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EFFECTIVENESS OF STABILITY OPERATIONS DURING THE INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSITION PHASE FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

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ABSTRACT

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        U.S. strategy after armed conflict in Iraq was to seal the victory through re-establishment
of infrastructure and establishment of democratic civil bodies of government. Prior to the
conflict there were several studies that highlighted critical military actions required to insure
successful post-conflict stabilization of Iraq. These requirements were not accomplished. The
stabilization effort was complicated by the looting and lawlessness resulting from the collapse of
regime's military and security force. Post conflict failures in planning and operations, coupled
with several inaccurate assumptions, degraded post-conflict stabilization efforts and likely
lengthened the post-conflict period of violence and lawlessness. This paper examines and
analyzes post conflict stability planning and operations, civil-military operations, and obstacles
to achieving U.S. strategic goals in Iraq during the first 60 days of the conflict.

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TRANSITION PHASE FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

The United States strategic goal at the onset of the armed conflict in Iraq was to topple
Saddam Hussein's regime and to create a free, unified, and democratic Iraq. The necessity of
having a unified Iraq derives from its strategic location in the Middle East and from U.S.
commitments to other Middle East countries supporting the war effort, including Saudi Arabia
and Jordan.[1] In order to achieve this strategic goal, the coalition, led by the U.S. military, would
need to first insure a secure and stable environment.

Prior to the start of conflict, the Bush Administration assumed that American troops would
be viewed as liberators and welcomed by Iraqis with cheers, and would support in the overthrow
of Saddam's regime.[2] This did not occur as envisioned. Coalition forces began the attack on
Iraq on March 20, 2003. Initially, as coalition forces moved into Iraq and began to gain control
of many of the towns, the masses welcomed the forces in recognition of their new found
freedom and impending removal of Saddam's regime.[3] In an attempt to stabilize the region, civil
affairs activities began almost immediately in these towns.[4] By 9 April 2003, U.S. Forces were
gaining control of Baghdad,[5] the largest city having a population of 4.5 million.[6] However, much
of the celebration quickly faded when the citizens found basic services not restored, personal
economic situation worsening, and rumors of the U.S. "real" purpose in Iraq being spread as
truth, with no rebuttal by the coalition.

Stabilization efforts, during the first sixty days after the start of the war, were significantly
hampered by numerous issues clearly within U.S. military's control. Planning for the transition
phase was not timely and consisted of several incorrect critical assumptions. These factors,
coupled with a lack of security, loss of basic necessities, marginal information control, a
severely degraded utility system, shut-down economy, and no oil movement, created challenges
in accomplishing stability operations. Failure to take immediate action on identified weaknesses
in the transition plan, further impacted these activities. These factors contributed to loss of
momentum and "winning the hearts and minds" of the Iraqi people and, in turn, caused further
disruption and delays in the stabilization progress necessary to achieve a democratic Iraq.

CONDITIONS IN IRAQ

In Iraq, there are numerous organizations, religious sects, and groups of citizens that
create internal conflicts between each other or are directed at U.S. efforts.[7] The Shi'a Muslim
community comprises 60-65 percent of the population and the Sunni Muslim comprises 32-37
percent of the population. Christians and others make up 3 percent of the population. Saddam

Hussein's Baath party were primarily Sunni Arabs, the minority in the country. The ethnic composition of Iraq creates further conflict; 75-80 percent of Iraqis are Arab, 15-20 percent Kurds, with Turkoman, Assyrian, and others comprising 5 percent of the population.[8] Kirkuk, in northern Iraq, is an oil rich city and populated with Kurds, Arabs, Turks, and Assyrians.[9] Additional conflict is caused from the pro-Saddam citizens, Islamic fighters, and other terrorist organizations directed against the United States and the coalition. Each of these organizations and groups have their own agenda which affects the coalition's stabilization and peace efforts directed at establishing a democratic government. [10]

Prior to the armed conflict, cultural resources in the towns were protected, water was plentiful, electricity was available in most areas, and there was fuel for cooking and heating. The sixty-five percent of Iraqi families employed by the government received their were paid.[11] At the beginning of the hostilities, these basic necessities disappeared. In addition to security, each region had its own critical concerns. In Baghdad, trash remained uncollected for over a month after the war started. Standing pools of sewage added to the impending sanitation crises.[12] In Kirkuk, the concerns were primarily fuel shortages and securing property. [13] In Umm Qasr, clean water flowing [14] and re-establishing food distribution centers was the immediate priority. [15]

PRECURSIVE PREDICTIONS ON THE WAR IN IRAQ

Prior to the invasion by coalition forces, there were numerous studies that identified specific areas that must be considered to succeed in creating a free and democratic Iraq. Although raising concerns and offering viable recommendations, these studies were neither embraced nor acted upon by the military. For example:

- In January 2003, about two months prior to the start of the attack on Iraq by the coalition forces, the Marine Warfighting Laboratory conducted wargaming analysis on the effect the Iraqi people will have on the conflict. This analysis showed that the first thirty to sixty days would be the most critical to influence the Iraqi people and the international community's perception. This report identified three activities that would be, at least initially, the responsibility of coalition forces, and absolutely critical to achieving success: (1) Maintaining a secure environment for the Iraq people, including law and order; (2) Maintaining basic necessities such as water, electricity, fuel, schools, and hospital services; and (3) Rapid return of infrastructure responsibility, including governance, back to Iraqis. The report also stated that potential for violence against coalition forces would increase with time if Iraqis' quality of life did not improve over that realized during Saddam's regime and there must be a transition of governance back to Iraqis. Finally, the analysis stressed that humanitarian assistance groups required a safe and secure environment. [16]
- The State Department's "Future of Iraq" project, created in April 2002 to study the after-war in Iraq scenario, predicted widespread looting and other criminal activity.

The report recommended coalition military patrol all major cities throughout Iraq to prevent such action, highlighting the need to protect the vital utilities and government buildings. Electrical, water, and sewage infrastructure would need major investment for repair. The report also recommended retaining half of the Iraqi military and converting them to a peacekeeping force, after being screened by U.S. Military Intelligence, and finding jobs for the remaining deactivated military. It also raised the point that Iraqi's media could be exploited to promote the U.S. goals in rebuilding Iraq.[17]

- The Independent Task Force report sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, first issued on 12 March 2003, stated that the U.S. military must sustain public security and humanitarian assistance from the outset of the conflict. Post-conflict reconstruction endeavors must be in a secured environment to be achieved.[18]

- A report from The Center for International and Strategic Studies by Bathsheba Crocker, which was published two months prior to conflict, stressed that a civil policing plan needed to be developed by the administration. The report asserted that until the environment was safe and secured, the U.S. military would have to fill the humanitarian assistance role of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other relief agencies.[19]

- The blue ribbon commission created by the Council on Foreign Relations and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy of Rice University argued that the Iraqi Army should not be disbanded and should be used for the internal security of Iraq. Otherwise, there would be a large cohort of armed men, without a job or pay. This report addressed the disrepair of the electrical infrastructure in Iraq, painting a much worse picture than reflected by previous military, estimating a cost of $20 billion to restore to pre-Desert Storm capacity. [20]

These predictions, by creditable and reputable sources, all stress that a secure environment would be necessary to succeed in Iraq. Post-conflict reconstruction and other stabilization activities would be significantly impacted without it.

TRANSITIONAL PHASE TO STABILIZATION

Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, defines four phases of a Joint Campaign as (1) deter/engage, (2) seize initiative, (3) decisive operations, and (4) transition.[21] The transition phase, phase 4, is characterized by stability operations, usually focused on restoring law and order and creating conditions for self-sustaining peace at the conclusion of the operation.[22] Stability operations are not normally short term[23] and may occur concurrently with phase 3, combat operations.[24] Military forces needed for combat operations may be significantly different from those required for stability operations.[25] To maintain momentum and exploit the success of combat operations, commanders must reorganize and initiate concurrent stability operations directed at achieving military and political goals. FM 3-0, *Operations*, provides the following explanation of the Stability Operations:

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"Stability operations promote and protect U.S. national interests by influencing the threat, political, and information dimensions of the operational environment through a combination of peacetime developmental, cooperative activities and coercive actions in response to crisis. Regional security is supported by a balanced approach that enhances regional stability and economic prosperity simultaneously."[26]

The U.S. goal in Iraq was to achieve a free and democratic country which would require the coalition force to achieve peace in the region. The *Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook For Peace Operations* provides the Principles for Peace Operations as shown below:[27]

PRINCIPLES FOR PEACE OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVE	PERSEVERANCE
Direct military operations towards a clearly defined decisive, and attainable objective. -Defined by a Resolution/Mandate. -End state refinement is iterative. -Political considerations often drive operations. -Concurrent actions required during operations to achieve permanent peace.	*Prepare for measured, protracted application of military capability in support of strategic aims.* -Prepare for long protracted operations. -Information operations strategy key. -Gauge social and political progress to measure success. -Balance attaining objectives quickly with strategic aims and other restraints.
UNITY OF EFFORT	RESTRAINT
Seek unity of effort toward every objective. -Military may not have the lead. -Seek a coordination structure that incorporates activities of all elements in the area (nongovernmental, private voluntary, and international organizations). -Atmosphere of cooperation required. -Establish extensive liaison and communications.	*Apply appropriate military capability prudently.* -Disciplined application of force, tactics, and rules of engagement. -Justified and carefully controlled. -Closely related to "Legitimacy." -Society "face-saving" options can diffuse a crisis. -Use of mediation and negotiations.
SECURITY	LEGITIMACY
Never permit the hostile factions to acquire an unexpected advantage. -Force protection. -Enhances legitimacy and impartiality. -Attains international credibility. -May extend to nongovernmental and private voluntary organizations. -Freedom of action throughout the joint operations area.	*Sustain the willing acceptance by the people of the right of the government to govern, or a group or agency to make and carry out decisions.* -Avoid inadvertent legitimization of factions. -Use public affairs, civil affairs, and psychological operations programs to enhance perceptions. -Impartial treatment is critical.

FIGURE I. PRINCIPLES FOR PEACE OPERATIONS

During the coalition's initial stabilization effort, several of the elements making up the principles for the peace operations were violated, they either were not planned for or assumptions were made that precluded the necessity for action. Several assumptions and actions that affected the transition phase were: (1) Major combat operations were expected to last for over two months **;** (2) Security requirements were underestimated**;** and (3) The infrastructure would remain operational, including the police force and ministries.[28] Not only were these assumptions inaccurate, but also the coalition's failure to respond to the changing conditions had a heightened negative affect. This has continued to impact progress towards achieving our political-military strategic goals. Factors that affected the stability operations are related to planning, security, information activities, civil considerations, and training.

PLANNING

Planning combat operations in Iraq was initiated at least six months before the attack.[29] Planning for the transition phase for stabilization operations was significantly delayed.[30] Postwar planning was a second priority to the combat planners.[31] A key element of the transition plan was the reconstruction and humanitarian assistance responsibilities needed to promote a stabilized environment. Planning by the inter-agencies did not reflect a cohesive and collected approach. On 17 January 2003, LTG (Ret) Jay Garner was selected to lead the organization responsible for reconstruction and humanitarian assistance. A month later, he met with the different inter-agencies for the first time to review procedures and actions for this new organization, later designated the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA).[32] To compound the planner's problem, ORHA was placed under operational control (OPCON) to the Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) just shortly before the war,[33] but LTG (Ret) Garner had almost daily direct contact with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) leadership.[34] Additionally, the Phase 4 planners at CFLCC did not coordinate with ORHA on the interagency actions for stability and reconstruction.[35]

On 17 March 2003, a few days before the conflict began in Iraq, the CFLCC strategic planners requested from the Military History Institute copies of "*Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation of Germany*"[36] and "*Handbook for Military Government in Germany Prior to Defeat or Surrender*,"[37] which were sent on 25 March 2003.[38] These handbooks were original created a half a century ago in preparation for Operation Eclipse, providing instructions and information for the occupation, stabilization, and reconstruction of Germany and following World War II. The latter handbook provided a checklist for actions to be taken upon entering the German cities.[39] These are excellent references for planning post-

hostilities operations, however, the timing of the research by CFLCC planners was one day after the conflict began.

Joint Publication 3-57 states that "transition planning must be initiated during the initial phases of operation planning to ensure adequate attention is place in this critical area --- plan for transition when planning for intervention."[40] Joint Publication 3-0 provides a slightly different view, in that the "planning for transition should be done concurrently with the offensive operations, or at least well prior to the beginning of the transition phase."[41]

There were several meetings, between CFLCC and V Corps, to discuss Phase 4 operations. However, an operation order for the transition phase was not provided to V Corps to develop their supporting plans. The combat phase was expected to last much longer than it did. The supporting plans would have included the priorities for protection of key facilities and overall security. As late as June 2003, the CFLCC position was that the coalition was not in Phase 4 yet.[42]

SECURITY

During combat operations in Iraq, the coalition force was better equipped and far superior in tactics, training, and resolve to win. However, the coalition should have been prepared to execute stability operations, as the enemy was defeated, while still engaging in combat operations. As major fighting ceased, the composition and size of coalition forces did not adequately support combat operations in one region, while initiating stability and security operations in other regions. Security in Iraq was insufficient for many weeks after the major combat ended, as reflected by the looting, vandalism, and armed attacks throughout the country.

Force composition during transition from combat operations to stability operations must change. Unfortunately, this did not occur despite clear guidance to the contrary. Joint Pub 3-07.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peace Operations*, states that the "transition from hostilities to post-hostilities is a volatile and uncertain process. Effectiveness of military operations will often be determined by a force's ability to provide for its security and ensure the safety of the civilian population."[43] Army doctrine specifies that the composition of a post-hostilities force may be substantially different from that needed for combat operations.[44] In order to exploit success and maintain momentum, the reorganization must be integrated into the combat force during the transition phase, rather than during a separate phase.[45] During initial implementation of the transition phase, combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) units used in stability operations should be seamlessly integrated with the combat units to insure

security is maintained, while humanitarian and other stabilization efforts occur. Forces used in stability operations include units such as "military police, medical, civil affairs, or water purification units."[46]

As major combat subsides, heavy-type combat units should be reduced and more agile security and stabilization type forces employed.   Composite forces, suitable for establishing necessary security and maintaining law and order, combined with capabilities for rapid assessment of conditions and initiation reconstruction and humanitarian assistance, should be considered.

Even with the clear indications of serious security problem, no additional preventive action was taken. On the day Kirkuk fell, valuable equipment and spare parts were stolen while US forces waited outside the city. [47] Several days after entering Baghdad, looting remained out of control. The Ministry of Planning was burned,[48] and furniture was stolen from the Minister of Interior.[49] Medical supplies and repair equipment were looted from the Rashad Psychiatric Hospital twice.[50] During ground combat operations, electrical transmission lines were damaged, causing outages. The power plant operators then shutdown the electrical generators and abandoned the substations. Looting and vandalism caused significant damage to the electrical system.[51] LTG (Ret) Garner stated that the amount of looting and lawlessness was seriously underestimated. Additionally, U.S. forces watched as the looting was going on, without taking any actions to discourage it. [52] In discussing the 3rd Infantry Division in Baghdad, LTG (Ret) Garner indicated that with 260 to 270 sites to guard, there were too few troops left to do security. He also noted that while driving around Baghdad on the evening of 14 May 2003, he only saw four solders.[53] According to a staff representative from V Corps HQ, the military force available was not utilized to its potential. Without the transition plan from CFLCC for implementing Phase 4, supporting plans were not developed. The supporting plans would have included the priorities for security and other necessary actions. Medical facilities, utilities substations, and government buildings should have been placed high on the priority list for protection.[54]

The serious security situation captured the attention of the military and other agencies when an unexpected attack occurred against the Civil Affairs Public Health Team in Baghdad on 27 April 2003. The attack by the lone gunman resulted in four U.S. Civil Affairs soldiers and one Iraqi interpreter wounded. The team had been conducting meetings in Baghdad with local leaders for the purpose of reorganizing and rebuilding the health system.[55]

Lack of security affected unity of effort in humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. The unity of effort principle for peace operations encourages participation from NGOs, private,

voluntary, and International organizations. Nongovernmental organizations delayed their entry into Iraq to provide aid due to the attacks, lawlessness, and general lack of security occurring for almost a month after the start of the war.[56] For the same reason, ORHA did not arrive in Baghdad until 21 April 2003.[57] Some NGOs and United Nations agencies were reassessing their operations due to violence and lawlessness, as late as 14 May 2003.[58]

The disbanding of the entire Iraqi Army by Paul Bremer, LTG (Ret) Jay Garner's replacement as head of ORHA, eliminated a potential security force. LTG (Ret) Garner's plan was to use them in the reconstruction effort.[59] Several studies had recommended that the Iraqi Army be used for internal security. These studies included the State Department's "Future of Iraq" project[60] and the report by the Council on Foreign Relations and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy of Rice University. [61] The training for the new 1500 man police force in Baghdad did not start until a month after U.S. established its presence.[62]

In general, law and order was not established in Iraq for many weeks after major armed fighting had ended in the cities. Failure to aggressively act on looting set the conditions for further lawlessness in the region. The size and composition of the military presence impacted the show of force needed for security in the country and affected stability operations. Armor and Armor Cavalry units are not the best suited for urban terrain security mission. More agile forces, such as Infantry and Military Police, would be better suited for security missions. With a suitable force composition, much of the infrastructure destruction could have been prevented, with reconstruction and humanitarian assistance starting earlier.

INFORMATION ACTIVITIES:

Coalition information operations were inadequate and too slow getting established.[63] Arab television stations presented anti-American slants in their broadcasting and were a detriment to the stabilization progress.[64] Information sources from Syria, Iran, and local media perpetuated rumors and conspiracy theories.[65] One such rumor was that the Americans had only come to seize Iraqi oil. Rumors were reinforced by U.S. forces only guarding the Ministry of Oil and leaving the schools and hospitals unprotected.[66] Unfortunately, coalition forces did not use or control the local radio stations, television, or newspapers to counter anti-coalition propaganda. For the first five weeks after entering Baghdad, neither ORHA nor the military used the local media to clarify their mission to the Iraqis.[67] Preconflict studies, such as the State Department's "Future of Iraq" study highlighted the use of the Iraqi media to promoted U.S. goals on rebuilding Iraq.[68]

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U.S. Army doctrine provides a means to optimize the effectiveness of information operations. There were many deficiencies in the information operations during combat and post-hostilities phases. The commander's analysis of the enemy during stability and support operations includes threat of misinformation during stability and support operations.[69] Joint Publication 3-07.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peace Operations,* states that:

> "The media may have a significant influence on the eventual outcome of the conflict. A supportive portrayal of military operations during post-hostilities activities can further the desired end state by enhancing local public support. Effective psychological operations (PSYOP) and civil affairs (CA) can also positively impact post-hostilities efforts by influencing attitudes and behaviors of a variety of important audiences. Information operations (IO) may contribute to thwarting activities counterproductive to the goals of posthostilities operations **."[70]**

Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations furthers the importance by stressing that Civil Affairs (CA), Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), and Public Affairs (PA) actions can "dramatically affect the perceived legitimacy of peace operations. CA actions should reinforce (and be reinforced by) PSYOP themes and actions. PSYOP themes and actions should be coordinated with PAO initiatives to avoid creating a dichotomy (real or perceived)."[71]

By not exploiting media resources, the coalition's efforts were not developed to optimize the Legitimacy and Perseverance Principles for Peace Operations. Effective use of the media is essential in expediting stabilization efforts.

An example of effective control of media was demonstrated in Bosnia, after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. After the war ended in Bosnia, the media was closely monitored for content by the Office of the High Representative, the organization responsible for the civilian implementation of peace. The monitoring action prevented the spread of rumors, propaganda, and other information designed to stir emotions against the peace process. This aided in the acceptance of the peace plan and reduced threat to the military peacekeepers. Controls similar to this should have been implemented to neutralize the rumors and conspiracy theories that threatened the progress in Iraq. The media should also have been used to emphasize the improvements in the living conditions and progress made in achieving a democratic and free country.

CIVIL CONSIDERATIONS:

Numerous accomplishments were made during the first sixty days that directly supported the stabilization process by providing needs to the citizens. However, there were also several

issues impacting stabilization progress, such as boundaries, economic, and infrastructure factors.

Stability operations is a command responsibility. Effective use of Civil-Military Operations can reduce demand for U.S. resources and will help achieve national and multinational objectives through massing assets of different organizations and agencies.[72] Use of NGOs, international and private organizations, and host nations support provides the necessary resources to help in the stabilization process.[73] During Civil Military Operations, commanders must "establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces and civil authorities --- both governmental and nongovernmental --- and the civilian populace."[74] The Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations states that "historically, Civil Affairs forces have managed distribution of relief supplies, advised and coordinated on population care and controls, and helped transition military efforts to civil agencies for restoration of selected governmental services."[75]

Coordination for services and humanitarian aid began immediately after major armed conflict ceased, as exemplified by the re-establishing of delivery of water in Umm Qasr by 1 April 2003.[76]. The coalition, in conjunction with NGOs, international organizations, foreign government assistance, and U.S. inter-agencies assistance, accomplished many reconstruction and humanitarian tasks that aided the stabilization process in Iraq. Success in re-establishing the various services, including water, electricity, and food distribution, depended on the condition of the infrastructure in each city. The following are examples of positive accomplishments:

- Within six weeks after entering the Kirkuk region, Civil Affairs were holding multiethnic town meetings.[77]
- In the Kirkuk region, the local police were receiving training from the coalition force. [78]
- Seven of the thirteen hospitals in Mosul were operational.[79]
- To resolve LPG and gas shortages, the coalition organized transport of fuel to Mosul and Baghdad near the end of May 2003.[80]
- Mail delivery had begun around parts of the country
- Oil production was increasing.
- Primary schools re-opened on 4 May 2003.
- Ministry of Health was re-established.
- Water restored to 75% of pre-war capacity in Baghdad.[81]

BOUNDARIES

Baghdad's city functions were subdivided into 9 municipal governments, with each having a Director General. The coalition forces in Baghdad were not arrayed in the same manner.[82] This resulted in coordination problems, distrust, and poor working rapport between the military

and civil authorities. A similar situation occurred in Bosnia with the boundaries of the international organizations and the location of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) separating the Federation and the Replublika Srpska. The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office of the High Representative (OHR), the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE), and the multi-national military forces all had different boundaries. This led to certain regions of the country, such as the eastern section of Replublika Srpska, receiving little concentration of effort for humanitarian aid and other stabilizing efforts during the first couple of years after the war. The focus for aid and support was not in this region, yet there was a need for buy-in to the democratic efforts being put forward by NATO. In the late 1990s, this region was the location of several demonstrations, and at least one attack against the organization stressing democratic elections.

The boundary location can make a difference in the success or failure in stabilizing a region, caused by the differential efforts by the various organizations. The Unity of Effort Principle for Peace Operations highlights the need for cooperation and coordination between all the elements in the area, including NGOs, military, International Organizations, and other governments. With different boundaries, the synergistic effect of a unified effort is weakened by the non-uniform focus on stabilization activities.

ECONOMIC

Local services in many of the cities were still in a state of chaos well after the conflict ended.[83] Civil servants, teachers, and religious facilities workers, were not paid.[84] The total deactivation and unemployment of the several hundred thousand Iraqi military added to the economic upheaval.[85] The economy needed a kick start. It was not until 16 May 2003, that the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) secured payment sites allowing ORHA to pay Iraqi civil servants in Northern Iraq.[86] Almost immediately after major fighting ceased in Umm Qasr, British soldiers had funds available and began to hire local workers to be cooks, kitchen helpers, drivers to haul water, and workers for trash pickup.[87] However, U.S. units did not have funds to accomplish these needed tasks until the second week of May 2003. Initially, the Brigade in Baghdad received $25,000 in discretionary funds to accomplish projects in their sector.[88] However, commanders, not familiar with the administrative requirements and possible fund restrictions, were hesitant to use it. This delayed the spending needed for critical projects and to kick-start the economy.[89]   There was a need for officers trained on use of government funds.

Discretionary funds should have been made available immediately after entering the region to be able to restart the economy and re-establish key services.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Many Iraqi government employees did not return to work after major fighting ended. ORHA plans did not consider a total non-functioning government in Iraq. [90]   Although this was envisioned, nor was it a common prediction among various advisory researchers, the slow response to rectify the problem was another critical error by the coalition. Effective information operations should have been employed to encourage the Iraqi civil service force to return to work.

Adding to the problems created by the lack of management of infrastructure was the condition of the infrastructure. Of most concern to the stabilization effort was the diminished electrical generating capacity and severe reduction in oil production capability.

Electricity

The availability of electricity to Iraqis was severely impacted as a result of the war and the coalition's failure to secure the utility infrastructure. As a result of Operation Desert Storm, Iraq's electrical generating capacity was reduced from 9,800 megawatts to 380 megawatts. [91]   Even with the past twelve years of maintenance neglect,[92] the electrical capacity had been restored to about 4,800 megawatts prior to March 2003. [93]   The inability to have electrical power restored ranked second to security in complaints from Iraqis two weeks after the coalition forces entered the city of Baghdad.[94] Although the electrical power systems were not targeted during the assault, some transmission lines were damaged from ground combat. Many of the 220 substations were vandalized and looted after power plant operators shutdown generators and abandoned them.[95] In April 2003, Iraq's electrical capacity was reduced to about 1,275 megawatts [96] as a result not only the war, but also looting and vandalism. As of 16 May 2003, most of Baghdad was still without power.[97] In addition to having a neglected electrical system, with damage from the war and aftermath, restoration of electrical power was further delayed by the coalition's inability to locate knowledgeable Iraqi technicians.[98] Pre-war electrical capacity was not reached and exceeded until October 2003.[99] Many businesses were not able to operate without electrical power, further impacting Iraq's weak economy. [100]

It was not until 17 April 2003 that a contract was awarded by U.S Agency for International Development (USAID). This contract was for assessing and repairing the electrical system, municipal water, and sewage systems. The initial award was $34.6 million, with possible funding up to $680 million over the following 18 months. [101]

It should have not been a surprise to the coalition that the pre-war electrical condition was in poor condition and significant investment and effort would be needed in post-war

reconstruction. Earlier studies, including the Future of Iraq project[102]and the Rice Council on Foreign Relations and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy of Rice University,[103]identified the degraded condition of Iraq's electrical system. The repair cost were estimated to be $20 Billion to return system to pre-Desert Storm capacity. The contract for assessment and repair should have been awarded several weeks earlier, with priority for service to those areas that had electricity prior to the war. Loss of electricity impacted both the Iraqi economy and public acceptance of the coalition agenda.

Oil Production

Prior to the war, oil was sold under the "Food for Oil" program. Oil production, refinement, and exports stopped with the start of the war. The crude oil storage tanks were full. Liquid petroleum gas (LPG), Iraq's major source for heating homes and water, is a by-product of crude oil production. Without storage capacity, crude oil could not be processed, which in turn, stopped the availability of LPG. The gasoline refinement process produced a fuel oil by-product used by electrical generating plants. The electrical generating plants could not operate at a high capacity due to damaged transmission lines and equipment. This resulted in an excess of fuel oil and full fuel oil storage tanks. The refinement process essentially stopped. The congested oil production system caused many Iraqis not to have fuel for automobiles and LPG for heating, both of which were available before the conflict.*[104]*

As with electricity, the lack of heating fuel impacted Iraqi acceptance of the coalition and the stabilization efforts. Knowing that the oil refinement by-products were critical for basic needs of the citizens, plans should have been developed for initially providing the material through the military, inter-agencies, other nations, or NGOs.

TRAINING:

Training for the transition phase of military operations is currently severely lacking. Commanders and staff officers only receive a few hours of classroom instruction at Command and General Staff College, with little practical exercise.   Training in stability operations is not included at either the Army's Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) or National Training Center (NTC) exercises. This leaves our combat leaders with few tools or skills to quickly assess a combat environment and implement a transition phase concurrently with combat phase. The legitimacy of an operation is reinforced by immediately establishing a safe and secure environment, allowing the start of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction efforts through civil military operations. This is a time-sensitive measure. Commanders are responsible for all phases of a plan. They must know how and when to shift priorities to post

conflict operations. Training must be developed that will challenge leaders on stabilization operations and on the employment of all of their assets, including their security force, Civil Affairs soldiers, PSYOPS, PAO, Engineers, and medical assets. Transition phase training will insure the timely achievement of strategic goals by the seamless change to stability operations while exploiting the momentum of combat successes.

CONCLUSION:

Significant accomplishments were made that focused on achieving stability in the region. However, the impacts of these activities were blunted by several factors that occurred prior to and after the start of the war. The following caused the most adverse impacts to the stabilization process:

- Insufficient guidance and training for implementing the transition phase of the operation, needed for the stabilization activities
- Failure to establish safe and secure environment
- Ineffective use of information operations
- Failure to revise or remedy plans found to have incorrect assumptions.
- Funds were not available for impact projects and to resolve critical health issues.
- Funds were not available to pay government employees.

Security forces should have been employed at the beginning of the transition phase and employed until trained Iraqi force could take over. Funds should have been available for impact projects and for Iraqis previously paid by the government. During the first two months after the cessation of major fighting, information operations should have been used more effectively in deterring the build up of terrorism and pro-Saddam cells. The coalition's operational momentum was significantly diminished by not creating a secure and stable environment. These issues have prolonged the stabilization and reconstruction effort by the coalition.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Operation Iraqi Freedom is one of the largest stabilization efforts by the U.S. military since World War II. The experience and lessons learned from the operation provide an opportunity to improve military planning and execution doctrine for future operations. The following recommendations were developed in response to the coalition's actions in Iraq's complex and asymmetric environment:

- Planning for the transition phase should include staged implementation, as the enemy is defeated in each city or region.
- Initially, the planning for the transition phase must anticipate concurrent operations with the combat phase, phase 3, with force structure enhanced to support combat, security, and stability operations.
- Transition planning must provide for immediate security of region to insure law and order is maintained and to protect people and key facilities.
- Planning must include protection of essential services, agencies and cultural sensitive sites.
- Planning for essential services should include either the rapid restoration of service or means to provide service through other sources.
- Plans for information operations must be continuous throughout the operation and must maintain the focus for achieving the U.S. strategic goals.
- Prior to deployment, selected Civil Affairs Officers must be trained as Contracting Officers, qualified to commit funds for impact projects.
- To further legitimize the military operation, funds for impact projects and other economic issues must be available immediately after major fighting ends in each region.
- To provide a unity of effort in stability operations, the boundaries for the military units should be adjusted to match the local municipal boundaries as soon as practical after the start of the transition phase.
- Challenging leader training for stability operations must be developed and integrated into realistic scenarios at the Joint Readiness Training Center and at the National Training Center exercises.
- Commanders must be prepared to rapidly develop and execute branch and sequel plans that arise from changing conditions and incorrect assumptions.
- Planners must research and evaluate creditable studies related to the operation and develop plans for applicable recommendations.

SUMMARY

To maintain the momentum of victory on the battlefield, a transition phase must be well planned and executed. A safe and secure environment must be established immediately after, and at times concurrent with, major combat operations in each area, to facilitate humanitarian and reconstructions efforts. Protection of key infrastructure facilities is essential for maintaining basic services to the civilians and for reestablishing government, with minimum delays. During concurrent combat and transition phases, the force structure must increase, with the additional Combat Service and Combat Service Support units. Effective information operations are essential to establish legitimacy. All of these actions are time sensitive. Discontent among the populace will grow if their environment does not appear to improve. Terrorism and criminal activities will flourish in such conditions. Decisions made in initial planning and during the first 30 days of a conflict can have a profound and prolonged impact on stabilization efforts, as exhibited from Operation Iraqi Freedom. Commanders must be able to seamlessly integrate

effective stability plans in order to maintain the U.S. public resolve and achieve the military and political strategic goals.

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