

US Inter-Agency Unity of Effort in Stability Operations: Ad hoc Solutions for Recurring Problems

A Monograph

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Abstract

US Inter-Agency Unity of Effort in Stability Operations: Ad hoc Solutions for Recurring Problems, by MAJ Stephen M. Cowne, US Army, 47 pages.

The synchronization between US military and US civilian agencies during stability operations has proven problematic during past and present conflicts. While there has been an acknowledgement by the US government and military of the importance of unity of effort, the current organizational structure is inadequate to achieve a unified effort during stability operations and the United States has relied on ad-hoc structures to compensate.

This monograph conducts a comparison of the organizational structures of the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program during the Vietnam War and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Both case studies present two ad-hoc models developed during stability operations attempting to unify the civilian and military efforts. Both cases provide frameworks illustrating positive and negative practices, and the dangers of relying solely on ad-hoc organizations to solve institutional organizational problems.

Counterinsurgency theory, US doctrine, and the case studies support this monograph's conclusion that unity of command is necessary for unity of effort and that the US government lacks the institutional structure to provide a unified effort between US military and civilian agencies during stability operations. The necessity of ad-hoc solutions during stability operations will continue unless the US government can establish a unified command structure at the national and operational level to allow for US military and civilian agency operational integration.

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Acronyms

ADP	Army Doctrinal Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrinal Reference Publication
AO	Area of Operations
APC	Accelerated Pacification Campaign
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
CA	Civil Affairs
CFLCC	Combined Forces Land Component Command
CENTCOM	Central Command
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Program
CJCMOTF	Combined Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force
CHLCs	Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINPAC	Commander-in-Chief Pacific Command
CMO	Civil Military Operations
CMOC	Civil Military Operations Center
COIN	Counter Insurgency
CORDS	Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support
DIOCC	District Intelligence Operations and Coordination Center
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
FM	Field Manual
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GVN	Government of South Vietnam
HES	Hamlet Evaluation System
ICEX	Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Program
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGO	Inter-governmental Organization

ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JP	Joint Publication
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group
MACV	Military Assistance Command Vietnam
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NLF	National Liberation Front
NSC	National Security Council
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
OCO	Office of Civilian Operations
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PF	Popular Forces
PIOCC	Provincial Intelligence and Operations Coordination Center
PKSOI	Peace Keeping and Stability Operations Institute
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
RF	Regional Forces
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USIA	United States Information Agency
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
USIP	United States Institute for Peace
VC	Viet Cong
VCI	Viet Cong Infrastructure

WWII

World War II

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Introduction

The synchronization between US military and civilian agencies efforts during stability operations has proven problematic for the United States in past conflicts. While military doctrine and government policies acknowledge the importance of unity of effort between US military and civilian agencies, the current structure does not alleviate the problems that result from entities that follow their own separate chain of commands even when supposedly integrated for particular operations. Because of this lack of unity of effort, the United States has relied on ad-hoc organizations throughout its history to attempt to solve the problems inherent in the interagency coordination structure in combat and stability operations. The interagency structure necessary in conflict zones must be institutionalized during peacetime to avoid the inefficiencies and failures caused by improvising organizational solutions for stability operations.

Current US military doctrine defines stability operations as activities that establish or maintain a secure environment, provide essential services, reconstruct infrastructure, and provide humanitarian relief.¹ Along with providing area security, stability operations allow ground forces to consolidate gains by converting temporary operational success into an enduring position, with stability operations as the primary way to affect the civilian population and set conditions that enable the establishment of lasting peace in the area of operations.² Stability operations are also essential for any counter-insurgency (COIN) operations because they reinforce the legitimacy of the affected government and reduce the influence of the insurgents.³ In the case studies covered by this monograph the terminology that was used at the time will not be changed, but it should be

¹ US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), V-15.

² US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 2-4, 3-7.

³ US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-07, Stability* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), xvii-xviii.

noted that the term pacification that was used during the Vietnam War represents the same type of activities included in stability operations—with both seeking the same outcome.

Stability operations typically involve the use of multiple instruments of national power with the Department of State (DoS) playing a prominent role. As the oldest department, the DoS holds the authority to implement US foreign policy while overseeing and coordinating other US Government (USG) agency efforts overseas.⁴ The necessity of the Department of Defense (DoD) and the DoS operating simultaneously in an area requires direct coordination of activities between the two organizations to achieve unity of effort.

According to a DoD Science Board Report, “since 1945, the United States has engaged in more military interventions than any other country in the world,” with the frequency of engagements involving stability operations averaging every two years.⁵ This frequency has led to a large national security apparatus to manage these interventions, complete with its own set of bureaucracies.⁶ The cost of these stability operations have equated to 80 percent of the DoD’s supplemental funds for operations, while combat operations have only accounted for 20 percent.⁷ The disparity in funds can be attributed to the fact that almost all combat operations are followed by stability operations and some stability operations are not preceded by combat operations.⁸

Despite the prevalence of stability operations in the US Army’s past, the current focus on large-scale ground combat operations threatens to marginalize non-kinetic operations and

⁴ Robert Worley, *Orchestrating The Instruments of Power* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 255.

⁵ Aaron Rapport, *Waging War, Planning Peace* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 215; US Department of Defense, *Defense Science Board Report on Institutionalizing Stability Operations Within DoD*, Report No. ADA441078, (Washington, DC: Defense Science Board, 2005), accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2000s/ADA441078.pdf>, 9.

⁶ Rapport, *Waging War*, 215.

⁷ US Department of Defense, *Defense Science Board Report on Institutionalizing Stability Operations*, 9.

⁸ Ibid.

reinforce the pattern of increase and decrease in the importance of non-combat operations.⁹ This pattern is evident in the history of US Army Civil Affairs units. The US Army dismantled its Civil Affairs division after World War II (WWII) and spread its functions across several Army agencies, but was forced to reconsolidate and re-organize Civil Affairs units after the Korean War and begin peace-time Civil Affairs training.¹⁰ As the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have drawn down, the Army has dismantled one of its active duty Civil Affairs brigades and returned its doctrinal focus to large-scale ground combat operations.¹¹ Based on the frequency of stability operations the United States has participated in since the end of the Cold War, the US Army's pattern of downsizing its capability or sharp doctrinal shifts beguiles the realities of how the capacity to conduct stability operations has proven necessary.

In all the wars that the United States has fought it has fallen upon the Army as the lead to establish political and economic order, but US political and military leaders have consistently avoided institutionalizing and preparing for the military and political activities that are associated with stability operations following combat operations. This has led to a lack of capacity for stability tasks within the Army, but has not resulted in a sufficient standing civilian capability in such agencies as the State Department.¹² This lack of civilian capacity was made evident during the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan where the State Department was hampered by budgetary shortfalls and organizational and cultural tensions that prevented an effective effort to materialize.¹³ USAID's employee count has decreased from around 15,000 during the Vietnam War to just above 2,000 today, with most of its work contracted out, leaving it arguably

⁹ Rapport, *Waging War*, 6.

¹⁰ Stanley Sandler, *Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of US Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004), 308, 338.

¹¹ Nadia Schadlow, *War and the Art of Governance* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017), 19.

¹² *Ibid.*, 14, 17.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 17.

understaffed to provide the level of support needed for successful stability operations in the recent Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.¹⁴

The peace-time structure and capabilities of US civilian agencies that are responsible for conducting stability operations have proven insufficient in areas of conflict and the US military has been forced to adjust to fill the capability gap. Even when civilian agencies provide capabilities, the effort has typically been plagued by decentralized actions that hinder efficiency and progress toward a desired end state. *Joint Publications (JP) 3-08* and *3-07* both stress that unity of effort is necessary to achieve success in incorporating all the elements of national power, but there is no operational structure that provides the unity of command necessary to ensure unity of effort.¹⁵

American Denial Syndrome

“American Denial Syndrome” is Nadia Schadlow’s explanation for the United States’ continued avoidance of preparing for activities necessary for the restoration of order during and after combat operations.¹⁶ Schadlow identifies four key themes underlying the denial syndrome.

The first theme is the discomfort for democracies in giving the military the lead role in political activities. Schadlow believes that this concern is rooted in the idea that “it is dangerous to give the military governing authority,” and states that are committed to civilian control over the military are very hesitant to allow the military to engage in governance operations.¹⁷

The second theme behind the denial syndrome originates from the United States’ anticolonial legacy and its ambivalence toward governing others. During World War II, both President Roosevelt and Truman were against the military performing governance operations; and

¹⁴ Worley, *Orchestrating The Instruments of Power*, 250.

¹⁵ US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-07*, I-19; Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08*, I-1, I-2.

¹⁶ Schadlow, *War and the Art of Governance*, 14.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

in more current history, President George W. Bush commented during his 2000 presidential campaign that US troops should not be used for nation building activities.¹⁸ Bush later changed his stance on nation building once OEF began, admitting the necessity of nation building operations in Afghanistan.¹⁹

Third, the belief that civilians could and should take the lead in governance operations during and after war is widespread. This view has prevented the development in capacity for the military to properly undertake stability operations, but has not prevailed in creating enough standing capacity in civilian agencies like the DoS. The United States has consistently turned to military reservists to fill the gap of civilians working on reconstruction and development projects.²⁰

The fourth and final theme underlying the denial syndrome is the Army's traditional view of war, which emphasizes battle and defeating the enemy over achieving broader strategic outcomes. This approach has perpetuated the separation of stability and combat operations within the Army; it can be traced back to the emergence of low intensity conflicts and unconventional warfare during the Cold War that placed a separation between these type of conflicts and "regular" warfare. Schadow further explores this separation of types of warfare by postulating that Clausewitz's influence on the US Army and his placing stability tasks as different from "war proper" serves to reinforce the US Army's view of stability operations as external to war.²¹

Schadow's four themes that shape "American Denial Syndrome" have created continuous tension for the United States as it planned and executed wars. Despite the frequent requirements for stability tasks, Schadow states that the United States "did not institutionalize

¹⁸ Schadow, *War and the Art of Governance*, 16, 17.

¹⁹ George Bush, *Decision Points* (New York, NY: Crown Publishing Group, 2010), 205.

²⁰ Schadow, *War and the Art of Governance*, 17.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 18, 19.

lessons from past contingencies;” and the problem remains rooted in the culture of the military and of the civilian leadership.²²

Case Study Selection Criteria

The National Security Act of 1947 integrated all parts of the military under the National Military Establishment headed by the Secretary of Defense; and created the National Security Council (NSC) to advise the President on integration of the different elements of national power to enable more effective cooperation.²³ While the National Security Act of 1947 provided a more unified structure for the military, it left the Department of State and its functions separate. While the National Security Council is the official tool for the coordination of effort amongst the many USG departments and agencies, it has proven unprepared to orchestrate the instruments of national power leaving each agency to act in relative isolation.²⁴ This fragmented structure has ensured that stability operations, which typically involve multiple USG agencies and the military, suffer from a lack of unity in command and effort.

The persistence of ad-hoc organizations popping up in conflict areas as a remedy to the fragmentation inherent in the US interagency approach illustrates the necessity to develop an enduring structure to provide the unity of command and effort that is consistently lacking at the start of US stability operations. This slow and sometimes counterproductive start only serves to lengthen the amount of time that the United States must spend in conflict areas attempting to stabilize the country or region sufficiently to warrant sending our troops back home.

The case studies examined demonstrate the inability of the current structure to perform acceptably, and illustrate improvised structures that emerged to compensate for the initial organizational shortcomings. The two cases selected are the Civilian Operations and

²² Schadlow, *War and the Art of Governance*, 23.

²³ National Security Act of 1947, Public Law 235 of July 26, 1947; 61 STAT. 496, accessed December 15, 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1947-07-26.pdf>

²⁴ Worley, *Orchestrating The Instruments of Power*, xxvii.

Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) in Vietnam and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Afghanistan. Both cases will be judged primarily on the ability of each to coordinate US military and civilian agency efforts at the operational level and secondarily on whether each was successful in achieving its desired effects. Unity of effort will be the main criteria for examining each case as success can be interpreted differently and other factors outside the span of CORDS and PRTs have a determining effect on the end state.

Both case studies were selected to represent the organizational structure and culture that emerged after the National Security Act of 1947, and provide studies that occur in different places and several decades apart. Vietnam illustrates a hard lesson for the United States in counterinsurgency and the stability operations that must accompany these operations, and Afghanistan illustrates the cycle of shifting focus as a re-learning of the lessons that Joseph Nye in *The Future of Power* says “had almost been deliberately forgotten after Vietnam.”²⁵ Looking further back than post-World War II can present a more simplified where military commander, such as General Winfield Scott during his Mexico City Campaign, exercise complete control of both military and what is now known as stability operations devoid of other USG agencies.

For both case studies, the United States attempted to strengthen and legitimize a foreign nation’s government while combating an insurgency. Both saw a mix of conventional and non-conventional combat operations coupled with massive reconstruction and development efforts to win the hearts and minds of the local populace to legitimize the internationally recognized government of the nation in which the United States was intervening.

Organizational Structure in Counterinsurgency Theory

Counterinsurgency theory, based on the works of David Galula, Robert Thompson, and Frank Kitson, provides a framework for the organizational structure needed to achieve unity of effort while countering insurgency and conducting stability operations. The consensus amongst

²⁵ Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2011), 37.

the mentioned theorists is that unity of effort between the military and civilian actors is paramount to successfully orchestrating a counterinsurgency.

Galula presented an integrated civilian-military staff as an organizational option that allowed a more direct line of command and was quicker to react than a committee-based approach. He emphasized the need for quick decisions and quick reaction because opportunities at the tactical level are fleeting and immediate action is required if the opportunity presented is to be seized. Galula believed that the members of an organization should act as if they were of the same mind if the problem is to be solved.²⁶

Kitson impressed the importance of a unified command to address the insurgency being established at the top of the chain because failure to do so will result in the subordinate members of each element, whether civilian or military, receiving instructions from their own command chain. This fractured approach led to contradictory instructions being disseminated to each element, and will at best be un-coordinated.²⁷ Kitson also proposed integrating soldiers with the government agencies that will take part in fighting the insurgency, providing integration throughout the entire chain of command.²⁸

Thompson stressed that the counterinsurgency plan by the government must include all elements of national power brought to bear against the insurgency in order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure no gaps in the effort emerge.²⁹ Thompson warned that lack of a balanced and coordinated effort will result in “military operations producing no lasting results because they are

²⁶ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 64-65.

²⁷ Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books), 68-69.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

²⁹ Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers), 55.

unsupported by civil follow-up action.”³⁰ Similarly, civilian measures in disputed areas are a waste if they are unsupported by military operations to provide security.³¹

The analysis of all three theorists surmises that a holistic national strategy incorporating all elements of national power be developed and then implemented through a unified command which incorporates both military and civilian agencies. The operational structure must also combine civilian and military elements to prevent duplication of effort and counterproductive activities. With a unified command and integrated operational structure, the counterinsurgency effort should exhibit a unified and efficient approach that possesses the agility to respond to quickly changing conditions in the operational environment.

Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS)

The US policy of containment toward communism during the Cold War led to its involvement in Vietnam.³² Beginning in the early 1950s, the United States dispatched the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) to the South Vietnam capital of Saigon to assist the French in countering the communist expansion from North Vietnam as part of the US mutual assistance pact with France.³³ The United States slowly increased its MAAG numbers, growing from 342 in 1954 to 685 in 1960 with the intent to build a regular ground force that could delay North Vietnamese or Chinese incursion until US reinforcements arrived.³⁴

In 1960 North Vietnam created the National Liberation Front (NLF), a group intended to serve as the focal point of insurgent activity in South Vietnam and establish its own shadow government while coordinating the activities of the Viet Cong (VC) and other groups opposed to

³⁰ Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, 55.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Justin Ticknor, “The Civil Side of Irregular Warfare,” (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, 2014), 23.

³³ Graham Cosmas, *MACV, The Joint Command in the Years of Escalation, 1962-1967* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 6-7.

³⁴ Ibid., 11.

the South Vietnamese government.³⁵ Adhering to Maoist doctrine, the NLF's plan to establish its shadow government was to force South Vietnamese government officials, militia, informants, and teachers from the villages and assume those vacated roles.³⁶ This shadow government was known to US forces as the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI) which included the communist political and military leaders in South Vietnam.³⁷ The VCI recruited peasants into the guerilla forces, collected taxes, usually in the form of agricultural products, gathered intel, served as guides to North Vietnamese conventional forces while providing them shelter and food, coordinated transmission of messages, and conducted propaganda.³⁸

Under the conditions set by the NLF, the Viet Cong waged a nationwide insurgency resulting in significant portions of rural South Vietnam coming under NLF control in the early 1960s.³⁹ The NLF was successful in establishing itself as a shadow government, with political cells extending from the village level, through district and provincial political committees, to a clandestine central authority.⁴⁰ South Vietnam simultaneously suffered the threat of North Vietnamese conventional forces and the Viet Cong insurgency.

Counterinsurgency operations in South Vietnam took the form of the process known as pacification.⁴¹ Pacification was the combination of military and civilian efforts to provide security and economic and social reforms while supporting the Government of (South) Vietnam (GVN).⁴² Pacification ultimately sought to recapture territory under insurgent control and win the

³⁵ Richard Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 6.

³⁶ Mark Moyer, *Phoenix, and the Birds of Prey: Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism in Vietnam* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 366

³⁷ Moyer, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 366.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Cosmas, *MACV*, 15.

⁴⁰ Hunt, *Pacification*, 7.

⁴¹ Cosmas, *MACV*, 17.

⁴² Hunt, *Pacification*, 2.

allegiance of South Vietnamese inhabitants to the GVN.⁴³ The success of pacification relied on the combination of security for Vietnamese villagers from insurgent coercion and reasons for these villagers to support the existing GVN regime.⁴⁴ This necessitates a coordinated effort between the military and civilian agencies as security must be established and maintained for any attempt at “winning the hearts and minds” to be successful.

The initial plan, signed by President Kennedy in 1961, left government agencies in Washington to separately push their own programs with little regard for an overall strategy.⁴⁵ The plan lacked any semblance of unity of effort resulting in a fragmented approach. It focused on strengthening conventional forces, while ignoring those forces designated for guerilla warfare, and neglected the communist threat in the countryside.⁴⁶ Until later re-organization, “US organizations involved in the effort suffered from organizational constructs and designs that were based on their peacetime mission.”⁴⁷

As the United States increased its support for the South Vietnamese, the necessity for a new headquarters to control the forces in Vietnam emerged.⁴⁸ In 1961, the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) was established to direct US military activities and advise the Saigon government.⁴⁹ The MACV commander reported directly to the Commander in Chief, Pacific (CINPAC), but the relationship with the DoS and the ambassador rested upon informal agreements with no codified structure to coordinate military and civilian agency efforts.⁵⁰

⁴³ Cosmas, *MACV*, 17.

⁴⁴ Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army in Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 215-16.

⁴⁵ Hunt, *Pacification*, 14.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁷ Jan Gleiman, *The Organizational Imperative: Theory and History on Unity of Effort in Counterinsurgency Campaigns* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CGSC Foundation Press, 2011), 45-46.

⁴⁸ Cosmas, *MACV*, 21.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 26-28.

When massive military deployments began in 1965, the pacification program was riddled with problems.⁵¹ In *Westmoreland's War*, Gregory Daddis stated that “the increasing American commitment in Vietnam brought confusion over who was responsible for the growing number of military and civilian agencies operating within the war-torn country; the South Vietnamese and their American counterparts found it nearly impossible to coordinate the multiple military and civilian activities involved in pacification.”⁵² The *Pentagon Papers* addressed the growing disunity in the US approach to pacification in Vietnam:

In 1965, each agency began to have its own field personnel operating under separate and parallel chains of command. This latter event was ultimately to prove the one which gave reorganization efforts such force, since it began to become clear to people in Washington and Saigon alike that the Americans in the provinces were not always working on the same team, and that they were receiving conflicting or overlapping instructions from a variety of sources in Saigon and Washington.⁵³

The creation of the MACV did nothing to address the fragmented approach to pacification and would require further re-organization later in the conflict (see Appendix, Figure 4).

The first step toward effectively addressing the insurgency in South Vietnam came at the Honolulu conference in February 1966 where President Johnson accorded pacification equal importance with the military offensive.⁵⁴ Prior to this conference, various agency studies had called for an integrated US effort and considered securing the countryside more important than destroying enemy units.⁵⁵

The lack of any headway against the insurgency resulted in the creation of the Office of Civilian Operations (OCO) on November 26, 1966, and control of the field offices of all the civilian agencies were transferred to OCO whose head reported to Deputy Ambassador William

⁵¹ Hunt, *Pacification*, 30.

⁵² Gregory Daddis, *Westmoreland's War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 122.

⁵³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *The Pentagon Papers: History of United States Decisionmaking in Vietnam, Volume II Senator Gravel Edition* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1974), 537.

⁵⁴ Cosmas, *MACV*, 353.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Porter (see Appendix, Figure 3).⁵⁶ Concurrently, General Westmoreland, the MACV commander, designated a brigadier general to be his special assistant for pacification and to provide a liaison between his command and OCO.⁵⁷ Porter was unable to reprogram any money or support of the separate agencies because under OCO each individual agency still maintained separate control of its logistical support and funding.⁵⁸ OCO was never envisioned to succeed except to deflate civilian objections to a new organizational structure that President Johnson had already envisioned.⁵⁹ The President wanted to move from multiple to singular responsibility for pacification efforts, and OCO was the logical halfway step to enable what would follow.⁶⁰

The pacification effort in Vietnam to this point highlights the ineffectiveness in the absence of unity of effort and unity of command. The splintered nature of how civilian agencies operated in a disparate nature devoid of any significant coordination with military forces underpins the inability of pacification operations to be successful without a coordinated effort along unified lines of effort and lines of operation. The institutionalized methods and structure of the time did not lend itself to any semblance of unity of effort, with each agency obligated to remain responsible to its headquarters in Washington.⁶¹ The initial effort was fraught with ineffective methods along a splintered line of effort. The United States lacked the ability to coordinate all aspects of its pacification operations resulting in different types of aid being negotiated between the head of the relevant US agency and their Vietnamese counterpart.⁶² It took an overhaul of the existing organization and method of operations to provide effectiveness to

⁵⁶ Douglas Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: US Doctrine and Performance* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1977), 238.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Hunt, *Pacification*, 83.

⁵⁹ Thomas Scoville, "United States Organization for Pacification Advice and Support in Vietnam, 1954-1968," (PhD thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1967), 185.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 117.

⁶² Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, 58.

the effort of pacification in Vietnam. President Johnson became frustrated by the lack of coordination among the US agencies, leading to placing pacification efforts under General Westmoreland and abandoning OCO just six months after its creation.⁶³

The Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) was created May 1967, and incorporated OCO and all its civilian agencies within the MACV (see Figure 1).⁶⁴ Robert Komer was selected as the first CORDS director and reported directly to MACV commander General Westmoreland as a deputy. Komer held the rank of ambassador and the equivalent military rank of four-star general.⁶⁵ “Never before has a US ambassador served directly under a military command and at the same time exercised command responsibility for military and civilian resources and personnel.”⁶⁶ Komer had been instrumental in the formation of CORDS and believed that the military was the only organization in Vietnam with adequate personnel, funding, and resources to support pacification efforts on a nation-wide scale.⁶⁷ Personnel from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Information Agency (USIA), the State Department, the White House, and all the military services were incorporated into its structure and civil-military advisor teams were present in all 250 districts and 44 provinces.⁶⁸ CORDS produced a structure in which all agencies supporting pacification were working under a single chain of command.⁶⁹

⁶³ Moyer, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 370.

⁶⁴ Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 240.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Richard Macak, “The CORDS Pacification Program: An Operational Level Campaign Plan in Low Intensity Conflict,” (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, 1989), 14.

⁶⁷ Moyer, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 370.

⁶⁸ Robert Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: Institutional Constraints on US-GVN Performance in Vietnam* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1972), 115; John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lesson from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 165.

⁶⁹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *The Pentagon Papers*, 622.

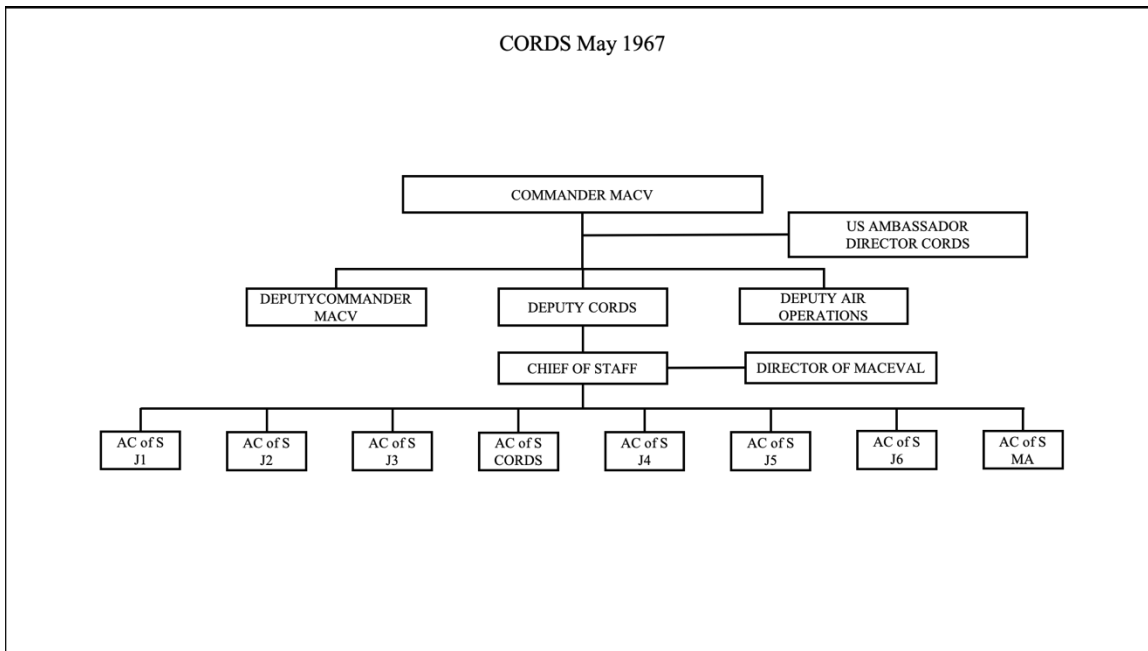


Figure 1. MACV/CORDS Organizational Chart. Thomas Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1982), 58.

At the corps level, the structure mimicked the MACV structure with the top CORDS official positioned as a deputy to the corps commander, due mainly to Komer's insistence that his CORDS deputy at each corps not be subordinate to the chief of staff and act in an operational, not staff, capacity.⁷⁰ This arrangement allowed the CORDS deputies to maintain autonomy from the corps staff and preserve their ability to exploit their access to military personnel and resources.⁷¹

With CORDS firmly established, Komer was now in charge of a single chain of command for pacification operations with sixty-five hundred military and civilian personnel and an initial budget of \$500 million.⁷² Provincial advisors were established below corps and either civilian or military personnel placed in charge. If military personnel were in charge, then their deputy would be a civilian and vice versa with each writing each other's evaluations.⁷³ This civil-

⁷⁰ Thomas Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1982), 68.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Blaufarb, *Pacification*, 241.

⁷³ Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 115.

military balance provided symmetry in the CORDS leadership teams.⁷⁴ The CORDS organization also promoted innovation and was not constrained by pre-existing institutional approaches to mission accomplishment.⁷⁵

Komer understood the Viet Cong infrastructure as the insurgency's center of gravity and the need to attack it directly and indirectly.⁷⁶ Komer attacked the VCI directly by focusing on arresting and isolating VCI cadre personnel, while raising local living standards through quality-of-life improvements in rural areas to undermine the insurgents' validity constituted Komer's indirect approach.⁷⁷ Undercutting the VCI's legitimacy would degrade their ability to function within the villages and hamlets of South Vietnam. Setting conditions for this degradation would require security established in the rural areas and reliable intelligence on VCI activity and personnel before any indirect approaches could be successful.

Starting with security within the villages and hamlets across South Vietnam, CORDS addressed the development of Regional Forces (RF) and Popular Forces (PF) paramilitary groups.⁷⁸ The US military had previously discounted the importance of these units in counterinsurgency operations as it focused on conventional forces in South Vietnam.⁷⁹ Prior to CORDS, the RF/PF units were not typically used for what should have been their primary mission of local security, but had been subordinated to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) who primarily used them for search and destroy missions which contributed to a high desertion rate.⁸⁰ With a viable solution to establishing local security against the Viet Cong, CORDS then tackled the problem with obtaining reliable, actionable intelligence.

⁷⁴ Macak, "The CORDS Pacification Program," 15.

⁷⁵ Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 165.

⁷⁶ Macak, "The CORDS Pacification Program," 17.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Krepinevich, *The Army in Vietnam*, 218.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 219.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Accurate and timely intelligence was necessary to identify and expel the VCI's clandestine political, military, and administrative infrastructure. In 1967, no central structure existed for intelligence sharing across the various organizations operating in South Vietnam resulting in most organizations sharing little to no intelligence with others.⁸¹ CORDS' sought to remedy to this fragmented approach by creating the Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Program (ICEX), later know as Phung Hoang or Phoenix.⁸² Komer tasked the CIA with creating Phoenix.⁸³

Phoenix consisted of District Intelligence Operations and Coordination Centers (DIOCCs) that combined intelligence inputs form the CIA, US military intelligence, and various GVN entities to create reports and circulate them to the various intelligence entities who would then add additional information to the reports.⁸⁴ By late 1968, DIOCCs were present in most of South Vietnam's districts, and in 1969 the establishment of Provincial Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centers (PIOCCs) further enabled the coordinated intelligence effort.⁸⁵

Phoenix's intelligence sharing reduced duplication of effort and established a common operating picture amongst the various forces in South Vietnam. Unity of command was necessary for Phoenix's success because various considerations that preclude agencies from sharing intelligence required direct orders from supervisors to force cooperation.⁸⁶

The improved intelligence picture provided by Phoenix allowed for greater precision in identifying and eliminating VC throughout South Vietnam. Previously, a 'shotgun' approach had been the practiced method to weed out VC, but Phoenix allowed for targeting of VC leadership

⁸¹ Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 50.

⁸² Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support*, 78.

⁸³ Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 50-51.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 51-52.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 379.

and the more efficient and effective ‘rifle shot’ approach.⁸⁷ This proved effective because “strong leadership was the most important factor in the success of the Viet Cong.”⁸⁸

While Phoenix did not fully eliminate the VCI, it did push them into the jungle. The analysis by General Creighton Abrams, Westmoreland’s successor as MACV commander, was that forcing the VCI out of the hamlets and into the jungle crippled its ability to function effectively within the population eliminating their ability to collect taxes, gather intelligence, propagandize, or coerce the locals.⁸⁹ According to Mark Moyer in *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, “as the shadow government’s ability to tax and recruit declined, the Viet Cong had to resort increasingly to coercion to obtain food and manpower, which did much to alienate the rural population, particularly since the Viet Cong no longer could maintain a steady presence in most villages.”⁹⁰ By the end of 1968 the Communists had lost the support of most villagers who had supported them earlier.⁹¹

The Tet offensive of 1968 was a nationwide attack that targeted 36 of the 44 provincial capitals and the six largest cities in South Vietnam, and involved approximately eighty-four thousand NLF and North Vietnamese troops.⁹² The simultaneous attacks were hoped to spur an uprising by the people of South Vietnam, but the opposite was true and most resisted the invasion.⁹³ Tet proved a disaster in some aspects with the NLF losing up to forty-five thousand troops, many of those irreplaceable parts of the insurgency’s infrastructure.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Moyer, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 53.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 392.

⁸⁹ Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt Inc., 1999), 147.

⁹⁰ Moyer, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 395.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Daddis, *Westmoreland’s War*, 89.

⁹³ Dave Palmer, *Summons of the Trumpet: US-Vietnam in Perspective* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1995), 187.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 202.

Following the Tet offensive by the North Vietnamese, CORDS launched its Accelerated Pacification Campaign (APC) seeing an opportunity to recover ground lost during Tet and to expand the South Vietnamese government's influence into areas where it was previously absent.⁹⁵ The peace talks which appeared about to begin in Paris also motivated the GVN to establish its presence in as many villages as possible.⁹⁶ It was estimated that by early 1969, only 195 of the 1,317 contested hamlets on the target list remained listed as contested or under enemy control.⁹⁷ APC had overcome Tet and pacification had reached its original goals for the end of 1968 that had been set prior to the Tet offensive.⁹⁸

APC illustrates Komer's ability as the head of CORDS to coordinate a pacification campaign plan, and since Komer and his staff communicated directly with all levels of South Vietnamese government on pacification matters, including the President, Vice-President, and Prime Minister, CORDS was able to influence its ally to action.⁹⁹ William Colby, Komer's successor, wrote that "the APC's basic accomplishment was in getting the South Vietnamese to carry it out" since many past programs "had foundered on a Vietnamese inability or unwillingness to execute the programs according to the American formula."¹⁰⁰

The pacification effort initially failed to address unity of effort between US forces and the South Vietnamese government.¹⁰¹ Until the establishment of CORDS in 1967, there lacked any resolution to combine the political and military effort to defeat the Viet Cong insurgency. No one organization existed capable of coordinating the entirety of pacification operations nor did any

⁹⁵ Hunt, *Pacification*, 158-59.

⁹⁶ Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 264.

⁹⁷ Hunt, *Pacification*, 197.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Hunt, *Pacification*, 205; Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support*, 77.

¹⁰⁰ Hunt, *Pacification*, 206.

¹⁰¹ Jan Gleiman, *The Organizational Imperative*, 45.

incentives exist for the current organizations to adapt.¹⁰² The initial solution undertaken by the US government had been to rely on its normal methods undertaken through its normal institutions through a decentralized decision making process with each individual agency bearing little accountability for achieving results.¹⁰³ This led to duplication of effort and competition for limited resources and separate agencies interfering with other agency's efforts.¹⁰⁴ The combination of this disparate effort and pacification's initial secondary role to the conventional effort was conducive to the Viet Cong's ability to spread their influence throughout South Vietnam in the early 1960s.¹⁰⁵

The military's dominance in the pacification effort was partly due to resourcing. The more effective deployment of resources to Vietnam by the US military over civilian agencies contributed to military preponderance and aided the focus on the use of hard power over soft power in Vietnam. In his writings on the insurgency in Algeria, David Galula attributed the inequality between the civil and military to the development of the civil administration in peacetime leaving it unable to meet the personnel requirements of a counterinsurgency.¹⁰⁶ The lack of surge capabilities by USG civilian agencies slows their full integration into stability operations and places the military, who has historically shown an aversion from performing non-combat operations, to fill the capabilities void.¹⁰⁷

CORDS contributed to the defeat of the Viet Cong by degrading the VC's popular support in South Vietnam by bolstering pacification efforts in rural provinces and enhancing the

¹⁰² Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 164.

¹⁰³ Ross Coffey, "Improving Interagency Integration at the operational Level: CORDS—a model for the Advanced Civilian Team," (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, 2006), 21.

¹⁰⁴ Scott Thompson and Donaldson Frizzell, eds., *The Lessons of Vietnam* (New York, NY: Russak & Company, 1977), 271.

¹⁰⁵ Ralph Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang: A Study of Wartime Intelligence Management," (PhD Dissertation, American University, 1982), 119.

¹⁰⁶ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 62.

¹⁰⁷ Schadlow, *War and the Art of Governance*, 18-23

capabilities of the South Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces.¹⁰⁸ CORDS was able to push multiple programs simultaneously under unified management and with a firm set of priorities.¹⁰⁹ It was able to do this because all US assets were consolidated under one chain of command which greatly reduced inefficiency in pacification efforts and turned local gains into operational success.¹¹⁰ CORDS was able to influence a reorganization and unification of the GVN pacification structure at all levels, and according to Robert Komer, in just three years “CORDS efforts led to the only sustained large-scale example of combined US/GVN planning at every level during the Vietnam War.”¹¹¹ Security operations and civic action could only achieve decisive success executed concurrently, and were both ineffective when executed separately.¹¹²

In *The Counterinsurgency Era*, Douglas Blaufarb argues that CORDS was a success because by 1970 the ability of the VC to “affect events, mobilize the population, fight, tax, and recruit had been eroded to the point where it was a manageable threat.”¹¹³ Internally displaced persons (IDPs) had declined from 1.5 million in February 1969 to 217,000 in mid-1970, a sign of the improved security and various reconstruction efforts across South Vietnam.¹¹⁴ Another indicator of the pacification’s success was freedom of movement. Highway travel in Vietnam after 1963 required movement in convoys, but by 1969 some considered that the highways were as safe to travel as they had been prior to the VC insurgency.¹¹⁵ An ex-Viet Cong official reported that recruiting became next to impossible after pacification efforts in 1969.¹¹⁶ The North

¹⁰⁸ Ross Coffey, “Revisiting CORDS: The Need for Unity of Effort to Secure Victory in Iraq,” *Military Review* 86, no. 2 (March-April 2006): 26.

¹⁰⁹ Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 116.

¹¹⁰ Macak, “The CORDS Pacification Program, 2.

¹¹¹ Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 116.

¹¹² Ticknor, “The Civil Side of Irregular Warfare,” 27.

¹¹³ Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 270.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Palmer, *Summons of the Trumpet*, 224.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 225.

Vietnamese achieving victory over South Vietnam through purely conventional means also illustrates how successful pacification efforts were.¹¹⁷

CORDS was also the most cost-effective effort of the Vietnam War. It entailed a modest fraction of the budget with its budget in 1968 at \$850 million, while cost for bombing and offensive operations was \$14 billion.¹¹⁸ This conventional attack heavy focus was lamented by Robert Komer after the war. He concluded that “if the GVN and US had pressed [a predominately counterinsurgency-oriented strategy] on a suitable scale in 1955-1964, instead of putting their chief emphasis on conventional military responses, the Viet Cong might never have achieved the momentum that they did.”¹¹⁹

CORDS allowed pacification operations to be simultaneous and sequenced to achieve its goals. As shown earlier, several major operations were planned and executed moving CORDS toward its desired end state. Prior to CORDS these major operations were impossible, preventing a unified national effort toward pacification. Unity of effort could not be achieved merely through coordination, unity of command was necessary.¹²⁰

For many, CORDS came too late to change the outcome of the Vietnam War. Both CORDS director’s Komer and Colby lamented that the United States wasted too much time before CORDS was established and earlier implementation could have changed the war’s outcome.¹²¹ The United States lacked an institutionalized structure to provide unity of command and unity of effort for pacification operations. This led to an impotent effort and the need for an ad-hoc organization to be established to achieve any success against the insurgency. CORDS had no basis in legislation, existing only because of a executive order that supplanted the authority

¹¹⁷ Coffey, “Revisiting CORDS,” 31.

¹¹⁸ Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 118.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 148.

¹²⁰ Coffey, “Revisiting CORDS,” 26.

¹²¹ Macak, “The CORDS Pacification Program,” 25; Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 148.

and resourcing allocated by Washington to these separate agencies.¹²² Before CORDS, the United States was achieving victory on the battlefield but was unable to consolidate its gains in South Vietnam. Vietnam highlights the necessity for the institutionalization of a CORDS-like framework to allow US military and civilian agencies to operate in synch from the start of conflict and not later when it may be impossible to change the outcome.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) kicked off in October 2001 with the objective of eliminating al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and ousting the Taliban from control of the country.¹²³ By 2012, the insurgents were devoid of any operational or supportive base inside Afghanistan. Despite the military gains, the expected political victory did not emerge because the US civilian effort was under resourced and the Afghan government lacked political will and effective leadership.¹²⁴

The US civil-military efforts in Afghanistan were disjointed and counterproductive. The first attempt made toward stability operations was through the Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells (CHLCs) created by the active duty Civil Affairs units on the ground. These CHLCs failed to coordinate their efforts through the Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) which were doctrinally designed to coordinate operational civil-military operations (CMO).¹²⁵ This lack of

¹²² Blaufarb, *Pacification*, 241.

¹²³ Donald Wright et al., *A Different Kind of War: The United States Army in Operation Enduring Freedom October 2001-September 2005* (Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Press, 2010), 43.

¹²⁴ Neamat Nojumi, *American State-Building in Afghanistan and its Regional Consequences*, (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2016), 25.

¹²⁵ Wright et al., *A Different Kind of War*, 197; US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 3-57, Civil Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 2-1. The Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) serves as the primary coordination interface for US forces, humanitarian organizations, International Government Organizations (IGOs), Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), multinational forces, Host-nation (HN) government agencies, and other civilian agencies of the USG. The CMOC facilitates continuous coordination among the key participants with regard to Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) from local levels to international levels within a given area of operations (AO), and develops, manages, and analyzes the civil inputs to the common operating picture (COP). The CMOC is the operations and support element of the Civil Affairs (CA) unit as well as a mechanism for the coordination of CAO.

coordination created friction between the CHLCs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Afghanistan. It also ran counter to the initial approach of wholesale aid distribution where the military would use the existing civilian infrastructure and coordinate with NGOs/IGOs to provide humanitarian assistance with the military only providing emergency support.¹²⁶ The OEF planners did not initially anticipate the need for civil-military operations on the ground, but that assumption was quickly proven incorrect.¹²⁷

The realization that the wholesale method of aid distribution was unfeasible led to the establishment of the Combined Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF) to conduct the humanitarian assistance operations that the Central Command (CENTCOM) planners had included as simultaneous to combat operations from the start of OEF.¹²⁸ JP 3-57 (2008 edition) mentions that the Civil Affairs forces command structure can provide the command and control of the CJCMOTF, but the Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) commander assigned a logistician to head the CJCMOTF whose initial response to the news was “Great, what’s that?”¹²⁹ Someone with the lack of operational civil-military operations knowledge was placed in charge of the civil-military operations effort for the whole of Afghanistan. The lack of institutional knowledge for operational and strategic CMO hampered the integration of military and civilian agencies.

In 1997 Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56 established the requirement that a political-military implementation plan (pol-mil plan) “be developed as an integrated planning tool for coordinating US government actions in a complex contingency operation.”¹³⁰ The directive

¹²⁶ William Flavin, *Civil Military Operations: Afghanistan* (Carlisle, PA: US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, 2004), 17-18.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹²⁸ Wright, et al., *A Different Kind of War*, 82.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 193.

¹³⁰ William Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive 56, “Managing Complex Contingency Operations,” May 1997, accessed December 15, 2018, <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd56.htm>.

sought unity of effort among the various government agencies through an “integrated concept of operations to synchronize agency efforts.”¹³¹ The CJCMOTF and CFLCC had operated in Afghanistan for a year without the required pol-mil plan, the plan that assigns elements of national power to specific objectives. The absence of clear guidance for each of the different elements operating in Afghanistan resulted in the different US agencies relying on their own judgment to guide their decisions.¹³² Later in the conflict, the Department of Defense issued Directive 3000.05 which stated that “integrated civilian and military efforts are key to successful stability operations,” and that “military-civilian teams are a critical US Government stability operations tool.”¹³³ This directive sought to bring stability operations to a more prominent role and encourage greater integration between military and civilian agencies.

The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) materialized in 2002 addressing security, extending the national Afghan government throughout the provinces, and reconstruction.¹³⁴ The PRTs emerged out of the remnants of the CHLCs and were expanded to have an integrated civil-military structure and their own organic security elements. The PRTs combined military and civilian personnel, but the separate elements within the PRTs still operated under their own command chains.¹³⁵ The initial PRTs suffered from lack of civilian involvement, limited resources, and no unity of command.¹³⁶

¹³¹ Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56.

¹³² Wright et al., *A Different Kind of War*, 226-27; Flavin, *Civil Military Operations: Afghanistan*, 20.

¹³³ US Department of Defense, *Directive 3000.05, Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, November 2005, accessed December 12, 2018, https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/d3000_05.pdf.

¹³⁴ Henry Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush: The False Hope of “Unity of Effort” in American Counterinsurgency* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 10.

¹³⁵ Carter Malkasian and Gerald Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do We Know They Work?* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), vii.

¹³⁶ Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush*, 13.

PRT structure for US teams consisted of 60-100 personnel with civil affairs, military police, psychological operations, intelligence, medical, and administrative and logistical support personnel, as well as a platoon to provide security.¹³⁷ The PRTs were also designed to include a State Department Foreign Service Officer (FSO) and a representative from both USAID and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), but often neither were present.¹³⁸ A representative from the Afghan Ministry of the Interior was also part of the PRT structure.¹³⁹ The PRTs represented a tactical level attempt to integrate the different elements engaged in stability operations; but without Kitson's unified command structure, each separate element within the PRTs was subject to divergent guidance from its own chain of command.

Born out of the Bonn Agreement and authorized by United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1386, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) sprang forth December 20, 2001 to assist the Afghanistan government's efforts to maintain security and spread the rule of law nationwide.¹⁴⁰ In 2003, ISAF began to take control of PRTs from the Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan (CFC-A), the US-led international military coalition.¹⁴¹ The CFC-A was disbanded in 2006 and control of stability and security operations was passed entirely to

¹³⁷ Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 5; Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush*, 15.

¹³⁸ Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush* 15; Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 5

¹³⁹ Wright et al., *A Different Kind of War*, 226-27; Flavin, *Civil Military Operations, Afghanistan*, 228.

¹⁴⁰ United Nations, United Nations Security Council Agreement 1154, *Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions*, S/2001/1154, 5 December 2001, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1154>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386, *The Situation in Afghanistan*, S/RES/1386, 20 December 2001, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1386>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Agreement 1563, *The Situation in Afghanistan*, S/RES/1563, 17 September 2004, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1563>.

¹⁴¹ International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), *Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Handbook*, 4th ed., 2008, accessed November 1, 2018, <https://info.publicintelligence.net/ISAF-PRThandbook.pdf>, 2.

ISAF.¹⁴² ISAF determined the PRT mission, as outlined in the ISAF PRT Handbook, was to assist the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) to extend its authority to facilitate the development of a stable and secure environment and enable security sector reform and reconstruction efforts.¹⁴³

The organizational structure of the PRTs degraded their ability to function within an integrated campaign plan (see Figure 2). The PRTs operated at the provincial level which relegated them to focus on regional concerns, and multiple countries within ISAF organized and ran their own PRTs with most of the US PRTs falling under the US Brigade whose Area of Operations (AO) they occupied.¹⁴⁴ While there was universal guidance amongst the PRTs, there was a lack of unified command structure to force unity of effort. Even with the PRT mission headed by ISAF, each country still operated its PRTs according to their own prerogatives.¹⁴⁵ There were also Civil Affairs teams attached to US battalions conducting stability operations parallel to the PRTs.¹⁴⁶ The flexibility of the PRTs contributed to their local success, but “interagency coordination fell short of the vision,” and some plans were not distributed to the field through any of the multiple command chains.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush*, 25.

¹⁴³ ISAF, *Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Handbook*, 3.

¹⁴⁴ ISAF, *Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Handbook*, 4; Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 5.

¹⁴⁵ Markus Gauster, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Innovative Instrument of International Crisis Management Being Put to the Test* (Garmisch, DE: George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, 2008), accessed November 9, 2018, http://www.marshallcenter.org/mcpublicweb/mcdocs/files/College/F_Publications/occPapers/occ-paper_16-en.pdf, 11-12.

¹⁴⁶ Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 26.

¹⁴⁷ Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush*, 27-28.

could deconflict efforts between combat and reconstruction operations.¹⁵⁰ Despite all the deficiencies of the PRTs, no other organization in Afghanistan could equal the performance of the PRTs for reconstruction and stability operations, especially in contested areas.¹⁵¹

One of the primary tools available to the PRTs was the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds. Once again this was localized and the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) concluded that money was "devoted to a program with no overarching strategy, without effective systems for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data," resulting in "a program that spent \$2.3 billion in an underdeveloped economy with unknown effects."¹⁵² Eventually, money became the PRTs metric for success as they were judged on how much they spent on projects.¹⁵³

Military personnel issues also plagued the PRTs. Originally led by civil affairs soldiers, later in the conflict, these positions were often headed by Navy and Air Force personnel.¹⁵⁴ The SIGAR addressed the quality issues of some of the civil affairs soldiers in Afghanistan in his 2018 report: "Civil Affairs is a sophisticated skillset that cannot be mass produced, and the conversion of chemical units to civil affairs units degraded the quality of the civil affairs personnel significantly, degrading the PRTs capabilities because the chemical soldiers as a collective whole were not competent."¹⁵⁵

The stability efforts in Afghanistan were left to the local level without any relevant coordination or guidance from higher commands. In his testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Robert Perito stated that "improvisation

¹⁵⁰ Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush*, 29.

¹⁵¹ Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, ix.

¹⁵² Sopko, *Stabilization*, 95.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁵⁴ Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 5.

¹⁵⁵ Sopko, *Stabilization*, 105.

is not a concept of operations,” and “PRTs [lacked] an agreed upon concept of operations and an agreed upon organizational structure with a single chain of command.”¹⁵⁶ Despite the inclusion of certain US civilian agencies on the PRTs, the agencies still operated through their own chain of command. The PRTs were not a complete failure, they were the most effective organization in Afghanistan for stability operations; but they suffered from localization and US civilian agencies operating within their own separate parameters. Without unified objectives there cannot be standardized measures of performance or effectiveness.¹⁵⁷ Unity of effort can only exist coincidentally without centralized command and control.

Thirteen years after the start of OEF in Afghanistan, UNSCR 2120 laid out the terms for Afghanistan to finally take the lead role in security in 2014.¹⁵⁸ A UNSCR resolution in March of 2014 reiterated “its concern about security in Afghanistan, in particular the ongoing violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, al-Qaida and other violent and extremist groups...resulting in threats to the local population, including women, children, national security forces and international military and civilian personnel, including humanitarian and development workers.”¹⁵⁹ The resolution also stated concern over the “high number of civilian casualties in Afghanistan” and encouraged the international community to continue to support Afghanistan.¹⁶⁰ More recently, resolution 2405—passed in March 2018—extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) through 2018, and also expressed “deep concern about the continuous high level of violence in Afghanistan, especially the number of

¹⁵⁶ Robert Perito, “The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan,” *Testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations*, October 18, 2007, accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-110hhrg38977/html/CHRG-110hhrg38977.htm>.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2120, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/2120, 10 October 2013, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2120>.

¹⁵⁹ United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2145, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/2145, 17 March 2014, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2145>.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

civilian casualties.”¹⁶¹ The UN resolutions show an international concern for the continuous cycle of violence and conflict in Afghanistan with civilians representing a high number of casualties. There was also a continuous extension of assistance to Afghanistan, and while the lead role of Afghan security forces was recognized in resolution 2405, the resolution also expressed concern for the still high levels of violence and civilian casualties.

Based off an assessment of the yearly UN resolution concerning Afghanistan, security has not improved despite over a decade of efforts by the US and coalition partners. While the failure of stability operations to consolidate gains cannot be pinned as the only factor, it has contributed significantly to failing to establish Afghan-led security within the country.

While the PRTs were more effective at coordinating US military and civilian agency efforts than the original framework for reconstruction and stability operations in Afghanistan, there was still a lack of nationwide unity of effort. The flexible design of PRTs was too flexible resulting in a lack of clear guidance and goals for PRTs resulting in PRTs improvising and successes primarily localized.¹⁶² The ISAF PRT Handbook mentioned throughout that the capacity of the Afghan government should be increased, but the PRT mission failed to recognize that the centralized control of the Afghan government meant that there was a lack of capacity to transfer stability and reconstruction operations at the provincial and district level. A centralized plan driven by a centralized command would be needed to orchestrate a stability campaign in conjunction with the Afghan government, and a restructuring would be necessary to transfer the

¹⁶¹ United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2405, *The Situation in Afghanistan*, S/RES/2405, 8 March 2018, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2405>.

¹⁶² Carlos Hernandorena, “US Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, 2003-2006: Obstacles to Interagency Cooperation,” in *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles*, eds. Joseph Cerami and Jay Boggs (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 134.

provincial level projects that the PRTs specialized in.¹⁶³ In many cases, ISAF could not get out of the hold phase of COIN.

The PRTs were not able to achieve the level of local security that CORDS was despite the shorter time CORDS functioned in Vietnam. The structural constraints on the PRTs that maintained the divergent lines of effort from the military and civilian agencies hampered its efforts from the beginning. USAID maintained its autonomy from the PRTs despite having a position on each team. This meant that the agency with the largest amount of funding for reconstruction and training of locals, as well as the capability to execute nationwide projects, operated in its own decision making cycle, devoid of unity of effort amongst the major players in reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

The PRTs were yet another ad-hoc organization developed to tackle the counterinsurgency problem, but unlike CORDS, unity of command was not established, therefore preventing unity of effort. Improvisation can lend results, but not on a consistent basis, and the PRT concept was unable to replicate the amount of success that CORDS did. In both case studies, early efforts floundered in the chaotic nature of the multiplicity of effort that the traditional US agency structure has consistently shown will permeate contested areas upon US entry into combat operations, even on a limited scale.

Comparison

On the surface, CORDS and PRTs seem very similar; both structures born out of the United States' struggle against an insurgency in a foreign land, and both an attempt to unify efforts toward pacification in Vietnam and stability operations in Afghanistan. Both included elements of the US military and civilian agencies, as well as elements of the host nation in their structure. Both were more effective than the initial efforts at stabilizing and securing the country for the host nation to assume control and function as the legitimate ruling entity in the region, and

¹⁶³ Sopko, *Stabilization*, 72.

both were ad-hoc structures built amidst conflict and geared toward combating an insurgency. The focus of this comparison will be the relative effectiveness of each, with unity of effort as the primary criteria for determining the feasibility of each structure as a guide for future operations.

CORDS attempted to utilize quantitative data to determine the status of pacification efforts across Vietnam through the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES).¹⁶⁴ There were six basic criteria for evaluating each hamlet, and while there were some disagreements in the interpretations of the HES data, it still provided CORDS with the ability to draw some measures of effectiveness providing feedback for their efforts and allowing for more objectivity and less subjectivity in determining effectiveness. Measuring performance was a complete failure for the PRT program. Performance measures devolved into just sheer dollar amounts spent on projects and not whether the projects had any real effect on local security or the legitimacy of the Afghan government.¹⁶⁵

One indicator that the CORDS program improved security in the rural areas of Vietnam, aside from the HES data, was the decrease in internally displaced persons within Vietnam as the number declined from over 2 million to around 450,000 by 1971.¹⁶⁶ The number of terror and sabotage attacks was down from 1968 to 1971 and the number of civilian casualties also declined greatly.¹⁶⁷ In Afghanistan, security past the vicinity of the capital of Kabul was sparse and Taliban forces remained a threat to security. Throughout the conflict in Afghanistan, the United Nations expressed increasing concern for security problems, Taliban and Al-Qaida insurgent activities, and the constant civilian casualties in its yearly resolutions.¹⁶⁸ The UN's concern for civilian casualties actually increased as the conflict continued.

¹⁶⁴ Hunt, *Pacification*, 95.

¹⁶⁵ Sopko, *Stabilization*, 102.

¹⁶⁶ Thompson and Frizzell, *The Lessons of Vietnam*, 221.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1589, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/1589 24 March 2005, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1589>; United Nations,

The PRTs possessed the capability to provide their own internal security but lacked offensive capability and security efforts were thus left to other units in the area resulting in at best a coordinating function between PRTs and combat units. Often, reconstruction efforts were undertaken in areas that were not secure, greatly diminishing their effect on the populace. CORDS, on the other hand, took lead on local security efforts within the villages and hamlets of Vietnam, allowing CORDS to phase its operations to ensure security was established prior to reconstruction efforts. CORDS also controlled CIA operations enabling intelligence operations to be directly part of pacification efforts. The battle-focused mentality that both the PRTs and CORDS faced necessitated that to be effective in establishing security for the populace, security operations had to be integrated into stability/pacification operations. CORDS demonstrated this integration, PRTs did not.

US military and civilian agency integration has constantly been a problem for the United States in conflict and post-conflict regions during stability operations. Operations in Vietnam and Afghanistan both suffered from the usual fragmented approach, and both CORDS and PRTs sought to remedy the disparate efforts. The PRT solution was to include positions within the PRTs for DoS, USAID, USDA, and the Afghanistan Ministry of the Interior.¹⁶⁹ Even when these positions were filled, the civilians reported through their own separate chains of command and

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1662, *The Situation in Afghanistan*, S/RES/1662, 23 March 2006, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1662>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1776, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/1776, 19 September 2007, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1776>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1833, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/1833, 22 September 2008, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1833>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1934, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/1934, 13 October 2010, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1934>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2011, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/2011, 12 October 2011, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2011>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2069, *Afghanistan*, S/RES/2069, 9 October 2012, accessed December 14, 2018, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2069>; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2120; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2145; United Nations, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2405.

¹⁶⁹ Nuzum, *Shades of CORDS in the Kush* 15; Malkasian and Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 5

maintained the ability to act independently of the military. Unity of effort was then personality driven amongst the different PRTs and was never consistent throughout OEF. CORDS was able to overcome the separate chains of command by forcing all the US civilian agencies, including such agencies as the CIA, under its chain of command that was incorporated directly with the military. This streamlined structure meant that civilian and military personnel fell under the same chain of command that directed all pacification efforts in Vietnam allowing for the simultaneous and sequenced approach necessary for operational and strategic level success. According to *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, Interorganizational Cooperation*, “In military operations, unity of effort is facilitated by first establishing unity of command. Unity of command is based on the designation of a single commander with the authority to direct and coordinate the efforts of all assigned and attached forces in pursuit of a common objective.”¹⁷⁰ Only CORDS was able to achieve unity of command, and therefore was the only one of the two to achieve unity of effort.

Unity of command was the most significant difference between CORDS and PRTs, and the most important factor in stability operations. The greater operational effectiveness of CORDS over PRTs illustrates this point and raises the question of why the United States has failed to institutionalize a structure to allow for unity of command of US military and US civilian agencies during stability operation. This organizational failure has hampered the consolidation of gains and produced the meandering efforts that the US continues to put forth despite the historical lessons available to its leaders. Unity of effort is a reoccurring theme when military and civilian agencies are involved concurrently.

Conclusion and Recommendations

JP 3-08, Interorganizational Cooperation states that “one difficulty of coordinating operations among USG departments and agencies is determining appropriate counterparts and

¹⁷⁰ US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, Interorganizational Cooperation* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), I-4, I-5.

exchanging information among them when habitual relationships are not established.”¹⁷¹ *JP 3-07, Stability* states that military and civilian activities must be linked to achieve true unity of effort.¹⁷² Both *JP 3-08* and *JP 3-07* also assert the necessity of unity of effort to achieve success in incorporating all the elements of national power.¹⁷³ *JP 3-08* identifies how USG unity of effort can be degraded:

Within the USG, unity of effort can be diminished by organizational stove piping, crisis-driven planning, different core missions, and divergent organizational processes and cultures. When USG departments and agencies do not coordinate sufficiently, they may interpret national policy guidance differently, develop different objectives and strategies, and set different priorities, and therefore, not act in concert toward national objectives.¹⁷⁴

The United States Institute of Peace’s (USIP) *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* highlights the importance of unity of effort to the success of stability operations by placing unity of effort as one of the cross-cutting principles that applies in all stability operations situations.¹⁷⁵ USIP also highlights the difficulty in establishing a shared common operating picture and the importance of integrated activities across USG agencies, but states that integration “is a challenge that has yet to be met.”¹⁷⁶

JP 3-08 states that “unity of effort is facilitated by first establishing unity of command,” and *JP 3-07* elaborates on the interagency difficulty by highlighting the difficulty in establishing unity of command with all stability operations participants since many will not fall under military chains of command.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08*, xi.

¹⁷² US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-07*, xi.

¹⁷³ US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-07*, I-19; US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08*, I-1, I-2.

¹⁷⁴ US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08*, I-4.

¹⁷⁵ United States Institute for Peace, *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), 3-18, 3-19.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-19.

¹⁷⁷ US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08*, I-4; US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-07*, I-13.

The USG admits that there is an issue with unity of effort in stability operations. Whether this notion is illustrated through PDD 56 or paragraphs in various joint publications, there appears to be an understanding that the fragmented nature of efforts between US military and civilian agencies impedes mission success. There is no institutional structure to ensure unity of effort through unity of command between the US military and civilian agencies and initial failures during multiple operations have necessitated the creation of ad-hoc organizational structures, such as CORDS and PRTs, to attempt to cope with the failings of the current US government structure during stability operations.

CORDS in Vietnam and PRTs in Afghanistan highlighted the pitfalls of fragmented approaches to pacification and stability operations, both examples beginning operations with military and civilian agencies operating separately and ineffectively. The structure contributing to these initial failures has not been reformed to provide unity of effort in stability operations despite the continued necessity to construct ad-hoc organizations to address failures in organizational structure. *JP 3-08* states that “a number of civilian agencies and organizations—each with their own mandates, capabilities, authorities, and objectives—interact with the Armed Forces of the United States,” and that “interagency coordination is conducted between elements of DOD and relevant USG departments and agencies to achieve unity of effort.”¹⁷⁸ The necessity for constructs such as CORDS and PRTs exemplifies doctrinal emphasis on unity of effort, but also highlights the impossibility of achieving unity of effort without unity of command. A Peace Keeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) study concluded that there are “recurring challenges which have impeded sustained coordination, including resource imbalances, gaps in operating concepts, and personality-based rather than institutional relationships.”¹⁷⁹ *JP 3-08* can

¹⁷⁸ US Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-08*, I-2.

¹⁷⁹ Benjamin Kauffeld, *USAID & DOD: Analysis and Recommendations to Enhance Development-Military Cooperation* (Carlisle, PA: Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute, 2014), accessed December 16, 2018, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a609817.pdf>, 1.

state that coordination brings unity of effort, but history shows that only a unified command encompassing military and civilian agencies will achieve this goal.

The CORDS framework presents unity of command that resulted in unity of effort and the ability to plan and execute nationwide stability operations that were sequenced and simultaneous. Under CORDS the US military and civilians were forced to integrate their efforts and thinking, and then contextualize their joint approach; with US civilian agencies providing an unprecedented level of 2,685 personnel to staff the CORDS effort.¹⁸⁰ Despite CORDS success at integrating military and civilian efforts, USAID leadership were negative in their sentiment toward the program and tried unsuccessfully to remove themselves from under the CORDS structure.¹⁸¹ USAID's attitude toward CORDS appears to be more the norm than outlier with regards to US civilian agencies being incorporated directly with the US military.

The PRTs suffered from an inability of the civilian agencies to recruit and hire enough employees to fill the demand, and that US civilian agencies lack any surge capacity.¹⁸² There was also no approved concept of operations for interagency elements within the PRTs, which resulted in PRT priorities, programs and effectiveness being strongly dependent on the personalities of those who served on the teams.¹⁸³

Under CORDS, there was a clear chain of command that ran directly to MACV preventing local commanders from setting divergent priorities. CORDS was able to prioritize security and build RVN capacity to secure its rural villages and then move to reconstruction and development. The disjointed command the PRTs fell under led to reconstruction efforts conducted in non-secure areas which greatly diminished their effectiveness.¹⁸⁴ While CORDS

¹⁸⁰ Kauffeld, *USAID & DOD*, 7.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

¹⁸² Kauffeld, *USAID & DOD*, 11; Perito, "The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan."

¹⁸³ Perito, "The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan."

¹⁸⁴ Sopko, *Stabilization*, 73.

took lead on securing the rural populations of Vietnam, the PRTs acted separate from the ISAF security presence and lacked any offensive capability, only possessing the ability to provide their own security.¹⁸⁵ If the COIN doctrine specifies that secure is the first step, then security should have been an integrated function of the PRT mission like that of CORDS.

After analyzing the reoccurring issues that the United States has faced integrating military and civilian agency actions, this research recommends that a framework incorporating unity of command for the US military and civilian agencies during stability operations should be institutionalized to avoid the floundering efforts the US has historically put forth during operations that involve insurgent activity and the need to build a foreign nation's capacity. Schadlow's American Denial Syndrome frames the reasons that have contributed to the United States failing to properly prepare its military and civilian structure for stability operations that are inherent during and after combat operations. Counterinsurgency theory emphasizes the importance of the coordination of efforts between the military and civilian agencies, and doctrine places unity of command as the only sure way to achieve unity of effort.

There currently is no single government authority able to operationalize stability operations through command over both US military and civilian agencies.¹⁸⁶ The NSC was meant to fill that role but it has "failed at many integrative challenges" in the past and present, with Iraq and Afghanistan illustrating the NSC's inability to effectively integrate the military and non-military actions.¹⁸⁷ Counterinsurgency theory dictates that there must be a unified command element at the national and operational level overseeing stability operations. This unified structure would allow required capabilities to be filled with whatever organization, whether civilian or military, could fulfill the requirement. The current method of each agency carving out

¹⁸⁵ Perito, "The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams."

¹⁸⁶ Kauffeld, *USAID & DOD*, 27.

¹⁸⁷ Project on National Security Reform, *Project on National Security Reform: Forging a New Shield* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), iii.

its fiefdom based on preconceived notions of what specific roles must be filled by the military or civilian agencies precludes this gap filling from emerging as reality. This would also allow for civilian agencies to build wartime capacity without the initial stability effort suffering. This is the only way to avoid a fragmented approach and achieve strategic and operational goals.

The findings of this monograph recommend further research into how best to organize civilian and military forces for stability operations. Both case studies illustrate that failure to integrate stability operations across the various government agencies in a unified effort causes inefficiencies and waste time, money, and lives. The organizational structure recommendations from counterinsurgency theory stresses the importance of military and civilian agency unity of effort to achieve results and further research into the optimal organization within the USG is recommended.

Second, an analysis of the current Department of State and USAID structure and career progression should be evaluated to determine the DoS and USAID's capability to fulfill its mission during conflict. The DoS and USAID numbers have been steadily decreased since Vietnam. If there is not sufficient incentive for these organization's employees to deploy to conflict zones, then there will be a habitual lack of personnel to fulfil stability missions in conflict areas; and the military will continue to be required to bridge the capability gap.

Third, current Army Civil Affairs capability and structure should be evaluated to determine the scope of mission that it can handle and its initial surge capacity while civilian agencies ramp up their forces for deployment. Continued deployments can strain CA forces, as evidenced by the conversion of soldiers in other branches to fill the personnel gaps during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and OEF. This research recommends looking at initial CA packages and the transition to sustainable packages as USG civilian agencies filter into theatre and assume their primary mission.

The United States has engaged in foreign stability operations since Major General Winfield Scott's Mexico City Campaign in 1846, and since the end of the Cold War the United

States has engaged in stability operations an average of every two years.¹⁸⁸ Despite the frequency of these operations, the United States still struggles to put forth a unified effort, especially when conflict is present. The knowledge of a lack of unity of effort is not emergent as numerous government reports from past and present conflicts have highlighted the continuous fragmented approach the United States puts forth. There has also been a cornucopia of writings on this lack of unity, especially in the post-World War II era. Perhaps a paradigm shift from the preconceived notions regarding separation of duties between the US military and civilian agencies during stability operations has to occur before true integrated operations are possible. Schadow's "American Denial Syndrome" offers a mental model for the way of thinking that has permeated the US government and led to rigidity in roles. Despite this rigidity, the military is consistently the lead for stability operations even with the mandates of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development. There has been growing support for increasing the interagency integration through US national security strategies, DoD doctrine, and DoS and USAID policies; however, implementation lags behind these doctrinal statements and official guidance and at this point it only exists as words on paper.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ US Department of Defense, *Defense Science Board Report on Institutionalizing Stability Operations*, 9.

¹⁸⁹ Kauffeld, *USAID & DOD*, 47.

Appendix

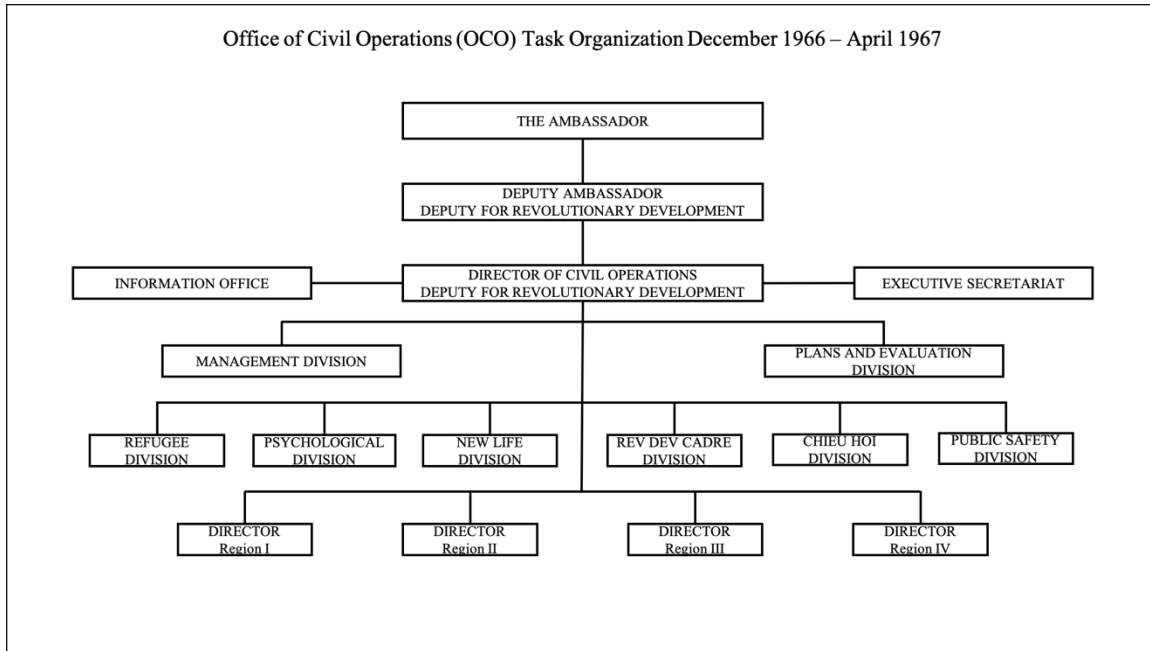


Figure 3. OCO Organizational Chart. Thomas Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1982), 57.

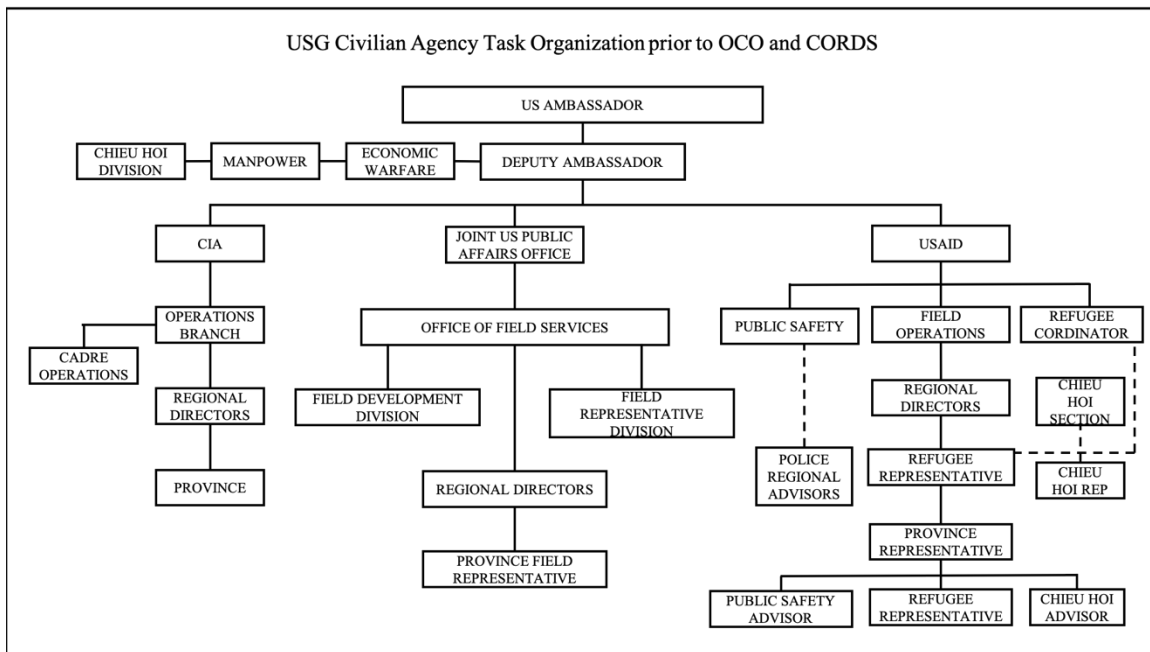


Figure 4. USG Civilian Agency Task Organization Prior to OCO and CORDS. Thomas Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1982), 56.

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