy, and attack Iraq in an unprecedented short timeframe, the British Army despite some setbacks was far better prepared to more rapidly transition to stabilization operations. Exceptions include the 101st Airborne Division and the 1st Cavalry Division, but some have noted that this success owed more to the inspired leadership of outstanding officers such as Major Generals Petraeus and Chiarelli and the independence they had by default (before the establishment of large conventional civilian and military headquarters) than to organizational culture or training and education. In fact, most British observers have noted that the U.S. military in general has struggled to come to terms with the realities of unconventional asymmetric warfare.

This struggle was observed firsthand by a member of the research team during the presentation of lectures to commanders and staffs preparing to deploy to Iraq. Many of the personnel in these headquarters were about to commence their second and even third tours in Iraq. All are highly experienced and a significant minority understood and accepted most of the principles of counterinsurgency outlined above. Yet the brigades and divisions they have been posted to Iraq are still culturally and practically optimized for conventional warfare. Even after extensive predeployment training, the dominant organizational culture and conventional mindset prevails.

Once these staffs reach Iraq and begin as an entity to face an asymmetric adversary, attitudes change but the evidence to date suggests that this change is not yet cascading through the rest of the Army and Marine Corps. There may be a number of reasons for this; two are articulated here. First, a minority of officers and soldiers return from Iraq still not having accepted many of the principles outlined above, especially the concept of minimum force. Second, this is currently a captains' and corporals' war and relatively few flag-ranked officers have served in combat leadership roles in this type of warfare. One wonders if by the time sufficient numbers of highly experienced unconventional "converts" at the major and colonel level reach flag rank, the lessons will have been forgotten or overtaken and the overall mindset of the military will remain largely conventional. It is also possible that anything less that an outright

victory in Iraq may encourage a reversion to a conventional warfare approach, much as it did after the Vietnam War.

> ***British Consensus:*** **Despite three years of asymmetric combat in Iraq, the U.S. military still retains a largely conventional organizational culture which severely inhibits its ability to defeat an insurgent adversary.**

Adaptation and Innovation

A number of British Army officers noted that the U.S. Army has limited the level of instinctive and innovative behavior it encourages in its junior officers and NCOs in order to create a formidable conventional warfighting machine. Not one considered that any of the U.S. colleagues they had met weren't capable of the same degree of adaptation and innovation as the average British officer of similar rank. It was simply that the system seemed to actively discourage such adaptation. As a result, few ever attempted to think too far out of the box even when the situation demanded it. More senior British observers did, however, envy the U.S. military when it came to the execution of brigade and divisional-level operations. They commented that the more regimented nature of the U.S. approach ensured that U.S. units executed operations far more quickly and effectively than equivalent British formations with just the right amount of adaptation and innovation needed in those circumstances but not so much that it disrupted operational tempo. However, those same observers noted that this successful approach to conventional warfare undermines the U.S. military's ability to fight an insurgency.

The type of asymmetric conflict being encountered in Iraq and Afghanistan places a premium on small-unit actions, with most engagements taking place at the squad and platoon level. Indeed, as one experienced officer put it, if engagements against an asymmetric adversary take place at the battalion/battle group level or above, then the authorities have probably lost control of the situation. This places a huge amount of responsibility on the shoulders of the most junior personnel, who must react instinctively to hugely complex and volatile situations. The ability to do so comes as much from an organizational culture that can tolerate and even encourage significant independence from junior personnel, as it does from education, training and experience. Most British officers commented that junior commanders in the U.S. military were insufficiently prepared for such levels of responsibility and even after deployment were insufficiently empowered to take command decisions that could have profound consequences. One British battalion commander noted that the U.S. brigade commander under whom he served did not appear to have the same degree of autonomy that he delegated to his company commanders.

We noted that a considerable number of young American officers and SNCOs were demonstrating that they were both adaptive and innovative leaders. However, this was largely due to the inspiring and progressive leadership provided by a new generation of more senior commanders who were empowering their subordinates rather than the Army itself changing its culture and approach. This may yet come, but only the first signs have been seen so far.

> *British Consensus:* **The U.S. military retains a conventional "big army" mindset and organizational culture, and this limits the freedom of command of more junior officers and stifles the type of low-level adaptation and innovation needed to defeat an asymmetric adversary**

Tolerance of Error

The British officers noted their general perception that the U.S. military had a very low tolerance for error, and a number expressed concern that the British Army was beginning to become less tolerant of error also, something they attributed to political pressure, the strictures of European Human Rights Law, and political correctness rather than a change in organizational culture.

The U.S. officers interviewed still considered that the Army and the Marine Corps to be organized along peacetime lines and that intolerance of error was still common. One senior officer pointed out that a successful counterinsurgency campaign was a series of tactical failures leading to a strategic success. However, the U.S. military still made it hard for an officer's career to survive an error of judgment or a failed operation. The performance of the U.S. Army in Africa during the early days of the U.S. involvement in World War II was cited by several experts as an example of how learning from mistakes enabled the U.S. Army to create a force capable of invading occupied Europe and defeating the Germans. Few believed that the officers who made those mistakes in Africa and who went on to become highly successful leaders in the Mainland European campaign would have survived those early setbacks in today's military.

This is troubling, because a key to success in S&R and counterinsurgency operations is the willingness to take risks, to out-adapt a highly adaptive adversary, and to try innovative solutions. An army that is intolerant of error will discourage its leaders from taking risks, and this will hand the initiative to the adversary. It also discourages officers from admitting mistakes or that someone else has failed, which means that shortcomings may not be addressed until it is too late and inadequate leaders are allowed to remain in their posts for too long. It also means that successful strategies and tactics will be persisted with long after they should have been changed. That is

important, because the asymmetric adversary quickly learns how to counter successful approaches and can easily turn such operations to their own advantage for example by ambushing a complacent unit.

The British believe that to encourage a climate favorable to innovation one must accept some errors and even occasional failure on the part of officers, even on operations. A zero-defect culture discourages innovation and conversely encourages conformity, which is a major weakness in counterinsurgency operations.

British Consensus: **Because it remains essentially a peacetime organization, the U.S. military continues to demonstrate, at least to external observers, a zero-defect culture that limits adaptation and innovation and punishes mistakes. Given that in asymmetric conflict, trial and error is one primary tool of learning, this is particularly unfortunate, as it limits the willingness of officers to take risks and encourages the type of conformity that is so often exploited by insurgents to deadly effect.**

Decentralized Command and Control

Those of the British officers interviewed who had served with U.S. units felt that the U.S. C2 process was far too rigid. These officers felt that far too many decisions were taken at too high a level, usually one where tactical appreciation is limited, compared to those closer to an unfolding situation. These officers were also astonished at the types of decisions being taken by fairly senior officers—decisions that might be taken by a platoon commander or even a senior NCO in the British Army. For example, tactical information operation and PsyOp products require three-star and higher approval. While in some units commanders devolved significant authority to fairly junior subordinates, in many others there was little delegation of real command authority below company level and often even below brigade level.

Those officers with firsthand knowledge of the U.S. military also felt that the quality of American junior officers and NCOs was generally excellent but that the education and training system did not adequately prepare them to make significant albeit tactical decisions and the C2 system rarely provided them with the opportunity to learn. This can and did change in the field under forward thinking and leaning commanders but was not a policy that had been implemented Army wide. In S&R and counter-insurgency operations, devolved C2 is considered essential to defeat an asymmetric adversary who does not allow an intervention force the time to consult the chain of command and can easily get inside the decision/action cycle of a force which has a too rigid C2 structure. A decentralized structure empowers junior commanders to

make key decisions, understanding the commander's intent. This is the very essence of the principle of mission command.

> ***British Consensus*: The U.S. military had a somewhat rigid command and control process with only limited command authority being delegated to commanders below the rank of LTC. This can seriously affect the operational effectiveness of those units and subunits most likely to engage an asymmetric adversary or engage with the local populace.**

Lack of Regimental System

While no officer specifically advocated U.S. adoption of the regimental system, a number did note that that system had served the British Army well in Iraq. The level of experience that was retained within a typical regiment or battalion ensured that a corporate knowledge-base was maintained of all the lessons learned in earlier deployments to Iraq, the Balkans, and Northern Ireland. For regiments and battalions deploying to Iraq for a second tour, as much as 70 percent of personnel had previous shared Iraq experience, because most soldiers and officers stay within the regiment for most of their careers. This is invaluable. Some have argued that dispersing experienced troops around the force raises the competency of all units. However, this is only true if the overarching organizational culture of the receiving formations embraces the new skills and experience these personnel bring. If that culture favors conventional over unconventional warfare, then the presence of 10–30 percent of personnel with asymmetric combat experience will be less effective than retaining all of that knowledge and experience within the same regiment/battalion or formation.

> ***British Consensus*: The dispersal of asymmetric combat veterans around numerous units may not have the desired effect if the overall organizational culture remains conventionally oriented.**

Professional Bureaucrats

A number of British officials and officers commented on the paucity of experienced professional civil servants within key U.S. headquarters and the U.S. embassy in Iraq, especially at the more senior level. Many junior civilian officials were extremely young and inexperienced and only spent a relatively short period of time in-country before rotating out. The age of many of these officials was considered to be a particular hindrance when dealing with Iraqis leaders. The short duration of civilian tours was also a disadvantage, making it difficult to develop any knowledge of the situation in Iraq or a rapport with Iraqi officials. (In contrast, the U.S. military typically remains in Iraq for a year or more.) At the most senior level, many officials were political

appointees, often with no experience of running a government, of military operations, or of a diplomatic mission. This was considered to be a significant weakness that severely hindered the effectiveness of the U.S. civilian administration in Iraq. Conversely, one senior British officer noted that many of the U.S. experts brought in to run key industries and utilities were drawn from relevant professions and industries, which was a significant strength, as career civil servants would have little idea of how to run an efficient commercial entity or keep the lights on in Baghdad.

In order to execute a successful S&R operation, one needs a cadre of highly experienced professional bureaucrats and diplomats who are capable of setting up and running a government and eventually shadowing their indigenous counterparts. A pool of business and industry professionals is also needed to help reestablish essential services and revitalize and reconstruct a shattered economy. What are not needed are junior and inexperienced staff and political appointees on short rotations who are simply looking to check a career box.

> ***British Consensus:*** **S&R requires experienced professionals willing to make a significant personal commitment and take often considerable personal risks. Unfortunately, many of the U.S. civilian personnel deployed to Iraq are too junior, lack the necessary skills and experience and are rotated out of country far too quickly.**

Continuity

One notices when comparing operations in Iraq to past successful campaigns in places like Malaya and even Northern Ireland that there was far greater continuity and stability in key posts than we have seen in Iraq. U.S. forces rotate entire headquarters, up to and including corps level, within a matter of weeks, and replace the commander and most of his staff in one fell swoop. Entire divisions are rotated out in one go and replaced by a new division rotating out of the United States or Germany. Some formations, especially from the National Guard, are assembled especially for operations in Iraq and are then disassembled on their return. Very few tours of duty are for more than one year and in the case of civilians, this can be for less than six months. The British are no better: their units only serve a six-month tour in Iraq. The only advantage they have is that the British Army is so small and is based on the regimental system, so a battalion will typically return to Iraq within two years, and more than 60 percent of personnel will have served there on the previous rotation.

In contrast, in many earlier campaigns, a significant number of personnel would remain in theater for much longer periods, in some cases for many years. This provided a level of continuity that is lacking in Iraq. Such continuity is most important

in dealing with the local populace, permitting the development of long-term and successful relationships with local leaders and populations that can take months and even years to cultivate. Given the challenges being faced in Iraq, some continuity must be introduced. For starters, one might look to fill key posts with volunteers who would be willing to serve for two or more years in return for an improved salary and an increased leave allocation. One could also exploit an old colonial model of selecting emerging leaders from the local populace and the émigré community, sending them to train and be indoctrinated abroad, prior to permanently deploying them back to a theatre as representatives of the intervention force. Whatever solution is adopted, continuity is vital in such operations.

British Consensus: **Operations in Iraq, particularly the development and maintenance of long-term relationships with the local peoples, are encumbered by the lack of continuity in both the military and civilian spheres.**

Part 3. Policy Recommendations

Revised policies, strategy doctrine, and TTPs need to be developed to ensure that (i) the Coalition and Iraqi government prevail in the conflict and (ii) the United States develops a revised approach to S&R operations that can be successfully applied in the inevitable next such operation.

3.1   Realistic Objective

In future S&R operations, the U.S. government should develop a pragmatic and realistic plan and determine an achievable end-state, based on a detailed understanding of the country that is to be stabilized and rebuilt. This understanding must cover every aspect of the society to be changed to include the political, economic, ethnic, social/ cultural, religious, and security dimensions. This plan cannot be based on the desires/ demands/assessments of émigrés and opposition spokespersons. Nor can it be based on idealism, ideology, or Western concepts of a mature liberal democracy. Instead, the plan and end-state need to recognize among other things the history and structure of the society being rebuilt; the country's economy and infrastructure, the likely willingness of all key segments of the population to accept change, and the likely endurance of the U.S. population for a costly and lengthy commitment.

There will doubtless be dark days and setbacks that will undermine public confidence. The domestic audience must therefore be convinced from the outset of the legitimacy of the intervention and have confidence in the efficacy, desirability, and achievability of the S&R plan and end-state. The government needs to be prepared to undertake a comprehensive strategic communications campaign that explains the plan and pre-pares the public for the trials and tribulations to come. This campaign needs to continue throughout the operation in order to retain the support of the domestic audience for what will likely be a protracted and costly endeavor. If the public cannot be so persuaded either to support engagement from the outset or their continued supported is not assured then such an operation should probably not be contemplated in the first place.

A significant diplomatic effort and public diplomacy campaign will also be needed to win over the international community, whose support will probably be needed on some level. Even if much of the international community is unwilling to support an intervention, as was the case in Iraq, an effort should still be made to develop a plan and end-state that most reasonable members of the international community can accept. Any appearance of an ideologically driven end-state will reduce the chances of

securing international consensus and support for either the intervention or the subsequent S&R effort.

The overarching plan and end-state will also need to be sold to the local populace once an operation moves to Phase IV. It must take into account the society's complexities and the demands and expectations of key constituents. The strategic communications campaign needed to do this cannot focus on abstract concepts such as democracy and freedom or set unrealistic expectations, but must deal directly with contentious issues and bad news.

The end-state should be realistic enough that it does not have to change as events unfold, although the timeline for achieving this end-state is likely to change due to unforeseen circumstances. However, the plan developed to achieve that end-state is as the military like to say "unlikely to survive the first contact" and must therefore be flexible and adaptable. This requires the intervening force to effectively track and understand the situation unfolding on the ground and to respond to events promptly.

Legitimacy of the Intervening Force

The justifications put forward for the invasion of Iraq are outside the scope of this study. In general, it goes without saying that in order to secure legitimacy for an intervening force, the justification for an invasion should be self-evident to the majority of the invader's domestic population, the international community, and the society being stabilized and reconstructed.

The failure to find any WMD in Iraq clearly undermined domestic and international support for the war but probably did not significantly affect the Iraqi population. The Shia simply wanted their freedom from Saddam and probably did not care about the justifications for the invasion. The Kurds also wanted Saddam gone so they could consolidate their autonomy; they would therefore have accepted an invasion for almost any reason. The Sunnis would have opposed the invasion even if WMD had been found or any other justification used. What undermined the Coalition's legitimacy with the Shia community was its failure to protect them, to improve their personal circumstances, to adequately address their grievances and issues, and what was seen as the excessive use of force. The majority of the Sunni were never likely to have accepted the Coalition's legitimacy, but the Coalition's perceived excessive use of force trying to combat the largely Sunni insurgency has not made things any better. The failure to include traditional Sunni leaders at the outset was also a critical error.

The obvious recommendation is that the first priority in Phase IV of any operation is to bring stability to a community without unduly alienating the local populace in the

process. As stated previously, this necessitates a large, culturally attuned follow-on force capable of controlling the population and denying operating space to the insurgents, while using minimum force and taking greater risks in order to minimize collateral damage. It is also essential to align operations with the actual needs of the community, to communicate effectively and often with the local population, and to counter enemy propaganda.

Legitimacy of the Supported Government

The local populace has to have confidence in their own government, which must be seen as legitimate by key ethnic and political groupings. In an ethnically divided country, legitimacy is not determined simply by majority acceptance. A government dominated by the majority ethnic group, for example, will quite probably be viewed as illegitimate by minority group(s) leading to rejection and possibly violent opposition. This is certainly the case in Iraq today.

When undertaking future S&R operations, the United States must develop a truly multiethnic solution that will likely have to offer disproportionate influence to minority groups in order to secure their acceptance of the legitimacy of the new form of governance. This probably necessitates a certain degree of coercive diplomacy to persuade the majority ethnic group to accept far less than total control but is attainable in return for stability and prosperity. This would follow the successful pattern of the U.S.-brokered 1997 Good Friday Peace Accord that successfully ended the conflict in Northern Ireland. The majority Protestants were forced to make significant concessions to the Catholics, but in the end they were willing to do so, despite deep-seated hatred, in return for the eventual disbanding and disarming of the Provisional IRA.

The form of governance and democracy introduced by the Coalition in Iraq created as many problems as it solved, primarily because it did not take adequate account of centuries-old ethnic and ideological divisions or of the traditional leadership system that had endured even in the face of Saddam Hussein's oppression. Critical issues include ethnic divisions, Iraq's tribal structure, Islamic law, the influence of religious leaders, the client-patron relationship between traditional leaders and their followers; and the legacy of decades of dictatorship, and a command economy. All of these issues have to be taken into account when developing a new form of representative governance. In the future, the United States should investigate the political, ethnic, religious, economic, and other societal factors that must be understood before a plan for government reform and democratization is developed.

A society with traditional leadership structures, little or no history of democracy or representative governance, significant ethnic and ideological divisions, and/or a legacy of years of corruption and repression is unlikely to be able to create and sustain a Western-style liberal democracy in a matter of a few months or even a couple of years. Nor is it likely that the early return of full sovereignty will be in the best interests of the majority of that society. The transfer of sovereignty should therefore be phased over time and only after certain key benchmarks of public accountability, integrity, honesty, and impartiality have been achieved. The setting of these benchmarks and the review thereof almost certainly needs to be undertaken by impartial international observers in order to ensure that legitimacy is accepted both by the local populace and the international community.

Again, if an S&R operation is planned for a society as divided as Iraq, the United States should seriously consider developing a plan for representative governance from the bottom up rather than top down: beginning locally, not nationally. It would almost certainly be far easier to develop and imbed the democratic process and establish effective, accountable institutions at the local and regional level first. If stability can be achieved in each region and insurgencies stifled there, then the much more contentious issue of a national government can be resolved over time, without the overwhelming pressure of an insurgency and ethnic and religious conflict undermining efforts to achieve national reconciliation. By focusing at the regional level first, it is also much easier to coopt traditional leadership structures such as the tribal system in order to achieve stability. In an unstable post-Gulf War I Iraq, even Saddam Hussein was forced to work with the tribal leaders in order to maintain control, despite having spent decades trying to usurp their traditional authority. During the stabilization phase of any nation-rebuilding operation experience suggests that the best approach is to think strategically but act locally.

3.2   Patience

Postconflict S&R operations are enormously complex undertakings that will generally take many years to complete. They require endurance and patience on the part of the intervention force and a willingness to pay a high price in blood and treasure. This truly is a "long war," and the intervention force must be willing and able to outlast all of those parties who would oppose it. Therefore, if the U.S. or any other country does not have the patience and endurance needed for such a protracted, costly, and dangerous endeavor, then it should not commence the operation in the first place. To do so and then "cut and run" risks making the situation worse after withdrawal than if nothing had been done at all.

3.3   Winning the Support of the People

If an operation like OIF is considered again, it is crucial that during the preplanning phase the U.S. government develop an intimate understanding of the society that U.S. forces will soon occupy. This understanding should then inform the planning for the conduct of the war as well as the postwar occupation and shape the policies that would be implemented after regime change.

A pragmatic and objective assessment needs to be made of the state of the country or community that will be occupied in order to determine the scale of the task being taken on. A realistic assessment of the level of likely resistance is also needed.

Once an operation has begun, the conduct of the war must set the conditions for the subsequent peace. Operational planning must therefore take due account of the likely impact of these operations on the local populace, which will determine in large part their postwar support for the intervention force. Once Phase IV of the operation commences, the military must provide basic security for the local populace, restore essential services, and control the population to ensure that the post-regime change period of instability is kept to a minimum. This will require the deployment of a substantial follow-on force.

The formations that will execute Phase III have to be trained for peace enforcement as well as warfighting tasks. A plan must be developed to facilitate the co-opting of as much of the existing infrastructure of the occupied state as possible, in order to maintain law and order and to provide essential services. This requires a pragmatic assessment of the loyalty of former regime officials at all levels, particularly in the police, intelligence, and military. A through purge of former regime loyalists and war criminals can occur once stability has been restored.

The intervention force also needs to adequately prepare to interact with a foreign culture in order to avoid alienating the local populace. The intervention force must be prepared to take risks and not make force protection its highest priority. It must avoid a disproportionate response to the inevitable resistance and violence that will follow the removal of a regime. If all of these measures are followed, it should be possible to avoid most of the mistakes made in Iraq and to retain the support of much of the local populace and, at a minimum, the willingness of more hostile communities to consider nonviolent ways of addressing their grievances.

Information/Communications Campaigns

All personnel must be constantly reminded that every word and deed of every soldier and civilian deployed on a postconflict S&R operation will have an effect, positive or negative, on the attitudes of the local populace. Nothing should be done without taking full account of the direct and indirect effects of that action. The most influential messengers in this type of operation are the troops themselves. One stray round, one inappropriate gesture, one perceived slight can undermine months of concerted effort to change the attitudes of the local populace. To instill this level of understanding, officer and soldier education and training must include a significant focus on the role of each in the battle for the hearts and minds of the key target audiences.

In Iraq, the Coalition's information operations have also been inadequate to the task of winning the war of ideas with the insurgents and extremists. This includes being unable to adequately explain Coalition actions, promote Coalition and Iraqi government objectives, set expectations, and counter adversary propaganda. The reasons for this include insufficient resources, an inadequate skill base, competing and uncoordinated capabilities (the conflict between the Info Ops and Public Affairs communities is legend), insufficient knowledge of Iraqi culture and society, and the deployment of abstract concepts such as democracy and freedom which have little resonance with a local populace who care far more about simply making it home safe at night. A comprehensive review should be undertaken to design the right mix of capabilities needed to win a war of ideas.

Serious consideration should be given to the creation of a national-level Director for Strategic Communication, possibly serving on the National Security Council, who would be responsible for creating and promulgating a national information strategy and ensuring that all departmental strategies are mutually supporting. Consideration should also be given to the creation of an Office of Strategic Communications in each relevant department, within each combatant command and possibly even within major deployed headquarters. This office would be responsible for the coordination of the communications and information/influence campaigns of all subordinate formations and units.

It is recommended that the Public Affairs officers and the Information Operations staffs with in the DoD at each level of command should be subordinated to this new office to ensure that both professions cooperate with each other and that the capabilities of both are orchestrated to best effect. The Public Affairs profession is encouraged to accept that they too have a key role in influencing and not just informing key target audiences in support of the mission.

The Information Operations discipline should be reorganized, with military deception, computer network operations, information assurance and electronic warfare decoupled from PsyOp. This change recognizes that by default, Info Ops in Iraq has become a combination of strategic communications and PsyOp. Little is gained by the inclusion of these other important but largely unconnected capabilities. Indeed, the inclusion of deception is counterproductive, as it reinforces the perception that PsyOp is propaganda. A new discipline should therefore be created that includes tactical, operational, and strategic communications and PsyOp. The most obvious name for this capability would be Influence Operations. Using the term strategic communications is inappropriate because of the tactical nature of many influence operations.

Finally, the new national Director of Strategic Communications, or another national entity, should lead a concerted campaign to educate and inform policymakers, politicians, and the public of the necessity to engage in a war of ideas with our adversaries in order to win the hearts and minds of key audiences.

Cultural Awareness

An intervening force must intimately understand the culture of the society with which it will engage. Experience in Iraq strongly suggests that the U.S. military, contractors, and to a lesser extent civilian officials lack the level of cultural awareness needed to successfully execute S&R operations. The U.S. needs to develop a comprehensive cultural awareness program to provide staff at all levels with the sensitivity and understanding they will need in the field. This program should comprise three key components.

First, it is crucial to develop and maintain integrated, comprehensive cultural surveys or as they are now described, Human Terrain Maps. Such maps need to be developed in advance for all the societies that the U.S. is most likely to have to engage with over the next five to ten years. These maps need to be developed by experts with social science and other relevant backgrounds—cultural anthropologists, psychologists, historians, economists, theologians, political scientists, area specialists, linguists, diplomats, infrastructure experts etc.—working in conjunction with in-country or near-country (neighboring countries/communities that share similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds) experts. These maps should include overlays covering all key dimensions of a society to include the political, economic, religious, and social. The skills, techniques and experience gained by these teams will enable them to quickly build new human terrain maps for unexpected contingencies. These surveys should be combined wherever possible with attitudinal surveys (polling, focus groups, structured

interviews) in order to determine current attitudes and opinions. This comprehensive database of cultural knowledge, which should drill down to at least the regional and ideally the town/village level, to include, if applicable, tribes, clans and even extend influential families, will enable policymakers, planners, and operators to better understand the communities with whom they are likely to engage which will ensure that they are far more likely to secure their operational objectives.

Utilizing this cultural knowledge base, a comprehensive training and education program can be designed for all personnel, both military and civilian. In peacetime, this program should be designed to prepare all personnel to interact effectively with alien cultures and to increase their comfort level when dealing with foreign cultures. During predeployment this program would be intensified and focused on the target society. This should include not only training about the culture itself, down to the village level for the area that a unit or individual will operate in, but also training on how to operate within this society and how to engage directly and effectively with the local populace. Such training should include not just classroom sessions but also the development and use of interactive computer-based programs that allow students to interact directly with both real and simulated cultures. The cultural dimension should also be incorporated into all other predeployment training, as it will affect all aspects of an S&R operation. This education and training will not prepare soldiers for every eventuality but it will at least encourage them to think about the relevance of culture in their actions.

Training and education should be specifically tailored for personnel at all levels. For commanders, for example, it should provide an understanding of the traditional leadership system in their AO. For commanders and planning staffs, it would include understanding how each type of operation will impact on a community, including what TTPs can be applied when and where. For line units, it would include how to engage with a local community or individual in a productive manner. It also needs to continue in theatre for deployed units, adapted to meet operational requirements or if ongoing attitudinal surveying and other intelligence show that new approaches are required.

The third component of this program should be cultural immersion. The much maligned Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program is an excellent example of effective cultural immersion. Almost all officers who have served as FAOs have demonstrated far greater sensitivity on operations in Iraq than those who have not. This program should therefore be significantly expanded and fully supported by the military. Indeed, involvement in this program should become a career-enhancing deployment in order to encourage the best and brightest to volunteer.

Additionally, in predeployment training and in theatre, personnel at all levels require cultural immersion in a benign setting, so that they can develop the confidence to engage effectively with the local populace. Some progress has been made in predeployment training, with the inclusion of role players who share an ethnically similar background to Iraqis. In some exercises, however, this is not nearly enough to properly prepare personnel for the challenges they will face once they deploy. Consideration should therefore be given to the development of dedicated cultural immersion centers (in the U.S. and in-theatre) where selected personnel can be fully immersed in a culture.

This three-pronged approach to developing cultural understanding and awareness should overcome most of the problems encountered in Iraq and mitigate the negative consequences of the cultural ignorance of many personnel.

Involvement of the Local Population

To reiterate, representatives of the local population must be involved from the beginning of the predeployment planning process, including in developing an S&R plan and in determining the desired end-state. A failure to do so runs the risk of rejection by at least a minority of the local populace. Every effort should be made to understand the local populace as intimately as possible prior to and during the planning process. The creation of Human Terrain Maps will help significantly in this regard and should be the basis for all planning and policy development. Polling of the population or at least ethnically similar communities will also help. Seeking the advice of members of a society living abroad has some value; however, their opinions should be treated with caution. Many émigrés have lived outside of their society for an extended period and their perspectives will have been colored by their experiences both at home and since emigrating. Opposition members will also have a political agenda that will significantly skew their counsel and must therefore be balanced with all other perspectives. The advice and observations of émigrés should therefore be validated from other sources.

Most S&R operations share similar characteristics in critical areas, and the body of past experience should be tapped into as well.

This integrated approach to understanding a society will help to ensure that policy and planning is tempered by the realities of the situation that will be encountered in Phase IV and which must be taken into careful consideration in Phases I–III of any operation.

In Phase IV of an operation and particularly at the outset, this process of local involvement must be continued to ensure that all operations are developed following a careful appraisal of the human terrain. All units deployed for Phase III of an operation should be reinforced with sufficient trained personnel to form dedicated Community Engagement Teams (CETs). The CETs would seek out and establish immediate dialogue with local leaders and communities in order to build rapport, determine community needs, and collect intelligence. These teams will need local language skills or excellent translators and an intimate understanding of the local culture. They also need to be expert negotiators, so that they can engage directly with local leaders. The CETs should also have the skills needed to begin to collect attitudinal and census data (either by securing existing records or through surveying) to provide increased situational awareness and enable the development of S&R programs that will garner local support, not hostility. These teams should also be capable developing influence campaigns and using all mediums to communicate intentions directly to the local population in conjunction with other capabilities such as PsyOp units. These teams can also support commanders as they begin to spread out into the local community and engage with them.

As Phase IV progresses, the local populace has to be involved in all programs and operations developed in their name and on their behalf. Due account needs to be taken of likely reactions when planning coercive operations at any level. An S&R operation is in effect an influence campaign and influence can only be achieved with the active involvement of the local populace. The U.S. or coalition must quickly establish joint committees with local community leaders and involve them wherever possible in all decisions affecting their communities. As the engagement expands, this can be extended to include national-level cooperation. These committees cannot, however, be formed simply on the basis of which leaders are most acceptable to the intervention force. Careful consideration must be given to the involvement of those leaders and spokespersons that the local populace accept as representative of their communities, even if these leaders are less palatable to us. Usurping traditional leadership structures rarely works.

During the process of reestablishing regional and national governance, the key is not democratically elected governance but effective representative governance that has the support of the bulk of the community. Once effective governance has been established, then appointees can be replaced with elected officials. The choice of both appointees and election candidates needs to be determined whenever practical by the local populace. Externally selected officials with little or no local support are unlikely to be accepted.

As the process of developing local institutions progresses, a timetable for progressively handing over limited control to local officials should be developed. However, as previously stated, complete control of governance should only be handed over when officials have demonstrated their competency. During what may well be a protracted transfer of authority, U.S. or Coalition officials should be embedded at all levels to provide professional guidance and oversight. They should also be willing to suspend local involvement and independence if serious abuses of power are detected. Public expectations can be managed regarding the speed of devolution, if progress towards stability is being achieved. However, the loss of control resulting from the premature handover of authority, followed by any serious deviation from democratic principles, is almost impossible to reverse without serious opposition.

Population Control

As stated throughout this paper, it is essential to rapidly stabilize a society by providing a reasonable level of personal security and an adequate standard of living to the local populace. These basic conditions are essential in order to secure the cooperation of the majority of the population and to circumscribe what is likely to be violent opposition by a minority of the population. A certain degree of population control is therefore essential to ensure that vital facilities, installations, and individuals are protected, law is maintained, and freedom of maneuver is denied to opponents, particularly insurgents. This necessitates a force that is capable of securing the country, not just defeating that country's conventional military forces. The requirements of Phase IV, not Phases I–III, should determine the size of the intervention force. The U.S. military will assuredly defeat any conventional adversary with a relatively small force. However, the demands of an occupation necessitate a much larger garrison. This follow-on force needs to be adequately trained and equipped and ready to deploy as soon as Phase III is completed.

During Phase IV, existing security entities such as the police, internal security forces and military should be utilized to the extent possible. These institutions will have served the previous regime and some may have been the instruments of repression. However, they are also the only local entities that are trained and equipped to help maintain law and order and to counter violent opposition. These forces should be quickly co-opted and deployed under significant supervision to support the intervention force. Obviously, active supporters of the regime will need to be culled, but this process should be limited at the outset to those individuals likely to be disruptive and obstructive. Once a degree of stability has been restored then a more thorough process for removing former regime loyalists and war criminals, Security Sector Reform can be commenced. A South African style "truth and reconciliation" process is one model to consider, as it provides closure for victims and an acceptance of

responsibility by the supporters of a regime but pardons most in return for their confessions. This leaves only those who are alleged to have committed atrocities to be tried. Such a process avoids gutting the very institutions that if properly reformed will underpin the stabilization process.

Other, more subtle, means of population control include information operations, which is covered separately.

Setting Realistic Expectations: Promise Less, Deliver More

Setting realistic expectations at the outset, requires that the U.S. government itself to develop a realistic understanding of the challenges that will likely be encountered in a S&R operation. Planning for the worst while hoping for the best remains the best advice. The potential setbacks as well as the hoped for benefits of intervention should then be communicated to both the domestic audience and the local populace. Both audiences need to understand the desired end-state, feel that they have a stake in the plan to achieve that end-state, and be made aware of the costs and sacrifices involved. The mantra for stabilization operations should be to "promise less and deliver more."

3.4   Civilian Primacy

While the military will almost certainly have initial control of Phase IV of any intervention, civilian leadership has to be installed as quickly as possible to take charge of and coordinate the S&R effort. This civilian leader should answer directly to the president and be authorized to coordinate the activities of all government departments and agencies in the area. The right person must be appointed, one who possesses the experience to be able to take on the role of interim de facto leader of an occupied state. He or she ideally should be independent of any government department, and must outrank the senior departmental representatives in the AO. In operations where stability still has to be restored, it would be prudent to make the senior military commander the immediate deputy to this civilian leader.

Only this level of civilian leadership can effectively lead and orchestrate all of the levers of state power that must be employed to rapidly stabilize a failed or failing state and to begin rebuilding a defeated nation. This senior civilian leader can also ensure that all of the lines of operation are coordinated and in particular can ensure that the military line of operation is in harmony with the political, economic, and informational lines of operation. This approach would also ensure that the interagency process is well managed, thereby overcoming traditional political and bureaucratic obstacles and rivalries.

The civilian leadership should also be adequately resourced to fulfill such a complex function. Otherwise the military will, by default, be forced to assume responsibility for key functions. This includes providing an adequately staffed civilian headquarters manned by civilian staff officers who are trained to fulfill all of the key functions of what will effectively be, at the outset, the government of an occupied state. Mimicking military practice, the U.S. government might maintain a small permanent skeleton civilian headquarters that would be the framework for a tailored and much larger operational civilian headquarters that could be deployed with the military to a forward operating base and from there into the occupied state. This headquarters would need a small permanent staff and should be provided with all of the equipment it would need in the field. This equipment could be forward deployed. Additionally, a much larger human resource pool should be identified from across the U.S. government, academia, and the private sector. These personnel would be called upon to serve in such a headquarters from the commencement of an operation. This would have to be on a voluntary basis, so significant compensation would be needed to encourage volunteering. These standby personnel should be provided with formal training and should participate in regular simulations of likely operations.

The UK approach of appointing a lead minister and utilizing the cabinet/committee system to lead such operations is an alternative approach that could be considered. However, this system is not without its challenges. The identification and appointment of a dedicated civilian leader and the deployment of a fully staffed civilian headquarters is therefore considered to be the optimal solution for S&R operations. The formation of interagency committees chaired by the civilian appointed by the president to lead an S&R operation, and at the lower levels by his staff, would, however, be an effective way of ensuring timely cooperation between agencies. Primacy would remain with the dedicated operational civilian leadership, which would ensure that command decisions were made and accountability provided.

Unity of Effort

If the recommendations regarding civilian leadership are followed, then unity of effort should be easily achieved. The key, as the British experience in Northern Ireland has shown, is the principle of primacy. The interagency process does not work unless one agency or ideally a leader independent of any agency has primacy over all of the other members of that process. A committee system only works if there is a chairperson who can make the command decisions and be held accountable for the decisions taken. Therefore, the optimal means to achieve unity of effort in U.S.-led S&R operations is the appointment of a senior civilian leader with a dedicated headquarters and with all other agencies, including the military, subordinate to that leader.

This solution will not, however, ensure success in this type of operation if authority is transferred too quickly to the local populace, because once control of the S&R effort is divided between the intervention force and the local populace, unity of effort can become almost impossible. Also, the local populace may not be ready for the return of complete sovereignty, especially if a political settlement between all parties has not been achieved. In future operations of this type, governance of the country cannot be handed back to local representatives until specified conditions have been achieved.

A political solution first needs to have been developed and a form of governance devised that all interested entities, including for example tribal and religious leaders, not just political parties——have accepted, prior to the complete handover of power. Even then, a transitional process needs to be developed that can be temporarily suspended if infractions of the political agreement are identified. This process is particularly vital in ethnically and ideologically divided communities. Of course, some parties will object strongly to a more measured transfer of sovereignty, and the ethnic majority will complain bitterly if too many concessions are made to minority groups. However, the Northern Ireland peace process vividly demonstrated both the necessity to make concessions to minority groups in order to secure their cooperation and the reality that the peace process can remain fragile for years. Political control sometimes needs to be taken back by the "intervention force" in order to avoid the total collapse of the peace process.

Newly created or reorganized institutions such as government ministries, the police, and the military may need some time to develop the level of impartiality, integrity, and effectiveness required before complete control can be turned over to them. If stability has not been fully achieved and an acceptable political settlement brokered, then these ministries can be hijacked and used for their own ends by various ethnic and political groups. The Ministry of the Interior in Iraq is the latest and one of the worst examples of this phenomenon, with its security troops actively involved in what are now called extra-judicial killings. It is therefore recommended that a formal transitional process is developed for the handover of control of these institutions that includes both a realistic timetable and benchmarks that must be achieved. The imbedding of shadow U.S./Coalition officials at all levels will also help, both with the development of core competencies and an ethical culture within these key institutions.

During the early stages of an operation's stabilization phase, the focus should be on the development of representative local and regional governance, with local elections following once a reasonable degree of stability has been achieved. The focus on national elections in Iraq in many respects accelerated the divisions between the Sunni and Shia long before stability had been achieved in most areas. The focus on

achieving local and then regional stability and a measured degree of representative governance would avoid this potential pitfall.

Selling this approach to the local populace requires making the case early for the focus on good governance and stability before elections and certainly before the transfer of sovereignty. The majority would accept this approach if their lives improved and progress towards fully representative governance could be seen. Ironically, the rapid transfer of sovereignty to the local populace before stability has been achieved and the benefits of reconstruction manifested is likely to extend the duration of a conflict and delay the exit of the intervention force, which must then remain within a country they no longer have control over.

3.5   Minimum Force

The measures necessary to change the U.S. military's approach to the use of force in S&R operations require fundamental changes in U.S. national policy; military organizational culture, doctrine, and TTPs; and political and public attitudes towards the issue of force protection. So fundamental are the changes required that the type of overarching recommendations that could be made here would be meaningless, especially since it appears that the U.S. government and military has yet to accept that change is necessary. It is therefore recommended that a high-level, possibly congressionally mandated review should be conducted on the use of force in postconflict S&R operations and on the balance between force protection and local engagement. Such a review requires the direct involvement and endorsement of both the senior military and civilian DoD leadership to ensure that the findings are given due consideration.

Meanwhile, senior military commanders should undertake a review of the existing ROE for these types of operations and tighten both doctrine and the ROEs in order to encourage personnel to see the use of lethal force as the last resort, not the first option. Predeployment and in-country training should be modified to include a dedicated component that highlights the negative consequences of the perceived disproportionate use of force. This should include dispelling the myth that the restrained use of force will embolden the insurgents and undermine the mission, when in fact the excessive use of force is far more likely to increase support for the insurgency. Commanders should also be empowered to take more risks with force protection in order to avoid alienating local communities. Such short-term measures will not overcome the systemic problems highlighted previously but will contribute significantly to a reduction in the number of incidents of collateral damage and slowly increase popular support.

Limited Utility of Military Power

The U.S. government and military must accept the limited utility of military power in postconflict S&R operations and that the military cannot defeat an asymmetric adversary that enjoys popular support and is perceived as legitimate by the local populace. There are no decisive battles against an insurgent enemy; and the defeat of this adaptable and resourceful adversary will likely take years to achieve. The U.S. military therefore must be organized and resourced to engage in protracted engagements of this type; to be able to fight and win "long wars." If the political will and material and human resources are not there for a protracted engagement, then it is prudent not to engage in such an operation in the first place but to seek alternative means to control an unfavorable situation. To try and fail is often worse than to not try at all.

The U.S. government also needs to recognize and accept that the main role of the military in Phase IV of any operation is to quickly provide for the security and physical well-being of the local population, thus buying time for the reconstruction effort to begin as soon as possible. In doing so, however, the military must employ only the minimum amount of force needed to suppress an emerging insurgency, and do so without provoking and alienating the local populace. The military must therefore be willing to accept the risks involved. It cannot place force protection above all other considerations.

The military must also be able to physically control the population and key terrain. This requirement will probably necessitate a much larger force for Phase IV than is now needed for Phases I–III of the operation. This need for substantial follow-on forces must be taken into consideration from the outset of the planning process. Sufficient forces therefore need to be readied and resourced not only to provide protection to the local populace but also to be able restore essential services and to provide effective local and regional governance until such time as the security situation stabilizes sufficiently to bring in civilian personnel and return some functions to the local populace. The invasion or intervention force also needs to be trained for the "three-block war" so that they can transition back and forth between warfighting and peacekeeping operations during the crossover period between Phases III and IV.

An overarching national strategy for nation-rebuilding—a more accurate term in the context of Iraq than nation-building—also needs to be fully developed that reflects the realities of conducting this type of large-scale intervention operation. To date some efforts have been made at the departmental level to develop strategy and some dedicated capabilities, for example within the State Department, but even that limited effort has stalled because of lack of funding. However, departmental initiatives are not

the answer. A new national strategy is needed that will coordinate what must be a national effort; with planning and execution centrally coordinated and led. This effort cannot be left to individual and competing departments.

The mechanisms and procedures necessary to deploy and employ all of the levers of state power in a coordinated manner need to be put in place early, so that any reconstruction effort can commence immediately and in parallel with the stabilization effort led initially by the military. The likely material and human resources required for such a complex operation also need to be determined early and at the very least a plan developed to secure these resources at the earliest opportunity, once a decision to intervene has been taken. Such a strategy will ensure that both the military and the wider government are prepared for what is the most complex of undertakings, as the challenge in Iraq continues to so vividly highlight. Such an approach will also ensure that the military is assigned its proper role, is resourced accordingly, and is not required to cover for the shortcomings of the wider national effort.

3.6   Intelligence-led Operations

For Iraq, the problem of non-adherence to the principle of intelligence-led operations would be implementing all of the above recommendations. If the Coalition can decrease its alienation of the Iraqi population and improve both the security situation and the standard of living for ordinary Iraqis, then popular support for the actions of the Coalition and the Iraqi government will increase. With that increased support, one can reasonably expect a similar increase in the numbers of people willing to provide information on the insurgency. This will in turn enable more operations to be intelligence-led thereby increasing their effectiveness and reducing the incidence of "collateral damage" and wrongful arrest—beginning a favorable cycle of increased support and declining alienation. For this process to unfold, however, doctrine and TTPs must be modified to ensure that all operational planning begins by asking, should this operation be undertaken if insufficient intelligence exists to ensure that it is properly focused? Do the benefits outweigh the risks? This risk-management culture is essential in postconflict S&R operations in order to avoid the temptation to do something when doing nothing may be the best option.

The U.S. military and intelligence agencies might investigate various other models for intelligence collection and management, including the Northern Ireland model, in order to refine the existing processes and optimize intelligence collection, coordination, analysis, and dissemination.

This study also strongly suggested that the U.S. military still does not fully understand, at an institutional or personnel level, the type of asymmetric adversary they are

engaged with in Iraq and likely to encounter in future such operations. Certainly there are experts throughout the U.S. government and academia who understand the nature of asymmetric warfare. That said there does not seem to be agreement on the nature of the insurgency in Iraq. Part of the problem may not be a lack of knowledge but the existence of too many conflicting opinions, assessments, and briefings. Following the British model, one intelligence entity should be given primacy for the development of a common intelligence picture for each S&R operation. This integrated intelligence picture should be developed in cooperation with all relevant agencies including allies, and nongovernmental experts. It should also be subject to regular independent review by a panel of independent experts to ensure that conventional wisdom and inter-agency compromise does not distort this picture.

3.7   Organizational Culture

Changing the organizational culture of the U.S. military would be a huge, lengthy, and in some respects counterproductive undertaking, if it undermined the preeminence of the U.S. military in conventional warfare, a form of warfare that remains the most violent and poses the greatest threat to national security. The U.S. military must therefore continue to prepare to fight and win America's conventional wars.

That said, the existing culture seriously undermines the U.S. military's ability to successfully execute counterinsurgency and S&R operations, which many military experts agree place a premium on restraint and the use of minimum force. A detailed, high-level DoD study, similar to earlier RAND studies, should be undertaken to define the current organizational culture of the U.S. military and to determine what cones-quence this culture has on the ability of the U.S. military to successfully defeat asymmetric adversaries. A key element of this study should be determining how career education and training, and in particular predeployment training, should be modified to mitigate the effects of a conventional-warfare mindset.

This study should also investigate how the warrior ethos of the U.S. military affects the ability of personnel to conduct counterinsurgency and stabilization operations— for example, whether this ethos encourages the use of excessive force. Again, the results of this study should feed through into predeployment training and education to ensure that personnel show restraint and engage effectively with the local populace.

Adaptation and Innovation

The study recommended above should consider the influence of organizational culture on personnel's ability of to adapt and innovate in order to counter a highly adaptive adversary. While many personnel are adapting well to the demands of

asymmetric conflict in Iraq, standards are variable across the force and dependent on the command latitude given by more senior officers, far fewer of whom are displaying such flexibility.

Tolerance of Error

A peacetime approach to officer career development cannot be applied to personnel serving in Iraq and other similar areas of operation. In particular, there cannot be a zero-defect culture which disadvantages officers who have taken operational risks and made mistakes. The U.S. military should review its officer career development, to determine whether a zero-defect culture still exists and if it does, how to eliminate it. Senior officers should also actively encourage more junior officers to take carefully measured risks and to provide the necessary support and counseling if on occasions things backfire. Senior officers must also recognize that against highly adaptive adversaries, it is often necessary to attempt new and innovative approaches and learn literally though trial and error what does and does not work.

Such an approach places a premium on a career development system that tolerates some errors as long as these are learned from and ultimately lead to the successful execution of a mission. This is particularly true in conducting operations where only minimum force is used and force-protection requirements are relaxed. Such operations will result in increase causalities in the early stages until such time as the local population becomes more cooperative. Officers who take these risks and lose soldiers should not suffer unduly for having done so as long, as the risks they took were carefully calculated with a view to success of the larger mission.

Decentralized Command and Control

One of the key factors that has contributed to the success of the British Army's approach to counterinsurgency and stabilization operations is the level of delegated authority given to the most junior commanders at platoon and company level. It is therefore recommended that the DoD reexamine its C2 processes to optimize it for the types of small-unit actions that generally characterize counterinsurgency operations. Squad, platoon, and company commanders must be allowed to employ mission command tactics and should be educated and empowered to execute small-unit operations and exercise considerable initiative in accordance with the objectives, not the direction, of higher command

The Value of the Regimental System

The U.S. military is not in a position to introduce a British style regimental system but it is recommended that it explore ways to increase continuity within units and formations to ensure that hard won experience is retained and not superseded by the prevailing organizational culture.

Professional Bureaucrats

The levers of soft power that have to be rapidly deployed in an S&R operation must be fully resourced in order to exploit the time that has been bought by the military, a window of opportunity that will close quickly if the reconstruction effort does not begin to deliver tangible benefits to the community in relatively short order. This necessitates the creation of a small cadre of professional bureaucrats who are adequately trained and prepared for rapid deployment along side the military forces that will execute Phases I–III and the first stage of Phase IV. This team would help establish a civilian headquarters in the AO; begin the process of assessing the requirements of the reconstruction effort; and commence the most urgent reconstruction projects. A much larger pool of talent also needs to be identified from across the government, the private sector, and academia that can be quickly trained and deployed as the follow-on component of the reconstruction effort. These two pools of human resources need to include a significant number of more seasoned personnel, many of whom have already served in an overseas appointment. There are simply too many young and relatively inexperienced personnel deployed in Iraq today.

Sufficient funds should be made available by Congress to adequately train, equip and compensate these personnel to ensure that the best talent is available at the time it is most needed.

Continuity

There is no simple solution to the lack of continuity in Iraq, but a review should be undertaken to determine what solutions can be developed to ensure that key posts are manned for extended periods by personnel willing to serve beyond existing deployment cycles. This review should also determine which posts require the incumbents to serve for extended periods. Various solutions may be possible, including offering a package of benefits to personnel willing to serve in the area for an extended period of at least 18 months or more. This package could include additional leave, better pay, bonuses, relocation of families to neighboring countries and job sharing. Whatever solutions are adopted, providing continuity personnel will go a long

way towards the twin goals of retaining institutional memory in the area and developing a long-lasting relationship with key members of the local populace.

Project Director

Andrew Garfield – A former European Director of the Terrorism Research Center, Deputy Director of International Policy Institute (IPI) at King's College London, and Senior Director of Influence and Insight for the Lincoln Group, Mr. Garfield is now a Senior Fellow at the FPRI. Mr. Garfield is also a former senior British military then civilian intelligence officer and former senior policy advisor at the UK Ministry of Defense. While serving in the UK Defense Intelligence Staff he led two major studies that reviewed key aspects of that organization's approach to post–Cold War intelligence analysis and recommended radical changes to policy and organization that were subsequently implemented in full. After moving into academia with King's College London, he devised and successfully led three major projects for the U.S. Department of Defense focusing on the terrorist threat; likely adversary asymmetric warfare strategies; and the development of U.S. strategic influence operations and cultural intelligence.

Research Team

Dr. Michael Clarke – Director of the International Policy Institute at King's College. Dr. Clarke is one of the UK's foremost defense academics with extensive experience advising on and researching key defense policy issues and all aspects of peace support operations. He is currently the academic advisor for the House of Commons Defense Committee and has established and led a multi disciplinary conflict prevention team funded by the UK's Department for International Development. More recently he has also established and overseen the development of the UK's first academic research group to focus on asylum and immigration issues. This has given him further insight into the realities of failed and failing states.

Frank G. Hoffman – Mr. Hoffman is a retired Marine infantry officer and a graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, George Mason University, and the U.S. Naval War College. He previously served as an analyst in the Pentagon and on the Armed Forces' 1994–95 Roles and Missions Commission and as a staff member on the U.S. Commission on National Security (the Hart-Rudman Commission). He is a Senior Fellow of the FPRI and a Research Fellow at the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities (CETO) in Quantico, Va.

Randolph Kent – Head of the Humanitarian Futures project at King's College London. Dr. Kent is one of America's foremost experts on postconflict S&R efforts and complex emergencies. He is a former head of the UN relief effort in Rwanda and

has been the resident UN humanitarian coordinator in Somalia. He has also been a senior UN relief official in Kosovo, the Sudan, and Ethiopia.

Michael Noonan – Managing Director, Program on National Security, FPRI. Mr. Noonan's current research focuses on defense transformation and the military's role in the war on terrorism, and he regularly comments on these issues for the news media. He holds membership in the International Institute for Strategic Studies, is a fellow of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, and served as a Contributing Editor of *Orbis*. His writings have appeared in *Orbis, Parameters, National Security Studies Quarterly*, and as FPRI Wires and e-notes. He is currently a doctoral candidate from Loyola University Chicago, where his dissertation deals with civilian control of the military and military effectiveness in the United States. A captain in the U.S. Army Reserves, he is now serving in Iraq.

David Whetham joined King's College's Department of Defence Studies in 2003, based at the Joint Services Command and Staff College in Shrivenham. He earned his Ph.D. in War Studies at King's College London. He has been a researcher for BBC History and was employed by the OSCE in Kosovo, contributing to the 2001 and 2002 elections.

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