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Abstract

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The Coalition's success in Iraq will be defined by how well it balances the strategy of Rapid Decisive Operations (RDO) against the realistic requirements for post-conflict reconstruction operations. There are many questions posed about how the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army will approach post-conflict operations and reconstruction in light of their current Department of Defense strategy of RDO. Central Command's commander General Tommy Franks and his subordinate commanders are the test-bed and will determine the concept's true validity.

The Cold War's end, coupled with the 11 September 2001 attacks, illustrates the changes to the strategic norms and paradigms in which military operates. As a result, the Department of Defense's civilian and military leadership have initiated programs to transform the military in order to meet these challenges. Addressing these challenges, the services must not only change the way they think, but also their force structure and capabilities in order to adapt quickly to new threats and unexpected circumstances. At the center of transformation is the RDO strategy. The RDO strategy is relevant to the discussion of post conflict operations in that it dictates a war-fighting vision spanning the spectrum of conflict. As such, RDO will affect future military doctrine and structure.

In theory, RDO will impact military capabilities in a manner that creates a war-fighting architecture that limits an opponent's options, his range of possible decisions, and rendering his actions more predictable and easier to counter. This monograph examines the U.S Army's doctrine and structure in terms of producing the effects required in a post conflict reconstruction environment. The criteria used to assess these capabilities are derived from the sub-elements residing in the Security pillar as documented in the *Reconstruction Framework*, published as a joint project of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). This framework defines a total of four pillars that must be addresses during any reconstruction effort; these pillars are Security, Justice and Reconciliation, Social and Economic Well-Being, and Governance and Participation.

This study uses a methodology that starts by introducing the thesis, and defining the criteria. Following the introduction is an explanation of the terms relating to RDO and post-conflict reconstruction. Next, a historical case study of Operations JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY in Panama offer an opportunity to combine the criteria and terminology to illustrate the effects of RDO on post-conflict reconstruction. The fourth chapter provides an RDO based evaluation of the Operation IRAQI FREEDOM combat operations. Even with a strategy that focuses on information dominance, command and control, and effects based operations, a dramatic military victory merely defeats the enemy; it does not shape or win the peace. The fifth chapter evaluates post-conflict Iraqi security operations in regard to the social, economic, and political environment. Given a post-Saddam reconstruction setting, the study illustrates challenges that disarmament, as well as protection of borders, the populace, and key political and economic institutions pose to an RDO strategy. This chapter demonstrates that the post-conflict period will last longer and is not fully accounted for within the current RDO strategy. The final chapter examines the future of RDO as comprehensive military strategy. Herein, are recommendations to operational level planning staffs and commanders for force design and employment in support of future post-conflict reconstruction operations.

To Fight and Win America's Wars . . . and Then What?

A Critical Analysis of Rapid Decisive Operations
in a Post-Saddam Iraq

A Monograph
by
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In theory, RDO will impact military capabilities in a manner that creates a war-fighting architecture that limits an opponent's options, his range of possible decisions, and rendering his actions more predictable and easier to counter. This monograph examines the U.S Army's doctrine and structure in terms of producing the effects required in a post conflict reconstruction environment. The criteria used to assess these capabilities are derived from the sub-elements residing in the Security pillar as documented in the *Reconstruction Framework*, published as a joint project of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). This framework defines a total of four pillars that must be addresses during any reconstruction effort; these pillars are Security, Justice and Reconciliation, Social and Economic Well-Being, and Governance and Participation.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, CRITERIA, and METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Success in Iraq will be defined by how well the U.S. Army balances the strategy of Rapid

Decisive Operations (RDO) against the realistic requirements for post-conflict reconstruction

operations.[1] There are many questions posed about how the Department of Defense and the U.S.

Army will approach post-conflict operations and reconstruction in light of their current

Department of Defense strategy of RDO.   General Tommy Franks and his subordinate

commanders are the test-bed and will determine the concept's true validity.[2]

If one agrees that the military is the only instrument of national power capable of

achieving victory in battle, it can be postulated that the Army is the principle instrument to

establish the security conditions for post-conflict success. As the Army adapts to the ever

changing nature of warfare, it is clear that political, social, and technological influences are

affecting defense doctrine. As this environment evolves, so do the strategies that govern the

application of the military element of national power.[3] This study examines the application of the

emerging defense strategy of Rapid Decisive Operations (RDO) in contrast to post-Saddam Iraqi

reconstruction operations. By analyzing the foundations that constitute RDO and post-conflict

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[1] Rapid Decisive Operations is a joint operational concept for future operations. A rapid decisive operation will integrate knowledge, command and control, and effects-based operations to achieve the desired political/military effect. In preparing for and conducting a rapid decisive operation, the military acts in concert with and leverages the other instruments of national power to understand and reduce the adversary's critical capabilities and coherence. The United States and its allies asymmetrically assault the adversary from directions and in dimensions against which he has no counter, dictating the terms and tempo of the operation. The adversary, suffering from the loss of coherence and unable to achieve his objectives, chooses to cease actions that are against US interests or has his capabilities defeated.

[2] The monograph was researched and produced between November 2002 and April 2003. During this period, Operation IRAQI FREEDOM was entering its final planning stages through deployment of forces to South West Asia.

[3] Donald H. Rumsfeld, forward to the *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Press, 2001), V. accessed 15 August 2002, @ http://www. defenselink.mil/ pubs/ qdr2001.pdf

reconstruction, a comparison is offered between a developing military strategy and the actual

environmental conditions that affect the strategy's employment. The conclusions drawn include

an array of variables affecting Army units, to include: information synthesis as it applies to force

employment in combat and post conflict; force tailoring in terms of meeting operational

commander's endstate criteria; and force employment as it relates to the desired effects for a post-

conflict environment.

The Cold War's end, coupled with the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, illustrates the

changes to the strategic norms and paradigms in which military operates. As a result, the

Department of Defense's civilian and military leadership initiated programs to transform the

military in order to meet these challenges.[4] To address these challenges, the services must not

only change the way they think, but also their force structure and capability to quickly adapt to

new threats and unexpected circumstances.[5] At the center of transformation is the RDO strategy.

The RDO strategy is relevant to the discussion of post conflict operations in that it

dictates a war-fighting vision spanning the spectrum of conflict. As such, RDO will affect future

military doctrine and structure. In theory, RDO affects military capabilities in a manner that

creates a war-fighting architecture that limits an opponent's options, his range of possible

decisions, and makes his actions more predictable and easier to counter. The Bush

administration's 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS) broadly addresses the RDO and post-

conflict reconstruction themes. The NSS highlights the necessity to transform the armed forces to

increase deployability and lethality.[6] At the same time, the NSS also outlines military force

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[4] *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 32.

[5] U.S. Joint Forces Command, *A Concept for Rapid Decisive Operations*, J9 Joint Futures Lab, Coordinating Draft (Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Va, 2002[CD-ROM]), 6.

[6] George W. Bush III, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington: The White House, 2002), 30.

employment in support of propagating stability and democracy.[7] It is clear that we must come to terms with these sometimes conflicting interests. Crucial to success is how well the DoD leadership manages the interests of presence and duration.

Civil and military leaders face the impact of an RDO strategy not only in terms of methodology, but also resource strategies. The Iraqi reconstruction effort may prove instrumental in terms of how the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army define their future organization and resource strategies. From the perspective of Congress, it is clear that we must get the post-Saddam reconstruction operations right.[8] As stated by Senator Joseph Biden during two days of Senate Foreign Relations committee hearings on Iraq, "It would be a tragedy if we removed a tyrant in Iraq, only to leave chaos in his wake. The long-suffering Iraqi people need to know a regime change would benefit them. So do Iraq's neighbors."[9] Therefore, an overarching military strategy should be one that encompasses both the systems required to overthrow Saddam, as well as those that allow the Iraqi people a future of political and economic freedoms.

In terms of previous post-conflict operations, the Balkans and Afghanistan illustrate the complicated nature of the post-conflict environment. Currently, Combined Joint Task Force 180 provides the military support to the Afghan reconstruction operations.[10] Several major differences exist concerning the environment in which our forces currently find themselves in

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Iraq: Strategy and Resource Considerations: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 107th Congress, 1 August 2002, 2. Accessed 20 November 2002 at http://foreign.senate.gov.

[9] Congress, Senate, *Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate Holds Hearings on Reconstruction of Post-Saddam Iraq: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 107th Congress, 1 August 2002, 1.

[10] Johann Price, *Operation Enduring Force Chain of Command*, (Washington, D.C.: Center for Defense Information Military Reform Project, 2002), 1. Accessed 17 September 2002 @ http:// www.cdi. org/ mrp/rdo-pr.html. Combined Joint Task Force-180 (Afghanistan)'commanded by Lt. Gen. Dan K. McNeill built around half of the XVIII Airborne Corps staff and answering to CINC CENTCOM took over responsibility for all Afghan operations from CENTCOM component air, sea, land and special operations commands at the beginning of June 2002. This move frees CENTCOM and component commands to plan and oversee other major operations such as Iraq in spring 2003. CJTF-180 also replaces CJTF-Mountain.

Afghanistan and what will probably be the situation in Iraq after hostilities cease. First, even though many U.S. policy makers may view Afghanistan and Iraq through the terrorism lens, differences in terms of regional political and economic stability, Islamic fundamentalism, and regional defense architectures play a greater role when discussing a post-Saddam Iraq.[11] To start with, Iraq differs from Afghanistan by virtue of the tasks associated with reprogramming and demilitarizing a relatively large, well resourced military machine. The second difference between the two involves social-political infrastructure. Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq has a functioning, albeit corrupt, civil service.[12] As such, the major efforts to rebuild Afghanistan's social and bureaucratic systems may not be reflected in Iraq. Third, Afghanistan has few if any marketable natural resources, therefore possesses limited means to establish a sound economic base. Iraq, with its abundant natural resources and ports, possesses the needed ingredients for a rapidly growing market economy. Finally, the differences between Islamic Afghanistan and a secular Iraq present unique challenges in terms of competing interest groups and the formation of representative governments. Given this background concerning the factors influencing reconstruction planning and the execution of an RDO strategy, the next section examines those critical security tasks that an armed force would execute to produce a safe and secure post-conflict environment.

Defining the Criteria

How is success defined in terms of the U.S Army's ability to execute an RDO strategy during reconstruction operations? This section introduces the criterion used to evaluate how well RDO can be adapted to this environment. The criteria are defined in terms of their relation to

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[11] With secure borders, an established economy, region's largest military and second largest oil reserves, an unrestrained Iraq could again emerge as a major Middle Eastern influence, but in this case in economic versus military terms.

[12] Frederick D. Barton and Bathsheba N. Crocker, *A Wiser Peace: An Action Strategy For A Post-Conflict Iraq* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic And International Studies, 2003), 10. Accessed 15 January 2003@ http://www.csis.org

post conflict reconstruction. The criteria are derived from the sub-elements residing in the

Security pillar as documented in the *Reconstruction Framework*, published as a joint project of

the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the United States

Army (AUSA).[13] This framework defines a total of four pillars planners should address during

any reconstruction effort; these pillars are Security, Justice and Reconciliation, Social and

Economic Well-Being, and Governance and Participation.[14]

The four post conflict reconstruction pillars encompass a broad spectrum of interagency

and non-governmental reconstruction capabilities. Born through a melding process, these

capabilities form into a mutually supporting architecture designed to promote environmental,

economic, and political regeneration. Even though several differing entities participate in this

process, only one is designated as the lead. Within this construct, participating U.S. Army forces

may support a variety of initiatives promoting economic and social development. These forces

must understand and account for these inherently interagency operations. However, as the

predominant ground force, the Army can anticipate being the lead agency for security operations.

Security operations, unlike the economic, social, and political systems, often rely on the early

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[13] The CSIS Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project explores the needs of societies emerging from armed conflict, identifies gaps within current capabilities of the international community, and works to improve the broad efforts of key actors involved in post-conflict operations. By examining the prioritization, timing, sequencing, and integration of post-conflict tasks, the project will assess the division of labor among various organizations (civilian/military, national/international, government/non-governmental, public/private) with rigorous analyses of their respective core competencies, limitations, and comparative advantages. The project will make specific, actionable recommendations to maximize the leverage and effectiveness of American engagement.

[14] Association of the U. S. Army and Center for Strategic and International Studies. *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2002),4. Accessed 5 September 2002 @ http://www.pcrproject.org. "Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Task Framework." ©Joint Project of the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the US Army, April 2002. The Project definition: "Security addresses all aspects of public safety, in particular establishment of a safe and secure environment and development of legitimate and stable security institutions. Security encompasses the provision of collective and individual security to the citizenry and to the assistors, and is the pre-condition for achieving successful outcomes in the other pillars. In the most pressing sense, it concerns securing the lives of citizens from immediate and large-scale violence and the restoration of the state's ability to maintain territorial integrity." These security tasks are grouped in the Task Framework into the following clusters: Control of Belligerents Territorial Security, Protection of the Populace, Protection of Key Individuals, Infrastructure, and Institutions, Reform of Local Security Institutions, and Regional Security.

deployment of a credible force capable of implementing measures that promote public safety. As a result, the nation's armed forces, become the force of choice in either United Nations or multi-lateral support operations. Therefore, by limiting this study to the security elements of reconstruction, it is shown how military forces support post-conflict humanitarian and administrative operations through the establishment and maintenance of a stable environment.[15]

It is the Army's job to establish the necessary security conditions for a coordinated reconstruction plan. Security is defined as all aspects of public safety, in particular the establishment of a safe and secure environment, as well as development of legitimate and stable security institutions.[16] There are four components to the security pillar. Depending on the situation, the security pillar components may be executed sequentially or simultaneously. Controlling belligerents is the first security component and involves conflict termination enforcement. Key to accomplishing this task is identifying and neutralizing potential spoilers (e.g. governmental or non-governmental elements whose purpose is to undermine reconstruction security). Another critical task in controlling belligerents is to implement a weapons control systems. This includes collection rewards programs and the capability to guard and ultimately destroy weapons. Finally, demobilization and reintegration of belligerent military forces will fall onto the Army.[17]

Maintaining territorial security constitutes the second component of establishing a secure environment. Territorial integrity is key to assuring a secure internal and international environment. Army forces can expect to execute border and boundary control. Units will establish and enforce curfews and movement rules that allow security forces, IGO/NGOs, as well

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[15] U.S. Army Field Manual 3.0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters. Department of the Army, 2001), 9-14.

[16] Association of the U. S. Army and Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework*, 4.

[17] Ibid.

as the population to move safely. For international observers/monitors movement controls are essential for the execution of sensitive site exploitation and disarmament. The ultimate goal is, in coordination with support agencies, to develop and deploy a legitimate indigenous border security apparatus.[18] The intent of the first two components is to rapidly establish a safe environment where belligerents are either eliminated or marginalized and measured border and movement restrictions are emplaced to limit the possibility of negative influences affecting a very volatile situation. The last two components focus on building the populace's confidence and initiating political and economic growth.

Protecting the populace is the third security component. The focus here is protecting vulnerable elements of population (e.g., refugees, IDP, women, children). Army units will assure aid agencies access to endangered populations and refugee camps. Additionally, they will designate protection zones and maintain order in refugee camps and population centers. In cooperation with international police or constabularies, they will provide interim security programs for at-risk populations. All of these functions are designed to implement civic education programs for law and order and public security and the eventual deployment of indigenous public security forces.[19]

The final component includes protecting key political and economic systems. As witnessed in Afghanistan, protecting key individuals and institutions promotes the rapid establishment and growth of a new regime. Securing critical infrastructure facilities (e.g. airports, roads, bridges, hospitals, telecommunications, banks, electricity plants, dams, water reservoirs, pipelines) enables the reestablishment of social and civil administrative systems. Fostering new

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[18] Ibid., 5.

[19] Ibid., 6.

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civil and defense institutions is the product of securing critical social, religious, and government systems.[20]

The criteria provide a starting point for understanding post-conflict reconstruction. In chapter two, these criteria serve as the mechanism to analyze both RDO and post-conflict reconstruction doctrine independently. Similarly, in Chapter three the criteria provide a means to assess the combat and post-combat operations in Panama. Finally, chapter five uses the criteria as tools for development of analysis and conclusions of possible scenario's in a post-Saddam Iraq.

Methodology

This study uses a methodology that starts by introducing the thesis, and defining the criteria. Following the introduction is an explanation of the terms relating to RDO and post-conflict reconstruction. Next, a historical case study of Operations JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY in Panama offer an opportunity to combine the criteria and terminology to illustrate the effects of RDO on post-conflict reconstruction. The fourth chapter provides an RDO based evaluation of the Operation IRAQI FREEDOM combat operations. Even with a strategy that focuses on information dominance, command and control, and effects based operations, a dramatic military victory merely defeats the enemy; it does not shape or win the peace. The fifth chapter evaluates post-conflict Iraqi security operations in regard to the social, economic, and political environment. Given a post-Saddam reconstruction setting, the study illustrates challenges that disarmament, as well as protection of borders, the populace, and key political and economic institutions pose to an RDO strategy. This chapter demonstrates that the post-conflict period will last longer and is not fully accounted for within the current RDO strategy. The final chapter examines the future of RDO as comprehensive military strategy.

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[20] Association of the U. S. Army and Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework*, 7.

Herein, are recommendations to operational level planning staffs and commanders for force design and employment in support of future post-conflict reconstruction operations.

CHAPTER TWO

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Examining the terminology and doctrine associated with Rapid Decisive Operations

(RDO) and Post-conflict Reconstruction (PCR) provides a foundation for understanding the

components of each term, as well as their relationship to each other and to a contemporary

environment. Through gaining an understanding of the background and tenants of RDO and

PCR, we acquire an appreciation of the concepts in relation to their impact on the Army. Finally,

by overlaying the evaluation criteria on RDO and PCR, a base is formed by which historical and

contemporary operations are analyzed.

Rapid Decisive Operations

Rapid Decisive Operations integrate knowledge, command and control (C2), and effects-

based operations to achieve the desired political/military aims.[1] RDO's lineage evolved from the

post Cold War defense reductions and transformation initiatives. The Nineties witnessed the

Army struggling to define is role in an evolving geopolitical environment.[2] Under General

Gordon Sullivan, the Army initiated a series of exercises designed to wrestle with its future in

terms of vision and design.[3] These experiments, known as the Louisiana Maneuvers, examined

the best means of leveraging transformation in order to change the Army from a "Cold War"

legacy heavy force, to a capabilities-based, deployable and lethal force. What evolved from the

Louisiana Maneuvers was a new Army strategy that adhered to the premise of asymmetric

assault. Asymmetric assault, which was the genesis of RDO, was base on a theory where joint

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[1] *A Concept for Rapid Decisive Operations*, 8.

[2] David Jablonsky, "Army Transformation: A Tale of Two Doctrines," *Parameters* Vol. XXXI, No. 3 (Autumn 2001): 43-62.

[3] Susan Canedy, *Building The Force: 1994 Tradoc Annual Command History* (Fort Monroe, Va: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1994), 4. Accessed 8 October 2002, at http://tradoc.monroe. army.mil/ historian/pubs/1994.

forces attacked an adversary from multiple directions and in dimensions against which he possessed no counter.[4] Further concept refinement came from the 2002 National Security Strategy and 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review in terms of guidance for Department of Defense transformation.

The *2002 National Security Strategy* defines the President's vision for Defense transformation by stating, "that to support preemptive options, we will continue to transform our military forces to ensure our ability to conduct rapid and precise operations to achieve decisive results."[5] In concert with the NSS, the Department of Defense's (DoD) Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) outlined four elements to the DoD transformation program. The First element focuses on strengthening joint operations through standing joint task force headquarters, improved joint command and control, joint training, and an expanded joint forces presence policy. The second element focuses on experimenting with new approaches to warfare, operational concepts and capabilities, and organizational constructs. These approaches include testing standing joint forces through wargaming, simulations and field exercises focused on emerging challenges and opportunities. The third element involves exploiting U.S. intelligence advantages through multiple intelligence collection assets. This translates to global surveillance and reconnaissance, and enhanced exploitation and dissemination capabilities directed toward potential threat bases. Finally, developing transformational capabilities through increased and wide-ranging science and technology, selective increases in procurement, and innovations in joint processes the last element of transformation as outlined in the QDR.[6]

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[4] Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Rapid Decisive Operations: An Assumptions-Based Critique* (Carlisle, Pa: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2001), 3.

[5] *2002 National Security Strategy*, 16

[6] Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Press, 2001), 32. accessed 15 August 2002, @ http://www. defenselink.mil/ pubs/ qdr2001.pdf.

The Joint Operational Warfighting (JOW) concept, developed by the Joint Forces Command Futures Laboratory, further discusses RDO as it applies to joint operations. Future joint operations must possess the agility to apply combat power commensurate to the situation.[7] In relation to post-conflict operations, this means that the systems' architecture, as well as organizational leadership, must identify indicators that enable the organization to adjust. By developing an information-analysis-decision methodology, Army units rapidly and reliably compresses the time interval between indicators of an enemy's intent and friendly actions. As well, this architecture gives the Army commander organic, joint, and interagency indicators that translate into desired effects on an opponent's capabilities and decision-making process.[8] By adapting these systems to one's environment, a new perspective is garnered concerning roles and missions.

The Army's contribution to the transformation process includes enhancing and nesting its technical capabilities, while transforming legacy combat forces by increasing their deployability and lethality. The end-state is an Army capable of executing an RDO strategy across the spectrum of conflict by manifesting a multi-level (strategic, operational, and tactical) paralysis on an adversary's security, social, economic, and political systems.[9] That is to say, an RDO strategy should govern not only the employment of forces, it should incorporate the full array of doctrine,

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[7] U.S. Joint Forces Command, J9 Joint Futures Lab, *Joint Operational Warfighting (JOW): Thoughts on the Operational Art of Future Joint Warfighting* (Norfolk, Va: U.S. Joint Forces Command, 2002), 3. Accessed 13 October 2002 at https://home.je.jfcom.mil/QuickPlace/innovation /PageLibrary 85256AFF00620B2E.nsf/ h_Toc/ED6814E19C75A4D785256BFB005607B0/?OpenDocument. The Joint Operational Warfighting Concept (JOW) is a response to several key factors: the complex, adaptive enemy system of the future; the bold conception of future warfare articulated by Joint Vision 2020; and the guidepost of future joint warfighting introduced by the Rapid Decisive Operations concept. JOW establishes a framework for future joint warfighting. It heralds the need for a cultural change among warfighters as the foundation for change. It then introduces the three salient features of the future joint force, called JOW's cornerstones: singular battlespace, operations, and adaptive command. Under each of these cornerstones, JOW describes the ten "first principles" of future joint warfighting.

[8] Daniel M. Smith, *Rapid Decisive Operations: Getting the Structure Right*, 2.

[9] U.S. Army Field Manual 1, *The Army* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army Field Manual Headquarters, 2001), 34. Access 18 November 2002, at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/service _pubs/fm1.pdf.

training, leader development, organization, materiel, personnel, and facility (DOTLMPF) considerations affecting Army units today. This offers a paradigm whereby RDO, whether in combat or in peace, optimizes the distribution of combat power in terms of tempo, capabilities, and endstate effects.[10] Recent history illustrates how the transitions from war to peace operations can occur almost instantly. In this chaotic joint and interagency environment, where rules of engagement and media dominate the operating environment, unit's need the organizational agility anticipate these requirements in order to conduct rapidly synchronized and decisive operations. What starts at one end of the spectrum can transform instantaneously. For this reason, an RDO strategy should start by preparing units at home, through employment and redeployment, to account for the entire spectrum of operations within its purview.

Post-Conflict Reconstruction (PCR)

If the United States wishes to win both a war and the following peace, the preferred minimum post-conflict conditions on which to base rebuilding and rehabilitation of the enemy's country and population needs to be considered as a desired effect of the operational commander's war-fighting decisions. In fact, these desired effects should be well thought out even before the fighting begins. A common end-state vision, flowing from the strategic to tactical level, is the adhesive that links military commanders and agency directors to a single objective. Conflict termination is where tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war intersect. The art is understanding how to leverage the military and agency resources to create a synergistic effect. This effect is what establishes a functioning post-conflict society that is stable and does not pose a threat to its neighbors or to the United States. The remainder of this chapter examines post conflict philosophies and doctrines as outlined in both military and non-military publications.

Joint Publications provide the operational level doctrinal linkage between strategic policy and tactical mission requirements. This doctrine provides Joint Force Commanders a framework

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[10] J9 Joint Futures Lab U.S. Joint Forces Command, *Joint Operational Warfighting (JOW): Thoughts on the Operational Art of Future Joint Warfighting.* 7.

from which they translate strategic aims into military campaign plans. A commander's campaign plan should include a transition from combat operations to Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW).[11] Commanders plan for this transition at the very outset of hostilities. This ensures desired political objectives continue to be pursued after the cessation of wartime operations.[12]

U.S. Army doctrine nests with Joint Campaign planning by providing post conflict end-state design considerations. For example, if the end-state is a situation that promotes economic growth, commanders should consider the effects of destroying the economic infra-structure. This is critical when conducting initial operational planning to include the post-conflict phasing. Regardless of how the conflict ends, it often changes into less violent, but persistent, forms of confrontation.[13] The *U.S. Army Field Manual 101-5-1, Operational Terms And Graphics* addresses conflict termination as the point a conflict ends and post-conflict activities begin.[14] Therefore, the enemy combatants should be both unable and unwilling to resist as ground forces execute this transition. Initial strategic, operational, and political goals should be focused on providing a new sense of security to the affected population. Although generic in nature, these definitions provide a foundation for Army commanders as they plan to support post conflict operations. Given, that tactical commanders understand and nest the post-conflict end-state objectives into their plans, tactical actions will result in positive strategic implications. Mastering this complex environment of diverse players requires recognizing the synergy of rapidly adapting and tailoring capabilities. In the ensuing chaos resulting from the end of armed conflict, Army

[11] Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2001), V-1. Accessed 23 November 2002 at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf.

[12] Joint Publication 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995), I-2. Accessed 23 November 2002 at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/ jel/new_pubs /jp3_07.pdf.

[13] U.S. Army Field Manual 3.0,*Operations*, 6-21.

[14] U.S. Army Field Manual 101-5-1, Operational Terms And Graphics (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1997), 1-37. Accessed 20 November 2002, at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/service_pubs/ 101_5_1.pdf

units will face an environment composed of a wide spectrum of scenarios. In some cases an adversary's defense and administrative systems may implode, forcing units to fill administrative and civil roles. Such was the situation in Germany, where U.S. Army commanders established control over the remaining German authority in order to insure that the government would be carried on according to the Allied will and that Nazis would be excluded from power.[15] Units may also face a fleeting adversary that may or may not leave an existing infrastructure. In this event, a rolling or progressive post-conflict strategy is required. Finally, the best scenario is where there is a negotiated end to hostilities. In this environment, the military objectives must mirror and support political agreements, as well as the institutions that must be demobilized, reformed or reestablished.[16]

The military is not the only realm addressing the body of knowledge regarding post-conflict reconstruction. The 1990s saw a growth industry in nation building and post-conflict reconstruction. From these experiences, several United Nations' organizations, as well as non-governmental "think tanks," formed to analyze PCR operations and publish their findings.[17] As expected, the majority of this dialog revolved around how humanitarian assistance groups (e.g., NGO, PVO, UN) participate in the post-conflict interagency purview. Experiences from the last decade offered a number of invaluable lessons and some clear guidelines for improving military performance during PCR operations.

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[15] Forrest C. Progue, United States Army in World War II, The European Theater of Operations: The Supreme Command (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1954), 511.

[16] U.S. Army Field Manual 3.0, Operations, 6-21.

[17] Several efforts are underway to promote joint planning and coordination efforts within the U.N. and in the extended multilateral family. Examples of these initiatives include the Executive Committees on Peace and Security (ECPS) and Humanitarian Assistance (ECHA), the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), the IASC Reference Group on Post-Conflict Reintegration, the ECOSOC humanitarian segment, and the coordinating role of the Deputy Secretary-Generalare all encouraging initiatives. The opportunity now exists to link these various efforts in a coordinated strategy for humanitarian relief, post-conflict recovery and development.

A common thread through many non-military post-conflict reconstruction publications is the need to establish a safe and secure operating environment. Post-conflict situations, by definition, have at their core a significant security vacuum.[18] The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a think tank that focuses on military support for post conflict reconstruction, addresses the issue of PCR security in its *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework*. In this paper, the center postulates four critical components of post conflict reconstruction (security, social/economic well-being, justice/reconciliation, and governance/participation).[19] According to the *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Framework*, all four areas of post-conflict reconstruction are inextricably linked, and positive outcomes depend on successful integration and interaction of efforts across the four fields. Central to this linkage is the concept of security which forms the foundation upon which progress in the other issue areas rests. Therefore those agencies responsible for reconstructing indigenous institutions towards the point of self-sufficiency will, in many cases, greatly depend on Army commanders to provide those enabling security tasks.[20]

Army planners should consider the best combination of means for retaining control of the security situation while facilitating a more peaceful and orderly environment. This analysis should reflect the existing threat assessment. As conditions change and the overall security situation no longer warrants the presence of heavily armed military forces, the lagging progress of developing indigenous security forces exposes the gap in security capacity across a wide range of tasks.[21] In an arena where belligerents have combated for generations, there exist multiple layers of military and para-military operatives. The challenge is quickly identifying the existing armed

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[18] Orr, Robert, Ph.D. *Meeting the Challenges of Governance and Participation*, 6.

[19] Association of the U. S. Army and Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework*, 3.

[20] Ibid., 6.

[21] Ibid., 4.

groups and enticing them to disarm or reintegrate into this new security force. Failure to adequately respond to this problem can lead to long-term difficulties across all areas of reconstruction. It is in the interest of political and military planners to set the conditions for reestablishment of stable local and national economic systems. Farmers having secure markets to sell their goods, and parents having safe schools to send their children will support the system and be less inclined to offer assistance to para-military or illegal activities determined to undermine reconstruction efforts.[22]

Through an examination of the terminology and doctrine associated with Rapid Decisive Operations (RDO) and Post-conflict Reconstruction (PCR), an understanding is established concerning the components of each concept. The Army is forging ahead to divest itself of its cold war legacy in order to develop a deployable, capabilities based force structure. From the President's National Security Strategy to recent service manuals, we see the guiding principals of RDO nested throughout. Similarly, we see an understanding that military participation in PCR operations is a logical element in any successful political endstate scenario. Viewing the RDO and PCR tenants in a historical setting gives insight into their possible future employment. Operations Just Cause and Promote Liberty offer an opportunity to overlay the tenants of RDO and PCR on a contemporary combat operation. In addition, the criteria enumerated in chapter one reveal the challenges facing those responsible for employing an RDO strategy during PCR operations.

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[22] Scott Feil, *Building Security Capacity for Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic And International Studies, 2003), 2. Access 12 Nov 2002, at http://www.csis.org. Scott R. Feil joined CSIS as Senior Associate in May 2000 and became the Executive Director in June 2001. Prior to joining the program, Scott was a career officer in the United States Army whose final assignment was as the Chief, Strategy Division, Directorate for Strategic Plans and Policy, (J-5), the Joint Staff. His division was the Joint Staff lead coordinator on the National Security Strategy, the Contingency and Defense Planning Guidances and supervised the development of the Illustrative Planning Scenarios. The division authored Joint Vison 2020, the Joint Planning Document, and was the Joint Staff lead for the implementation of Theater Engagement Planning. Feil holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from the U.S. Military Academy and a Masters in Political Science from Stanford University. He completed an Army War College Fellowship with the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, in 1997. He is the author of *Preventing Genocide: How the Early Use of Force Might have Succeeded in Rwanda* (Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1998).

CHAPTER THREE

OPERATION JUST CAUSE/PROMOTE LIBERTY CASE STUDY

With a foundation established for understanding RDO and PCR operations, the next step

is applying them to the combat (JUST CAUSE) and post-conflict (PROMOTE LIBERTY)

operations during the 1989 invasion of Panama. By superimposing current RDO and PCR

strategies on Operations JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY, a comparison is formed

relating to their relevance to the RDO and PCR tenants. Finally, studying the invasion and

occupation of Panama offers insight into possible scenarios for Iraq.

Operation JUST CAUSE

In 1988 President George Bush inherited a deteriorating situation on the Panamanian

isthmus. In the face of growing tensions between the two countries, Manuel Noriega and the

Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) overtly challenged the Bush administration. Following

Noriega's decision to overturn the May 1989 elections, Bush announced that the United States

had had enough of the corruption and disregard for democratic process in Panama. This was not

the first time Noriega had caused an administration to seek his removal. During the Reagan

Presidency, both the Joint Staff and U.S. Southern Command developed plans for some form of

armed incursion.[1] What was new was the change in SOUTHCOM's leadership. By appointing

General Maxwell Thurman as Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command, the president sent

the signal that America would take a tougher stance. Thurman worked in conjunction with the

new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Colin Powell, to redefine America-Panama strategic

aims. These aims involved creating an environment safe for Americans, ensuring the integrity of

Panama Canal, providing a stable environment for the freely-elected Endara Government, and

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[1] Tomas Donnelly, Margaret Roth and Caleb Baker, *Operation Just Cause: The Storming of Panama* (Macmillan, Inc., New York, 1991), 21.

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bringing Noriega to justice.[2] Thurman used this assessment process to form the basis for his theater operational guidance, which eventually became the SOUTHCOM planning guidance.

Thurman envisioned that he might have to launch operations at short notice to meet political "triggers" and to achieve operational surprise.[3] With this in mind, on 10 October 1989, he designated the XVIII Airborne Corps as Joint Task Force South (JTFSO), responsible for the planning and execution of all combat operations in Panama.[4] General Warner, Thurman's predecessor, had envisioned combat operations as a series of warnings, and evolving strike operations of increasing intensity. His theory was to pressure the Noriega government into acquiescing or to bolster opposition groups to overthrow the government.[5] Neither Thurman nor JTFSO's commander, Lieutenant General Carl Stiner, believed this approach feasible; only through simultaneously destroying the Panamanian political and security apparatus would the conditions exist for a new government to emerge.

SOUTHCOM and JTFSO intelligence analyst's identified the critical Panamanian military units and individuals to target in order to produce a command system collapse. Stiner formed JTFSO around Army, Maritime (Marine), and Special Operations forces capable of identifying, isolating, and simultaneously destroying the Panamanian security infrastructure.[6] In 1989, these forces began to stage into Howard Air Force Base and Roosevelt Roads Naval Station in order to set the conditions for combat operations. As a result, at 0100 on 20 December 1989, JTFSO executed Operation JUST CAUSE with 26,400 soldiers, marines, airman, and sailors attacking targets through the country of Panama. By the afternoon of 22 December, all

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[2] Lt Gen. Edward M. Flanagan, Jr., *Battle for Panama: Inside Operation Just Cause* (Washington, D.C.:Brassely's (US), Inc, 1993), 34.

[3] Donnelly, Roth and Baker, 71.

[4] Ronald H. Cole, *Operation Just Cause: Panama* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995), 17.

[5] Donnelly, Roth, and Baker, 17.

[6] Ibid.

operational objectives were met, except one, securing Manuel Noriega. Not until January 1990,

did the U.S. apprehend Noriega and transport him to the United States.[7] The months of planning

and training had paid off. In a matter of hours, the PDF ceased to exist and U.S. forces controlled

the Panamanian infrastructure.

RDO and Operation JUST CAUSE

In review, Rapid Decisive Operations strategies are based on the premise that U.S. forces,

not the adversary, use intelligence and information gathering systems to achieve an asymmetric

physical and psychological advantage prior to initiation of hostilities. This knowledge is

translated physically through organizations formed to strike and paralyze an enemy's centers of

gravity. Blending these inputs produces a paradigm for combat operations in which the U.S.

dictates the terms of the fight, thus fostering an effects-based asymmetrical assault against which

an adversary has no counter.

Operation JUST CAUSE illustrated knowledge based operations through the array of

intelligence systems employed. As stated earlier, the fact that for over eighty years U.S. forces

had lived and trained in Panama was not lost on JUST CAUSE planners. The robust intelligence

architecture extended through all elements of the Panamanian political and social structure.

Thurman valued the essence of good intelligence as the ability to accurately identify enemy

centers of gravity and key vulnerabilities.[8] Because corruption was so widespread, removing

only Noriega would not completely disable the system that controlled Panama. Aggressive

collection and analysis identified the Panamanian Defense Forces' leadership and not just

Noriega as the enemy center of gravity. U.S. national and SOUTHCOM's intelligence systems

gave an accurate picture of the Noriega's political and security centers. The relationship of these

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[7] Cole., 38-39.

[8] Cole., 14.

centers to Noriega, drove specific targeting and determined which leaders and units had to be destroyed or defeated in the initial, simultaneous strikes.

Information concerning a Noriega's capabilities, coupled with a matching and in depth understanding of JTFSO's composition, formed the foundation for establishing the command and control mechanism. Prior to JUST CAUSE, General Thurman stated the need for, "leadership that understood not only the explicit order but the implicit challenges; who were able to persevere regardless of the vagaries of rapidly changing conditions, thus enabling decentralized, aggressive action to achieve the objectives selected."[9] Thurman, based on his experience, and an understanding of the forces needed to defeat the PDF, chose the XVIII Airborne Corps as the operation's principal command and control architecture. XVIII Airborne Corps brought with it credibility in both the Special Operations and conventional communities. JTF South's asymmetric capabilities were represented by the fact that at H-hour over 7000 soldiers initiated the attack, and that within twenty-four hours, over 13,000 additional soldiers were in country, providing the rapid buildup of forces that enabled a rapid consolidation and transition to stability operations.[10]

Stiner's orchestration of the intelligence systems and forces, in concert with the operational environment and time, created the desired effects. The operational environment consists of many physical and psychological variables. Physical examples include conflict participants (e.g., forces, civilian population, and transients), the geography and urban development, and external participants who include nation and transnational groups that may have impending interests in the manner in which the conflict is resolved. Psychological influences affecting the battle space include religions, wealth in terms of banking, trade

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[9] James H. Embrey, LTC., *Operation Just Cause: Concepts for Shaping Future Rapid Decisive Operations* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: USAWC Strategy Research Project:U.S. Army War College, 2002), 55.

[10] Institute of Land Warfare, Strategic Mobility and Responsive Power Projection (Washington: Association of the United States Army, December, 1999), 1-4.

capability, and natural resources, as well as support or dissention toward existing authority. Stiner's understanding of these battlefield components afforded him an insight as to how best to distribute combat power in a manner that optimizes the effects. RDO captures this notion of effects-based operations through the commander's practical application of combat power against the right situation, at the right time. The critical shift from Woerner's strategy of increasing and calculated military pressure to Thurman's decisive destruction illustrates how Operation JUST CAUSE evolved from a slow-developing and deliberate operation to one that incorporates the decapitating and dominating of the Panamanian governmental and security apparatus.

Neither SOUTHCOM nor the JTFSO were prepared for the rapid breakdown of the Panamanian social order. In essence, both headquarters devoted little preparation for civil-military operations, and as a result failed to anticipate the complex threat that emerged from the Panamanian Defense Forces dissolution. This lapse led to Panama falling into a state of chaos and the deaths of hundreds of civilians.[11] The next section reviews the post-JUST CAUSE environment during the execution of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY.

Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY

The civil-military planning in support of a possible U.S. invasion of Panama began under General Woerner in 1988.[12] Over the next several years, these plans continued to evolve both in name and content. One consistent feature of both the JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY planning efforts was the operational security surrounding every aspect. As a result, the SOUTHCOM planners exercised little, if any, coordination outside Department of Defense

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[11] Cole., 24.

[12] LTC William C. Bennett, "Just Cause and the Principles of War," *Military Review*, March 1991 pp. 9-10.

channels.[13] The effect was that there was a distinct lack of synchronization in terms of the

political and economic support required to rebuild Panama.[14] Upon assuming command of

SOUTHCOM, Thurman's understanding was that the embassy and Department of State would

constitute the lead agency for rebuilding Panama. As a result, the fact that most, in not all of the

required Civil Affairs needed presidential authorization for mobilization did not concern

Thurman. He viewed these units and the military as having a transitory role in post conflict

reconstruction. In retrospect, Thurman acknowledged that the depth of civil government

corruption "was not well understood" and that its broad reach "complicated the restoration, thus

hampering a cogent post-conflict resolution approach."[15]

The first stage of PROMOTE LIBERTY concentrated on public safety, health, and

security measures. It was not until much later that the Panamanian government was capable of

fielding a credible police force, rebuilding commerce, and exhibiting the leadership necessary to

win the support of the people for reforms. In the interim, U.S. Army units were faced with

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[13] USAWC, "Case Study: Operation Just Cause," 44. In all, there was little non-military involvement in the pre-intervention planning process. The Secretary of Defense was undoubtedly briefed on the plan, but it remains unclear as to whether the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy or the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (both charged by Goldwater-Nichols to review military planning) were involved in the planning process. Additionally, there is no indication that any non-Defense Department agencies, particularly State Department, had enough knowledge of the operation to do their own contingency planning. In all, there is no indication in developing a rapid and decisive military option that the interagency process was energized to develop a plan for following military victory with political-economic action to emplace and support a new Panamanian government that replaced Noriega and the PDF.

[14] John T. Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama* (Carlisle, Pa: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1992), 19. John T. Fishel received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Indiana University in 1971. Since that time he has done research in Peru, Mexico, El Salvador, and Panama. He has served as President of the North Central Council of Latin Americanists and the Midwest Association of Latin American Studies. He served on active duty in the US Army at the United States Southern Command where he was Chief of Policy and Strategy, Executive Officer of the Combined Assessment Team for the evaluation of the Armed Forces of El Salvador, and Deputy Chief of the US Forces Liaison Group with the Panama Public Force. In the latter capacity he also served as Special Assistant to the Commander of the US Military Support Group-Panama and US Army South. His recent books include *Civil Military Operations in the New World*, 1997, *"The Savage Wars of Peace:" Toward a New Paradigm of Peace Operations*, 1998, *Toward Responsibility in the New World Disorder*, 1998, and *Invasion, Intervention, "Intervasion:" A Concise History of the U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy*, 1998. Dr. Fishel has been a Professor at CHDS since December 1997.

[15] Ibid., 31.

hunting down and eliminating Dignity battalion and PDF remnants. Stiner, while still focused on

locating Noriega, was forced to dedicate units for stability operations. This was too little and too

late to prevent anarchy in the streets. American forces were forced to transitioned from combat to

stability operations; but even this shift in priorities was unable to prevent looting that caused

between $500 million to $2 billion in damages to the commercial districts of Panama City.[16]

American forces across the country gradually subdued the crowds and secured the 142 sites that

provided the city's sanitation, power, water, telephones, and other public services.[17] U.S. forces

reinstated order after what Panamanians called "three days of anarchy."[18] By the end of January,

the strategy for restoring basic government, security, and services, was taking shape and security

returned to the point that U.S. military forces could redeploy to the United States.

PCR and Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY

Even though the post-conflict operations designed in Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY

were anticipated and planned, what was not anticipated was the concurrent execution of post-

conflict tasks concurrently with Operation JUST CAUSE. The CSIS Framework offers a tool for

critical analysis of PROMOTE LIBERTY's effectiveness, as well as highlighting some initial

thoughts concerning applications to a post-Saddam environment. The questions answered in this

section include: How well were belligerents identified and either neutralized or controlled? What

role did territorial security play in terms of relations with Columbia, Costa Rica, and international

shipping transiting through the Panama Canal? Was planning and force allocation sufficient in

order to protect the populace? Where key figures secured to enable a rapid transition to the

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[16] Representative Les Aspin, *Operation Just Cause: Lessons and Warnings in the Future Use of Military Force* (U.S. Congress: House Committee on Armed Services, January 12, 1990),7-8.

[17] USCINCSO JUST CAUSE/PROMOTE LIBERTY Sitrep 015, 041000Z Jan 90, S, J-3/JOD/ WHEM. Msg, CJCS to USCINCSO et al., 032235Z Jan 90 and Msg, CJCS to USCINCSO, 032236Z Jan 90, S; J-3 Cell SOA Info Binder 4,J-3/JOD/WHEM.

[18] Major General Marc A. Cisneros, Oral History Program: Just Cause (Fort Clayton, Panama: History Office, Headquarters, U.S. Army South, June 12, 1990), 9-13.

democratically elected government? In addition, were critical institutions (banking and commerce) adequately safe-guarded to ease the economic chaos following an armed incursion?

Years of stationing, coupled with the recent coups attempts, enabled Thurman's planners to identify and target the most threatening Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF). As witnessed during the November 1989 coup attempt, elements from the Battalion 1000 stationed in Panama City, as well as the 6th and 7th Companies in Rio Hato possessed the motivation and capability to reinforce a threatened Noriega.[19] Another group, the local Dignity Battalions, posed an unknown threat. What was unknown was how they would react to a massive U.S. Army incursion. SOUTHCOM planners did not anticipate the wide-spread lawlessness that ensued immediately after the 20 December 1989 strikes.[20] Combined together, these elements (PDF, Dignity Battalions, and criminals) formed the belligerent base facing U.S. forces.

As for how well JTF South controlled these belligerent forces, the PDF was neutralized within hours of the initial assault.[21] Witnessing this swift PDF defeat, the Dignity battalions attempted to exploit the chaos in populated areas by inciting riots, destroying private and government property, and murdering civilians.[22] Refusing to face U.S. forces directly, the Dignity Battalions used coercion to foster unrest. Locating and defeating these elements became a pressing issue for Stiner. Rampant violence forced JTF South to reallocate forces from strategic targets to rural security missions. Only after a week of impromptu "fire-fighting" did the situation finally calm enough to enable forces to initiate the rebuilding process. PROMOTE LIBERTY illustrates how unanticipated effects can jeopardize an operation. In retrospect,

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[19] Donnelly, Roth and Baker, 68.

[20] Cole., 66-67.

[21] Ibid., 51.

[22] Donnelly, Roth, and Baker, 355.

defeating the principle PDF forces may have posed a lesser challenge than controlling the chaos, and subduing the scattered paramilitary and criminal forces.

Destroying PDF meant U.S. forces assumed all forms of both internal and external law enforcement. Translated into requirements, ground force commanders were now responsible for not only securing towns and cities, they also would maintain the borders with Columbia and Costa Rica, and secure the Canal Zone. Army and Marine forces executed border and boundary control and established and enforced curfew and movement rules, allowing security forces, IGO/NGOs, as well as the population to move safely in a controlled area.[23] These operations limited illegitimate transnational activities during a period when the U.S. was helping Panama form new political and security institutions.

The next challenge to JTFSO consisted of forming a credible interim Panamanian police force. The only civil organization capable of relieving JTFSO from this mission was International Criminal Investigative Training and Assistance Program (ICITAP).[24] Unfortunately, the ICITAP Director was neither designed nor staffed for such a massive project.[25] Failing to realize ICITAP's limitations, U.S. Army Military Policemen established an indigenous force training program while continuing to support combat forces as they enforced curfews and other measures to promote security and protect the populace.[26] After defeating the PDF, protecting the populace became JTFSO's the next critical task to provide support for burgeoning reconstruction programs.

People living in Panama City and Colon, more so than rural areas, received the brunt of the 20 December attacks, and resulting chaos. Especially in the heavily damaged areas near

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[23] Association of the U. S. Army and Center for Strategic and International Studies, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework*, 5.

[24] Fishel, 49

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

Noreiga's La Comandancia, Army units were forced to shift from combat and security operations to protecting vulnerable elements of population (e.g., refugees, IDP, women, children). JTFSO transformed schools and military ranges into refugee camps where displaced civilians could receive shelter and medical treatment.[27] In the less effected rural areas, military units deployed to provide security and support for local non-PDF administrations to reestablish indigenous control, receive medical supplies, and demonstrate support for their constituents.[28] Additionally, Army and Marine forces assured aid agencies access to endangered populations and refugee camps. The initiative demonstrated by these soldiers and marines provided Civil Affairs units and other support agencies the time to activate and deploy into theater.

While JTFSO addressed Panama's security and humanitarian crisis, SOUTHCOM dealt with rebuilding the political and economic systems. Securing President Endara, as well as critical infrastructure such as canal locks and dams, and the international airport proved crucial to reestablishing a functioning nation-state. A critical step to ensuring the new government's viability was taken by General Thurman. Early on 19 December 1989, Thurman invited the elected political leadership to his quarters. By securing the future leadership, Thurman guaranteed a future supportive U.S. alliance. Thurman's actions typified the pledged support to democratic institutions and codified America's support to the Panamanian people. Had Thurman decided not to protect the future Panamanian leadership, the reestablishment of functioning political and economic systems may have taken much longer.

Thurman and Stiner realized that the most critical economic and international landmark in Panama was the canal. U.S. forces identified and secured the canal's Madden Dam and the lock system. Elements of the 82d Airborne division, 7th Infantry Division, Marine forces, and the

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[27] Donnelly, Roth, and Baker, 381.

[28] Ibid., 355.

193d Infantry Brigade secured key canal sites between Panama city and Colon.[29] Thurman knew that revenues from international shipping were crucial to Panama's future. Operation JUST CAUSE's success was tied to rapidly restoring the flow of international shipping transiting the Panamanian isthmus. The new political and security programs took several months to bring to fruition. Some of the same forces that destroyed the PDF and captured Noriega, now provided much needed support to the Panamanian reconstruction programs.

Conclusion

Operations JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY illustrate lessons that relate directly to the effects of RDO in a PCR environment. First, it is not enough to use your overwhelming information superiority on combat operations alone. If one agrees that PCR operations help shape future international relationships, then those systems used to neutralize the enemy combat elements, should also provide information concerning the critical socio-economic and political systems. Operation JUST CAUSE planners were forced into "instride-PCR" operations starting on 20 December 1989. A better interpretation of Operation JUST CAUSE's strategic aims may have allowed planners to anticipate the friction of transitioning from a combat to a post conflict environment. As such, the timely adjustment of information sensors may have given SOUTHCOM and JTFSO insight into the degree of anarchy resulting from the invasion, and permitted a more functional assessment of follow-on force strength and mission requirements.

In terms of force design, it was fortunate for JUST CAUSE planners that JTFSO possessed an overwhelming force structure enabling U.S. commanders the flexibility to redirect combat units to PCR operations. Had the PDF resisted in greater numbers, U.S. forces would not have been able to initiate PCR operations as early. Through an understanding of the end-state

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[29] Ibid., 269.

mission requirements, a stronger case could have been made to the JCS for critical combat support and service support units.[30]

Finally, by securing the Endara political leadership, as well as the key economic institutions, the U.S. expedited relinquishing of U.S. military control of Panama.[31] Even though a fully functioning governmental apparatus was months away, Panamanian's legitimately elected leaders, coupled with U.S. support, orchestrated the reconstruction process. Similarly, by safe-guarding the Canal and banking industry, Thurman identified Panama's economic centers of gravity. Therefore, safeguarding Panama's economic recovery process.

Given this historical setting, an examination into today's conflict in Iraq offers contemporary insights into the dilemmas facing coalition forces as they attempt to establish the foundation for rebuilding Iraq. Using the key RDO components of information dominance, C2 and organizational design, and effects based operations, an assessment is offered of combat operations in Iraq. From this assessment, a foundation is established for understanding and assessing Iraq's post-Saddam situation.

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[30] Fishel, 47.

[31] Cole, 66.

CHAPTER FOUR

RDO and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

Introduction

The previous three chapters provided the foundation for understanding the strategies,

concepts, and historical application surrounding Rapid Decisive Operations and Post-Conflict

Reconstruction Operations. Given this backdrop, this chapter provides an RDO-based analysis of

Coalition combat operations in Iraq. The tenents of information dominance, command and

control, and effects based operations illustrate the actions and effects caused by Coalition forces

fighting to control the critical Iraqi political and military objectives. These effects constitute the

complex and chaotic setting forces face as they attempt to impose order by transitioning to post-

conflict reconstruction operations.

Information Dominance

How is the information dominance planning, preparation, and execution for Operation

IRAQI FREEDOM similar, and how does it differ from what was seen during Operation JUST

CAUSE? Today's Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) planners, like their JUST CAUSE

predecessors have established an information architecture through watching, collecting, and

assessing Iraqi military and political patterns. Even though the OIF planners do not have the

historical relationship with Iraqi as the SOUTHCOM planners had in Panama, information gained

from opposition groups, defectors, years of no-fly operations and United Nations inspection

reports has yielded a significant intelligence foundation.[1] Since establishing the Northern and

Southern No-Fly Zones, British and U.S. aviators have been on the front line of the coalition's

containment effort and as a result gained a great appreciation for Iraqi defenses and dispositions.

Evidence to the importance of both historic and current collection efforts was highlighted by

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[1] James S. Robbins, "War In The Shadows: Covert Operations In Iraq," *National Review Online* (February 21, 2002), 1. Access 12 March 2003, at http://www.nationalreview.com/contributors/ robbins022102.shtml.

Secretary of State Powell when he stated at the United Nations that, "the U.S. Knowledge

Superiority systems are focused on Iraq and tracking the forces and critical targets that, if

attacked, will affect Saddam's defense systems."[2] Contemporary information management

systems provided Coalition commanders a near simultaneous view of both an enemy and friendly

force dispositions. This information is then processed in the form of rehearsals and plan

refinement, as well as refining and improving combat synchronization.

Command and Control and Force Design

Given the JUST CAUSE experience, how did commanders design forces to asymmetric

and simultaneously destroy Iraq's physical and cybernetic centers of gravity? According to Joint

Forces Command J9 Joint Futures Laboratory, an RDO strategy leverages improvements in

information technology (IT) and the Global Information Grid to enhance the joint organizational

command and control (C2) architecture.[3] Practiced collaboration, habitual relationships, and

shared situational understanding will enable greater coherence of C2 and more rapid and effective

execution. Physically, the Republican Guards Divisions were assessed as the most loyal and

constitute the greatest threat to coalition forces.[4] By employing IT to attack Saddam's cybernetic

infrastructure offered one means of degrading the Iraqi command and control apparatus between

Bahsra and Tikrit.

Like General Thurman did for Operation JUST CAUSE, General Tommy Franks

designed Operation IRAQI FREEDOM's Coalition command and force structure. Unlike, JUST

CAUSE, Operation IRAQI FREEDOM had the historical lessons from DESERT SHIELD and

DESERT STORM. With an OIF objective of removing Saddam Hussein from power, Franks

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[2] Secretary of State Colin Powell testimony to the U.N. Security Council on 5 February 2003, accessed 27 February 2003 at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html.

[3] Joint Forces Command, J9 Joint Futures Lab, 10.

[4] Patrick Clawson, *How to Rebuild a New Iraq After Saddam* (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2002), 5.

designed a capabilities-base force package that drove straight to Baghdad, destroying the Iraqi political and military infrastructure in its wake.[5] Coalition forces linked supercomputers and Internet-like networks to spy planes, satellites, fighters, bombers, tanks and ships in order to provide a region-wide common operational picture that fostered quickly target identification and coordinate attacks.[6] As an example, Army commanders in Iraq used a new computer system that allowed them to instantly see the precise location of U.S. tanks, artillery and other vehicles as well as information about their fuel level and supply of ammunition. These same commanders identified the enemy with remotely controlled spy planes with real-time video cameras, and issued orders through e-mails popping up on the computer screens fitted in M-1 Abrams tanks.[7]

The question that must be asked as one observes coalition forces spreading throughout Iraq, is are the types of air, ground and maritime forces arrayed in Iraq capable of exploiting an RDO-like asymmetric defeat of Saddam's forces. What defines an operation as decisive? The combinations of operations contributed to the decisive employment of forces where paramount to success during JUST CAUSE. What operations are required to replicate this decisiveness if coalition forces attack Iraq?

Effects-Based Operations

RDO are predicated on the warfighting philosophy of effects-based operations that employ the integrated application and mutual exploitation of Dominant Maneuver (DM), Precision Engagement (PE), and Information Operations (IO).[8] In his statements to the U.S. Congress and at the United Nations, President George W. Bush has clearly articulated his intent

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[5] Richard Pyle, "Gulf War II To Be Much Quicker Pentagon plans to overwhelm Saddam with high-tech arms," *Washington Times* (January 29, 2003) , 16. Accessed February 2003, at http://www.washtimes.com.

[6] Peter Pae, "Military Beefs Up Its Digital Arsenal Higher-tech innovations than those used in the '91 Persian Gulf War are aimed at Iraq now," *Los Angeles Times* (February 2, 2003).

[7] Ibid.

[8] Joint Forces Command, J9 Joint Futures Lab, iii.

for Iraq.[9] On numerous occasions, Bush points to the fact that Saddam, and the Iraqi security establishment, are intent on maintaining control of Iraq by any means possible.[10] Central to this control is the development, safe-guarding, and deployment of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The desired effects from the employment of an RDO strategy in Iraq included the removing of Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath party from power, identifying and securing weapons of mass destruction, and accomplishing these tasks while limiting the collateral damage to the populace and economic infrastructure.[11] Reviewing Coalition combat operations presents an illustration of dominant maneuver and precision engagement in order to achieve the desired effects as outlined above.

The first effect, that of removing Saddam's regime, started over a year ago with the initial deployment of forces into Kuwait and Northern Iraq. The methodical buildup of troops in Kuwait, coupled with new United Nations resolutions, signaled the administration's determination to disarm Iraq. Concurrent with the coalition air, ground and maritime force deployments, Central Command increased the intensity of its no-fly zone operations to include leaflet drops and radio broadcasts to the Iraqi military and populace.[12] These "shaping" operations set the stage for the combined army, marine, and British assault into Iraq.

Unlike the 38 day preface to the first Gulf war, the combined air, ground, maritime and special operations forces near-simultaneously attached into Iraq at a rate similar to the 20 December 1989 Panama invasion. The orchestration of information operations, force design and

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[9] 12 September 2002 remarks by President Bush at the United Nations. Accessed 13 March 2003, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html.

[10] Ibid.

[11] 17 March 2003 remarks by President Bush to the Nation, *President Says Saddam Hussein Must Leave Iraq Within 48 Hours*, Office of the Press Secretary March 17, 2003. Accessed 12 April 2003, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html.

[12] Anthony H. Cordesman, *The "Instant Lessons" of the Iraq War Main Report, Third Working Draft: April 14, 2003* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2003), 4. Accessed 18 April 2003, at http://www.csis.org/features/iraq_instantlessons.pdf

precision strike gave the he US had an almost incredible advantage. In terms of the Coalition's campaign architecture, the CENTCOM planners and commanders brought together land and air operations and supported them from the sea and friendly bases at very high tempos of coordinated operations in order to produce a tailored mix of joint operations according to desired effects throughout the entire theater of operations.[13]

The situation in Northern Iraq presented a different set of challenges to Coalition planners. Given Turkey's failure to support the deployment of the 4th Infantry Division across Turkey's boarder and through the Kurdish controlled areas, CENTCOM relied on special operating forces to establish a second front. Herein, U.S. and Kurdish forces fixed the Iraqi army units vicinity Mosul and Kirkuk.[14] Employing precision guided munitions, combined with limited ground maneuver, the Northern front Coalition forces succeeded in defeating the local Iraqi army forces and securing key political and economic centers.

The second effect of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM sought by Coalition planners was to locate, secure, and destroy Iraqi's weapons of mass destruction. Pinpointing and destroying Saddam's WMD arsenal will take the full extent of U.S. intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets. Therefore, disarmament and demobilization of Iraq's chemical and biological stocks as well as the delivery means is the first priority after forces have secured Baghdad, as well as the other key cities within Iraq. Locating and securing these sites prior to their destruction may present challenges to thinly spread coalition forces. Even though U.S. intelligence possessed information concerning WMD production and storage sites, the regime may have chosen to destroy the evidence as they fled the country.

Understanding the need for an element possessing unique skills and capabilities, CENTCOM formed a unit consisting of approximately 5,000 specialized personnel, and

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[13] Ibid., 5.

[14] Ibid., 14.

designated it the 75th Exploitation Brigade.[15] Franks formed this unit so that it responded directly to CENTCOM, and had the right people with the rights combinations of skills are employed to secure and demilitarize the WMD sites. These specialized teams with their technicians, linguists, and security elements are positioned with Coalition forces operating throughout Iraq in order to rapidly deploy once a suspected site is located.

The final effect of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM was to limit the collateral damage and preserve Iraqi's economic infrastructure. As the President stated on 19 March 2003, "I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable and free country will require our sustained commitment."[16] As of 11 April 2003, coalition combat operations have supported this aim through the use of coordinate ground and air operations supported by the employment of precision guided munitions. Early estimates show that up to 65 percent of the ordinance dropped so far has been precision guided.[17] The advances in weapon technology have reshaped Coalition targeting processes which have resulted in a reduction in the number of civilian casualties and collateral damage. Even Iraqi claims indicate that the US and UK inflicted negligible civilian casualties and collateral damage in historical terms.[18]

Coupled with limiting the collateral damage was the Coalition's desire to protect Iraq's economic infrastructure. In order to limit the cost of rebuilding Iraq, U.S. Army, Marine, and British forces had to secure the Port of Umm Qasr, as well as the Rumaylah and Kirkuk oil fields.

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[15] Baker Spring is F.M. Kirby Research Fellow in National Security Policy and Jack Spencer is Policy Analyst for Defense and National Security in the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies at The Heritage Foundation.

[16] 19 March 2003 remarks by President Bush to the Nation, *President Bush Addresses the Nation The Oval Office*, Office of the Press Secretary March 17, 2003. Accessed 12 April 2003, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html.

[17] Cordesman, *The "Instant Lessons" of the Iraq War Main Report*, 3.

[18] Ibid., 9.

Through the employment of conventional and special operating forces, the Coalition was able to protect these facilities from the withdrawing Iraqi army. As a result, it required relatively little effort in order for international relief supplies to start flowing through the Port of Umm Qasr. As for the oil fields, the memory of the disastrous 1991 Kuwaiti oil fires resonated deep within the Coalition. CENTCOM knew that by securing the oil fields meant securing Iraqi's economic future.

By examining Operation IRAQI FREEDOM through an RDO lens illustrates the strategy's veracity in terms mid to high intensity combat operations. Through the employment of new information technologies the Coalition clearly demonstrated information dominance. Information dominance allowed General Franks the ability to design a tailored and versatile air, ground, maritime, and special operating force architecture. Through a complementary combination of capabilities, Coalition forces created the battlefield effects required to succeed during the decisive combat operations. The question that is examined in the next chapter is, will an RDO strategy afford the same advantages in terms of information dominance, command and control, and decisive operations during post conflict reconstruction as it did during the decisive phase of combat operations.

CHAPTER FIVE

RDO'S EFFECTS and IRAQI POST-SADDAM RECONSTRUCTION

Up to this point, the RDO discussion has evolved from a theoretical concept to a practical

application in both Panama and Iraq. The intent here is to offer insight into the challenges posed

to Army forces in a post-Saddam Iraq. By overlaying the effects of disarmament and belligerent

control, internal and external boundary control, populace protection, and key persons and

institutions protection on a probable Iraqi post-conflict scenario, conclusions are drawn

concerning an RDO strategy's validity in respect of PCR environmental requirements.

Disarmament and Belligerent Control

Due their diversity and omnipresence, identifying and disarming Iraq's military/security

apparatus presents challenges to post conflict coalition forces. Iraq's belligerent elements fall

into three categories: First, there are those remaining forces whose sole purpose was regime

protection; the second category of belligerents is comprised of remnants of Iraq's conventional

military apparatus; the last category consists of the anti-regime resistance fighters. Eliminating

the threat posed by marauding bands of armed belligerents may significantly challenge a U.S.

RDO strategy. Like the difficulties experienced in post-Taliban Afghanistan, and with the Dignity

battalions in Panama, the coalition's strategy must quickly address and neutralize these forces or

they could foster a chaotic environment that degenerates into total anarchy.[1] In order to prevent

the Iraqi Army's metamorphosis, coalition strategies should include the employment of

dominating information operations and tailored forces. As Iraq's occupiers, the Iraqi people will

hold coalition units accountable for "de-Nazification," of Iraq.[2] That is, punishing those who

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[1] Kamran Karadaghi, *Minimizing Ethnic Tensions*, in a book edited by Patrick Clawson, *How to Build a New Iraq After Saddam* (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East policy, 2002), 32.

[2] James Fallows, "The Fifty-first State?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 2002, 11. Accessed on 15 November 2002, at http://www.theatlantic.com.

were personally responsible for the old regime's brutality and securing everyone associated with the former government.[3]

The situation posed by, and solutions for addressing the regime loyalists threat, may not suit the nature and disposition of Iraq's regular army. The Regular Army is one of few Iraqi institutions that would have more potential value in the immediate aftermath of regime change.[4] Ethnic, religious and political constituencies aside, a coalition strike force, designed for the effect of regime change will depend on the Iraqi military to manage the country both in the immediate aftermath and during the three to five year post-Saddam transitional period.[5] In addition, among the key challenges facing U.S. PCR planners will be building legitimate military and security structures. Any new Iraqi defense organization will have to be carefully vetted along tribal, regional, and religious lines. The force will also need to recruit a number of young Iraqis who have not participated in prior conflicts.

Iraqi resistance movements constitute the final category of armed belligerents requiring disarmament during post-Saddam reconstruction operations. Participants in these resistance movements are principally comprised of forces loyal either to the Iranian backed Shi'a in Southern Iraq or the Kurds in the Northern. Both movements, as well as their supporting populations, have experienced devastating despotism at the hands of Saddam Hussein. At the same time, both groups populate areas that are abundant in cultural and natural resources. This economic capacity leads these movements toward a quest for independence. Coalition forces must appreciate the history and account for the emotions and hatred spawned from the previous two decades of subjugation.

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[3] James Fallows, "The Fifty-first State?"

[4] Patrick Clawson, *Introduction: Shaping a Stable and Friendly Post-Saddam Iraq, in How to Build a New Iraq After Saddam* (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2002), 6.

[5] Kamran Karadaghi, 33.

To achieve post-Saddam peace, both the Shi'a and Kurds must demilitarize. A coalition victory over the elite units could lead to a security vacuum with the disintegration of Saddam's security services.[6] If not careful, the Coalition could foster retribution killings of former regime loyalists. In the towns of Tikrit, Samarra, and Ramadi and in parts of Mosul and Baghdad, Sunni's could be slaughtered by the majority Shi'i Arabs once Saddam's dreaded Republican Guard and security organizations begin to collapse under a U.S.-led attack.[7] National and coalition leadership must make it clear that once Saddam is removed these independent armies must turn over their arms and focus on their efforts toward a sustained nonviolent existence. As the next section discusses, any post-war force must possess the size and capability to thwart both internal ethno-religious, as well as external threats to Iraq's sovereignty.

Securing External and Internal Boundaries

One of President Bush's stated war-aims was maintenance of Iraq's territorial integrity.[8] Coupled with securing Iraq's current boarders, the United States must guarantee regional partners that Iraq no longer poses a threat, either through its military capacity, or through its political and ideological make-up.[9] Iraq's post-Saddam security requirements fall into two categories. The first category includes external security operations. That is, those measures necessary to support , functioning and efficient border operations with Iraq's six neighbors. The second category includes internal boundary security. Coalition planners should account for the historic divisions between the Kurds, Sunni's and Shi'i populations, and implement measure to maintain the

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[6] Ibid., 34.

[7] Ibid., 31.

[8] President Bush, U.N. Speech, 12 Sept 2002.

[9] Scott R. Feil, Co-Director, AUSA/CSIS Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project, *Statement for the Record, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Iraq: Strategy and Resource Considerations*, August 1, 2002.

regional integrity of specific ethnic groups. How the United States addresses the sensitive issues surrounding Iraq's cultural diversity will affect Arab regional perceptions of U.S. legitimacy.[10]

Securing Iraq's external borders means understanding the motivations and relationships of its neighboring countries. U.S. forces, and eventually a newly trained Iraqi defense force, must physically position forces at key access points along the Iraq-Iran border in order to prevent large-scale transiting by unauthorized Iranian elements. The politicians, not the Army, must obtain guarantees from all neighboring states to refrain from trying to control or unduly influence events in Iraq. Many of the population centers are close to the Iran-Iraq border, scene of devastation from the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. To the North, exacerbated by feuding over the Kurdish ideology, Turkey and Iraq have significant security and resource issues.[11] U.S. and coalition requirements must focus on Iraq's Kurdish population, and ensure that appropriate security systems are in place to prevent involvement of the Kurdish factions residing in Turkey. Even though Iran and Turkey are seen as significantly influencing any post-Saddam Iraq, other regional partners have much at stake in terms of political and economic stability. To the West, both Jordan and Syria have maintained close ties to Saddam's Ba'ath regime. In Jordan, the economic impact of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM could be significant if the Coalition does not quickly reestablish existing trade relationships. In addition, U.S. diplomatic and defense strategies will need to address the significant Jordanian public animosity illustrated during combat operations in Iraq. In terms of political hegemony, the only other regional power to match Saddam is Syria' President Bashar al-ASAD.[12] The special relationship Iraq and Syria share in terms of a ruling

[10] Ibid.

[11] Scott R. Feil, Co-Director, AUSA/CSIS Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project, *Statement for the Record, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Iraq: Strategy and Resource Considerations*, August 1, 2002.

[12] 2002 CIA Fact Book, accessed on 12 April 2003 at http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications /factbook /geos/sy.html

Ba'ath party and similar militaristic tendencies present challenges to a post-Saddam Iraqi reconstruction strategy. Only by exercising strong diplomatic, as well as military signals will CENTCOM keep Syria from interfering in Iraq.[13] To the South, the Gulf states have demonstrated their will to support the Coalition. Allowing combat forces to base and operate out of their countries, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman have illustrate their intent on partnering with the Coalition in a post-Saddam environment. This environment affects an RDO strategy by increasing the forces required to maintain Iraq's borders and prevent intervention by those elements insistent on thwarting U.S. regional participation.

Securing Iraq's internal borders means understanding the social, religious, and ethnic relationships with Iraq. Now that Saddam is gone, years of cultural repression and pent-up animosity by Iraq's minority groups will likely materialize in the form of power struggles and violent retributions.[14] The U.S. Army's role in securing Iraq's internal borders will significantly test the RDO strategy in terms of ISR and force structure. Dissolving Iraq's repressive security apparatus means unleashing years of pent-up hatred amongst differing ethnic groups. The 2002 CIA Fact book reports the Iraqi population at 75-80% Arab, 15-20% Kurds, 3% Assyrian and Turkomen.[15] Similarly, it says that the population is 97% Muslim, but the CIA estimates that 60-65% are Shi'ites and 32-37% Sunni.[16] The analysis suggests that fighting inside Iraq will not end

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[13] Clawson, 14.

[14] Clawson, 15.

[15] CIA Fact Book, access on 12 April 2003, at www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sy.html

[16] Anthony H. Cordesman, *An Attack on Iraq:The Military, Political, and Economic Consequences A Background Paper on Risk Analysis and Scenarios* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2002), 12.

with Saddam's regime, but that the United States will be drawn into mediating Iraqi factional disputes or risk unleashing a blood bath if it succeeds in unseating the current government.[17]

The importance all this has in terms of RDO revolves around ISR and force structure. Embedding special operating forces and other governmental agencies with the Kurds, Sunni, and Shi'a populations may offer an understanding of their motivations and reactions to a coalition invasion. This promotes efficient force design by applying combat power in a manner that mitigates any anticipated chaos and possible factional bloodshed. Post-Saddam PCR operations will require a significant Coalition presence to destroy the terrorist networks and cells, eliminate Iraq's WMD arsenal and infrastructure, protect its energy resources, and block Iranian hegemony in the region.[18] The conditions by which the conflict ends will determine the very nature of the post-Saddam environment. "But of course it all depends on how one finds oneself in a victorious position—on what you had to do to win," says Chris Sanders, an American who worked for eighteen years in Saudi Arabia and is now a consultant in London. Irregardless of the speed, shock, and awe of a coalition assault, or how much better we say the plight of the Iraqi will be, the initial days and weeks following the assault will illustrate the Iraqi people's suffering and desperate existence.[19]

Protecting the Populace

As was seen during Operations JUST CAUSE/PROMOTE LIBERTY, and endemic to any armed conflict, is the pain and suffering experienced by innocent non-combatants. Refugees and displaced civilians make up a large part of an affected populace. Due to the destructive

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[17] Tom Bowman, "2002 After Invasion Of Iraq, Then What?" *Baltimore Sun* (September 23, 2002). Accessed 11 January 2003, at http://www.sunspot.net/.

[18] Baker Spring is F.M. Kirby Research Fellow in National Security Policy and Jack Spencer is Policy Analyst for Defense and National Security in the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies at The Heritage Foundation.

[19] James Fallows, "The Fifty-first State?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 2002, 1. Accessed on 15 November 2002, at http://www.theatlantic.com.

nature of an RDO campaign, collateral damage may be localized, but cannot be totally avoided. Therefore, it is essential that coalition military forces provide a conduit for military and international medical support. The battlefields will be littered with bodies, both civilian and military. Caring for the wounded and disposing of the dead will fall on military forces, as well as local citizens. According to Phebe Marr, a veteran Iraq expert who until her retirement taught at the National Defense University, told a Senate committee in August, "If firm leadership is not in place in Baghdad the day after Saddam is removed, retribution, score settling, and bloodletting, especially in urban areas, could take place."[20]

Efforts to reestablish an economic infrastructure must reflect the rapidity of the combat operations. The problem is that very little, if any of these reconstruction requirements are defined in RDO-base literature or doctrine. Postwar recovery in Iraq will depend rehabilitating the country's roads, the rail system, air fields, and bridges across the Tigris and the Euphrates. Task organizing combat forces for success in this arena means integrating linguists and Civil Affairs experts, who habitually arrive well after the fighting subsides, well forward in tactical formations. As soon as a village or city is occupied, right away troops need to offer food, water, and shelter. Charles William Maynes, a former editor of Foreign Policy magazine and now the president of the Eurasia Foundation, stated that, "because of the allegations that we've been killing women and children over the years with the sanctions, we are going to be all the more responsible for restoring the infrastructure."[21] The Coalition, not Saddam, is now responsible for the loss of whatever livelihood the Iraqi people may have had, it is incumbent upon the coalition forces to immediately illustrate President Bush's "better life."[22] Ultimately, success depends on coalition efforts to reestablish an infrastructure capable of providing these services.

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[20] Ibid.

[21] James Fallows, "The Fifty-first State?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 2002, 1. Accessed on 15 November 2002, at http://www.theatlantic.com.

[22] Ibid.

Protect Key Persons and Institutions

In the end, the world will gauge U.S. and coalition operations by the time required to reestablish Iraq's governmental and economic structure. The paradox facing "occupying" forces is how to balance the efficiencies gained through technology and speed with post-conflict requirements for rebuilding Iraq's civil institutions. Lessons learned from Afghanistan illustrate the need for a strong presence during any transitional period, thus allowing suppressed ethnic tensions to boil up and be addressed prior to imposition of some new form of local government.

In terms of effects-based operations, Coalition partners face the conundrum of controlling Iraq's key political centers. Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq has an existing national and local bureaucratic administrative architecture.[23] Based on our tenuous foothold, the Coalition must rely on optimizing new national and local governments that possess domestic and international credibility, that can negotiate political rivalries, counter foreign meddling, and preserve Iraq's territorial integrity.[24] The Coalition must now enact positive measures toward instituting viable civil and administrative systems that are seen as legitimate, Iraqi in nature, and do not require years of international social support.

None of this can exist if Iraq's infrastructure is decimated. By maintaining Iraq's key economic systems, while promoting future international investment, U.S. and coalition forces will gain credibility from Iraq's populace and the world. For any post-conflict Iraqi reconstruction program to succeed, coalition forces and international partners must move quickly to restore its economic infrastructure. Central to any Iraqi economy is petroleum production and disbursement. In comparison to the enormous efforts required in Afghanistan, the physical repair

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[23] Ellen Laipson, *Assessing the long-term challenges*, in the book, *How to build a new Iraq after Saddam*. 12.

[24] Ibid.

of Iraq will be relatively easy. Iraq is a country of engineers and builders, people who quickly restored bridges and roads after the Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars.[25] However, the rehabilitation of sabotaged or war-damaged oil facilities may be outside the purview of an RDO strategy, and may also be beyond the immediate capability of Iraqi specialist. Therefore, coalition forces will need to assist in securing the transport of critical components and supplies. An Iraq that emerges from the conflict must be both viable and capable of self-determined behavior in consonance with generally accepted norms of international and domestic order.

Iraqi's post-conflict environment poses many challenges and will most likely require a sustained U.S. Army presence for some time to come. Just identifying and demilitarizing the belligerent groups spread across the country will force units to occupy and patrol many parts of Iraq. This, coupled with the need to secure Iraq's borders and rebuild a respected military organization, will prevent any rapid disengagement of U.S. Army units and will probably require additional unit rotations. The world, and more importantly the region, is watching how the U.S. handles the post-Saddam reconstruction. In order to prove the legitimacy of the Coalition invasion, reconstruction efforts need to extend beyond disarmament and security. To illustrate that the Iraqi people have a better future in store, concerted efforts must be made to bring the average Iraqi's life back to normalcy as soon as possible. This means having markets available for the sale of goods, schools open for children, and hospitals staffed. The near-term requirements for establishing functioning governmental and economic systems will fall under the control of CENTCOM. Providing the genesis for an Iraqi form of representative government is crucial. If this is not handled correctly, the Kurdish, Sunni, and Shia populations may form their own tribal governments which may make it even harder to maintain Iraq's national integrity. One means of enhancing Iraq's national identity is through the petroleum industry. With the oil

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[25] Ibid.

production, comes revenues for reconstructing Iraq. By maintaining control of these revenues at the national level, all factions will want a vote concerning the distribution of these funds.

Given that Iraqi reconstruction efforts are in their infancy, an analysis of an RDO strategy offers some initial discussion points. First, in terms of information dominance, the systems used to identify and monitor the enemy should also be available to monitor critical population and economic indicators. The Coalition employed the most advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems seen in combat to date.[26] However, like the ISR systems used in Operation JUST CAUSE, the systems used in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM were trained principally on Iraqi's political and military infrastructure. The question to be answered is if similar ISR systems had focused on the population, would the Coalition been able to prevent the urban chaos and looting that occurred in Baghdad and other major population centers? If they had, Coalition forces may have been able to prevent some of the looting witnessed in Baghdad and Basra.

In relation to C2 and force design, a command and force structure dedicated to reconstruction is an optimum solution. As seen in Panama and now in Iraq, the same forces who participated in the invasion are now distributing food and policing the streets. An optimum condition would be for an occupation force to follow the assault forces into the urban areas. The primary role of this occupation force would be to secure the key social, economic, and life support systems.

Finally, the effects of combat operations should nest with the strategic and operational campaign aims. In Panama, the focus of reestablishing functioning political and economic systems was subservient to the PDF's destruction. As a result, the urban chaos and anarchy created a dilemma for Thurman where he had won the war, but was about to loose the peace. The

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[26] Cordesman, *The "Instant Lessons" of the Iraq War Main Report*,?.

rioting and looting seen in Iraq show that the Coalition strategy did not fully identify and anticipate the reaction of the Iraqi people to their newly found freedom.

Did the Coalition planners anticipate the challenges posed by conflict termination? Did they have the resources needed to address the immediate Iraqi reconstruction requirements? Given that reconstruction operations are tailored to the specific environmental needs, does an RDO strategy provide a broad enough base to incorporate the influences and interests of the different joint, interagency, and inter/non-governmental players? Does the RDO strategy afford the framework for meeting the ultimate strategic aims or does it only concentrate on the military aspects of combat operations? The following discussion examines these questions and offers insights and recommendations for commanders and planning staffs.

CHAPTER SIX

THE FUTURE OF RDO AS A COMPREHENSIVE MILITARY STRATEGY

The question remains, is a strategy of Rapid Decisive Operations RDO valid throughout

the full spectrum of warfare? More specifically, and in terms of the U.S. Army's execution

combat and post-Saddam reconstruction efforts, does RDO provide a viable methodology for

addressing the wide array of reconstruction challenges? It may be myopic to rush to draw

conclusion concerning an RDO strategy from a war that is not over. The intent here is not to

examine unique cases where the history is not fully developed, but to reexamine the available

RDO literature in terms of the Operation IRAQI FREEDOM reconstruction challenges facing the

CENTCOM planners.

Anticipating Reconstruction Environmental Requirements

In its present form, the RDO strategy faces difficulty incorporating the realities of today's

post-conflict reconstruction environment. This is not to say that the elements of information

dominance, C2 and organizational design, and effects based operations do not apply. What it

says is that these RDO tenants focus primarily on combat operations as the means for decisively

attaining the strategic objects.[1] In a March 24th Department of Defense briefing, Secretary

Rumsfeld outline the eight Operation IRAQI FREEDOM's strategic objects:

> Coalition military operations are focused on achieving several specific objectives: to end
> the regime of Saddam Hussein by striking with force on a scope and scale that makes clear
> to Iraqis that he and his regime are finished. Next, to identify, isolate and eventually
> eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, production
> capabilities, and distribution networks. Third, to search for, capture, drive out terrorists
> who have found safe harbor in Iraq. Fourth, to collect such intelligence as we can find
> related to terrorist networks in Iraq and beyond. Fifth, to collect such intelligence as we can
> find related to the global network of illicit weapons of mass destruction activity. Sixth, to
> end sanctions and to immediately deliver humanitarian relief, food and medicine to the
> displaced and to the many needy Iraqi citizens. Seventh, to secure Iraq's oil fields and
> resources, which belong to the Iraqi people, and which they will need to develop their
> country after decades of neglect by the Iraqi regime. And last, to help the Iraqi people

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[1] U.S. Joint Forces Command, *A Concept for Rapid Decisive Operations*, i.

create the conditions for a rapid transition to a representative self-government that is not a threat to its neighbors and is committed to ensuring the territorial integrity of that country.[2]

It can be argued that at least three of these objectives are more closely tied to achieving decisiveness in a post-conflict rather than combat environment. The question to be posed here is did the CENTCOM planners fully analyze these strategic aims in order to anticipate the informational, force structure, and operational reconstruction requirements?

It can be stated that the ground, air, maritime, and special operating forces allocated for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM secured their first objective with the entry into Baghdad of elements of the 3rd Infantry Division and I Marine Expeditionary Force. As the Coalition continues to consolidate its position in Iraq, conventional and special operating forces are searching known and suspected WMD sites.[3] The third, fourth and fifth objects relate to the United States' global war on terror and will require additional time and resources to accomplish. It is the six, seventh and eighth objects that pose the greatest challenge to the CENTCOM planners. These objectives are linked directly to Iraq's reconstruction and therefore must either be resourced with additional forces or require supporting these tasks with forces already in theater.

Operational commanders and staffs must employ capabilities, informed by an intimate knowledge of the adversary, to produce the desired effects. As seen in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM the force structure, operational objectives, and desired operational effects are unequivocally linked. It is the operational planner's analysis that forms the basis for establishing the campaign objectives. These objectives translate into requirements for forces by type and

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[2] Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, *DoD News Briefing - Secretary Rumsfeld And Gen. Myers* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Defense, 2003), 1. Accessed on 4 April 2003, at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2003/t03212003_t0321sd1.html.

[3] Faye Bowers, "Tunnels of Baghdad may be the war's last frontier," *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 10, 2003 edition, 1. Accessed on 10 April 2002, at http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0410/p04s01-woiq.html.

capability. RDO's failure to address conflict termination will reflect a void in future force capabilities, forcing operational planners into an ad hoc adaptation of existing strategies.

RDO Strategy and Interagency, and Inter/Non-Governmental Players

Some would say that post-war U.S. military activities should be focused on securing war aims, not on administering the country or creating a new government, and that these functions should be left to the civilian authorities of an interim Iraqi government. Others state that a force sufficient to topple the Iraqi regime would be more than sufficient to conduct the post-combat military activities. However, disarmament, as well as protection of borders, the populace, and key political and economic institutions will significantly challenge an RDO strategy. History shows that even the most dramatic military victory merely defeats the enemy; it does not shape or win the peace. In short, the war is not over when Saddam is gone and the major fighting stops. Rather, the uncertainties and problems in the post-conflict period will last longer than those of war. There is a high probability that the world faces years of tension and uncertainty as the internal future of Iraq is decided and as it establishes new relations with its neighbors and the West.[4] Put differently, the hope for quick post-war stability is probably futile.[5]

The RDO strategy does incorporate interagency participation in relation to intelligence and information systems. As outlined in the RDO Concept Paper, "In response to the shifting conditions, the U.S. military has changed in such ways as formalizing Theater Engagement Plans, increased emphasis on non-traditional missions and relationships, expanded contacts with the wider Interagency Community, and developed robust concepts in the area of Information Operations."[6] That is, development of information systems that combine the existing sensor array with interagency/non-governmental systems (e.g., USAID, CIA, SOF, PVO/NGOs, etc,)

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[4] Clawson, 12.

[5] Cordesman, 30.

[6] U.S. Joint Forces Command, *A Concept for Rapid Decisive Operations*, 3.

encompasses all aspects of one's surroundings, thus offering a credible means for anticipating future requirements and changes to the operational environment. However, this framework is intended to support the ISR architecture required for decisive operations, not reconstruction.

With some adjustment, operational planners can extend the discussion here to the post-conflict environment. Based on RDO's limits to force structure, early interagency participation becomes a necessity if reconstruction operations are to succeed. U.S. forces will no longer have the luxury that Thurman had during Operation JUST CAUSE to retask existing forces from combat to post-conflict reconstruction operations. Now it is the responsibility of operational planners to facilitate interagency community participation in order to achieve the effects required by the post-conflict strategic aims.

RDO Framework in Full-Spectrum Operations

A strategy for the employment of military force should be validated and applicable through the full spectrum of operations. Outlined below is the Joint Forces Command, Futures Battle Lab, Rapid Decisive Operations requirements statement:

> The United States now faces a world in which adversaries have the ability to threaten our interests or attack us or our allies with little or no warning. Our ability to deploy major forces to a theater in crisis will be constrained by politics, geography, adversary anti-access capabilities, and weapons of mass effects. Legacy warfighting concepts, and to some extent the forces created to support them, are ill-suited to deal with this new security environment. We can no longer plan on having months or even weeks to deploy massive theater forces into a region rich in unthreatened infrastructure, while delaying offensive action until favorable force ratios have been achieved. Instead, we must plan to engage in the first hours of a crisis with those capabilities that can be brought to bear quickly, informed by intimate knowledge of the adversary and focused on those objectives most likely to produce the desired effects. This new American way of war, especially when enabled by forces optimized to its requirements, will enhance our national security in the 21st century. The strategic requirement is to be ready to transition from a relatively peaceful process to intense combat operations rapidly and decisively to achieve the strategic objectives. Our challenge, in conjunction with other instruments of national power, is to build the capability to respond quickly and bring regional contingencies to a rapid and decisive close. We must do this while not losing our ability to prevail in the event of a major regional contingency.[7]

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[7] U.S. Joint Forces Command, *A Concept for Rapid Decisive Operations*, i.

In this statement it is seen where the author discusses the transition between peace and war, however, no mention is made concerning the transition from combat to peace operations. As such, the directing tenants of RDO are linked to this emphasis on rapid transition from peace to war. Outlined below is a discussion of RDO tenants and what operational planners should consider when addressing the environmental changes that occur during the transition from combat to post-conflict reconstruction.

Reflecting back to purpose of information dominance, the process of "seeing" the battlefield in order to anticipate and circumvent enemy opportunities and actions works well for force on force engagements. However, how will information dominance provide insight into and anticipate social, ethnic, and religious tensions that dominate PCR environments? As illustrated during Operation JUST CAUSE, clearly Joint Task Force South's ISR focus was directed toward destroying the PDF. Unfortunately, neither Thurman nor Stiner anticipated the resulting chaos, nor did they have ISR systems trained on the populace in order to provide early warning that something was going very wrong. One solution requires a more mental than physical paradigm adjustment. That is to say planners should train the ISR systems to collect on the social and political threats as well as potential military threats.

Changes to Iraq's operational environment requires agility in terms of organizational C2 and design. Even if the ISR systems are capable of collecting and providing information concerning all aspects of the environment, there must be a mechanism that assesses this information. Capabilities must exist to address emerging targets without detracting from existing operations. It was not until late on 20 December 1989 that General Thurman directed Major General Cisneros to initiate Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY.[8] At that time, neither Cisneros nor his staff had a complete understanding of the operation's concept. To complicate matters more, there were few if any resources in terms of Civil Affairs units available to execute the plan. The

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[8] Major General Marc A. Cisneros, Oral History Program: Just Cause, 1-4.

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Bush administration has established both civilian and military post-conflict planning groups. However, it remains to be seen how these groups will coordinate their efforts and resources to support "enroute" PCR operations, as well as providing the strategic and operational leadership upon regime removal.

Simultaneous asymmetric attacks focused on creating cerebral paralysis are the hallmark of effects-based operations. This tenant of RDO is based on the premise that with the prudent and focused application of combat power, the desired effects can be attained. However, this is where the strategy limits itself. As outlined in the JFCOM RDO Concept Paper, "Viewed from the perspective of the United States and its allies, the execution of an RDO is a rapid series of relentless vigorous multidimensional and distributed actions, raids, and strikes. The flow of the operations *does not follow the traditional sequential pattern of prehostilities, lodgment, decisive combat and stabilization, follow through, and post hostilities and redeployment*, but rather is a continuous cycle of operations from long range precision strikes, to distributed seizure or destruction of key surface objectives, to the sophisticated application of information operations."[9] This leads to a discussion of the operational "effects" or "aim" commanders are seeking. How can a strategy that does not encompass conflict termination be a viable strategy? That is, the desired endstate of safe, secure, and stable government, may be the true aim, with regime change and destruction of the enemy's military as one step in the process. Again using Operation JUST CAUSE to illustrate this point, by simultaneously dismantling the Panamanian security and defense system from the outside, Thurman and Stiner failed to anticipate the requirement for forces within the urban areas. The resulting anarchy led to pulling units away from their initial missions to execute civil disturbance operations in Panama City and Colon. In Iraq, the battlefield effects must contribute to, not detract from a safe and secure operational environment.

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[9] U.S. Joint Forces Command, *A Concept for Rapid Decisive Operations*, 13.

Summary and Conclusion

Success in Iraq will be defined not by how well the Coalition wins the war, but by how well it wins the peace. As this study has shown, the military is the only instrument of national power capable of achieving victory in battle. Does the employment of an RDO strategy detract from the military's ability to establish the security conditions for post-conflict success? This analysis suggests that the base RDO tenants are sound in terms of sustained combat operations. However, there is little to no dialog concerning employment of an RDO strategy in a post-conflict reconstruction environment. Having said this, further development of this strategy into doctrine must speak to the full spectrum of conflict, including conflict termination and post-conflict operations.

The Cold War's end forced changes to the strategic norms and paradigms which in turn created a need to transform the military. As a result, the Department of Defense initiated programs to transform the military in order to meet these challenges.[10] The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, coupled with President Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS) provided the guidance from which each service devised its form of transformation. Through joint collaborative programs, Joint Forces Command and the U.S. Army developed the transformation strategy of Rapid Decisive Operations. As a holistic approach to warfare, RDO's tenants of information dominance, command and control, and effects-based operations have become the guiding principals for the employment of the military instrument of power across the full spectrum of conflict.

RDO creates a war-fighting architecture that limits an opponent's options, range of possible decisions, and makes an adversary's actions more predictable and easier to counter. Operation JUST CAUSE offer an illustrative example of the effects and challenges posed by the employment of an RDO-like military strategy. As was highlighted in Panama, the strategic aims

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[10] *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 32.

must be clearly understood and embedded in both the decisive combat and post-conflict reconstruction operations. A better interpretation of Operation JUST CAUSE's strategic aims may have allowed planners to anticipate the friction of transitioning from a combat to a post conflict environment. This first example of an RDO strategy employment illustrates its faults in terms of directing combat systems entirely toward the enemy's defense architecture without addressing the strategic end-state aims. It is the operational planners who must analyze the requirements and establish the conditions and the environmental security setting for a coordinated reconstruction plan.

Like Operation JUST CAUSE, Operation IRAQI FREEDOM's combat operations illustrated how information dominance, combined with tailored joint force packages successfully produced the effects of defeating the enemy's military system which led to the ruling regime's removal. However, the question that must be asked is if the military strategy supported the strategic end-state aims. Does the RDO strategy meet the existing post-conflict reconstruction challenges? These challenges are both physical and psychological and materialize in the form of belligerent control, border and boundary control, populace safety, and institutional protection. These are complex problems that will require a dedicated Coalition presence for the foreseeable future. Future operational planners must understand this dilemma, and be able to address the dichotomy between an RDO strategy and designing an inclusive multi-spectrum campaign plan.

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