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Filling Irregular Warfare's Interagency Gaps

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A government ill-executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad government . . . . The ingredients which constitute energy in the executive are unity; duration; an adequate provision for its support; and competent powers.

— Alexander Hamilton[1]

Hamilton did not have the modern US government's execution of irregular warfare in mind when he laid down his principles of executive leadership, but he would readily recognize violations of those principles if he were alive today. The US government has consistently failed to apply the full weight of its instruments of power during irregular warfare conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, largely due to an inability or unwillingness of various agencies to agree upon the ends, ways, and means needed to prosecute those wars. When coupled with organizational structures that make disjointed visions and efforts the norm rather than the exception, this strategic failing has had dire consequences for US national security, thwarting the "whole-of-government" approach needed to overcome irregular warfare's complex challenges. Accordingly, most participants and observers agree that the American government has to reorganize its interagency process to succeed in these wars and future national security challenges.

Unfortunately, that is where the consensus ends. For while nearly everyone recognizes the need for interagency process reform, few agree on the specific prescriptions for that improvement. Proposed solutions include designs for complex interagency coordinating structures, unrealistic calls for heightened senior-leader participation and centralized oversight, and plans for expanding the capacities of agencies that are ill-suited for the tasks required. These solutions typically hinge upon a pervasive assumption that effective interagency cooperation and integration will occur if only the proper coordinating mechanisms are created. This assumption is not only false, it also misreads history, human nature, and the practi-

cal experience gleaned from Afghanistan, Iraq, and other irregular warfare operations.

For a variety of reasons, the US government has turned to the Department of Defense (DOD) as a stopgap substitute for actual robust "whole-of-government" interagency structures in executing irregular warfare (IW). The results are mixed in the best cases and profoundly ineffective in the worst. The interagency problem primarily stems from a fundamental disunity of effort and incoherence of end-state vision among key US agencies at the national-strategic level. Also contributing is a lack of command authority and essential expertise at the theater-strategic and operational levels. But as the Department of Homeland Security's faults compellingly illustrate, the answer—resoundingly—is not to superimpose another bureaucratic coordinating apparatus across the different agencies involved.[2] Nor does the answer lie in rebuilding the National Security Council in an attempt to exercise centralized planning and oversight of national security operations, especially IW operations that do not readily lend themselves to deterministic, "cookie-cutter" solutions. Instead, any truly effective solution will involve revising agency mandates, consolidating lines of authority, building relevant expertise among key agencies, realigning incentive structures, and decentralizing authority and execution.

This article advances a number of assertions related to conducting irregular warfare in today's environment. First, the US government's existing interagency mechanisms have failed to effectively integrate and coordinate agency resources and efforts, a problem that arises primarily from a disjointedness of authority and vision at the national-strategic level. The result is correspondingly adverse effects at the theater-strategic and operational levels. Commonly proposed solutions to this major problem depend upon a set of faulty assumptions that makes these proposals unlikely to succeed, given the realities of the key agencies' cultural norms, level of existing expertise, comparative resources, and core defining tasks. Instead, any feasible and effective solution to the interagency problem should: (1) provide clear, task-driven strategic-level statements of intent, responsibility, and authority; (2) enable key agencies to develop relevant expertise at all levels; (3) give agencies operational control over personnel from other agencies to realize true unity of vision and effort; (4) integrate other-agen-

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cy personnel throughout the combatant commands; and (5) create interagency service career incentives.

To be clear, this article does not represent a call for DOD primacy across the spectrum of "hard" and "soft" applications of American power. On the contrary, while it is true that the DOD does require access to the expertise and resources needed to carry out its specific IW responsibilities, the broader expertise required to successfully prosecute irregular warfare, nation-building, and stability operations cannot and should not reside solely within DOD. Instead, the challenges associated with these missions will require developing leaders and capabilities within other key agencies with existing or developing national security roles, jurisdiction, and subject-matter expertise. So while the US military is the correct vehicle to deliver American power in the nonpermissive environments where most nation-building missions and all IW operations occur, it is equally important to develop complementary resources, leaders, and capabilities in other agencies that will be engaged in irregular warfare.

Admittedly, changes of this magnitude will not come easily. Implementation will require overcoming major practical and political obstacles. As such, it will be necessary to create a new functional combatant command—a US Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command, led by a senior executive from outside the DOD—to help surmount the obstacles. But the bottom-line remains that in spite of claims or theories to the contrary, the only feasible path to interagency unity of effort is true unity of command. History teaches that there is no feasible substitute for a clear statement of commander's intent and the leverage of command authority to implement it.

Disunity of Effort: Problem, Scope, and Cause

Gaps in the interagency process, beginning at the national-strategic level and subsequently trickling down level by level, have led to an incoherence of effort in Afghanistan and Iraq. These gaps bode poorly for future IW, stability, and reconstruction missions. Agencies and their leaders disagree regarding desired end-states and then pursue their own visions, as no single agency has sufficient leverage or authority to compel any others to follow its lead. Not surprisingly, then, the IW interagency effort demonstrates political scientist John W. Kingdon's insightful description of American bureaucratic practices in general. He noted that US agencies typically suffer from an incoherence of vision and effort while "nobody leads anybody else."[3] Observers inside and outside of the US government, including retired General Barry McCaffrey, Pakistani journalist Ahmed

The interagency problem stems from a fundamental disunity of effort and incoherence of end-state vision among key US agencies.

Rashid, and others, have offered similarly stark assessments of American IW efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.[4]

This disunity of effort shows itself in a number of ways. Projects are undertaken where they are least needed, as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and other non-DOD agencies choose not to operate in nonpermissive security environments. Compounding this weakness, these agencies then complete projects that are only partially resourced, such as constructing schools without providing the teachers needed to staff them; building courthouses or jails where no trained judges or prosecutors exist; or undertaking other similarly shortsighted projects that have impact only if one's metric for success is counting how many projects have been completed. Conversely, the military is too often guilty of disproportionately focusing on security-centered metrics that underemphasize the development of the rule of law, institutions of national and local governance, economic infrastructure, or much-needed literacy programs, all vitally important to IW success. These critical aspects of progress are overlooked on a regular basis.

The current operational-level corrections for the interagency problem are not nearly as effective as they are claimed to be. While Afghanistan's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) do in fact provide a venue for interagency coordination at the brigade level, the truth is that they vary widely in their levels of effectiveness, cohesion, and coherence.[5] As an example, a senior member of NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, the agency with nominal authority over the PRTs, indicated that he did not believe that he or other NATO military leaders could align the PRTs' efforts with the NATO command's specific lines of operations. Instead, he felt that the PRT members' ultimate loyalties resided with their parent US agencies or their home governments.[6] One observer suggests that PRT performance hinges almost solely upon the ability of the military commander to work around the interagency and Coalition obstacles to success.[7] While there are numerous venues for interagency coordination at the joint task force level of operations, it is clear to all participants that agreements reached in those venues ultimately have to be approved by the leaders of the parent organizations, far from the tip of the spear. These challenges are further exacerbated by the heavy concentration

of civilian contractors, as well as the veritable "alphabet soup" of agencies with roles, responsibilities, or expertise relevant to the IW mission. There are 13 other-than-DOD agencies listed in Joint Publication 3-08, the Defense Department manual on interagency, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental cooperation.[8]

There is no shortage of presidential guidance or prescribed interagency coordinating structures, so simply creating more "legislation" or "direction" is not the solution. The Clinton Administration's 1997 National Security Presidential Directive-56, "Managing Complex Interagency Operations," outlined new mechanisms for facilitating interagency coordination during peace and stability operations.[9] Presidential Decision Directive-71, "Strengthening Criminal Justice Systems in Support of Peace Operations," of 2000 defined the roles and responsibilities of federal agencies related to enhancing civilian law enforcement capabilities in peace operations.[10] After implementing National Security Presidential Directive-1, "Organization of the NSC System," in 2001, the Bush Administration gave further explicit interagency guidance in National Security Presidential Directive-44, "Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations," published in 2005.[11] DOD Directive 3000.05 operationalizes that guidance, as do several other documents.[12] Early in 2009, the State Department published the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, written collaboratively with input from each US agency that has a major national security role.[13] Obviously, there is no shortage of interagency guidance.

What all of these documents share in common, however, is a basic lack of statutory authority allowing any one agency of the US government to directly manage the resources or personnel of any other agency. Put another way, each of these documents encourages the agencies to work together, but none of them actually mandates cooperation or integration. As a result, each agency is ultimately free to pursue its own vision and decisions. To put the scope and complexity of the IW and nation-building challenges into proper perspective, former Afghan Minister of Finance Ashraf Ghani and co-author Clare Lockhart identify ten major functions of the state that have to be achieved for nation-building to succeed:

- Implement the rule of law.
- Provide security and manage the use of force.
- Provide administrative control.
- Manage public finance.
- Develop human capital.
- Provide social welfare.
- Provide basic services.
- Manage public assets.

- Establish commercial markets.
- Facilitate public borrowing.[14]

Clearly, no single agency of the US government has the expertise or resources to independently accomplish these nation-building tasks, and each of the ten functions requires coordinated and integrated actions from different US agencies. Yet no one agency is in charge under the current organizational structure.

Inevitably, the results have reflected a lack of coordination. In Afghanistan, Stephen Flanagan and James Schear of the Center for Strategic and International Studies identify "a progressive loss of momentum" since 2006, a trend they attribute to several obstacles, including "the inherent weakness of state institutions, the dearth of human capital, inadequate international resources, and a lack of visible progress at the local level to give Afghans hope."[15] They cite poor development practices, the narcotics trade, violence, and corruption as factors that have contributed to a dismally short 43.77-year Afghan life expectancy, a meager 28.1 percent literacy rate, and other key indicators reflecting a grim quality of life for the average Afghan.[16] In an insightful report highlighting conditions on the ground in Afghanistan, General McCaffrey lauds the quality of the military's kinetic operational efforts, but he then goes on to describe a nation that is "in misery," given its constant warfare, short life expectancy, high infant and pregnancy mortality rates, and wholesale government corruption.[17] In influential works on similar problems in Iraq, a number of regional experts offer accounts that are consistent with these perspectives.[18] The United States clearly has not gotten the interagency-irregular warfare model right just yet.

Commonly Proposed Solutions and Faulty Assumptions

The commonly proposed solutions to the US government's interagency challenges typically fit into one of three categories: increasing bureaucratic complexity, enhancing other-than-DOD agency capacity, and adding key leader engagement and oversight.

Increasing Bureaucratic Complexity

One commonly proposed solution emphasizes increasingly complex bureaucratic coordinating mechanisms, with expanded and complicated rules for interagency interaction, to provide additional, improved venues for interagency coordination. These technocratic approaches usually emphasize new coordinating venues, interagency checklists, common

terminologies, or a realignment of operating procedures. An example of this line of thinking was the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in 2005 issuing *The Post Conflict Reconstruction Essential Tasks Matrix*, an exhaustive compilation of the individual requirements for a complete nation-building mission.[19] This list includes hundreds of tasks. Similarly, analyst John Pulliam suggests realigning the State Department and DOD regional operational boundaries—redrawing the operational maps—to help facilitate common operating practices.[20] Other proposals along these lines have addressed the need for "official" interagency language and terminology, while still others have focused on redesigning the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups and similar operational-level interagency coordinating venues.

Enhancing Other Agency Capacity

A second set of solutions calls for enhancing the irregular warfare capabilities of other-than-DOD agencies. Examples include the effort to create a Civilian Response Corps within the State Department, as well as other proposals to scrap the DOD's geographic combatant command structure altogether in favor of a set of functional interagency commands, thereby deemphasizing the military's role while expanding the role of the US ambassadors in each nation. Like other State Department overseas postings, this proposal counts on volunteers to step forward for each contingency.[21] Similar ideas have included creating an independent organization responsible for integrating civilian and military planning, or replacing the geographic combatant commands with "regional embassy-like teams with all agencies represented."[22] Related initiatives are under consideration in other agencies that traditionally focus on America's domestic operations, including the US Department of Agriculture and Department of Justice.

Key Leader Engagement and Oversight

A third category of solutions focuses upon the largely unrealistic calls for heightened senior leader attention or centralized oversight of IW operations at the national level. Examples of this line of thinking include a proposal that would create a "czar," or Deputy National Security Adviser for Interagency Affairs, as well as calls for the creation of Crisis Action Teams for each IW mission.[23] Another related idea includes a proposal to expand the National Security Council in an attempt to give it a major role in the planning and oversight of these missions. Other concepts call for increased leader emphasis and oversight, with some proposals focusing on the President's role and others highlighting the role of the Secretary of De-

In spite of claims or theories to the contrary, the only feasible path to interagency unity of effort is true unity of command.

fense. Proponents are constantly lobbying for an increase in the level of priority assigned to various stability operations and IW missions.[24]

In every category, however, the proposed solutions fall short of solving the interagency problem, as each leads to ever-increasing dialogue between agencies without actually addressing the fundamental cause of the disunity of effort. Interagency practitioners find it hard to believe that additional coordinating bodies, complex checklists and plans, or extra presidential directives will result in more effective interagency operations. As long as agency personnel remain ultimately accountable to "the home office" instead of leaders on the ground, and the agencies in question do not have adequate opportunities to develop the operational- and strategic-level expertise needed to meet the complex challenges of IW, these operations will remain disjointed and ineffective.

Likewise, these proposed solutions almost always rest upon a set of faulty assumptions that are likely to undermine the prospect for success when implemented. For example, each of the solutions assumes to some degree that non-DOD agencies are able to operate in nonpermissive security environments, which is simply not the case. Proponents also assume that the key government agencies have the expertise needed to carry out the tasks required for nation-building and IW, such as creating the elements of rule of law, building local and national institutions of governance, or constructing other civil institutions and infrastructure. This assumption is false as well. For example, the US embassy in Kabul was given responsibility for overseeing the development of Afghan national and provincial governing institutions. While the embassy personnel and their interagency counterparts proved adept at their core competencies of strategic-level policy coordination, communication, and reporting, they fell far short of what was needed to implement governance at the national, provincial, and local levels. This shortfall was evident in the poor quality of the mentoring, inadequate planning, and low level of resolution in tracking mechanisms. The Department of State's core competency of conducting foreign policy clearly does not equate to the ability to build foreign governmental capacity, especially below the national-strategic level.

Another pervasive assumption that underpins the proposed interagency solutions is the idea that the lack of coordination is merely due to

a shortage of venues for coordination and dialogue. As this thinking goes, if all US government agencies were to routinely sit down together, they would achieve consensus regarding a common vision of the desired strategic end-state and actions needed to achieve it. Experience shows that this assumption just does not hold up, even among agencies with nominally hierarchical relationships, such as the State Department and USAID. Instead, a more common scenario is for agencies to disagree over their visions, and to "opt out" when decisions are made that contradict their views. Where there is no forcing function to compel cooperation or unified effort, collaboration rarely occurs. These solutions also dismiss the problems associated with multiple points-of-entry into the US government found in irregular warfare theaters. Host nation leaders, host nation agencies, allies, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations each commonly seek to "exploit the seams" between US agencies, often shopping leader-to-leader or agency-to-agency until they get the answer they are seeking to a resource or policy question.

Finally, some solutions assume that placing a senior leader from the State Department or USAID into a geographic or functional combatant leadership position will somehow automatically empower that person to lead at the theater-strategic or operational levels, functions that are often inconsistent with those agencies' core defining tasks and organizational cultures. The reality is that leaders from the Department of State, USAID, and other US agencies require significant training and developmental assignments in relevant commands before they are capable of exercising such demanding responsibilities.

A Feasible Interagency Solution

In crafting a workable framework for the US government, the Founders created a system of separated, shared, and fragmented powers aimed primarily at minimizing the potential for abuse of authority. They emphatically rejected the fragmentation of executive authority, however, instead creating a unitary executive to exercise presidential powers. As Alexander Hamilton noted in *The Federalist* #70, many historic colonies and other egalitarian societies had implemented organizational schemes aimed at dividing executive power among different actors within government. None of these approaches worked, however, leading to Hamilton's telling observation that whatever these fragmented executive structures might be in theory, they had uniformly failed in practice, regardless of the good intentions of the designers.[25]

Speaking specifically of the US government's executive branch, and relying upon a close observation of the failures of divided executive authority throughout history, Hamilton identified four components essential to realizing "energetic," or effective, executive leadership. These elements are unity, duration, an adequate provision for support, and competent powers.[26] Unity refers to mathematical unity, or the idea that the only effective executive is one person, ultimately responsible and accountable for exercising his authority. Hamilton described at length the fallacy of investing one set of executive responsibilities in multiple people. Duration is the idea of a fixed period of executive authority and responsibility, accompanied by periodic scrutiny, performance reviews, and accountability mechanisms. Adequate provision for support encompasses both appropriate compensation and a staff sufficient to enable the executive to succeed. The phrase competent powers refers to providing the executive leader with sufficient authority to carry out the office's assigned responsibilities, without circumscribing or limiting those powers in a way that prevents the mission from being accomplished. Applied to the modern context, Hamilton argued that history discounts the notion, or "hope," that merely creating enough venues for interagency dialogue will generate consensus, more effective coordination, or efficient execution of complex operations.

Examining the same problem more recently, political scientist and organizational theorist James Q. Wilson analyzes why some bureaucratic agencies are successful in the execution of their responsibilities while others fail. Using armies, schools, and prisons as representative bureaucratic agencies, Wilson attributes the success of the German Army against the French in World War II to an organizational culture which emphasized clearly understood objectives and decentralized planning and execution.[27] Citing military historian Martin van Creveld's careful analysis, he highlights the fact that success was realized through the Germans' "mission-oriented command system." Under this system, higher commanders expressed their intent in "an unmistakable way" while allowing subordinate commanders to exercise wide latitude in making personnel, resource allocation, and operational planning decisions, taking advantage of the subordinates' proximity to the situation and their superior understanding of circumstances on the ground.[28] In turn, subordinate commanders fostered independent decisionmaking and decentralized authority down to the lowest level, while holding subordinates strictly accountable for the consequences of their actions and severely punishing infractions.[29] Keeping Hamilton and Wilson's analyses and logic in mind, any effective solution to the US government's interagency problems should include the following.

(1) The interagency solution provides clear, task-driven, strategic-level statements of intent, responsibility, and authority. Most strategic doc-

The current operational-level corrections for the interagency problem are not nearly as effective as they are claimed to be.

uments currently emphasize vague "goals" that sound more like rhetorical platitudes or ambitious hopes than specific guidance. Furthermore, these goals can be interpreted differently among the various agencies according to their own organizational cultures and core competencies. As a result, the Army has viewed IW largely as a conventional security operation—though this perspective is changing—while the Department of State, USAID, and other agencies have interpreted the same goals in ways consistent with their organizational cultures. As Wilson notes, "The State Department has goals, but they are so general that no executive can derive from them a clear definition of the department's tasks."[30] To succeed in complex IW missions, the national leadership will have to create and clearly articulate one vision for each irregular warfare theater of operations, a vision built using one common language that clearly defines exact tasks to be accomplished and assigns specific roles, responsibilities, and authorities to the relevant agencies. Similarly, the national leadership is required to define and assign specific goals for improved interagency performance and then hold those agencies accountable.

(2) The solution should enable agencies to develop relevant interagency and IW expertise at every level. The agencies playing primary roles in IW have only part of the expertise required to succeed in these lengthy, complex, and demanding missions. These agencies often have relevant expertise at one end of the strategic spectrum while lacking corresponding skill sets at the other levels of warfare. Accordingly, any solution to the interagency challenge for IW has to assist all agencies in their development of subject-matter experts for each set of tasks and area of responsibility. These may include, but are not limited to, operators and planners from the State Department, USAID, DOD, and other responsible agencies. This task-by-task and country-by-country expertise cannot be developed merely by reading books. It is developed by means of a focused and persistent effort over time, in an attempt to understand the challenges of nation-building and IW as well as the culture, demography, geography, politics, infrastructure, economics, key leaders, and associated transnational movements of those particular countries and regions.

Put another way, America cannot afford to continue to apply ad hoc solutions to recurring challenges. Instead, it needs to build and maintain the expertise required to execute nation-building and IW missions. To

facilitate the sharing of interagency and IW lessons learned across agencies, it will be helpful to create a national security clearinghouse similar to the Center for Army Lessons Learned. To avoid agency parochialism, this center should be housed in the National Security Council. As the US Joint Forces Command leadership has noted, "The joint force will need patient, persistent, and culturally savvy people to build the local relationships and partnerships essential to executing irregular warfare."[31]

(3) The interagency solution needs to give the designated lead agency operational control over personnel from other agencies if we are to realize true unity of vision and effort. Any feasible and desirable interagency approach requires giving combatant and joint task force commanders operational control over interagency personnel and the subject-matter experts, during the time they are assigned to that command. One benefit of operational control will be to provide genuine professional development and education opportunities for national security planners and operators from all relevant agencies, facilitating the cross-fertilization of organizational cultures and expertise as well as enhanced interagency effectiveness at all levels of planning and execution. Likewise, commanders should have streamlined access to funds that provide direct, significant, and visible impacts in the lives of average citizens within the theater of operations. Practitioner and thinker John Nagl identifies the Commander's Emergency Response Program as one such vehicle.[32] The typical current approach is for the Department of State and other key non-DOD agencies to retain final approval for spending decisions at their headquarters in Washington, D.C. Similarly, this level of operational control requires civilian contractors' employment contracts be results-based rather than merely time-based, a move consistent with the governmental reforms suggested by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, architects of the "Reinventing Government" initiative.[33] In a sense, these moves to decentralize operational decisionmaking and personnel control will take advantage of the benefits of the broader system of "federalism," where the key decisions that affect local operations are made by the leaders closest to the situation.

(4) The solution should integrate personnel from various agencies throughout the functional and geographic combatant commands. This change would bring differing perspectives into the planning, resourcing, and operational processes of every command, ensuring that each agency has the opportunity to have its viewpoints heard. It would also be wise to create new deployable interagency structures to mobilize as needed to jumpstart the interagency process, similar to the US Joint Forces Command's Joint Enabling Capabilities Command and its deployable elements that help task forces bridge the gap between single-service and joint operations. These new interagency structures would represent a cadre of trained

specialists in nation-building and IW, with emphasis upon the interagency process and the overlaps and gaps between agencies. It may be appropriate to build these "Standing Joint Interagency Core Elements" in each geographic and functional combatant command. Interim measures might include placing deputies for economic development (from USAID) and governance and diplomacy (from the State Department) in each combatant command, similar to the mix in US Africa Command. In sum, the basic objective would be to shift the military's primary focus from security force-centered operations to citizen-centered ones, again consistent with the reform themes advocated by Osborne and Gaebler.[34] This change would build upon two earlier operational- and tactical-level interagency success stories, the Marine Corps' Combined Action Platoons and the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program; both achieved significant interagency cooperation in Vietnam.[35]

(5) The solution needs to create meaningful interagency service career incentives. Any solution to the interagency problem will also need to align personnel incentives with the specific IW tasks that the agencies are assigned. These career incentives may take the form of promotions, awards, financial incentives, or professional educational opportunities, earmarked for the deployable personnel from the DOD and the other key agencies who become the cadre of interagency, IW, and humanitarian assistance and development missions. Unfortunately, US agencies typically take the opposite approach in their personnel practices, whether due to promotion considerations, a desire for balanced experience throughout the organizations, or a perceived need to offer opportunities fairly. Wilson notes, "US agencies distribute assignments in ways that seem to minimize the chance for key employees to become expert in their tasks."[36] As James Madison wrote in *The Federalist* #51, "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition," meaning that the agencies' most talented individuals should receive equal opportunities to pursue leadership development and advancement.[37]

Overcoming Political and Practical Obstacles

Changes of this magnitude will not come easily, whether viewed from a practical perspective or a political one. Foreign policy practitioners have been skeptical of the expansion of the military's role in the execution of foreign policy since the 1990s, when the Clinton Administration gave the DOD new responsibilities for demining, drug interdiction, antiterrorism, disaster relief, and other unconventional missions.[38] As a result, political obstacles to these proposed changes to interagency practices will include concerns about a perceived militarization of US foreign policy. Along these lines, journalist Dana Priest asserted in a recent book that

To succeed in complex IW missions, national leadership has to create and articulate one vision for each irregular warfare theater of operations.

a mismatch exists between the "culture and mission" of the demands of reconstruction and stabilization operations and the US military's mindset.[39] She argues that the demands of the Global War on Terrorism have exceeded even the broad capabilities of the military, stretching it too thin while requiring skills and expertise not available in the DOD.[40]

Similarly, bureaucratic politics and existing organizational cultures will create additional resistance to change. Specifically, attempts to reduce or change the roles, responsibilities, or resources of any of the major US agencies involved in nation-building and IW probably will result in bureaucratic "pushback" that can undermine the effort. Therefore, any solutions to the problem of interagency gaps should be additive to all organizations concerned. That is, to be successful, organizational changes generally have to increase agency resources rather than subtract from them, and these changes should not threaten the existing functions and organizational culture of the agencies affected. Wilson found that additive types of changes—or the addition of roles and resources—are the ones most likely to succeed, given bureaucratic and political realities.[41]

From a practical perspective, the main obstacles to this proposal center largely on the lack of relevant expertise that agencies require to execute the nation-building and IW tasks, as well as the current DOD-driven combatant command structure's limit on providing career incentives and senior leadership opportunities to non-DOD personnel. These practical obstacles include a lack of learning opportunities and mechanisms to provide interagency and irregular warfare skills for civilian agency personnel. Civilian employees do not have significant opportunities to develop the operational planning expertise that becomes second-nature in the DOD's planning culture, or the career incentives to develop these professional skills—although senior-level field assignments such as the Deputy Chief of Mission are in fact highly coveted within the Department of State. Finally, senior leaders from the State Department, USAID, and other key agencies with a role in IW do not have a chance to serve a culminating assignment as a combatant commander under the current structure, thus maximizing their rationale for pursuing "home office" assignments within their parent agencies rather than committing to the interagency track.

Creating an additional functional combatant command, the US Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command, led by the State De-

partment or USAID, would aid in overcoming many of these impediments. Headed by a four-star equivalent civilian from USAID or the State Department, this command would provide a developmental track for aspiring planners and operators from USAID, Department of State, and other relevant agencies, as well as promotion opportunities and career incentives. The new command would facilitate the integration, interaction, and development of personal relationships among key agencies, while enabling the State Department, USAID, and other non-DOD agencies to develop much-needed planning and operational expertise at the theater-strategic and operational levels. Movement back and forth from the US Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command to mainstream State Department and USAID assignments would serve to cross-fertilize those agencies, DOD, and the other combatant commands. Similar to the organization of US Africa Command, it would be appropriate to provide a military deputy to the new command, and to integrate DOD personnel at every level. The creation of this combatant command would be additive, permitting the agencies to maintain their organizational cultures, basic capabilities, and structures, while helping to demilitarize the face of American foreign policy and at the same time enhancing the interagency process.

If America intends to continue to attempt to "fix failed states," then it is imperative that we reshape the relationships among the relevant US government agencies. Using the DOD as a stopgap substitute for actual "whole-of-government" structures in the execution of irregular warfare and nation-building has yielded results that have been lackluster at best. It is quite likely that more of these nation-building and IW missions will occur in the future.[42] Approaches that give agencies all of the responsibility for such missions but insufficient authority to accomplish them are destined to fail. Our nation ignores the basic and immutable principles of executive leadership outlined by Hamilton and others at its peril.

NOTES

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3. John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (2d ed.; New York: Pearson, 1997), 71-89.

4. See Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The US and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Viking, 2008); Barry R. McCaffrey, "After Action Report: Visit NATO SHAPE Headquarters and Afghanistan, 21-26 July 2008" (West Point, N.Y.: US Military Academy, Department of Social Sciences, 30 July 2008); and Richard de Villafranca, "Reconsidering Afghanistan: Time for an 'Azimuth Check,'" *Parameters*, 38 (Winter 2008-09).

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8. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination during Joint Operations, Volume II* (Washington: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2006), Appendix B.

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10. Ibid., 9.

11. Ibid., xiv.

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16. Ibid., 136.

17. McCaffrey, 3.

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