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14. ABSTRACT Analysis of the 2012 terrorist attack of the Department of State's diplomatic facility in Benghazi from a bureaucratic and organizational vantage point provides both meaningful lessons and a framework to successfully institutionalize future reform efforts. As a result of extensive diplomatic engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq, a commitment to expeditionary diplomacy, shifting diplomatic initiatives, and turmoil in the Middle East, diplomats continue to deploy in increasingly non-permissive environments. Unfortunately the diplomatic efforts in Libya did not benefit from a significant U.S. military presence or a host country security force capable of providing security support in the event of a crisis. More importantly, many of the causal factors that contributed to the tragedy at Benghazi were well known by the Department and previously identified as vulnerabilities in the earlier attacks of the U.S. embassies in Lebanon, Kuwait, Kenya and Tanzania. Consequently, the terrorist attack at Benghazi signifies more than simply the inherent limitations of deploying diplomats in non-permissive environments. The Benghazi tragedy represents a pattern of bureaucratic failure over the past thirty years by the Department of State to adapt and emphasize a culture of security and risk management in balancing the needs of diplomacy and security in the 21st century.					
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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

The Tragedy of Benghazi: The Department of State and Bureaucratic Failure

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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Executive Summary

Title: The Tragedy of Benghazi: The Department of State and Bureaucratic Failure

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Thesis: The Benghazi attacks resulted from a complex confluence of factors impacting the Department of State's ability to reform and balance the needs of diplomacy and security over the past thirty years. The Department's cultural resistance to change precluded the successful implementation of a multitude of organizational, management, strategic planning and budget reforms recommended in the wake of previous tragedies. In an attempt to seek greater relevance in the national security policy process and constrained by budgetary pressures, the Department gradually expanded diplomatic engagement through expeditionary diplomacy initiatives in increasingly non-permissive environments. Tragically, the cumulative impact of the Department's inability to implement security reforms and balance diplomacy and security over the past thirty years culminated with the failure of the expeditionary diplomacy policy at Benghazi.

Discussion: This paper explores the policy failures that contributed to the 2012 terrorist attack of the Department of State's diplomatic facility in Benghazi. Tragedy and failure can provide the necessary motivation to implement much needed organizational change. Analysis of this tragedy from a bureaucratic and organizational vantage point provides both meaningful lessons and a framework to successfully institutionalize future reform efforts. As a result of extensive diplomatic engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq, a commitment to expeditionary diplomacy, shifting diplomatic initiatives, and turmoil in the Middle East, diplomats continue to deploy in increasingly non-permissive environments. Unlike the recent Iraq and Afghanistan experiences, the diplomatic efforts in Libya did not benefit from a significant U.S. military presence or a host country security force capable of providing security support in the event of a crisis. More importantly, many of the causal factors that contributed to the tragedy at Benghazi were well known by the Department and previously identified as vulnerabilities in the earlier attacks of the U.S. embassies in Lebanon, Kuwait, Kenya and Tanzania. Consequently, the terrorist attack at Benghazi signifies more than simply the inherent limitations of deploying diplomats in non-permissive environments. The Benghazi tragedy represents a pattern of bureaucratic failure over the past thirty years by the Department of State to adapt and emphasize a culture of security and risk management in balancing the needs of diplomacy and security in the 21st century.

Conclusion: Future foreign policy initiatives and the deployment of diplomats in non-permissive environments necessitate an organizational commitment to reform and integration of security and risk management in the development of a policy that successfully balances the requirements of diplomacy and security.

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	II
DISCLAIMER	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	IV
PREFACE	V
INTRODUCTION	1
THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND DIPLOMATIC SECURITY: AN OVERVIEW	3
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL FAILURE.....	5
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND CHANGE	7
BEIRUT AND KUWAIT: ORGANIZATIONAL REFORM PART I	10
NAIROBI AND DAR ES SALAAM: ORGANIZATIONAL REFORM PART II.....	12
BENGHAZI: ORGANIZATIONAL REFORM PART III.....	16
THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE: A CULTURE RESISTANT TO CHANGE	19
DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AND FORTRESS AMERICA	22
BALANCING DIPLOMACY AND SECURITY	25
BUDGET AND RESOURCE PRESSURES.....	28
AN EXPANDING DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT	31
IGNORING THE WARNING SIGNS	33
ALL ROADS LEAD TO BENGHAZI.....	36
A STATE OF REFORM?	39
CONCLUSION: A WAY FORWARD	40
ENDNOTES	44
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	51

Preface

I joined the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security in August of 1998, one week after the tragic bombings of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. As a career Special Agent with the Diplomatic Security Service, this topic is of great interest not only to myself but will hopefully provide valuable insight for consideration by my colleagues and policy makers in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Department of State.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the many individuals who contributed their time and assistance to me throughout the research and writing process. First and foremost, many thanks to Dr. Lynn M. Tesser, Command and Staff College, Marine Corps University, for mentoring me throughout the entire process. Without her patient guidance and encouragement, completion of this paper would not have been possible. LtCol Kevin Glathar, USMC, Command and Staff College, Marine Corps University and CG 8 MILFAC lead, provided encouragement and a warm welcome to this "civilian embed" throughout the entire CSC academic year. Department of State employees Miranda Longstreth and Elizabeth Twerdahl were extremely helpful in providing numerous documents, research recommendations, and offered an extraordinary amount of their personal time to answer my many questions. Additionally, former and current Department employees Kimber Davidson, Barry Moore and Kurt Rice, graciously agreed to review drafts and offered much appreciated insightful guidance. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wonderful wife, Margaret, and our lovely children Rachel and John, for all their patient support and understanding throughout the entire research and writing process.

On a final note, this paper is dedicated to my uncle, the late Thomas F. Bencin.

Introduction

On September 11, 2012, a terrorist attack of the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya, resulted in the tragic death of four U.S. personnel, to include the U.S. Ambassador. An analysis of this tragedy reveals an ongoing bureaucratic struggle within the Department to balance the often competing and contradictory requirements of diplomacy and security. This struggle is not unique to the Benghazi tragedy and similar patterns appear when examining the bombing of the U.S. Embassies in Beirut (1983), Kuwait (1984), Nairobi (1998) and Dar Es Salaam (1998). In reviewing the totality of these incidents, one of the common characteristics throughout is the strikingly similar assessment of the causal factors for each incident and the resultant prescriptive recommendations issued in their aftermath. Each of the review boards and panels examining the incidents identified a host of recommendations intended to remedy a lack of resources; implementation of risk management processes; and procedural and organizational reforms within the Department of State.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that there was no evolution in the Department's security practices over the past thirty years as a result of these tragic incidents. However, it is also readily apparent that many of the core recommendations and findings of the review panels were not fully implemented as many re-emerged as contributing factors in subsequent tragedies. In today's twenty-four news cycle and internet era, the multiple security failures experienced by the Department during the years leading to the embassy bombings of Beirut and Kuwait and again prior to Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam would most certainly garner intense media scrutiny and zealous congressional oversight. More importantly, despite the mounting number of security reform recommendations accumulated over the past thirty years, the Department failed to implement the change necessary to its security programs to prevent future tragedies. In light of

this we are left with three critical questions to consider. First, despite a number of significant attacks targeting diplomatic missions and personnel along with numerous reform recommendations, what factors negatively impacted bureaucratic reform efforts with the Department and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS)? Second, how did these failed bureaucratic reform efforts impact the outcome of Benghazi attack? Finally, what is the likelihood that post-Benghazi reform efforts will succeed?

The Benghazi Accountability and Review Board (ARB) highlighted deficiencies of leadership and management amongst its key findings and the subsequent removal of four officials would suggest that the report established the proximate causes of the Benghazi tragedy. Essentially, one could surmise that the causation of Benghazi tragedy was the result of leadership and management inaction that contributed to an inadequate security posture exploited by a terrorist attack with deadly consequences. However, I assert that the Benghazi attacks resulted from a complex confluence of factors that impacted the ability of the Department to reform and balance the needs of diplomacy and security over the past thirty years. The Department's cultural resistance to change precluded the successful implementation of a multitude of organizational, management, strategic planning and budget reforms recommended in the wake of previous tragedies. In an attempt to seek greater relevance in the national security policy process and constrained by budgetary pressures, the Department gradually expanded diplomatic engagement through expeditionary diplomacy initiatives in increasingly non-permissive environments. Tragically, the cumulative impact of the Department's inability to implement security reforms and balance diplomacy and security over the past thirty years culminated with the failure of the Department's expeditionary diplomacy policy at Benghazi.

To better understand the failure of the Department's multiple reform efforts, this paper will provide an overview of the Department of State and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security; a review of the factors impacting organizational failures, culture and change; an analysis of the three major organizational reform efforts in the aftermath of tragic attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities; examine the organizational factors that ultimately contributed to the Benghazi tragedy; and analyze the post-Benghazi reform efforts of the Department.

The Department Of State and Diplomatic Security: An Overview

The Department of State identifies its core mission as follows: "to shape and sustain a peaceful, prosperous, just, and democratic world and foster conditions for stability and progress for the benefit of the American people and people everywhere."¹ To accomplish this mission, the Department employs over 13,000 Foreign Service Officers, 11,000 Civil Service and 45,000 foreign national local staff employees at diplomatic locations around the globe. As the U.S. government's lead agency foreign affairs agency, Department employees engage in diplomatic efforts with a primary focus "to fight terrorism, protect U.S. interests abroad, and implement foreign policy initiatives while building a freer, prosperous and secure world."² Safeguarding these diplomatic efforts is the responsibility of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS).

DS is the security and law enforcement bureau of the Department of State, entrusted with the mission of "providing a safe environment for the conduct of American diplomacy" by protecting people, property and information at over 285 diplomatic posts worldwide.³ In 1916, the Department established the first security office, the "Bureau of Secret Intelligence," in response to a series of German espionage efforts targeting the State Department prior to U.S. intervention in World War I. Appointed in February of 1917, the first Chief Special Agent and Special Assistant to the Secretary supervised the first cadre of Special Agents hired to provide

dignitary protection and courier services.⁴ The U.S. Congress formally established the modern day Bureau of Diplomatic security with the passage of Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986.

Unlike the security challenges faced by the Department in 1916, providing a safe environment for diplomacy in the 21st century is extremely resource intensive. DS employs a large and diverse staff of Foreign Service specialists and civil service Diplomatic Security special agents (more commonly known as Regional Security Officers or “RSOs” when stationed overseas), security protective specialists, diplomatic couriers, security engineers and technicians. DS agents assigned to an embassy or consulate’s Regional Security Office as RSOs manage a robust physical, information and procedural security programs and support personnel in furtherance of the mission’s diplomatic efforts. DS Regional Security Offices are commonly staffed by locally hired Foreign Service National Investigators, Local Guard Force personnel, surveillance detection specialists, and a cadre of bodyguards depending upon the local threat environment. Additional overseas security support requirements may be augmented by the Department of Defense through the deployment of Marine Security Guards and “Seabees” from the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion.

Resources and funding levels available for overseas security programs are guided by two different sets of assessment criteria. The Security Environment Threat List (SETL), developed by DS’s Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis, assesses available threat intelligence to develop a threat profile of countries based upon security related criteria such as crime, political violence and acts of terrorism.⁵ The subsequent threat rating determines the level of security resources available to a specific post. Security resources and requirements are delineated by the Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB). The OSPB is an executive branch interagency board

chaired by DS which establishes uniform security standards and policies for all personnel working overseas under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador.⁶ Additionally, the security obligations of the host country for the protection of diplomats and facilities are established by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.⁷

Alternative Explanations of Organizational Failure

Three months after the Benghazi attack, four Department officials resigned under pressure after the public release of the Benghazi Accountability and Review Board (ARB) report.⁸ Although the report did not identify any individual breach of duty on the part of the four officials, it included a finding that these officials “demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability” in adequately addressing security measures for Benghazi.⁹ Assessing the Benghazi incident from an organizational perspective, the Benghazi terrorist attack can be characterized as a failure or an organizational deviance, an incident “that deviates from both formal design goals and normative standards or expectations, either in the fact of its occurrence or in its consequences, and produces a suboptimal outcome.”¹⁰ Consequently utilizing this definition, the terrorist attack at Benghazi and the previous attacks in Beirut, Kuwait, Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam qualify as a suboptimal outcomes as a result of the failure of the Department’s security program and diplomatic initiatives.

The causes of organizational deviance generally fall into three categories of an organizational mistake, misconduct, or a disaster.¹¹ Organizational misconduct as a cause for the Benghazi attack is not a sufficient explanation based upon the Department’s official ARB report determination that there was no individual breach of duty by Department employees. Of the two remaining options, organizational mistake, an act of omission or commission by employees

acting in an official capacity, initially offers a viable explanation for the tragedy.¹² A 2013 Brookings Institute report supports this conclusion, attributing the majority of governmental failures as errors of omission and assessed the Benghazi attack as a failure of policy in the Department's resources, structure and leadership.¹³

However the final option, one of "organizational disaster," provides a more compelling alternative explanation of the Benghazi tragedy. While organizational mistakes and misconduct factor into organizational accidents or disasters, the primary differentiating factors are the generally large-scale, costly, public and unexpected nature of organizational disasters.¹⁴ More importantly, two distinct patterns are common in organizational disasters. The first pattern is the existence of "conflicting goals, performance pressures, deadlines, escalating commitment, reward systems that reinforce productivity and undermine safety, and decline of resource slack." The second pattern transpires over a longer duration and is "typified by rule violations, discrepant events that accumulated unnoticed, and cultural beliefs about hazards that together prevented intervention that might have staved off harmful outcomes."¹⁵ For the Benghazi tragedy, both patterns factor prominently in the organizational events leading up to the attack.

In his assessment of organizational failure, Jonathan Klein argues that a single "organizational superculture" exists within all organizations and is defined by the "norms and values" of traditions; loyalty and commitment; hierarchy; duty; collectivism; compliance; and representation.¹⁶ This organizational superculture can impact an organization negatively by exerting pressure within an organization that generates a confirmation bias amongst subordinates favoring management decisions rather than an objective critical assessment of those decisions.¹⁷ Within the context of organizational failure, this creates a myth of consensus behind management and decision makers while individual responsibility for failure is collectivized.¹⁸

The tendency to collectivize failure through ethical license, or by placing blame on the system and the process, can negatively impact organizational performance by minimizing and justifying failures.¹⁹ Organizations may also take the opposite approach of scapegoating one or more individuals, especially in highly publicized incidents when the organization seeks to shield individuals in positions of greater authority from public scrutiny.²⁰ For the Department of State, with a superculture that is traditionally resistant to change, this can have profound impacts on reform efforts.

One of the most visible and damaging factors symptomatic in organizational disasters is a continual resistance to change. Organizations will commonly initiate multiple reform efforts, engaging in the “ritual of change” during which change may be planned, apparent or routine, but nonetheless all efforts conclude without any meaningful results.²¹ Organizations can avoid organizational failure provided they engage in a robust process of failure analysis, learning from failure, self-scrutiny, and a commitment to change by enacting truly effective and substantive change.²² However, when these factors are absent or the organizational superculture is resistant to change, reform efforts are ultimately destined to fail.

Organizational Culture and Change

Enacting effective and substantive change requires an examination and understanding of an organization’s culture. Edgar Schein defines the culture of an organization as:

...a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by the group as it solved its problems of external adaption and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.²³

Organizational culture provides a common understanding amongst its members based upon these myriad of shared experiences and values. More importantly for outsiders, examining organizational culture allows one to obtain an informed insight into how an organization

functions, what are its core values and processes and how its members work and interact both inside and outside the organization.

Schein identifies three separate organizational stages of change: the founding and early growth stage, midlife, and a final stage of maturity and decline. This final stage best describes the Department of State, a bureaucracy with a culture and tradition developed over the course of two hundred years. During the first two stages of an organization's development, cultural change is much easier to achieve as the organization, people and culture are simply more malleable. However as organizations mature, organizational culture becomes calcified and resistant to change. Consequently the organizational change mechanisms associated with the maturity and decline stage are generally only precipitated by traumatic events, an organizational turnaround, mergers and acquisitions in the corporate world, or through destruction and rebirth such as corporate bankruptcy.²⁴ As a mature bureaucracy, incidents such as the attack on Benghazi or earlier embassy bombings are traumatic events that should precipitate an organizational culture change within the Department.

Why does an organization's culture matter? The key reason is not only that culture influences organizational, team, and individual performance, but that these performance levels also affect the processes of how an organization conducts business on a regular basis.²⁵ During an organizational disaster, such as the Benghazi attack, one or more of these factors do not function, further contributing to the process of failure. Consequently, it is of critical importance for any successful organizational reform to link the reform vision (the desired goal) to the organization's culture (how to achieve it) and with the organization's strategic management (the organization's capability). As these three factors are interdependent, success in all three are

necessary to achieve healthy organizational change, with failure in one or more areas leading to suboptimal change results.²⁶

Regardless of the organizational reform approach instituted, cultural change has been identified as integral part of the process. For example, a “Total Quality Management” approach to reform emphasizes a focus on management behavior, organizational structure, rules and regulations, employee performance, and budget. More importantly, reform efforts also facilitate an environment where everyone has a common vision; frank discussion of organizational problems can occur without reprisal; and an emphasis is placed on mistake prevention as opposed to fixing them after a failure.²⁷ A critical task for an organization utilizing the “Balanced Scorecard” approach to reform is ensuring that those efforts are matched with the organization’s culture.²⁸ The success of any cultural change incorporates a three step process of identification, alignment, and change to transform an organization’s existing culture into ideal values established during the reform process.²⁹

As the goals, size and structure of organizations differ, the resultant organizational cultures that develop will be dissimilar. Despite these differences, organizational cultures can generally be classified into four major organizational culture types: hierarchy, market, clan, and adhocracy.³⁰ The Department of State, despite its hierarchical structure, acts more as an adhocracy due in part to the organization’s requirement for flexibility in response to the ever changing and nuanced demands of diplomatic engagement. Regardless of the organizational type, there are six major steps needed to achieve cultural reform.³¹ Although these prescriptive steps are necessary to the cultural change process, critical to this process is the need for individual change amongst an organization’s members for absent the individual change, organizational culture change will ultimately be unsuccessful.³²

More broadly speaking, cultural change is also a critical aspect of any organizational change or reform attempts. In “Leading Change,” his seminal work on organizational change, John Kotter identified an eight-step process necessary to successfully implement organizational change.³³ Why does Kotter emphasize this eight-step process? The eight-steps are milestones in the change process and also represent that successful organizational change requires that leadership embrace and foster the entire change process to successfully implement reform. Organizational change does not occur simply because a report or panel recommends it. Successful organizational change requires leadership that understands that change is necessary, pursues a vision for change, and a sustained commitment to implement the reform process.

In the absence of leadership driven change, certain events can impact an organization so profoundly that they act as an external shock and driver of cultural organizational change.³⁴ Given the magnitude of political and media attention as well as the internal and external calls for Department reform, the recent Benghazi attack and earlier embassy attacks should have acted as that external shock to drive a sustained and fundamental cultural organizational change within the Department. However, despite some evolution and reform of the Department’s security practices, all three incidents are frustrating reminders of history repeating itself.³⁵ This frustration stems not only from the fact that all three incidents precipitated reviews with strikingly similar findings. The greater frustration is that despite these findings, reform efforts repeatedly did not take hold within the Department in sufficient form and tragically contributed to future tragedies.

Beirut and Kuwait: Organizational Reform Part I

Although the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act formally created DS in 1986, two attacks precipitated the immediate impetus for security reform: the terrorist bombings

of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in April 18, 1983, and the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait on December 12, 1983.³⁶ In the aftermath of these terrorist attacks, the Secretary of State convened the Inman Commission in 1985 to review the Department's security practices. The panel submitted its formal findings in the "Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel on Overseas Security." The Inman Commission's core recommendations included the creation of a Bureau of Diplomatic Security and a Diplomatic Security Service; consolidation of Department's various security functions within the bureau; reforms and development of new security procedures; establishment of Marine Security Guard detachments; and the recommendation for accountability boards in the aftermath of future terrorist incidents resulting in the loss of life and/or damage to property.³⁷ The Secretary of State implemented the overwhelming majority of the Panel's recommendations and these recommendations provided the foundation for the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986.

The Inman Commission and subsequent legislative security reforms at the State Department were not only much needed but also very much overdue. It would be inaccurate to suggest that State Department officials and the Office of Security did not previously identify the growing threat of terrorism in the years leading up to Beirut and Kuwait attacks. Multiple initiatives and security program overhauls were attempted during the period yet the scope of the organizational reform efforts, funding, and personnel increases were not sufficient to stem the tide and impact of terrorism.³⁸ Within the broader context of the previous fifteen years, the embassy attacks in Beirut and Kuwait marked the culmination of a series of increasingly deadly attacks targeting U.S. diplomatic interests. In 1981, RAND's "Embassies Under Siege" study reviewed 48 embassy takeovers between 1971-1980. The study identified U.S. embassies as the target of four successful and one unsuccessful takeover attempts, to include the infamous Iranian

takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and the resultant hostage crisis in 1979. The review assessed that security measures appeared to work and deter terrorist activity and presciently predicted that terrorist tactics would evolve to target more vulnerable diplomatic facilities.³⁹ RAND published a second study in 1982, “Diplomats on the Front Line,” which identified several disturbing trends. Although the study concluded that the majority of host country governments attempted to fulfill their obligations to protect diplomats from terrorism, terrorist attacks significantly increased between 1968 and 1982, with U.S. diplomatic interests accounting for 29% of all terrorist attacks during that timeframe.⁴⁰

Despite the best efforts of host countries to fulfill their treaty obligations to protect diplomats, the impact of terrorism on U.S. diplomacy was staggering during this period. Beginning in 1968 and prior to the embassy attacks of 1983, terrorists murdered five U.S. ambassadors and a deputy chief of mission in Guatemala (1968), Sudan (1973), Cyprus (1974), Lebanon (1976) and Afghanistan (1979). Although eventually released, groups successfully kidnapped an additional four U.S. ambassadors or senior diplomats in Brazil (1969), Haiti (1973), Mexico (1973), Colombia (1980).⁴¹

Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam: Organizational Reform Part II

A similar pattern of security failures and inability to reform security practices plagued the State Department and contributed to the 1998 catastrophic embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. A decade after the bombing in Beirut, the prevailing attitude within the Department, in the words of Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security Anthony Quainton, was that “Terrorism is dead.”⁴² Although Quainton’s own dismissive attitude towards security was well known and not singularly unique, it did make him a curious choice to lead the Department’s security bureau.⁴³ In 1992 the Department’s “State 2000: A New Model for Managing Foreign

Affairs,” an organizational reform report which confidently predicted that “physical and counter-intelligence security threats to U.S. operations abroad will decline.”⁴⁴ In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Cold War peace dividend and rightsizing government initiatives to balance the federal budget severely impacted DS, as Quainton significantly downsized the bureau and attempted to eliminate DS’s investigative programs.⁴⁵ Ironically these downsizing efforts, beginning in 1992, coincided with the highwater mark of terrorist attacks targeting both U.S. targets and diplomats abroad during the past forty years.⁴⁶

Six years after Quainton’s appointment, the 1998 twin terrorist attacks targeted the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam, killing 220 victims and injuring over 4,000 additional people. An Accountability and Review Board convened, as required by the Omnibus Diplomatic Security Act of 1986, to review the circumstances that contributed to the deadly attack.⁴⁷ The board, chaired by retired Admiral William J. Crowe, provided 24 recommendations to enhance security procedure, crisis management and intelligence sharing. In the executive summary, the Crowe ARB identified two critical failures. The first was the ARB’s characterization of an institutional failure by the State Department to recognize the threat of transnational terrorism and the second was a collective failure by the Department, previous presidential administrations and Congress to adequately prioritize and fund security programs to mitigate vulnerabilities of diplomatic facilities during the previous decade.⁴⁸ The failure to provide adequate security funding was even more egregious when considering the totality of the 234 terrorist attacks targeting U.S. diplomatic personnel and facilities between 1987 through 1997.⁴⁹

As in the aftermath of the Inman Commission, Congress again took swift legislative action in response to the findings of the Crowe ARB and provided funding for an embassy security and construction program. In 1999, the Secure Embassy Construction and

Counterterrorism Act (SECCA) authorized significant funding resources to enhance embassy security and embark on an expansive new embassy construction program between 2000 and 2005.⁵⁰ Additionally, observing that the striking similarities between the findings of the Crowe and Inman panels, the SECCA legislation also codified seven other security requirements for threat assessments, site selections for diplomatic posts, perimeter setback distances, and crisis management and response.⁵¹ Of specific note in the legislation was the statutory requirement that all diplomatic facilities maintain a 100ft set back from the perimeter of the property. Additionally, statutory site selection criteria required that all U.S. government agencies be located within the same diplomatic facility unless the Secretary of State approved a collocation waiver.

In addition to the required convening of the ARB, the Secretary of State commissioned two studies to examine the broader management and security issues within the Department. The Overseas Presence Advisory Panel's "America's Overseas Presence in the 21st Century," report included ten major findings and cited challenges with security, interagency coordination, resources, capital needs and facilities, and the dangers of inaction as major drivers for the Department to embark upon a program of systemic reform.⁵² In the report's assessment of security issues confronting the Department, the Panel observed that the Department should continue implementing the findings of the ARB and specifically recommended that the Deputy Secretary be designated by the Secretary to carry out the statutory security requirements for the protection of U.S. personnel overseas. The study also emphasized the need to "create a prosecurity culture" at the Department through inclusion of security awareness as a rating factor in employee evaluations, increased training requirements and a commitment by the Secretary "to promote the vision and goals for security overseas."⁵³ One of the critical issues raised by the

Panel, the need to balance diplomacy and security, would remain a source of conflict within the Department in the years after the Africa embassy bombings.⁵⁴

The second study commissioned by the Department was a comprehensive organizational review of security and intelligence management within the Department by Booz, Allen & Hamilton, Inc. Booz Allen's "Security and Intelligence Management Study" emphasized similar core findings as those found in the Overseas Presence Advisory Panel report. The Booz Allen review specifically focused on security policies, management and organization of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and the study's findings included fifteen recommendations encompassing organizational structure, risk management and intelligence dissemination.⁵⁵

The primary recommendations of the study included elevation of the position of the DS Assistant Secretary to an Under Secretary of State, revision of the reporting chain of command for the RSO directly to the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission, and the development of a risk management plan. Booz-Allen's structural recommendation to elevate the position of the DS Assistant Secretary emphasized two factors: that the placement of a position within an organizational hierarchy determines both its authority and accountability while also reflecting the significance of the position within the organizational structure.⁵⁶ The second recommendation, eliminating the bureaucratic reporting layer of an embassy's management officer from the RSO's reporting chain to the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission, was quickly implemented by the Department. This new reporting arrangement corresponded with the study's primary recommendation to eliminate the Under Secretary for Management from the reporting chain by creating an Under Secretary of State for DS directly responsible to the Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary.

Under Secretary of State Bonnie Cohen endorsed the recommendation to create an Under Secretary of State for DS, as an apolitical and progressive solution reflective of the Department's security needs.⁵⁷ On May 26, 2000, Secretary of State Madeline Albright approved creation of an Undersecretary of State for Security, Law Enforcement and Counter Terrorism, consolidating the Bureaus of Diplomatic Security, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement and the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism.⁵⁸ Although approved by the Secretary of State, the proposed reorganization ultimately failed as one of the key requirements was congressional authorization to establish the new Undersecretary of State position.⁵⁹

Benghazi: Organizational Reform Part III

Fourteen years after the embassy bombings in Africa, and ironically after a similar period of elapsed time between the 1983 and 1998 bombings, terrorists attacked the U.S. Special Mission to Benghazi on September 11, 2012. The terrorist assault caused the death of Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans, prompting the statutory convening of an ARB, this time chaired by Ambassador Thomas J. Pickering. The principal finding of the Benghazi ARB assessed that systemic, leadership and management failures within senior levels of the Bureaus of Diplomatic Security and Near Eastern Affairs contributed to an insufficient security program at Benghazi incapable of securing the facility from the terrorist attack.⁶⁰ Other key findings included inadequate security staffing and resources in addition to a failure by Department stakeholders to view security as a "shared responsibility" leading to what the panel described as a stove-piped policy and security decision process. Additionally, the ARB determined that due to the official designation of the facility as a Special Mission, resources were not allocated to upgrade the facility in compliance with Overseas Security Policy Board standards.⁶¹

The Benghazi ARB provided twenty-four key recommendations in six core security and management categories. In the areas of risk management, the ARB identified the need for the Department to assess the appropriate risk and reward balance for operations high threat regions and emphasized the need for all Ambassadors to accept responsibility for risk management for the diplomatic posts under their authority. The ARB recommended that the Department conduct another review of DS organization and management, to include an assessment by an outside panel of experts to identify best practices for operating in high threat environments. The ARB also proposed the establishment of minimum physical security standards for temporary facilities, reiterated the collocation requirements for facilities required by the SECCA legislation and recommended by the Crowe ARB, and noted yet again the Crowe ARB recommendations that the Department obtain Congressional funding and authorization to re-initiate a ten-year capital building program.⁶²

The first of two Department sponsored reviews recommended by the Benghazi ARB, the “Report on Diplomatic Security Organization and Management,” evaluated whether DS’s organizational and management structure suitably aided with the Department’s core diplomatic mission. The report’s findings identified similar themes as previous reviews and included thirty-five recommendations in the three core areas of organization, management and training. The report specifically noted the resource and manpower difficulties associated with DS’s expanded mission responsibilities and the paradoxical impact caused by the absence of a training float to adequately prepare personnel for assignments.⁶³

The second Department sponsored review, the “Report of the Independent Panel on Best Practices,” contained forty recommendations focusing in twelve different areas. The major points of emphasis in this report concentrated on four key areas of organization and

management; accountability; risk management; and program criticality and acceptable risk. The Panel identified the first recommendation, the creation of an Under Secretary of Diplomatic Security, as a critical requirement for the Department “to fully integrate and balance security” and “align security management with the realities of a post 9/11 threat environment.”⁶⁴

In the areas of risk management, program criticality, and acceptable risk, the Panel noted that neither the Department nor DS implemented a risk management policy. The Panel assessed that in the absence of any formal risk management model, the Department and DS essentially defaulted to utilizing Inman and OSPB security standards and process of waivers in an ill-conceived attempt to manage risk, with the unfortunate byproduct that personnel were exposed to greater risk.⁶⁵ Additionally, the Panel emphasized the need to implement a program criticality and acceptable risk component in addition to a risk management model, as both are essential for success. In the Panel’s proposed model, the process functions as a system of checks and balances, with the Under Secretary of DS providing the risk assessment; the Department’s Regional Bureaus determining how important (or critical) the mission is; and the Department’s leadership (either the Secretary or Deputy Secretary) assessing and approving the mission based upon what is deemed an acceptable risk.⁶⁶ The Panel observed that this formula is essentially the de facto practice at overseas posts, with the RSO, post’s Emergency Action Committee, and the Ambassador fulfilling the respective roles. The one major differentiating factor in this analogous process is that although the RSO reports directly to the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission, currently the DS Assistant Secretary reports to the Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary through another bureaucratic layer of the Under Secretary of Management.

The Department of State: A Culture Resistant to Change

Successful organizational change requires an organizational culture receptive to reform. After each tragedy, review panels provided a host of prescriptive reforms and organizational restructuring recommendations to the Department. In two instances, after the attacks in Nairobi/Dar Es Salaam and Benghazi, review panels commented on the similarities with previous attacks and the Department's failure to reform. The fact that reform efforts failed is not surprising when considering the Department's recent past. Previous reform efforts at the Department of State have historically proven to be ineffective due in large part to a cultural resistance to change within the Department. In 1968, John Harr observed in "The Managerial Crisis" that the Department failed to achieve balance between its policy making role and management of foreign affairs despite several reorganizational attempts.⁶⁷ As a result, for the Department's two critical core power groups of political appointees and diplomats, management issues and priorities necessary for facilitating foreign policy initiatives are misunderstood and even viewed as potentially hostile to policy concerns.⁶⁸

Within the paradigm of policy and management, security is a management function supportive to the execution of policy. More importantly this paradigm establishes a hierarchy of importance between the two roles, ascribing a prominence to policy and relegating management to a secondary and subordinate role. Consequently, the view that the Department was unreceptive to outside ideas and places a greater emphasis on policy flexibility to reflect the evolving views of rotating leadership, continues to prevail at the expense of the more mundane and rigid requirements of management issues.⁶⁹

Assessing the Department a year later, Andrew Scott concluded that:

...the central problem of the Department is cultural rather than organizational. It is easy to reorganize the Department, but organizational change does not automatically produce

cultural change, certainly not of the kind that should be desired. Reorganization gets at formal structures but the informal structures are out of reach.⁷⁰

The failure of these earlier reform efforts impacted funding, as demonstrated by the Department's inability to adequately justify funding requests to Congress.⁷¹ The Department's resistance to systemic research, analysis and long-term planning were further exacerbated by an institutional failure to embrace lessons learned and self-improve. This resistance stemmed from a Department cultural view that each experience was unique and that a lessons-learned approach was not beneficial.⁷² An unfortunate byproduct of this cultural legacy was that support functions outside the policy realm were of deemed of lesser importance, lower priority, and consequently kept outside the Department's primary chain of command.⁷³ Successful change within the Department could occur if the subculture was under enough internal pressure, such as during the Department's "Young Turk" reform movement of the late 1960s or through external pressure, such as Congressional action, sufficient to trigger the necessary reform. However, efforts that solely focused on changing the formal organizational structure without a commensurate change to the informal subculture would likely fail due to the constant friction between the two opposed efforts.⁷⁴

In 1970, Scott argued that the Department's dominant subculture was so pervasive and hostile towards management, planning and research, that the insular trends of the organization essentially shielded it from external criticism and prevented the build-up of the requisite pressure needed to trigger a cultural change.⁷⁵ Deputy Undersecretary of Administration William J. Crockett's reform efforts of the late 1960's failed for those reasons, as his continual strife with the Department's dominant subculture precluded any collaboration with the Department's leadership elite.⁷⁶ This is not to suggest that change within the Department was impossible, as reform advocates believed that a strong leader armed supported by an Administration and a

comprehensive management strategy could overcome the dominant subculture⁷⁷ Additionally, critics of failed Department reform efforts suggest that although Foreign Service Officers may resist change or respond to it with enough pressure, they could not be relied upon to implement those efforts on their own.⁷⁸ These themes were certainly apparent during the failed reform efforts of the “Diplomacy of the 70s” initiative. An inability to garner support from the leadership elite within the Department and complaints that many of those reform efforts ‘went against the grain of many FSOs” would indicate that attempts at cultural change were ineffective.⁷⁹

Reviewing the Department reform efforts of the same era, Petrow et al, examined the difficulties in changing an organization that valued experience at the expense of management competence. Given these factors, Petrow assessed that successful reform efforts required three forces to stimulate bureaucratic change within the Department: external; bottom-up and internal; and top-down leadership pressure.⁸⁰ In 1978, almost a decade after the start of the late 1960’s reform efforts, Robert Pringle’s analysis of 65 previous studies of the foreign affairs community highlighted each study’s similar assessments regarding the Department’s ineffective management and planning efforts. Pringle’s most damning conclusion suggested that despite all these studies “little serious effort has been made to implement them and virtually none have resulted in major change at State.”⁸¹

Over a decade later, the 2001 Hart-Rudman Commission Report’s “Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change,” which predated and was not precipitated by the 9/11 attacks, called for an overarching reform of the government’s national security apparatus. The Commission was especially harsh in its assessment of the Department, characterizing it as “a crippled institution.”⁸² Specific recommendations for the Department included reform of an

organizational structure that “works at cross-purposes with its Foreign Service culture” to reverse what the report characterized as a “spiral of decay” fueled by a dearth of resources, organizational inefficiency and the absence of strategic direction.⁸³ Referencing the Department’s long history of resistance to reform, Newt Gingrich opined that “the State Department is far too busy being ineffective to bother fixing its internal structures in order to become more effective.”⁸⁴ Although ineffectiveness was a consequence of the Department’s decade long inability to enact meaningful reform in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, factors such as territorialism; loyalties and asymmetric information; hierarchical rigidity; bureaucratic inertia; and incomplete control over the foreign affairs also presented significant challenges to Department reform efforts.⁸⁵

Diplomatic Security and Fortress America

In addition to a cultural resistance to change, the Department continues to struggle with balancing the demands of diplomacy and security in an era where American diplomatic personnel and facilities remain high-value targets for terrorists. Examining how the Department views security within the larger context of its diplomatic mission is fundamental to understanding this internal conflict. After traumatic events such as Beirut, Kuwait, Nairobi, Dar Es Salaam and Benghazi, one may assume that the necessity of security for the safe conduct of diplomacy would be culturally ingrained within the Department. Unfortunately, the issue is more complicated due in part to the competing demands of diplomacy and security.

Ambassador Robert Dillon, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon in 1984, reflected upon the terrorist attack and poignantly summarized the difficult issues confronting the Department:

I’m troubled, indeed saddened, by the defenses behind which our people live. Embassies look like giant prisons. They’re big fortresses. Isolated.

And yet I remind myself that if we had had something like that in Lebanon, we would have been secure. Secure and they could not have blown up the Embassy. If anyone wants to pursue a Foreign Service life, this is part of it. It's like being in the Army. There isn't any safe way to do it. If the danger of terrorism makes it impossible for you to go out and interact with other people, you'd better not do it.⁸⁶

Ambassador Dillon's thoughts are now commonplace complaints by Foreign Service officers concerned with the role of security at the Department and derived from a belief that security negatively impacts diplomatic engagement. This sentiment is reflective of the Department's efforts to cope with the competing demands of security and expediency, with a perception that security needs continue to prevail in a post-1998 embassy bombing environment. Consequently, the advent of the Department's 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) was heralded by some as a signal that the Department would seriously contemplate a recalibration of priorities.⁸⁷

The 2010 QDDR report concluded that the threat environment limited the ability for personnel to effectively perform in the very places that assistance and operations were required. Consequently, the QDDR promised to deliver "a new global standard for risk management" by conducting a review and revision of existing risk management practices and policies; further incorporate these practices and policies into Department planning; and finally provide the appropriate level of training for personnel.⁸⁸ As required by the QDDR, the Department conducted an internal 2011 Risk Management Survey to assess the impact of security on diplomatic initiatives.⁸⁹ The survey generated 759 participants from Foreign Service, United States Agency for International Development and other executive branch personnel stationed overseas. At the time of the survey, one year before the Benghazi attack, 77% of participants responded that risk management practices at their current post were appropriate for the security situation.⁹⁰ Additionally, 62% of respondents stated that the availability of security resources or agreement on appropriate security planning did not hinder operations.⁹¹ However, two years after Benghazi, a 2014 American

Foreign Service Association (AFSA) survey of 3,500 respondents inclusive of 1600 current Department employees, revealed significantly different responses. According to the 2014 AFSA survey, only 25% of active duty Department employees believe “that the department has struck the right risk/reward balance” and over 50% believe that “it is now more difficult for employees to effectively engage overseas.”⁹²

In addition to perceptions that security impacts the efficiency of diplomacy, there is a growing belief that security measures actually negatively impact American diplomatic efforts, thereby making our diplomats more vulnerable to attacks that our embassy “pillboxes” or “prisons” cannot defend against. The pillbox or prison embassy is at odds with the core values espoused by an open and democratic society and the ability for diplomats to effectively conduct diplomacy requires access for the public that a fortress like embassy cannot provide. The consequence of security triumphing over diplomacy translates to a concern that “the buttoned-up embassy is now American policy.”⁹³

Concerns about the limitations to embassy security and protecting our diplomats also focus on the totality of security’s impact on diplomacy to the extent that aspirations to achieve perfect security prevent effective diplomacy.⁹⁴ Critics have characterized security procedures at embassies as “wholly unpleasant — and usually smacks more of hard power than soft.”⁹⁵ Former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell, commented after security threats precipitated the temporary closing of multiple U.S. embassies in the Middle East in 2013 that Department security spending now outpaced traditional diplomatic initiatives and programs. In Campbell’s opinion, the emphasis on security and a Fortress America embassy “diminishes U.S. soft power by undermining its traditional message of openness and welcome.”⁹⁶ Prominent international relations theorist Stephen M. Walt agrees with these complaints, characterizing the current approach to embassy security and design as “an odd combination of power and paranoia”

with imperial overtones inconsistent with the image and message that the U.S. wishes to project overseas.⁹⁷

Walt's sentiments are reiterated in recent criticism of the New Embassy Compound construction project in London, characterized by military descriptive terminology describing the trenches and bunkers of the "New Tower of London"⁹⁸ and references to surrounding reflecting pools as castle moats.⁹⁹ Secretary of State John Kerry, disheartened by the embassy construction program during his tenure on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, remarked that "We're building fortresses around the world. We're separating ourselves from people in these countries."¹⁰⁰ As Henry Graber accurately observed, the key architectural challenge in embassy design is achieving the correct balance between security and representing American values.¹⁰¹ Failure to achieve that balance raises legitimate concerns about the ability of security to seamlessly integrate and provide an environment conducive to diplomatic engagement.¹⁰² More importantly, within a larger context, the failure to obtain that proper balance between diplomacy and security also raises the fundamental question of whether there is any continued value to maintaining an embassy or overseas presence.¹⁰³ Obviously disengagement overseas is not a viable option nor in the national interest of the United States. Consequently, in the current threat environment calibrating the proper balance between diplomacy and security is necessary to achieve our foreign policy objectives.

Balancing Diplomacy and Security

Achieving an appropriate level of balance between diplomacy and security is inherently difficult due to the very nature of their objectives. From an organizational standpoint, Cameron and Quinn would likely identify the needs of diplomacy as best served by an organizational adhocracy and security through an organizational hierarchy.¹⁰⁴ In fact security policies,

regulations and procedures have a tendency to further reinforce hierarchies.¹⁰⁵ Diplomacy requires an openness and agility to adapt to changing circumstances, a willingness to negotiate, and ultimately compromise to achieve goals. Conversely security is closed and rigid, dictated by procedures that must be strictly and consistently adhered to for success. Due to these inherent differences, they become competing cultures existing within the same organization. Consequently, former Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman's observation that the Department "embraces and rebels against institutional hierarchy" in many ways reflects the paradoxical duality of a Department confined to a strict organizational structure despite a mission requiring greater organizational flexibility.¹⁰⁶

This aversion to institutional hierarchy may also explain some of the institutional resistance to the strict requirements of security practices. Grossman argues that the "unresolved tension between the regional bureaus...and functional regional bureaus is a significant impediment to collaboration."¹⁰⁷ The Department's regional bureaus are responsible for policy within the Department and functional bureaus, such as DS, are responsible for supporting the regional bureaus in the execution of policy. As it pertains to balancing diplomacy and security, the conflictive tension between the two can be a positive for fostering intra-departmental collaboration within the Department provided the correct organizational framework is established. However the appropriate balance can be difficult to achieve and implement, as planning and resources are required elements to achieve any organizational goals. Grossman notes that strategic planning and "making the crucial operational link between policy and resources" have not been hallmarks of Department excellence.¹⁰⁸ Some of these failures can be ascribed to the reactive nature and inherent need for flexibility in the conduct of crisis diplomacy in the 21st century. However from the perspective of security, although the nature of specifics

threats will change based upon particular operating environments, the persistent need for security has and will remain a constant.

Recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan have also offered evidence to some that the Department of State is desperately in need of organizational reform. Over the past decade, the reform efforts of Secretaries Powell, Rice and Clinton failed to significantly impact the Department's culture sufficiently to accumulate support to implement their priorities.¹⁰⁹ Increases in security and consular staff generated friction and complaints by those at State wishing to see those funding increases directed towards staff engaged in the Department's core diplomatic engagement mission. The genesis of these complaints stem from an organizational culture that values the core diplomatic mission over embassy security or visa issuance "even though those are critical vulnerabilities highlighted by attacks on American embassies in the past fifteen years."¹¹⁰ Despite this focus on embassy security and protecting our diplomats, critics argued that the Department failed to shift their focus from keeping diplomats safe to accepting that their work, much like that of the military, is fundamentally dangerous. The end result is that increased security standards impede the efforts of our diplomats, creates fortress embassies, and establishes a dynamic of "a more secure embassy building but a more exposed diplomatic corps."¹¹¹

For change to occur, especially at the State Department with its cultural resistance to change, the QDDR process offers an opportunity as the ideal vehicle to evaluate and develop a common vision for the Department.¹¹² The planning and organizational reform potential of the QDDR is essential for a department incapable of assessing threats and allocating resources.¹¹³ However, the QDDR process is not a panacea, and the Department's "institutional reflex" to argue for more resources rather than address the core issues requiring organizational reform is

counterproductive. This lack of resources argument is viewed as a crutch that the Department utilizes to justify incompetence and protect itself from necessary organizational reforms. The repeated failure of organizational change at the Department is not resource driven but due to its inability to critically assess the organization's deficiencies, implementing reform and fully committing to reform implementation.¹¹⁴

Budget and Resource Pressures

Although a commitment to critical self-assessment and reform are important, resources availability for all organizations impact effectiveness. The same holds true for efforts to appropriately balance diplomacy and security also impacts the resources and funding available to the Department. An effective security program requires a significant investment of resources and funding. In 2014, Anthony Negrut analyzed available data after the 1998 bombings to determine whether a correlation existed between the appropriation funding level for security at diplomatic posts and the death rate. Negrut's research concluded that correlation existed to demonstrate that death rate decreases corresponded with security spending increases and that increases in death rate occurred during security funding shortfalls.¹¹⁵ If Negrut's analysis is accurate, obtaining sufficient funding on an annual basis for security programs from Congress should be easily justifiable for the Department.

Unfortunately, a historical review of security funding at the Department reveals a very different pattern for security funding. In 2012, a STRATFOR assessment in the wake of the Benghazi ARB report was especially critical of the cyclical nature of DS funding, the Department's evaluative criteria of diplomatic operations in non-permissive environments, and the practice of designating temporary facilities to circumvent security requirements.¹¹⁶ In 2007¹¹⁷ and again in 2009,¹¹⁸ STRATFOR analyzed the boom and bust nature of security

funding at the Department in the aftermath of the Inman and Crowe ARB reports, whereby dramatic increases in security funding in the aftermath of terrorist attacks were later followed by drastic spending cuts. This cycle, fueled in part by the expected public outcry for congressional action in the aftermath of a crisis, ebbs along with the funding after the crisis is no longer at the forefront of the public consciousness. Additionally, internal tensions between DS's pro-security stance and the Department's diplomats, who tend to view security and diplomacy as incompatible, negatively impacted security funding and prioritization at the Department.

The assessment of a boom and bust cycle of DS funding is a valid criticism. A 2001 Congressional Research Service (CRS) report on embassy security funding included a comprehensive roll-up of security spending at the Department between 1992 through 2002. The CRS funding numbers illustrated a very clear decreasing trend-line in security funding prior to the Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam embassy bombings, beginning in 1993 through 1998.¹¹⁹ In reviewing Congressional funding in the aftermath of the Inman Commission findings, CRS determined that the Department did not request sufficient resources to fund the Inman Panel recommendations and only highlighted the need for new security funding twice in the twelve years after the Beirut bombings. On two occasions in FY1995 and FY1996 Congress actually rescinded \$100 million in unspent security funding from the Department.¹²⁰

After the 1998 Africa bombings, security funding initially increased in FY1999, but thereafter decreased and remained fairly flat until finally surpassing those levels in FY2004, coinciding with the Department initiating operations in Iraq. Between 2004 through 2009, security budgets increased significantly, however security operations in Iraq and Afghanistan represented approximately 40% of DS's budget.¹²¹ After the FY2009 Iraq transition increase, security budgets fell and flattened again until the post-Benghazi FY2013 funding increase.¹²²

This increase marked the start of new trend, which initially began in 1998 and 1999 after the African embassy bombings, when the percentage of security funding within the foreign affairs budget tripled from 9% to 22%.¹²³ Over the next fifteen years, that percentage would continue to increase and for the first time surpassed 40% of the administration of foreign affairs expenditures and 30% of the total State Department funding marks in 2014.¹²⁴

Within a broader context, security funding represented not only an absolute but relative funding increase in relation to the Department's overall budget. Between 1964 through 2001, international affairs and foreign assistance spending significantly decreased before the international affairs budget finally settled to represent approximately 1% of federal budget beginning in 1987. Steven Hook attributed this decline to a combination of factors such as the Department's poor relationship with Congress; overplayed criticisms of "clientitis;" internal management problems; an overall lack of a domestic constituency for foreign affairs; an "ends-means" gap in the Department's strategic goals and capabilities; and finally the Department's diminished role in the national security policy process. By FY2001, the international affairs \$22.8 billion request represented only 1% of the overall federal budget, with State Department program funding subsequently representing approximately 31% of that total.¹²⁵

Thirteen years later, the FY2014 international affairs budget request represented a similar ratio of 1% of the FY2014 federal budget, with the State Department's program funding representing 32% of that total.¹²⁶ Projections for the FY2015 budget request of \$48.45 billion represent similar ratios and funding levels for security are slightly increased over FY2014 levels to correspond with the recommendations of the Benghazi ARB. By FY2015, security funding is expected to represent 42% of the administration of foreign affairs expenditures.¹²⁷ Although the international affairs budget maintained a relatively consistent ratio of the federal budget in the

past dozen years and increased in absolute dollars as the federal budget increased, overall security funding increased four-fold since 1998.

For an organization with a primary mission of conducting diplomacy, the cost of security has required a tremendous investment of resources over the past fifteen years. This ebb and flow of security funding not only impacts available resources, staffing and construction of facilities, but contributes to an environment of reactive rather than proactive planning. Whether foreign assistance funding should remain at 1% of the federal budget is beyond this analysis. However, dramatic increases in security spending at the both the real and perceived expense of core Department programs serves to exacerbate tensions within the Department, which already views security as a secondary and supporting function. In the absence of any domestic constituency, justifying further budget funding increases remains challenging as the Department continues to struggle and remain relevant in the national security policy process. More problematic from a security perspective is this factor's impact on the Department as it embarks upon more aggressive risk taking in diplomatic initiatives to regain relevance in the national security process.

An Expanding Diplomatic Engagement

This sizable increase in the Department's security spending is further magnified when viewed from the perspective of its core diplomatic and foreign policy mission as part of the broader spectrum of the national security policy apparatus. If Hook's 2003 characterization of an ends-means gap within the Department is accurate, this gap is even greater when compared to the growing delta between diplomacy and defense spending, which fell from a high of 50% in 1948 to approximately 6% by the 1990s.¹²⁸ The Afghanistan and Iraq wars and subsequent increases to defense spending only further exacerbated this divide. By 2013, General David

Petreaus observed that the Department's budget decreased to 5% of defense spending and the Department's Foreign Service officers available worldwide were less than half the size of an Army division.¹²⁹ In 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates argued that the imbalance between diplomacy and defense, both in spending and as projections of foreign policy, required recalibration to "...strengthen other important elements of national power both institutionally and financially, and create the capability to integrate and apply all of the elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad."¹³⁰

The American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), the Department's professional association of foreign service officers, voiced similar concerns about the militarization of foreign aid and the continued shift of civilian responsibilities to the military during a 2007 Congressional hearing.¹³¹ Secretary Rice's transformational diplomacy,¹³² Secretary Clinton's expeditionary diplomacy and smart power¹³³ initiatives were in essence efforts to rebalance the diplomacy, development, and defense spending formula, as well as attempts to both redefine and reassert the role of Department in executing and shaping the nation's foreign policy agenda.

From a security perspective, the transformational diplomacy, expeditionary diplomacy and smart power initiatives also represented fundamental shifts in where and under what circumstances diplomats would be deployed. A 2007 CRS report on transformational diplomacy noted that the initiative required significant global repositioning of Department personnel in what were characterized as American Presence Posts, many of which potentially could not adhere to security standards. In those instances where security standards could not be met, the report indicated that the Department would seek a SECCA waiver to facilitate opening of the post.¹³⁴ Concurrently, diplomats continued to operate in Iraq and Afghanistan under increasingly arduous conditions which, as evidenced by AFSA's 2009¹³⁵ and 2011¹³⁶ testimonies

to Congress, precipitated expressions of concern for the safety of diplomats and increased calls for a better balance between security and diplomacy.

In addition to activities in Afghanistan and Iraq, a 2009 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report assessed that the Department increasingly operated in more dangerous areas, as evidenced by a significant decrease in embassy evacuations between 1997 through 2008 and a commensurate increase in the number of active posts receiving danger pay during the same timeframe.¹³⁷ Reviewing the Department's data for the same timeframe through 2013 reveals no change in that downward trend and the data illustrates a marked decrease in embassy evacuations beginning in 2003.¹³⁸ During that same timeframe, a 2008 GAO study of State Department's evacuation planning reported that the number of unaccompanied diplomatic positions was the highest number to date.¹³⁹ From both a political and practical standpoint, this trend makes sense as it becomes increasingly more difficult to justify the closure and/or evacuation of post when the Department continues to operate in critical threat areas such as Baghdad or Kabul. The fundamental difference is that unlike Baghdad or Kabul, other posts do not have the same level of security support available.

Ignoring the Warning Signs

Operating in non-permissive environments is not without risk and available data does not suggest any decline in the terrorist threat facing U.S. interests or diplomats. The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism's Global Terrorism Database identified 2,700 terrorist attacks against U.S. interests overseas between 1970 and 2012 and causing over 3000 deaths. During that same period, 521 attacks targeted U.S. diplomats causing close to 500 deaths. Since the 1998 African embassy bombings there have been 81 terrorist attacks, on average 6 per year.¹⁴⁰ DS's "Significant Attacks Against U.S. Diplomatic Facilities

and Personnel” report identified 290 significant attacks targeting Department facilities between 1998-2013, and exclusive of incidents of indirect fire targeting State facilities in Iraq, these averaged nearly 21 incidents per year.¹⁴¹ In fact, analysis of available data indicates that during the past decade as the embassy evacuations have decreased, the Department’s own threat reporting revealed an increase in significant attacks against diplomatic personnel and facilities.¹⁴²

Additionally, on multiple occasions after the embassy bombings of 1998 and in the decade leading up to Benghazi, GAO monitored the Department’s progress in addressing security related issues. A 2001 GAO study, “Major Management Challenges and Program Risks – Department of State,” identified significant long-term planning funding shortfalls for Department capital construction efforts and security enhancements of facilities.¹⁴³ A 2003 follow-up study cited substantial progress by the Department, to include implementation of a capital construction plan, but noted that significant challenges remained as many security vulnerabilities, such as setback requirements, could only be mitigated by the construction of new facilities.¹⁴⁴ In 2004, GAO identified collocation and security concerns in a review on the construction progress of new State and USAID facilities. The report specifically cited concerns expressed by State and USAID officials about the use of interim facilities which did not adhere to OSPB security standards and viewed as vulnerable soft targets by terrorists.¹⁴⁵ GAO’s 2008 review of the Department’s Compound Security Upgrade Program (CSUP) focused on progress made by State to enhance security at existing facilities, to include non-located annexes and buildings, for compliance with five critical OSPB security standards: a 100-foot perimeter setback; anti-climb walls or fences; anti-ram barriers; blast-resistant construction; and controlled access to the compound. The report determined that due to a variety of factors, none of the

reviewed existing facilities complied with security standards and consequently were susceptible to an attack.¹⁴⁶

In 2009, three years prior to Benghazi, GAO conducted a comprehensive review of the mission, funding and challenges faced by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security in the decade since the African embassy bombings. Although complimentary of DS's performance in an ever-increasing range of activities that continued to outpace available staffing and funding shortfalls, GAO was critical that the Department's strategic plan failed to account for resource and management challenges.¹⁴⁷ The GAO report indicated that DS strategic planning was lacking as well, due in part to the reactive nature of DS's supporting role within the Department and the constant need to respond to shifting Departmental priorities. Identifying a similar trend as other reports, GAO also noted the growing tensions and need to better balance security with State's diplomatic mission. In addition to activities in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Department was also increasingly operating in more dangerous areas than in previous years as evidenced by a significant decrease in embassy evacuations between 1997 through 2008 and a commensurate increase in the number of active posts receiving danger pay during the same timeframe.¹⁴⁸

The 2009 report concluded with a recommendation that the Department either independently or as part of the planned 2010 QDDR process, conduct a strategic review of DS to assess whether the bureau was adequately positioned to respond to the Department's diplomatic priorities.¹⁴⁹ The Department's failure to incorporate a strategic review of DS was raised by Senator Daniel K. Akaka two years later at a 2011 Senate Committee on Homeland Security hearing on "Diplomatic Security and its Implications for U.S. Diplomacy."¹⁵⁰ Two months after Benghazi attack, GAO testimony provided the House Committee on Foreign Affairs an update on the 2009 report. This 2012 update included three key findings: that the Department continued

to operate in non-permissive environments that require increased security and were increasingly more difficult to secure; that staffing shortages and operational challenges continued to impact DS; and that the Department's expansion of DS was conducted in the absence of sufficient strategic planning.¹⁵¹ Of greatest concern was GAO's finding that despite their 2009 recommendation, the Department failed to conduct a strategic review of DS, a review which GAO determined as critical for the Department to evaluate the expanding burden on DS resources and the impact on diplomatic operations and mission requirements.¹⁵²

All Roads Lead to Benghazi

The failure of the Department to strategically assess and resolve the competing demands of diplomacy and security would have dire consequences for the victims of Benghazi. Although the two-day terrorist attack on Benghazi began on September 11, 2012, the genesis of this organizational disaster arose over the preceding thirty years. Suggestions that the Benghazi-style attack was unprecedented are completely without merit.¹⁵³ Similar style terrorist attacks targeted the U.S. Embassy in Sanaa in 2008 and the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah in 2004.¹⁵⁴ The critical differences between those incidents and the attack on Benghazi were that both facilities adhered to the OSPB physical security standards and consequently were sufficiently fortified to withstand the attack until host country security forces could respond. The 2004 Jeddah attack also precipitated modifications to the Department's physical security standards and construction programs to eliminate a vulnerability identified and exploited by terrorists during the attack.¹⁵⁵ Given the fluid political situation and deteriorating threat environment in Libya¹⁵⁶, any expectation of assistance or reliance on local or interim Libyan government security forces was overly optimistic.¹⁵⁷

In the absence of appropriate host country security forces, an even greater burden was placed on the Department to ensure that appropriate resources and funding were available to support the mission. Assertions that inadequate funding negatively impacted the level of security support in Benghazi do not appear to be a legitimate explanation for the failure.¹⁵⁸ Conversely, the designation of the Benghazi facility as a special mission and temporary facility appears to have a greater impact on the failure, specifically given the implications of that designation on availability of funding for physical security upgrades, security staffing levels and physical security standards for temporary facilities.¹⁵⁹ Additionally the ARB report expressed concern about the uncertain operating status of the Benghazi facility after 2012 and whether this status impacted resources and funding:

Special Mission Benghazi's uncertain future after 2012 and its "non-status" as a temporary, residential facility made allocation of resources for security and personnel more difficult, and left responsibility to meet security standards to the working-level in the field, with very limited resources.

However, notwithstanding the impact of the Benghazi mission's uncertain status in the days leading up to the attack, the key issue was the initial decision by the Department to commence operations at the facility given the threat environment, physical security vulnerabilities of the facility, and the limited security resources provided by the Department and available from the host country.

The organizational decision to initiate operations in Benghazi did not occur in a vacuum. The decision reflected and was the sum of a series of incremental organizational failures to reform during the course of the previous thirty years. The most immediate factor was the impact of expeditionary diplomacy. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, Elizabeth Dibble, provided the following testimony on the impact of expeditionary diplomacy and Benghazi:

Things changed in the way we conduct our diplomacy in the period after Iraq, and we are now operating in places where 15 years ago we would have been pulling people out. Instead we are putting people in.¹⁶⁰

The impact of expeditionary diplomacy on the entire Department cannot be overstated. For an organization seeking a return to prominence in the national security policy debate, especially after the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the allure of expeditionary diplomacy was quite tempting. However, embarking on such an endeavor without the necessary supporting elements, most critically adequate security for diplomatic initiatives deploying to high threat-environments, ultimately culminated with an organizational disaster. It is only natural that the Department would view the secondary security priorities as potential impediments to the primary organizational diplomatic missions even in the most dangerous of environments. For the Department, operating in war-torn Iraq or Afghanistan, this view was further exacerbated when the justification for continuing operations in other locations became skewed and benchmarked against the Department's continued presence in Iraq or Afghanistan. Consequently, activities that were previously viewed as a risk fifteen years prior no longer resonated, with the end result that further risk-taking incrementally increased in magnitude.

Unfortunately, for an organization with a cultural resistance to change, embarking on the necessary reforms to balance diplomacy and security is a difficult task particularly when those reforms involve integrated a competing and secondary priority such as security. This process can be even further strained when the proposed reforms require a commitment to security, organizational restructuring, strategic planning, and resource management, areas not only of existing organizational weakness but relegated in organizational prominence to a secondary role. Furthermore, it is a daunting prospect for an organizational culture primarily focused on the core diplomatic mission to elevate the organizational role of security in light of the substantial

security funding increases of the past fifteen years, all at the perceived expense of the organization's core diplomatic efforts.

A State of Reform?

In the two years since the Benghazi attack and release of the ARB report, the Department accomplished considerable progress with implementation of a wide variety of recommendations.¹⁶¹ Amongst the most critical of these recommendations were the development of the Vital Post Validation Process (VP2), which instituted a formalized risk management process within the Department, and a Security Accountability Framework which delineated the specific roles and responsibilities of Department officials in the risk management process. Modifications to employee work requirements and promotion criteria included the addition of personal security requirements and risk management to emphasize the individual and collective responsibility of security by and for all employees.¹⁶² New position descriptions for senior level personnel included a requirement for Department officials to actively engage on policy, security and risk to achieve the appropriate balance for diplomatic operations.¹⁶³ DS initiated multiple reforms to include the creation of a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State position and directorate for High Threat Posts, an expansion of the Marine Security Guard program and the deployment of multi-agency Integrated Security Assessment Teams to evaluate high threat missions.¹⁶⁴ Additional revisions of Department regulations clarified the DS Assistant Secretary's reporting responsibility directly to the Secretary of State "as threats and circumstances require"¹⁶⁵ and incorporation of a new Department-wide risk management policy.¹⁶⁶

The one critical recommendation the Department declined to implement was the establishment of an Undersecretary for Diplomatic Security. Secretary of State Kerry declined to

initiate the change citing concerns that this restructuring would isolate DS from the rest of the Department and further amplify stove-pipe decision making within the organization.¹⁶⁷ The American Foreign Service Association also opposed the creation of a DS Undersecretary position, arguing that the proposed reorganization would further divide rather than consolidate security and policy decisions.¹⁶⁸ The decision not to move forward with this initiative despite multiple recommendations after the Kenya-Tanzania embassy bombings and the Benghazi attack suggest that despite these external shocks for reform, continued resistance within the Department remains. Multiple Office of Inspector General (OIG) audits and inspections in the aftermath of the Benghazi tragedy suggest that progress with implementing security reforms continues to remain a challenge for the Department.¹⁶⁹ If reform efforts continue to progress at insufficient rates, then serious consideration may warrant entrusting independent oversight and compliance with Departmental reform efforts to the OIG or stimulate Congressional intervention. Furthermore, greater transparency and public scrutiny of future ARB reports would also encourage broader public oversight and stimulate additional reform efforts. Currently, only three ARB reports – the Inman, Crowe and Pickering ARB reports - of the eighteen convened ARB panels over the past thirty years are available for public review.¹⁷⁰

Conclusion: A Way Forward

Whether the Benghazi disaster is sufficient alone to overcome these management challenges, or if congressional action is necessary to precipitate change as some have suggested, still remains to be seen.¹⁷¹ Ambassador Marc Ginsberg, former U.S. Ambassador to Morocco, recently advocated for Congressional intervention in the form of a bi-partisan panel review of security at the Department. For Ginsberg, such a review is long overdue as Department decision

makers lack security expertise and are “unable, or unwilling, to change the way business has been done in the past.”¹⁷²

The experience of the past thirty years illustrates that the Department’s current organizational model is no longer sufficient for the needs of an expansive diplomatic engagement and security environment of the 21st century. The Benghazi ARB and the Independent Panel on DS recognized this concern, citing the impact of span of control issues for security operations given the breadth and depth of responsibilities for the Under Secretary for Management and within the DS bureau.¹⁷³ Currently thirteen major bureaus and offices, including DS, report to the Under Secretary of Management, raising legitimate concerns about the ability of one official to sufficiently manage such a diverse portfolio.¹⁷⁴ Ironically this issue was raised in 1992, the high-water mark of terrorism during the preceding thirty years. The “STATE 2000” report advocated the creation of management clusters within the Undersecretary of Management, to include a program support cluster comprised of the security-related bureaus of DS, the Office of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) and the Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM). The report observed that although this model of strategic management would increase the burden on the Under Secretary for Management, the program clusters would ultimately decrease the span of control impact.¹⁷⁵

Although such a model for reorganization may not be entirely practical twenty years later, it offers a template warranting further consideration. Consolidating DS, OBO and IRM within one Under Secretary addresses the need to provide a dedicated and responsible leader with a vision for managing the Department’s robust security operations. The cybersecurity mission of IRM¹⁷⁶ and physical security mission of OBO¹⁷⁷ align closely with two aspects of DS’s mission to protect people, property and information. This reorganization model enables DS

to divest itself of physical security and cybersecurity responsibilities, as those functions could then be directly integrated within IRM and OBO. Additionally, the realignment facilitates a more narrow focus by DS on a streamlined core mission of protecting people through embassy security, dignitary protection and investigations, while OBO and IRM would concurrently assume the responsibility for protecting property and information. The new Under Secretary of Diplomatic Security, comprised of the Diplomatic Security Service, OBO and IRM, would report directly to the Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary with a mission to protect Department's people, property and information.

In the aftermath of a series of counterintelligence failures during the construction of the new embassy in Moscow in 1989, Bretton Sciaroni argued that the failure was due in part to a culture of contempt for security that existed within the Department, resultant from a view that security reveals the limitations of diplomatic engagement and represents a failure of diplomacy.¹⁷⁸ Moving forward in the complex diplomatic and security environment of the 21st century, this mindset must evolve towards a view of security not as a failure of diplomacy, but as facilitating a secure and expansive diplomatic engagement. Recent security reforms in the aftermath of Benghazi are crucial first steps but insufficient without establishing an Under Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security. The challenges of the future necessitate that the Department fully integrate the role of security through a commitment to strategic planning and a thorough program of organizational, management, and resource reforms. An Under Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security streamlines the byzantine bureaucracy of the Department, galvanizes security resources under a unified leadership capable of devoting the attention necessary to manage a robust worldwide security program, and advises the Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary on security risks for informed policy decisions. Security cannot and should

not supplant the primary functions of diplomacy and policy formulation within the Department. However, it is critical that the Department incorporate security as an integral component of the diplomatic engagement process, not in fear that it will deter diplomatic efforts but with a vision that security positively enhances and facilitates diplomatic policy initiatives.

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