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After the Fight: Interagency Operations

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In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 23 June 2005, the head of US Central Command, General John Abizaid, reported that the strength of the insurgency in Iraq had not changed since the beginning of the year. Further, he said, “I believe there are more foreign fighters coming into Iraq than there were six months ago.”¹ General Abizaid’s testimony shortly followed statements in the press by Senator Chuck Hagel that “things aren’t getting better; they’re getting worse. . . . The reality is, we’re losing in Iraq.”² The post-major combat operations phase in Iraq is a stunning example of how the failure to effectively plan and execute interagency operations turned what started as out as a rapid victory into a long, hard slog. Despite the lightning-quick defeat of Saddam’s army and the destruction of his regime, US and Coalition forces in Iraq are struggling to create a secure environment and bring to fruition a stable, democratic Iraqi government.

The situation may not be nearly as dire as some pundits and much of the media would have the American public believe,³ but there is certainly a long way to go before most Iraqi citizens will be living in a safe and secure environment under a democratic government. This state of affairs begs the question: How did we regress from a stunningly rapid conventional military victory to a slow, painful, and drawn-out counterinsurgency effort? James Fallows argues that two themes have emerged: “a lack of foresight and a lack of insight—that is, a failure to ask ‘What happens next?’ and a failure to wonder ‘How will this look through Iraqi eyes?’”⁴

US and Coalition military forces did very well during the initial major combat phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom, yet subsequently failed

to recognize the political, social, economic, and ideological aspects of the campaign. A substantial reason for this breakdown was the lack of effective interagency collaboration at the operational level—in other words, a lack of interagency unity of command and effort. This in turn resulted in a failure to apply effectively all the elements of national power: diplomatic, informational, and economic as well as military. Using the relationship between Combined Joint Task Force-Seven (CJTF-7) and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Iraq as a case study, this article argues that improving its ability to conduct interagency operations needs to become one of DOD's highest priorities.⁵

Post-Major Combat Operations in Iraq

President Bush declared the end of major combat operations on 1 May 2003. Nonetheless, during the first few months of 2004 strategic planners in CJTF-7, the senior military headquarters in Iraq, commonly asked each other: “Are we in Phase IV yet?” This phase consisted of post-combat operations in which the role and footprint of Coalition military forces would begin to sharply decline, while civilian authorities played a greater role and began the process of returning sovereignty to what was expected to be a friendly Iraqi government.

Although Coalition soldiers were experiencing increasingly frequent attacks from guerillas or insurgents, especially from roadside bombs, Saddam's armed forces clearly had been defeated. There was even a period of several weeks in which US casualties from traffic accidents exceeded those from enemy action. Yet the slaughter of American contractors on 31 March 2004 and the subsequent “first” battle for Fallujah, combined with al-Sadr's assaults on Najaf and Kut, clearly indicated that there was still plenty of combat in Iraq.

Much of the press has asserted a failure to plan for post-combat operations.⁶ The greater problem, however, was that of execution. Before the war, US Central Command published a 300-page operations order for Phase IV.⁷ A key aspect of DOD planning was to appoint a senior civilian administrator

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upon the completion of major combat operations. This was initially accomplished by the appointment of retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner and the creation of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA). Subsequently, a somewhat more robust organization was established—the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)—led by Ambassador L. Paul Bremer. Garner, and later Bremer, would report to DOD rather than to the Department of State.

The intent of this arrangement was to streamline security and reconstruction activities, keeping them primarily within the realm of the DOD in order to provide unity of effort. A document published by DOD's office for Near East and South Asian Affairs cited the experience of separate civil reconstruction and peacekeeping force chains of command in Bosnia as an impetus for placing ORHA and CPA under DOD control. It stated: "Many contend the lack of coordination between military and civilian entities has led to the prolonged involvement of all parties. We did not want to repeat past mistakes."⁸

The US Central Command operations order for Phase IV identified seven lines of operation: unity of effort, security, rule of law, civil administration, governance, humanitarian assistance, and resettlement.⁹ In a statement for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz distilled these into a strategy of "three interdependent lines of operation to build indigenous Iraqi capacity and transition responsibilities from the Coalition to Iraq rapidly, but not hastily."¹⁰ They entailed:

- Building capable Iraqi security forces.
- Nurturing Iraqi capacity for representative self-government.
- Reconstruction of Iraqi infrastructure and restoration of essential services.

It was clear that the DOD leadership understood the importance of coordinating traditional military operations and reconstruction efforts, and that success in these disparate activities was interdependent. Less obvious, however, were the mechanisms to synchronize such efforts—particularly the roles and legal authorities of CPA and its relationship to CJTF-7. Steven Metz and Raymond Millen argue that CPA "was understaffed, inadequately prepared, late to organize, and slow to deploy" and that "the interface between the US military and CPA remained a persistent problem, with each grumbling that the other should be doing significantly more to enhance stabilization."¹¹ According to a Congressional Research Report on the CPA dated 29 April 2004, "The lack of an authoritative and unambiguous statement about how this organization was established, by whom, and under what authority leaves open many questions."¹² The ambiguity was reflected by a great deal of confusion regarding the relative roles and authorities of CPA and CJTF-7.

Relationship of CPA to CJTF-7

It was often unclear within CJTF-7 and CPA how military and civilian responsibilities for the seven lines of operations interrelated and how these would be synchronized when translated into tasks to be performed by units and organizations on the street. This lack of clarity inhibited coordination between American military and civilian leaders inside Iraq and made more difficult the task of translating the CENTCOM operational-level plan to orders at the tactical level. It was here that weak planning for stability and reconstruction operations became most apparent.

In many cases combat units at the brigade level and below did a tremendous job, usually with outstanding support from Civil Affairs units, applying military resources to combat the insurgency and to improve infrastructure, restore services, and develop a capacity for civil society within their local areas of operation. These actions were often a result of initiative and ingenuity by junior officers and noncommissioned officers rather than the application of doctrine or the receipt of useful guidance from higher echelons.¹³ A senior CPA official described the variation among units even within the same brigade: “[The brigade in Baghdad] is doing it three different ways dependent upon the commander of the individual unit. One is using lots of low-level intel ideas coupled with a get-on-the-ground approach that is paying high dividends. The other two don’t care and just go about business as usual.”¹⁴

Ambiguity about the division of labor between and within the CPA and CJTF-7 often resulted in decisions that were heavily influenced by turf considerations and lack of current information. The official relationship between the CPA Administrator and the CJTF-7 Commander¹⁵ was probably clear to those two individuals, but not completely understood by others inside the former Republican Palace in which CPA and CJTF-7 were collocated. “Who is Bremer’s boss?” was a common question.

Many military officers appeared to believe that the Commander of CJTF-7 was the senior person in the building, or at least an equal to Ambassador Bremer—responsible for all military-related decisions, while Ambassador Bremer handled only civilian matters. Meanwhile, CPA staff believed the opposite to be true—that the CPA Administrator was the senior official in the country, setting Iraq-wide policy. The relatively large number of Senior Executive Service personnel assigned to CPA reinforced the belief of the CPA staff that theirs was the higher-level headquarters.

In addition to Ambassador Bremer, several other CPA personnel had ambassador-level rank. Also, in January 2004 the incumbents in the next CPA tier below Ambassador Bremer were the Deputy Administrator and Chief Policy Officer, Ambassador Richard Jones, and the Chief Operating Officer,

initially retired Lieutenant General Keith Kellogg, who was followed by retired Vice Admiral Scott Redd.¹⁶ In the minds of many CPA officials, the fact that the Chief Operating Officers were a retired lieutenant general followed by a retired vice admiral made their positions equivalent to that of the three-star CJTF-7 Commander, which in turn meant that Ambassador Bremer was at least one echelon higher.¹⁷

The CJTF-7 Commander, on the other hand, reported to the Commander of US Central Command, General John Abizaid, and had multiple layers of bureaucracy between himself and the Coalition's national leaders. For example, one of the critical asymmetries was the ability of CPA leadership to interface directly with the US National Security Council on a routine basis, while CJTF-7 input was typically routed through US Central Command, the Joint Staff, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Frequent tensions occurred between senior CJTF-7 officers and CPA officials where "military" and "civilian" responsibilities intersected. In particular, the CPA Office of National Security Affairs (ONSA) was a common point of friction. To describe one example, ONSA (which aligned with the Ministry of Defense) was responsible for developing a strategy for Transition and Reintegration (T&R) of Iraqi militia members.¹⁸ The ability to co-opt militia members had obvious implications for several lines of operation, not the least of which was security. A critical element of the T&R strategy was to develop three tracks of opportunity for former militia members: enlistment into security forces such as the Border Police, Iraqi Armed Forces, and Iraqi Civil Defense Corps or Iraqi National Guard; retirement on a public armed forces pension; or training and placement assistance for civilian employment.¹⁹

Responsible for recruiting Iraqis into the security forces and training them, CJTF-7 had a key part in the execution of the security force element of the strategy. However, many subordinate CJTF-7 units resisted the strategy's requirement to set aside quotas for former militia members. Failing to understand the need to induce members to leave the militias, and for militia leaders to voluntarily disband their militias, many senior US officers felt that recruiting should be on a "first come, first served" basis and strongly opposed the guidance to set aside positions.

The problem was exacerbated by confusion over who in CJTF-7 had actually approved the policy and what role the CJTF-7 staff would play in its execution. Although the CJTF-7 Commander, Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, was present when the policy was approved by Ambassador Bremer, there was nothing in writing that directed quotas for former militia members. This encouraged some subordinate commanders to push back against the requirement. Subsequent CPA negotiations with various militias to get them to

agree to dissolve were thus complicated by uncertainty about the number of security force slots that could be promised for their former members.

Another militia-related disconnect between CPA and CJTF-7 regarded the use of Commanders Emergency Response Funds (CERFs) for basic literacy training. The CERFs, initially using cash recovered from Saddam's fallen regime, were established to provide commanders the ability to fund short-term local projects, such as "to improve schools, buy new textbooks, clean up water, provide electricity, and improve medical care and security." As of May 2004, more than 21,000 different projects had been funded, with the average cost being less than \$7,000.²⁰ The projects often were selected and the expenditures managed at the brigade or battalion level.

With the seemingly obvious logic that it would be better to have militia members in classrooms instead of on the street where they might cause trouble, ONSA asked if CJTF-7 would approve the use of CERFs to provide basic literacy training to militia members. Besides providing a positive alternative to militia activity, this was viewed as a way to "front load" the T&R benefits for militias that agreed to disband. CJTF-7 responded by rejecting the proposal, arguing that the Ministry of Education or some other entity should fund such efforts. This result was so contrary to common sense and existing CERF guidance that it appeared turf issues or personality conflicts were a primary influence in the decision.²¹

Cultural and Procedural Differences

Even though CPA was theoretically a DOD entity, to many people its environment seemed closer to Foggy Bottom than the Pentagon. Lieutenant Colonel Bernd Willand, a mobilized National Guard officer attached to CPA, described the organization as "a strange mix of military, State Department, USAID, Iraqi expats, other civilians, and contractor personnel." He repeated the truism that "State is from Venus and DOD is from Mars," recounting that one senior CPA official, a former ambassador, introduced herself by saying, "I'm from the State Department and I don't do PowerPoint!"²²

One apparent source of dissonance was the relative youth of many of the CPA staff members. Individuals in their late twenties and early thirties occasionally had responsibilities and authority comparable to CJTF-7 colonels and general officers. However, most of the CPA staffers in senior positions were old Washington hands, many in the Senior Executive Service. Younger staff members with unusual degrees of responsibility typically possessed advanced degrees and government experience, and were highly professional. The exceptional cases were usually due to the severe understaffing of CPA, resulting in unplanned upward movement into vacant management-level positions.

“Tensions occurred between senior CJTF-7 officers and CPA officials where ‘military’ and ‘civilian’ responsibilities intersected.”

One CJTF-7 staff section developed a briefing on “Military 101” to educate the CPA Director of the Office of National Security Affairs (ONSA) on the US military, assuming few CPA personnel understood DOD. However, not only was the Director of ONSA a graduate of the US Naval Academy, there were numerous CPA staff members with prior military or civilian DOD experience.²³ Yet with the exception of mobilized reservists, very few CJTF-7 officers had backgrounds in the private sector or civilian government service.

The problems caused by the ambiguity of CPA versus CJTF-7 roles and relationships were compounded by dissimilar worldviews, backgrounds of key personnel, and approaches to problem-solving. CJTF-7 leaders and staff routinely used the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) to produce orders and plans. This is a detailed, formal process that is conducted in a very similar manner within any US Army headquarters at the battalion level and higher. In a nutshell, it entails:

- Receive Mission (Define the problem).
- Mission Analysis (Gather information).
- Course of Action Development (Identify potential options).
- Course of Action Analysis (Analyze options).
- Course of Action Comparison (Compare options).
- Course of Action Approval (Select an option).
- Orders Production (Disseminate the decision).

A particularly important step in the MDMP is the production of orders. This process results in a written product that both provides subordinates with details on what tasks the commander wants performed and documents the fact that the commander has personally directed these actions to be accomplished.

Decisionmaking within CPA was usually less formal and less routinized. Some meetings, for example, seemed more akin to a professor having a discussion with graduate students than anything resembling the MDMP. The absence of correspondence would often cause frustration for military officers used to a linear process. CPA officials were equally frustrated by what they perceived to be a very slow and unwieldy decisionmaking system on the part

of CJTF-7. Questions that they thought should be addressed quickly could take an extra week while various staff officers and generals reviewed the proposed response.

Another area of disconnect involved CPA's methods for recording and disseminating decisions. In some cases, memos proposing a policy were simply stamped "LPB has seen" to indicate approval by Ambassador Bremer.²⁴ In other cases, decisions were orally given at the conclusion of briefings, leaving a set of PowerPoint slides as the only evidence of what was decided. Draft policy memos were sometimes approved without being rewritten as "final." While CPA staff seemed comfortable with such staffing procedures, CJTF-7 military officers were often aggravated to the extreme by the lack of formality and clear documentation.

The disparity in processes and procedures was highlighted when CPA developed and planned to announce a new policy to improve the security of Iraqi borders. On 2 March 2004, simultaneous bombing attacks in Karbala and Baghdad killed more than 150 Shiite worshippers during festivals to observe Ashura. (Ashura is one of the holiest periods for Shiites, marking the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson al-Hussein, who was killed in 680 AD during a battle near Karbala, cementing the schism between Sunnis and Shiites.) Many Shiites blamed the United States for a lack of security, and began demonstrations and throwing rocks at Iraqi police and US troops.²⁵

CPA had been contemplating several new border security procedures for months, particularly the implementation of a system to issue and record visas, monitor the entry of foreign visitors, and to reorganize and double the size of the Border Police. The Ashura attacks, however, provided impetus for quick action. Within hours of the attacks, the CPA Senior Advisor to the Ministry of the Interior established a working group to develop specific actions that could be quickly implemented and announced. Two days after the Ashura bombings, the working group had produced a short memo of recommendations that was provided to Ambassador Bremer, who handed a copy to the CJTF-7 Commander, Lieutenant General Sanchez. The memo included a handful of actions that would be requested of CJTF-7 in support of the new policy.

This was the first time that Lieutenant General Sanchez had seen the proposed policy. From the CJTF-7 point of view, this was a significant staffing failure. It turned out that the CPA working group either simply forgot to invite CJTF-7 to participate or viewed the development of border security policy as an issue with little relevance to CJTF-7 because most of the proposals were specific to CPA or the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior, with only a minor support role suggested for CJTF-7.

Furthermore, the CPA staff saw nothing wrong with Lieutenant General Sanchez being the first person in CJTF-7 to see the policy. Most CPA per-

sonnel seemed to have an informal view of staff coordination that encouraged the rapid exchange of information between ministries and between different echelons of management. Meanwhile, CJTF-7 maintained more of a hierarchical approach. As long as interaction remained at what is known in the Pentagon as the “action officer” level, it raised little concern. However, coordination with an external entity such as CPA, or the involvement of general officers in other staff sections, often produced the expectation of a formal review.

Subsequent to Lieutenant General Sanchez’s receiving a copy of the draft CPA border policy memo, officers from the CJTF-7 Strategy, Plans, and Policy section (C5) were tasked to work with the Ministry of the Interior to develop a coordinated policy for the borders. A new working group, including both CJTF-7 and CPA staff, was convened to revisit the policy recommendations in the original 4 March 2004 memo. Yet in the meantime, CPA public affairs staff continued to move forward with a major policy announcement by Ambassador Bremer based upon the first memo. While CJTF-7 staff wanted to first conduct a full review of the existing border situation, including a survey of ports of entry, the focus of CPA was to get an announcement out quickly to demonstrate that action was being taken to “help stem the flow of terrorists and foreign fighters entering the country.”²⁶

On 6 March 2004, while CJTF-7 officers were still on the Mission Analysis step of their decisionmaking process, CPA produced a draft speech for Ambassador Bremer to announce the border policy—still based upon the first memo. This action both surprised and upset CJTF-7 officers. They were surprised that the policy announcement was moving forward so quickly based upon a draft memo, and upset that CJTF-7 concerns had yet to be incorporated. The CJTF-7 members of the working group were instructed to ensure that no mention of CJTF-7 was made in any final document unless it was personally approved by Lieutenant General Sanchez.

Trying to quickly come up with a document that could achieve CPA and CJTF-7 consensus, the working group began to whittle down the original list of CJTF-7 actions as part of the policy. Pressed by time, the group’s actions accentuated the differences in decisionmaking. Virtually all of the CPA members of the working group were civilian law enforcement senior managers used to rapid, direct coordination. For each new version of the policy memo, CPA personnel would simply walk into the office next door or send a quick e-mail to the Interior Ministry’s Senior Advisor and get nearly immediate approval or further guidance. CJTF-7 working group members were required to go through two general officers before proposals reached Lieutenant General Sanchez—a process that usually took at least two days, even when expedited.

Many of the delays on the CJTF-7 side involved nonsubstantive questions, such as “Who approved the changes to the previous draft of the

CPA policy?” and “Why isn’t the most recent version of the CPA memo signed?” Rather than allow the changes to be worked at the action officer level, CJTF-7 insisted on responding to working group proposals with written memos signed by a general officer. It was now the turn of CPA officials to be frustrated—by the pace of the CJTF-7 decision cycle.

Nine days after the first draft of the CPA memo was written, Ambassador Bremer released an announcement describing several new initiatives to improve border security.²⁷ The actions to be taken by CPA were nearly unchanged from the original 4 March 2004 version. A properly coordinated staff action would have outlined a more sensible division of labor, with the CPA focusing on the legal points of entry, and the CJTF-7 staff overseeing an increase in patrols between those ports of entry.²⁸ More than a week of ineffective collaboration resulted in virtually no input to the new policy by the CJTF-7 staff. Meanwhile, weapons smuggling and the movement of foreign fighters across the Iraqi border continued to become an increasing problem.²⁹

The preceding are just a few examples in which friction between CPA and CJTF-7 inhibited the execution of the political, social, economic, and ideological aspects of Operation Iraqi Freedom that were necessary for a successful Phase IV. These interagency shortfalls allowed the insurgency to blossom despite the speedy defeat of Saddam’s armed forces.³⁰ Space limitations prevent greater detail, but other interagency disconnects included:

- Coordination of contractor movement throughout the area of operations and sharing of intelligence and threat information with contractors was poor to nonexistent. A prime example was the contractors who got lost and precipitated the Fallujah crisis.³¹
- Information operations and public affairs intended for Iraqi audiences weren’t well conceived. Despite strong advice from cultural experts and foreign area officers, CPA and CJTF-7 failed to put an “Iraqi face” on news releases and press conferences.
- Security for vital reconstruction projects, such as restoration of power, water, and sewer systems, was typically disconnected from military operations. Generally viewed as a “contractor responsibility,” military and civilian project security efforts were rarely synchronized.
- Liaison between CJTF-7 subordinate units and CPA regional coordinators and governorate coordinators in the field were haphazard and nonexistent in many cases. When CPA offices in Najaf were attacked by Sadr’s militia in April 2004, they were unable to immediately call upon local CJTF-7 units for assistance and had to route emergency requests and situation reports via e-mail to the CPA headquarters in Baghdad, where it was then passed on to the CJTF-7 headquarters.³²

The Way Ahead

Bruce Hoffman of the RAND Corporation distills the following basic lessons of counterinsurgency:

First, always remember that the struggle is not primarily military but political, social, economic, and ideological. Second, learn to recognize the signs of a budding insurgency, and never let it develop momentum. Third, study and understand the enemy in advance. And fourth, put a strong emphasis on gathering up-to-the-minute local intelligence.³³

In the face of an enemy employing asymmetric tactics, American military doctrine and planning need to do a much better job of explicitly leveraging the substantial nonmilitary elements of American power to achieve political goals versus the current singular parochial focus on combat operations. One can question whether coordination of the nonmilitary elements of national power is an appropriate role for the military, but what other entity can accomplish this task at the theater, operational, and tactical levels? Furthermore, in the contemporary operating environment it usually will be impossible for a theater or joint force commander to accomplish the mission by applying military power in isolation.

Emerging concepts such as Effects Based Operations and Operational Net Assessment may represent some progress toward improving interagency coordination during military operations.³⁴ All geographic combatant commands have established Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs). However, the US Joint Forces Command concept for the JIACGs describes them as “advisory groups.”³⁵ Although they are intended to “[provide] regular, timely, and collaborative day-to-day working relationships between civilian and military operational planners,” the representatives in the JIACG typically do not possess tasking authority with their parent agency. Planning and operations by non-DOD agencies still remain largely disconnected from military planning and operations.

If two organizations both under DOD control—CJTF-7 and CPA—exhibit such problems in synchronizing their efforts, the prognosis for efforts involving DOD, Department of State, Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and others is not good.³⁶ More needs to be done to produce coordination at the operational and tactical levels. Teaching leaders from the military and civilian agencies to work together would be a key step, but no one has stepped forward to put a substantial education program into place.³⁷ This is an area where DOD should take the lead, not only in regard to interagency support during post-major combat operations overseas, but also for DOD’s civil support and homeland defense missions within the United States.

“Contemporary threats . . . require interagency decisionmaking and collaboration at the operational level.”

What might effective interagency coordination look like in a headquarters similar to CJTF-7? One model might be something akin to a tactical headquarters where the S2/J2 (intelligence) and S3/J3 (operations) staffs work side-by-side to ensure their efforts and information are integrated. At the joint task force or combined joint task force level, key agency representatives would be assigned to or otherwise embedded in the appropriate staff directorates, rather than having just one person in the JIACG as is currently the case. Alternatively, a matrix-style organizational structure may be more valuable for interagency operations than a typical military hierarchy.³⁸

To list just a handful of organizations, special agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation might routinely be assigned to the intelligence and operations directorates. The intelligence, operations, and logistics directorates each should include representatives from the US Agency for International Development. Instead of just one person serving as the political advisor (POLAD) to the commander, Foreign Service Officers from the State Department should routinely be assigned to the operations staff and the strategy, plans, and policy staff. In many operations, the US Treasury Department and the Department of Homeland Security also will play critical roles that require staff integration.

For such interagency structures to be effective, the Department of Defense will have to reciprocate by assigning quality personnel to assist other agencies. One successful example is the creation of the Embassy Interagency Planning Group (EIPG) by Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan. The EIPG was credited with helping to make “Embassy Kabul and the Combined Field Command a model of tandem coordination to achieve joint goals.”³⁹ Another possible mechanism for coordinating the efforts of DOD, the Department of State, other agencies, and nongovernmental organizations is the State Department’s Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). Created in July 2004, S/CRS has “a broad mandate to develop policy options to respond to failing and post-conflict states,” but has yet to be fully funded.⁴⁰

Developing effective interagency integration will be neither simple nor easy. The National Security Council was designed to enable national-

level, strategic decisionmaking, and it performs this function pretty well. Contemporary threats, however, require interagency decisionmaking and collaboration at the operational level. Yet there is no effective system in place to cause this teamwork to happen. Some mechanism is necessary to oblige interagency compliance—perhaps designating a lead agency for each contingency or other operation and providing it with the authority to commit multi-agency resources, including money and personnel.⁴¹

The new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Corps General Peter Pace, has suggested the need for an “Interagency Goldwater-Nichols Act.”⁴² This may indeed be necessary to solve the dilemma of interagency coordination at levels below the National Security Council. Despite a slow start and many bumps in the road, the armed services have done a pretty good job of becoming joint over the past three decades. While the logic of joint operations was clear to both military theorists and practitioners, overcoming service parochialism and differences in culture, argot, and doctrine largely required an effort driven from the top down.

Yet a key difference between the move to “jointness” and interagency operations is that the armed forces had a clear chain of command, with the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs at the top to push through reform.⁴³ For many federal agencies, the first single point of authority is the President. Congress or the President should find a way to cause the various agencies of the executive branch to pull together at the operational level during war and post-conflict activities.⁴⁴

Lieutenants are taught to fight as members of a combined arms team and to assault through and past the objective instead of halting upon it. Similarly, our generals and political leaders need to learn how to conduct interagency campaigns that continue beyond the initial defeat of an enemy’s military forces. As we hit the 20-year mark of Goldwater-Nichols, the Defense Department has done a pretty good job of becoming joint. But joint alone is not good enough against the most likely threats of the present era. Technological improvements in combat capability, especially in information management, will be useful, but mostly will involve tinkering around the edges. We require a quantum leap to interagency operations.

NOTES

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1. Liz Sidoti, “General Says Iraq Insurgency Still Active,” Associated Press, 23 June 2005, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory?id=877219>.

2. “National Security Watch: Sen. Chuck Hagel Criticizes President Bush’s Performance on Iraq,” *US News & World Report*, 25 June 2005, <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/050620/20hagel.htm>.

3. There is no shortage of articles critical of US post-invasion activities in Iraq. For a positive assessment, see Dan Senor, “Meanwhile, Back in Baghdad,” *The Weekly Standard*, 21 March 2005, <http://www>.

weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/005/356syssg.asp?pg=1. The CPA also posts a list of "Historical Accomplishments" at http://www.cpa-iraq.org/pressreleases/20040628_historic_review_cpa.doc.

4. "Getting Out Right," *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 2005, p. 27.

5. The Department of Defense defines interagency operations as "the coordination that occurs between elements of Department of Defense, and engaged US Government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and regional and international organizations for the purpose of accomplishing an objective." US Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington: GPO, 9 May 2005). One example would be military units supporting the Federal Emergency Management Agency in response to a natural disaster.

6. For an example, see Thomas Ricks, "Army Historian Cites Lack of Postwar Plan," *The Washington Post*, 25 December 2004, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A24891-2004Dec24>.

7. According to Antulio Echevarria, "Post-conflict planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom, albeit imperfect, was already well underway before combat operations began. While the specifics of the resultant post-conflict scenario could not be known, the basic outlines were." Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Toward an American Way of War* (Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, March 2004), <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pdf/PUB374.pdf>.

8. See US Department of Defense, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, "Pre-war Planning for Post-war Iraq," available at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/dod/postwar_iraq.htm.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Paul Wolfowitz, "Prepared Statement for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee," 18 May 2004, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040518-depsecdef0381.html>.

11. Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, "Intervention, Stabilization, and Transformation Operations: The Role of Landpower in the New Strategic Environment," *Parameters*, 35 (Spring 2005), 43-45.

12. L. Elaine Halchin, "The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA): Origin, Characteristics, and Institutional Authorities," Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress, 29 April 2004, <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/RL32370.pdf>.

13. See Leonard Wong, *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, July 2004), <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=411&CFID=495243&CFTOKEN=29753740>.

14. Quoted in Bruce Hoffman, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, RAND occasional paper, OP-127-IPC/CMEPP (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, June 2004), p. 9.

15. Shortly after CJTF-7 was established, Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez succeeded Lieutenant General William Wallace as commander in July 2003. In May 2004, CJTF-7 transformed into Multi-National Force-Iraq and Multi-National Corps-Iraq. See GlobalSecurity.org, "Coalition Joint Task Force 7 [CJTF 7]," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/cjtf-7.htm>.

16. A CPA organization chart for January 2004 can be found on slide nine of the "Iraqi Program Management Office Information Brief," 3 February 2004, <http://www.uniraq.org/documents/CPA-PMO%20presentation%20part%201%20UN.ppt>.

17. As one CPA staffer explained it: "I've observed VTCs [video teleconferences] where Bremer talked directly to President Bush on one screen and Prime Minister Blair on the other." Conversation with the author, April 2004.

18. For an overview of the T&R strategy, see Coalition Provisional Authority, "Armed Forces and Militia Transition and Reintegration: Key Facts," n.d., http://www.iraqcoalition.org/transcripts/20040607_MNFI_factsheet.html.

19. Developing the strategy was only one step. CPA officials also negotiated with cooperative militias to obtain agreements to dissolve, using both the inducement of positions within security forces for rank and file members plus some leadership positions and the threat of a pending law that would make militias illegal if they had not signed an agreement.

20. See Gerry J. Gilmore, "Reconstruction Fund Helps Provide Better Life for Iraqis," American Forces Press Service, 14 January 2004, http://www.defense.gov/news/Jan2004/n01142004_200401146.html; and Senator Ted Stevens, "Senator Ted Stevens Remarks on the Commander's Emergency Response Program," 19 May 2004, <http://stevens.senate.gov/pr/2004/may/pr051904.htm>.

21. Given the swirl of Iraqi politics and conflicting interests, it is difficult to determine whether better cooperation between CJTF-7 and CPA would have increased the odds of successfully dismantling the militias. However, numerous militias remain active in Iraq and threaten the government's monopoly on legitimate force. See William S. Lind, "Outside Views Invisible Militias in Iraq," United Press International, 9 March 2005, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/upi-breaking/20050309-090619-6595r.htm>; and James Hider, "Analysis" Why Iraqis Fear Militias," Times Online, 19 April 2005, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7374-1574822,00.html>.

22. E-mail to author, 8 May 2005.
23. There were also several field grade military officers assigned directly to CPA. The fact that they reported to the CPA chain of command instead of CJTF-7 and typically wore civilian clothes was yet another source of friction.
24. State Department cables were a routine exception. These followed a set format and were widely coordinated, with concurrences formally recorded, before being sent to Washington.
25. "Deadly Attacks Rock Baghdad, Karbala," CNN.Com, 2 March 2004, <http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/03/02/sprj.nirq.main/>.
26. Doug Sample, "CPA Announces Measures to Tighten Border Security in Iraq," Armed Forces Information Service, 13 March 2004, http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2004/n03132004_200403133.html.
27. A copy can be found at Coalition Provisional Authority, "Statement by Ambassador Bremer," 13 March 2004, http://www.iraqcoalition.org/pressreleases/20040315_Border_Remarks_31503.html.
28. CJTF-7 did have a continuing role in providing some of the equipment for the Department of Border Enforcement, training for certain non-police Iraqi security personnel, and limited patrolling by Coalition units with international borders along their areas of responsibility. CJTF-7 spokesman Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt alludes to this in a press conference following the release of Ambassador Bremer's announcement. See Coalition Provisional Authority, briefing transcript, 13 March 2004, http://www.iraqcoalition.org/transcripts/20040313_Mar13_KimmittSenor.html.
29. See Ann Scott Tyson, "Iraq Battles its Leaking Borders," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6 July 2004, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0706/p01s02-woiq.html>.
30. This is not, however, to imply that all CJTF-7 and CPA interagency efforts were a failure. The many successes included: the turnover of Baghdad International Airport to Iraqi control and initiating the General Establishment of Civil Aviation in Iraq; although many of the militias did not ultimately dissolve, all of those that completed negotiations with CPA entered the electoral process as political parties; and Coalition troops and CPA staff worked together in a "Task Force Democracy" to hold dozens of democracy-building workshops to prepare individuals and groups for the upcoming elections and to promote civil society.
31. See "High Pay—and High Risks—for Contractors in Iraq," CNN.com, 2 April 2004, <http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/04/01/iraq.contractor/>; and Liza Porteus, "Iraq's New War Zone: American vs. American," FoxNews.com, 29 June 2005, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,161170,00.html>.
32. CPA e-mails from 4 April 2005.
33. Bruce Hoffman, "Plan of Attack," *The Atlantic Monthly*, July/August 2004, pp. 42-43.
34. See Douglas K. Zimmerman, "Understanding the Joint Force Headquarters," *Military Review*, 84 (July-August 2004), 28-32; and US Joint Forces Command, "Doctrinal Implications of Operational Net Assessment," 24 February 2004, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/education/jwfc_pam4.pdf.
35. US Joint Forces Command, "Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG)," n.d., http://www.jfcom.mil/about/fact_jiacg.htm.
36. Furthermore, the challenge is even greater for homeland security efforts, where agencies and organizations at the state and local levels as well as the private sector must also be incorporated.
37. Small programs exist, such as the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) and the National Guard's Joint Interagency Training Centers East and West (JITC-W and JITC-E). However, only a handful of students graduate each year from the CHDS while JITC-W and JITC-E have small budgets and have recently been given guidance that severely restricts the training of civilians. On occasion, civilians also attend the senior service colleges, which present courses on interagency operations but are focused at the strategic level, e.g. the National Security Council.
38. For an overview of matrix organizations, see Robert C. Ford and W. Alan Randolph, "Cross-Functional Structures: A Review and Integration of Matrix Organization and Project Management," *Journal of Management*, 18 (June 1992), 267-94.
39. US Department of State, Office of the Inspector General, "Monthly Report of Activities," June 2004, pp. 7-8, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/36237.pdf>.
40. John C. Buss, "The State Department Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization and its Interaction with the Department of Defense," US Army War College, Center for Strategic Leadership, CSL Issue Paper, July 2005, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usacsl/publications/09-05-S-CRS-DOD.pdf>.
41. The author is grateful to an anonymous reviewer for crystallizing this thought.
42. See Jim Garamone, "Pace Proposes Interagency Goldwater-Nichols Act," American Forces Press Service, 7 September 2004, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/dod/n09072004_2004090707.htm.
43. See Christopher M. Schnaubelt, "Interagency Command and Control: Planning for Counterdrug Support," *Military Review*, 76 (September-October 1996), 16-24.
44. As Hurricane Katrina recently demonstrated, the coordination problem increases exponentially during domestic operations such as homeland security or civil support when the efforts of state and local governments must also be considered.