

**“THE SMALL CHANGE OF SOLDIERING”: US ARMY DOCTRINE FOR
STABILITY OPERATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

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General Studies

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

“THE SMALL CHANGE OF SOLDIERING”: US ARMY DOCTRINE FOR STABILITY OPERATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, by MAJ Oliver Kingsbury, 81 pages.

Stability operations are not a recent phenomenon, but have been particularly common since the end of the Cold War. All the major deployments of the US Army since 1991 have involved such operations.

In all these deployments, the US Army has been dominant in combat, but less accomplished in achieving success in the range of activities which comprise stability operations. It may be that such difficulties are due to a lack of effective doctrine; consequently, significant effort is being made to review this area. However, this thesis offers a study of Army units' preparation for, and execution of, stability operations in Iraq from 2003-2006 which indicates that existing doctrine--while not perfect--is detailed, validated by non-military research, and does *not* seem to be the principal source of the problem.

The actual cause appears to be a complex mix of a misunderstanding of the role of the Army, a tendency to prefer operating without clear political-strategic guidance, and--in some areas--a focus on tactical operations at the expense of wider objectives. It follows that reviews in stability operations doctrine may be largely superficial, and a more fundamental examination of the basic concepts of warfare is required.

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ACRONYMS

AAR	After Action Review
AO	Area of Operations
BG	Brigadier General
CALL	Center for Army Lessons Learned
CENTCOM	US Central Command
CFLCC	Coalition Forces Land Component Command
CG	Commanding General
CINC	Commander in Chief
CJTF	Coalition Joint Task Force
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
COE	Contemporary Operating Environment
CSA	Chief of Staff of the Army
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
FM	Field Manual
LTG	Lieutenant General
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
MG	Major General
MNC-I	Multi-National Corps-Iraq
MNF-I	Multi-National Force-Iraq
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
NSVI	National Strategy for Victory in Iraq
OOTW	Operations Other Than War
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom

OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
ORHA	Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance
PSO	Peace Support Operations
S & RO	Stability and Reconstruction Operations
S/CRS	Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization
SSI	Strategic Studies Institute
TF	Task Force
US AID	US Agency for International Development

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Most of the popular military history of any nation is derived from the wars it has fought, and the heroic acts of its soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen in battle. However, it has always been the case that a separate set of military activities has been required of those same servicemen. These are normally less dangerous, with fewer opportunities for glory or heroism, but they are nonetheless essential for long term success in most military campaigns. In virtually every deployment, US Armed Forces have been supremely dominant in the battles,¹ but have been consistently less successful in achieving the wider range of objectives which fall under the title of stability operations.

Problem Statement

US Army officers in the Twenty-First Century operate in the context of dominant US military power, unlikely to face a meaningful challenge in conventional war for the foreseeable future, but with a disappointing record when faced with complex stability operations. In the US Army, doctrine is well established as the basis for everything from professional education to low level tactics, techniques and procedures. As stability operations have been considered in Army doctrine since 1993, and now occupy a number of lengthy Field Manuals (FMs), it follows that such difficulties may be due to failings in that doctrine.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the support which doctrine provides to US Army planners and commanders charged with conducting stability operations, and to

discuss whether or not it is right to initiate change in that doctrine. This analysis will show that existing doctrine does need some adjustment, but is generally accurate and validated by non-military research. Doctrine does *not* seem to be the principal source of the problem. The actual cause appears to be a complex mix of a misunderstanding of the role of the Army, a tendency to prefer operating without clear political-strategic guidance, and--in some areas--a focus on tactical operations at the expense of wider objectives. It follows that reviews in stability operations doctrine may be largely superficial, and a more fundamental examination of the basic concepts of warfare is required.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in two ways. First, it appears to be one of the first to examine the ongoing campaign in Iraq as an enduring stability operation, in the light of the existing Army doctrine. In analyzing the vast quantity of material produced by the Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Study Group, and the other OIF archives at the Center for Army Lesson Learned, this paper should provide a useful complement to the Combat Studies Institute project to update *On Point: the United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom*.² Second, based on this analysis, the recommendations in chapter 5 identify a number of areas where improvements should be made, to both doctrine and the conceptual understanding of the Army role in warfare. These recommendations take the form of useable practical steps which should lead to meaningful change.

Outline of Paper

This thesis builds on the problem statement, and aims to examine the deeper issues behind the continued difficulties faced by the US Army in the field of stability operations. This chapter explains the background to the subject and clarifies the purpose of the study. The subsequent literature review introduces an outline of the main themes of current opinion relating to the US military's role in this type of operation and summarizes some important non-military definitions of success in stability operations. The research and analysis chapter draws the link between US doctrine and the conduct of stability operations, as actually experienced and practiced in OIF. The final chapter examines the results of the research and produces recommendations as to future developments; this is the fundamental aim of the study, and will be the ultimate indicator of its utility.

Background: "The Small Change of Soldiering"

For the US Army, the activities involved in stability operations were first codified under one coherent description in the 1993 version of FM 100-5, *Operations*, as "Operations Other Than War."³ This type of operation is not a recent phenomenon--the rebuilding of Japan after World War 2, or operations in the Philippines in the early 19th Century, for example. However, since the collapse of the conventional Soviet threat removed the superficial restrictions from President Clinton's "cauldrons of ethnic, religious, and territorial animosity,"⁴ it has appeared to be particularly prevalent. All the major deployments of US Armed Forces since 1991 have involved significant Operations Other Than War: in Somalia, Haiti, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is important to note the diversity between the activities involved in conventional warfare and those required for Operations Other Than War. As John Keegan has it: "there

is a fundamental difference between the sort of sporadic, small-scale fighting which is the small change of soldiering and the sort we characterize as battle.”⁵ The resulting range of titles, however, can appear confusing: from stability operations and support operations (SOSO, in FM 3-0, *Operations*), to stability and support operations (SASO, in interim manuals), to stability and reconstruction operations (S & RO, in FM 1, *The Army*). All of this is part of Operations Other Than War (OOTW, in Army doctrine) and Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW, in joint doctrine). A 2003 symposium on the historical experience of the US Army, sponsored by the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), collected all such operations under a single term, which became the title of the publication summarizing the conference’s conclusions: *Armed Diplomacy*.

Finer-gauged definitions are unnecessary. No doubt soldiers have always understood: when they were charged with a mission that did not look familiar, that diverged from the agreed-upon business of fighting wars, they entered the unorthodox realm of soldiering. This might include interventions and invasions, punitive expeditions, constabulary operations, occupations, peacekeeping, or even colonial or imperial warfare.⁶

To avoid the subject becoming bogged down in complex wordplay, this paper will follow the same idea, and use two collective terms: major combat operations and stability operations.

The consistency of the US Army’s difficulties has been identified in a number of recent publications, among them *Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario*. This pamphlet, published by the Strategic Studies Institute shortly before the invasion of Iraq, begins with a historical analysis of recent stability operations, outlined as follows.

Operation Uphold Democracy, in Haiti in 1994, did result in short-term success, across the spectrum of conflict, but “the situation has (since) deteriorated to conditions

approaching those early in the 1990's.”⁷ Operations Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard in Bosnia and Kosovo have generally resulted in stability, but this has been in spite of existing doctrine and contingency planning, rather than because of it, and the long term future of the Balkans is still in doubt. Once it became clear that lengthy stability operations were required, in both cases a number of problems had to be overcome--from mobilizing reserves with the necessary skills for such operations, to procedures for post-conflict intelligence and psychological operations being “completely inadequate.”⁸ Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan was rapidly successful in its initial combat phases, but has had problems from the start with creating a stable economy, improving infrastructure and developing robust political institutions. The point is made that this is because of “the haphazard and ad-hoc nature of civil-military organization and planning.”⁹

This trend was summarized at the *Armed Diplomacy* conference with the blunt conclusion that “certain shortcomings . . . seem to appear with depressing regularity.”¹⁰ Although such a deduction is likely to be the subject of some debate, there is enough evidence to suggest that the US Army finds stability operations more challenging than major combat operations for the premise to be used as a baseline for this paper.

Undertaking similar deployments will be a frequent requirement. Joint Publication 1 describes the international security environment as “dynamic and uncertain, with recurring disputes, crises, and conflicts in many regions, and endemic conflicts in regions of particular importance to the security of the United States.”¹¹ The US Army calls this complex situation the “Contemporary Operating Environment” (COE). It is described in FM 7-100, *Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy* as being composed of

variables, with “fluid and unpredictable” regional and global alliances, and with flexible, unorthodox enemies complicated by the presence of refugees, non governmental organizations (NGOs) and civilians.¹² In these uncertain circumstances, a constant factor is likely to be that achieving purely military objectives will rarely define success. This model is borne out by recent history, and shows no sign of changing: since 1945, the US Armed Forces have been deployed on “contingency operations” on over 1200 occasions. More than 1000 of these deployments have taken place since the first President Bush took office in 1989.¹³

Given the increasing frequency with which the US Armed Forces are committed to “fight for a better peace”¹⁴ in this complex Twenty-First Century strategic environment, it is important that a procedural and conceptual framework is established for their planning and execution. In the US military, this is provided by doctrine.

Military Doctrine

The research chapters for this paper will examine the guidance provided by stability operations doctrine, but as an introduction it is instructive to note the formal purpose of doctrine, and the publication dates and hierarchy of the principal manuals. Military doctrine is described as “fundamental principles that guide the employment of forces.”¹⁵ FM 1 is typically re-issued every time there is a change in the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), as one of two capstone documents. The other is the less frequently updated FM 3-0, which gives more specific guidance for the conduct of land operations. FM 1 was most recently published in June 2005, and FM 3-0 in November 2001, with the next update due in 2006, under the amended title of FM 3-0, *Full Spectrum Operations*. FM 3-0 “establishes the Army’s keystone doctrine” as “the Army’s principal tool for

professional education in the art and science of war”; it “provides a foundation for the development of tactics, techniques and procedures.”¹⁶ As such, doctrine is a framework for the planning and execution of all operations. In the foreword to FM 3-0, then CSA General Eric K. Shinseki, summarizes the point: “the Army is a doctrine based institution.”¹⁷ This is illustrated by the prominent position of doctrine in the syllabuses of the US Army’s training courses, particularly those aimed at the primary future planners and commanders, such the Command and General Staff College and the Army War College.

In February 2002, ideas already present in the 2001 FM 3-0 were expanded into a new manual, FM 3-07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations*. There are also a number of other manuals covering specific subsets, such as 3-07.31, *Peace Operations*, updated in 2003, or FM 3-07.22, *Counter-Insurgency Operations*, rapidly re-issued in 2004 as a result of the growing insurgencies in Iraq. With all areas, the further down the doctrinal hierarchy, the more detailed and specific the guidance.

As doctrine is the basis for US Army operations, it follows that the difficulties associated with stability operations may be due to failings in that doctrine. The FMs relevant to stability operations run to many pages: it certainly cannot be claimed that there is any lack of material to draw on, but it may be that the content is in some way lacking. This will be the primary focus of this study.

Task Force Stability and Reconstruction Operations

This thesis is not alone in examining the reasons why one of the most powerful armies the world has ever seen has had so little long term success in stability operations: OIF has brought the issue into sharp current focus. The literature review considers the

volume of work produced about the US Army's performance by others, but the highly public difficulties in Iraq have also caused significant internal discussion:

(an) intellectual trend whose origins lie in the ongoing stability efforts of (OIF) . . . achieved policy direction . . . in December 2004, when Army Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker added "Improve Capabilities for Stability Operations" as one of the Army Focus Areas and directed the Army Training and Doctrine Command to make a comprehensive review of the Army's approach to stability and reconstruction operations.¹⁸

This review fell under the remit of Task Force (TF) Stability and Reconstruction Operations, a specially formed research group with the following mission statement:

TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations determines requirements for Army S & RO capabilities and identifies gaps in current capabilities in order to identify initiatives to increase the Army's capability and capacity to plan and conduct S & RO in a Joint, Inter-agency and Multi-national (JIM) environment.¹⁹

TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations worked throughout 2005 to produce a number of very specific recommendations, using the common US Army framework for effecting change: DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leadership, Personnel, Facilities):

TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations provided the Army Staff with a list of eight specific "gaps" in the Army's current capability. . . . They also provided 31 general recommendations, refined to 25 actionable initiatives to close those gaps in the immediate and intermediate future. The TF coordinated an intensive interagency process which further produced specific action plans to accomplish these initiatives. Collectively, these action plans involve some specific 36 doctrinal actions, 31 training actions, 26 leadership actions, 24 organizational actions, 18 material actions, 18 personnel actions, and 6 facilities actions.²⁰

The evidence in this paper shows that these recommendations are likely to cause an improvement. Without a more fundamental examination of the role of the Army in warfare, however, the work of TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations will only solve symptoms, not causes.

Assumptions

The content of doctrine, and the chronology and actions of OIF from the invasion to the present will be discussed in some depth, but inevitably, this paper will be unable to include every detail. Consequently, it is assumed that the reader has a working knowledge of the US Army's doctrinal hierarchy, the political events surrounding the planning of operations in Iraq, and the way in which those operations were, and are, executed.

¹The attempt to rescue hostages from the US Embassy in Tehran in 1980, aborted after the problems at Desert One, is the only case the author is aware of where difficulties with combat activities caused complete mission failure.

²Gregory Fontenot, E. J. Degan, and David Tohn, *On Point: the United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004).

³Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 1993).

⁴President William J. Clinton, "Confronting the challenges of a broader world" (speech on 27 September 1993, accessed on 21 January 2006, available at http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1584/is_n39_v4/ai_14291623/print).

⁵John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York, NY: Viking Press, 1976), 16.

⁶Roger Spiller, "The Small Change of Soldiering and American Military Experience" in US Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Armed Diplomacy: Two Centuries of American Campaigning* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2003), 281.

⁷Conrad C. Crane and W. Andrew Terrill, "Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario" (Monograph, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 8.

⁸*Ibid.*, 10. For a detailed view of problems in Afghanistan, see Kathy Gannon, "Afghanistan Unbound," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 3 (May-June 2004): 35-46.

⁹*Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁰Spiller, 284.

¹¹Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2000), vii.

¹²Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 7-100, *Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy* (Washington, DC: GPO, May 2003), v.

¹³Spiller, 283.

¹⁴Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 1, *The Army* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2005), 3-8.

¹⁵Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2000), vi.

¹⁶Headquarters Department of the Army, FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2001), vii.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, Foreword.

¹⁸Edward L. Bowie, “Setting the Conditions for Institutional Change: Task Force for Army Focus Area ‘Improve Capabilities for Stability Operations’,” (draft version 2 seen by the author April 2006), 1.

¹⁹Army Focus Area Stability and Reconstruction Operations, “Chief of Staff of the Army Brief” (presentation to the Chief of Staff of the Army on 31 May 2005, slide pack seen by the author April 2006), slide 6.

²⁰Bowie, 15.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

General

From chapter 1 it can be seen that stability operations are a vital task in today's environment. The US Army has faced significant challenges in achieving long term success in this role. The purpose of this study is to examine whether those difficulties are due to shortcomings in the doctrine upon which so many fundamental activities are based.

The research chapters of this paper outline the guidance of the US Army's existing stability operations doctrine; as context for that research this chapter reviews the main areas of non-military thinking on such operations. A wide array of advice is available: suggested strategic goals, operational and tactical objectives, essential tasks and measurements of success. The common themes can be examined with the aim of extracting a commonly agreed upon definition of success, and of how that success should be achieved. This provides an objective control, against which current doctrine and actual execution can be compared. There is also a significant volume of work which is only tangentially related to the field of stability operations doctrine, but which does introduce some suggestions as to why achieving such success is so challenging.

There are four main sources of information. First, existing official publications, from the political level national strategies to the Army's FMs. Second, the steady flow of work from professional military researchers, such as the US Army's War College based Strategic Studies Institute, or the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth. Third, the reports and briefings of recently deployed military officers, such as the *Military Review*

article by then Major General Peter W. Chiarelli, based on his 2004-2005 Baghdad tour as Commanding General of the 1st Cavalry Division. Finally, an informative source, if at times highly subjective, is the work produced by a range of journalists and retired officers.

Stability Operations: The Challenges

Discussing the Army's role in stability operations is a complex matter. While this paper is only dealing in detail with doctrine, reviewing the available literature does much more than produce suggested strategies and techniques; there is also a variety of opinions as to why achieving long term success is so challenging. The sources fall into one of three camps: problems with the content and use of doctrine; the existence of an American Way of War; and the inherent limitations of military force.

Problems with the Content and Use of Doctrine

The first school of thought believes that there are fundamental problems with doctrine. These problems are suggested in two subtly different ways. First, the approach taken by TRADOC's TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations: the content requires modification. Stability operations are covered, but the coverage of these activities is not sufficient, and lacks detail and clarity. The 36 doctrinal actions suggested by TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations are examples of this approach--ranging from the specifics of adjusting units' Mission Essential Task Lists in order to justify proper funding¹ to more conceptual recommendations to "revise capstone and keystone doctrine to address Stability and Reconstruction Operations as one of three primary operations."² Fundamental to this modification is the decision to include stability operations as a

military “core mission,” resulting in a requirement for Geographic Combatant Commanders to “ensure proper emphasis is given to preparing for stability operations.”³ This is held as being a major departure from the previous position of stability operations as a “lesser included.”⁴

The second approach in this area suggests that the problem with doctrine is not the specific content, but that the content is not based on a sufficiently deep understanding of warfare--at whichever end of the spectrum. The current trend aims to produce doctrine at a speed rapid enough to keep pace with developments in the field. “(TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations) detailed recommendations to the CSA were to be offered within six months,”⁵ and doctrine writers on the Pentagon’s Joint Staff have a stated aim of delivering finished manuals in 12.5 months from inception to publication.⁶ This is lamented by, among others, retired US Marine Corps Lieutenant General Paul K. van Riper who has written about the lack of a considered intellectual basis behind US doctrinal developments. His concern is that this means that “concept developers now need to go back to the drawing table, and make a concerted effort to separate the proverbial wheat from the chaff.”⁷

Attempts are being made to turn this round. The title of Lieutenant General James M. Dubik’s recent essay urging a proper re-examination of the conceptual basis of warfare is unambiguous: *Get on with it.*⁸ The decision has apparently already been taken, however, that events in Iraq have been significant enough to have delivered that proper re-examination; this decision provides important context for the research of this paper.

The American Way of War

A second position is that the US Army is inherently focused on combat, regarding subsequent operations as jobs for less able military forces and other government departments. Dr William J. Gregor of the School of Advanced Military Studies argues that an institutional bias exists in the US Armed Forces which causes planners to relegate stability operations to an afterthought. He specifies US Central Command (CENTCOM) headquarters prior to OIF, and speaks of the “delusion that military commanders are only responsible for the outcome of major combat operations.”⁹ Those who agree with this assertion describe a prevailing US conviction that military action, while unwelcome and always a last resort, can solve the most significant political problems.¹⁰ This idea has been covered in some detail by a number of authors in discussion over the existence of an American Way of War, a concept first described in 1973 by Russell F. Weigley. A modern summary of this is offered by Professor Colin Gray of the Strategic Studies Institute as, at its most extreme, “astrategic . . . war as a largely autonomous activity, leaving worry about peace and its politics to another day.”¹¹ Gray suggests twelve “characteristics”: apolitical, astrategic, ahistorical, problem-solving and optimistic; culturally ignorant; technologically dependent; firepower focused; large-scale; profoundly regular; impatient; logistically excellent; sensitive to casualties.¹²

Andrew Bacevich provides a blunt analysis of the current application--operations in Iraq and Afghanistan--of Gray's idea in his critique of *American Soldier*, the autobiography of General Tommy Franks, CENTCOM Commander for both operations:

The political elite that ought to bear the chief responsibility for formulating grand strategy instead nurses ideological fantasies of remaking the world in America's image . . . meanwhile the military elite obsesses over operations. . . . Reluctant to engage in any sort of political-military dialogue that

might compromise their autonomy, the generals allow fundamental questions about the relationship between power and purpose to go unanswered and even unrecognized. . . . The US today has great ambitions for how the world should operate (and) it wields great power . . . but there exists nothing even approaching a meaningful strategy to hold the two together.¹³

Limitations of Military Force

The third view, gaining increasing popularity from civilians as well as within the military, is that armed forces are given responsibilities in stability operations that they are inherently unable to achieve. Again, within this branch of opinion there are subtle differences. A conceptual view is described by a retired British officer, General Sir Rupert Smith, providing a re-working of the basis for committing military force. Smith introduces a model of “confrontation and conflict,” where confrontations last for years, occasionally crossing into conflict: only political will and influence can solve the underlying issues, no matter what the military performance. He uses Iraq as an example. The confrontation has existed since 1990; at times--Desert Storm, No Fly Zones, OIF--conflict has appeared. This conflict can be solved by military force, but a final answer to the deeper confrontation, where stability operations will predominantly lie, requires a much greater range of influence. The problem is that governments persist in deploying military forces as if they can resolve the entire situation, and then blaming those forces when long term success is not forthcoming.¹⁴

Those of a more practical bent suggest the improvement of other organizations currently unable to reinforce the military effort--the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development (US AID) are the most common targets. Retired US Army General Barry R. McCaffrey, now Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at

the US Military Academy at West Point, after a detailed visit to Iraq in April 2006, produced a damning and passionate indictment:

The US Inter-Agency support for our strategy in Iraq is grossly inadequate. A handful of brilliant, courageous and dedicated Foreign Service Officers have held together a large, constantly changing, marginally qualified, extremely inexperienced US mission. The US influence on Iraqi national and regional government has been extremely weak. US consultants . . . are frequently absent on leave or home consultations, are often in-country for short tours of 90 days to six months, and are frequently gapped with no transfer of institutional knowledge. . . . The other US agencies of government such as Justice, DHS, Commerce, Agriculture, and Transportation are in Iraq in small numbers for too short time periods . . . this bureaucratic nonsense is taking place in the context of a war costing the American people \$7 billion a month--and a battalion of soldiers and Marines killed or wounded every month. . . . The State Department actually cannot direct assignment of its officers to serve in Iraq. State frequently cannot staff essential assignments such as the new Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) which have the potential to produce such huge impact in Iraq. . . . The situation cries out for remedy.¹⁵

McCaffrey would no doubt agree with the practical suggestions of Joseph Collins, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Stability Operations from 2001 to 2004:

State and AID personnel and organizations need to become more operational, i.e. able to lead in the management of grand enterprises, in unsafe and austere environments . . . they must be better funded across the board . . . as long as State is a budgetary midget, it will play second fiddle to the Pentagon's colossus. If we want to fix planning for complex contingencies, we are going to have to fund State and AID as major players and not poor relations.¹⁶

Collins's ideas are more prosaically summarized by General Franks: boots on the ground need to be joined by "wingtips."¹⁷

Whichever combination of factors one agrees with, there are a variety of reasons why military forces cannot be held solely responsible for a lack of long term success in stability operations. It is next time to turn to the range of opinions as to what that success actually comprises.

Defining Success: Views from Outside the US Army

You (military professionals) must know something about strategy and tactics and logistics, but also economics and politics and diplomacy and history. You must know everything you can know about military power, and you must also understand the limits of military power. You must understand that few of the important problems of our time have, in the final analysis, been finally solved by military power alone.

President John F. Kennedy, 1961, speech to US Naval Academy graduating class.¹⁸

The remarks of President Kennedy resonate with the thinking of General Smith: the military has great utility, but military *power* cannot solve every problem in today's environment; other forms of influence will be needed for decisive, lasting success. This provides an effective summary of the key deductions from an analysis of non-military thinking on success in stability operations: military force is not everything. Although these opinions rarely use the terminology of a field manual, the military idea of lines of operation provides a useful model for describing the content of this work. The following paragraphs outline four broadly representative sources, and their suggested lines of operation.

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Winning the Peace: A n American Strategy for Post-Conflict Resolution--

produced jointly by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and the Association of the US Army--has provided the conceptual basis for the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS, formed in July 2004). Headed at ambassador level, and reporting directly to the Secretary of State, S/CRS has the following mission:

To lead, coordinate and institutionalize US Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy.¹⁹

Winning the Peace espouses four “pillars.”²⁰ First, “security” covers all areas of public safety, from “in its most pressing sense . . . protecting the lives of citizens from immediate and large scale violence,”²¹ to establishing indigenous forces and structures capable of managing internal issues. Initially this must be provided by outside forces and agencies. As the second pillar, “governance and participation” addresses the establishment of representative political institutions, as well as the supporting administration and bureaucratic infrastructure. The key factor is that the institutions must be able to provide the required support to the population, without which the people’s faith in the new future will be lacking: “the first challenge is to ensure that the government has the ability to deliver the security, economic, social, political, and justice goods that the population demands--the top-down process of ‘governance’.”²² Third, the importance of “social and economic well-being” reaches back to the origins of many tensions: fifteen of the world’s 20 poorest countries experienced internal conflicts between 1978 and 1998.²³ This importance will necessarily extend into any attempt at post-conflict resolution. In outlining the crucial requirement for efforts to begin as soon as possible after--and preferably concurrent with--major combat operations, OIF is used as an example: a lack of initial action led to “a devastating loss of momentum and moral authority that would have accrued to the victorious forces if they had been able to maintain the economic and social infrastructure intact.”²⁴ The final pillar--“justice and reconciliation”--seeks to “build capacity to promulgate and enforce the rule of law.”²⁵ As with all the pillars, this will be different in each case, and will reach across many areas, starting with a

functioning judicial system, but extending into security sector reform, and closely linked with the establishment of a functioning government. Again, this pillar requires not only the establishment of institutions, but continued support and mentoring to ensure they can operate effectively, to deal with both day to day disputes and historic grievances from former regimes.

The Iraq War: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Lessons, another CSIS publication, was produced in 2003 order to formally capture the initial lessons learned from the invasion of Iraq²⁶ Much of this book is concerned with the lessons to be drawn from the performance of various types of equipment, procedures and organizations during the major combat phases of OIF, but there is a section on “nation building and the challenge of winning the peace.” This offers a discussion on the issues of stability operations in Iraq, and quotes from Carl Bildt,²⁷ “one of the few voices with great experience of nation building,” after lengthy service as High Representative in the Balkans. Bildt drew seven key “lessons” from that experience.

First, “it is important to establish a secure environment very fast.” The consequences of failure are severe: Bildt states that Bosnia and Kosovo still suffer from an initial failure to protect security as peace agreements were being implemented, and “there is no alternative to using soldiers and armies to keep order.” Next, “the central challenge is not reconstruction but state-building”: the “political infrastructure that unites competing forces” is a higher priority than physical infrastructure problems. But, “to build a state, you must know what state to build.” Bildt presents no specific solution to this problem, except to say that it will vary according to culture and history, must be acceptable to all, and requires “early and fast agreement.” There must be a realization that

“while humanitarian problems are always in the forefront in the initial phase, it is dangerous to let them predominate over the long term issues.” Enduring economic stability, job creation and a “vibrant middle class” are more important than short duration crises. There must also be a “benevolent regional environment”; this is connected to security, but has a wider meaning, referring to the support or otherwise of neighboring powers. “Nation building takes a longer time, and requires more resources, than most initially believe.” Bildt summarizes this point as “requiring an abundance of patience.” Finally, “the greater the international support, the easier the process,” because international disagreements may transfer into the country in question. This is difficult for Stability operations because a “peace coalition” needs to be broader and in greater fundamental agreement than that required for a war.

The Strategic Studies Institute

In early 2003 Conrad C. Crane and W. Andrew Terrill, of the US Army War College’s Strategic Studies Institute, produced the pamphlet *Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario*.²⁸ They identify 21 “mission categories,” divided into 135 tasks, and spread over four phases: security, stabilize, build institutions, and handover. These four phases take place *within* the military planning Phase IV--Transition.²⁹ Crane and Terrill hold that the transition period will last for years, and must be broken down into further stages. There is a specific military role in all 21 mission categories, whether it be obvious, as in the case of “Major Security Activities” and “Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration” or more subtle, as with “Public Finance” and “Education.”³⁰

National Strategies

In November 2005, with the benefit of over 2 ½ years of experience in OIF, the National Security Council published its *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq (NSVI)*. This document expands on the more academic conclusions of others to produce specific lists of instructions; a practical rendition of the concepts. *NSVI* uses eight “pillars,”³¹ which, as well as forming a suggested framework for success, are used as actual measures of effectiveness in the Department of State’s *Iraq Weekly Status Report*.³² The eight pillars are laid out as follows:

1. Defeat the terrorists and neutralize the insurgency.
2. Transition Iraq to security self-reliance.
3. Help Iraqis form a national compact for democratic government.
4. Help Iraq build government capacity and provide essential services.
5. Help Iraq strengthen its economy.
6. Help Iraq strengthen its rule of law and promote civil rights.
7. Increase international support for Iraq.
8. Strengthen public understanding of Coalition efforts and public isolation of the insurgents.

Shortly after the publication of the *NSVI*, the role of the US military in such activities was codified in Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, largely as a result of the intellectual effort formalized in the work of TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations. As well as for the first time formally noting “stability operations (as) a core US military mission”, the directive highlights three sets of tasks as being of particular importance:³³

1. Rebuild indigenous institutions . . . security forces, correctional facilities, and judicial systems.
2. Revive or build the private sector . . . encouraging citizen-driven, bottom up economic activity and constructing necessary activity.
3. Develop representative governmental institutions.

Common Lines of Operation

There are many factors to consider once the Army moves beyond the traditional role of combat in order to be able to succeed in stability operations. It is not possible to make a neat generalization about which is the single most important issue; indeed, all the sources quoted make it clear that it is a mistake to raise any one approach above any other. Crane and Terrill of the Strategic Studies Institute state that “the categories themselves are not prioritized” and tasks of differing levels of importance--critical, essential and important--are distributed throughout all phases.³⁴ Despite the diverse nature of the researchers above, their detailed analysis of a wide range of global and historical events, combined with the recent practical experience of OIF, produces a consistent set of suggestions. Their deductions can be paraphrased as a number of common lines of operation:

1. The establishment of a secure environment, imposed or enabled by force.
2. The creation and widespread acceptance of effective self-governance.
3. The development and sustainment of a self-sufficient economy.
4. The need for all efforts to start as close to “immediately” as possible; full prior planning is an obvious inference.

5. A significant degree of political, domestic and military patience to provide resources and moral support for an indefinite period.

This basic summary, centered on these five lines of operation, can be used as framework for the analysis and validation of the content of existing US Army doctrine for stability operations.

A Summary of Context

This review has provided a summary of the existing thinking on the subject: the context for this paper's study on the stability operations doctrine of the US Army. Does the existing doctrine line up with the consistent opinions from non-military research? Are the difficulties of the US Army in stability operations due to doctrinal problems? If so, can these problems be solved by making stability operations a core mission for the Army? Or are there more deep-seated issues: a lack of basic understanding about the limitations of the utility of military power, which, although by no means only a US Army issue, requires a fundamental re-examination of the Army's role in warfare? The paper will use four research questions as a framework for the study.

Research Questions

Primary Research Question: Are the US Army's difficulties in achieving long term success in stability operations due to a lack of effective doctrine?

Secondary Question 1: Is the planning and execution of stability operations covered by current doctrine?

Secondary Question 2: Is existing doctrine validated by wider theories of how to succeed in stability operations?

Secondary Question 3: Does the approach of US Army commanders to stability operations indicate that changes in doctrine are required?

¹Army Focus Area Stability and Reconstruction Operations, “Chief of Staff of the Army Brief,” (presentation to the Chief of Staff of the Army on 31 May 2005, slide pack seen by the author April 2006), slide 24.

²Army Focus Area Stability and Reconstruction Operations, slide 26.

³Department of Defense, Directive 3000.05, *Military Support to Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2005), 9.

⁴Volney J. Warner, Deputy Commandant of the Command and General Staff College, and head of Task Force Stability and Reconstruction Operations, interview by author, author’s notes, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 3 May 2006.

⁵Edward L. Bowie, “Setting the Conditions for Institutional Change: Task Force for Army Focus Area ‘Improve Capabilities for Stability Operations’,” (draft version 2, seen by the author April 2006), 2.

⁶Lawrence Smith. Comments used with permission from Joint Staff Presentation to US Army Command and General Staff College International Military Student Division at the Pentagon, 26 April 2006.

⁷Paul K. van Riper, “Planning For and Applying Military Force: an Examination of Terms” (Monograph, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), v.

⁸James M. Dubik, Lieutenant General, US Army. “Get on with it” in Anthony D. McIvor, ed, *Rethinking the Principles of War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 1-10.

⁹William J. Gregor, “The Politics of Joint Campaign Planning” (paper presented to the International Biennial Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, 21-23 October 2005, draft seen by the author September 2005), 9.

¹⁰For explanation of the formal high level genesis of the concept by the then US Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger in 1984, see Colin L. Powell, *A Soldier’s Way* (London: Arrow Books, 2001), 302-303. The problems associated with this approach in the Twenty-First Century are more fully explained in Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: the Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 309-310.

¹¹Colin S. Gray, “The American Way of War: Critiques and Implications” in McIvor, 13-40. The theory was first developed by Russell F. Weigley, *The American*

Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy (New York: MacMillan, 1973) and expanded on by Eliot A. Cohen, "Kosovo and the New American Way of War" in Andrew J. Bacevich and Cohen, eds, *War over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a Global Age* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), and Max Boot, "The New American Way of War," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 82, No. 4 (2003).

¹²Gray, 27.

¹³Andrew J. Bacevich, 2004, "A Modern Major General," *New Left Review* No. 29 (September-October 2004). Accessed 21 January 2006. Available from <http://www.newleftreview.net/>

¹⁴Smith, 181.

¹⁵Barry R. McCaffrey, "Academic Report: Trip to Iraq and Kuwait," (memorandum for United States Military Academy, 25 April 2006), 5.

¹⁶Joseph Collins, "Planning Lessons from the US Experience in Afghanistan and Iraq." Reproduced in US Army Command and General Staff College, *C300: Operational Studies Block Student Reader* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: USA CGSC, 2005), 6-7.

¹⁷Tommy Franks, *American Soldier* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 422.

¹⁸President John F. Kennedy, speech to US Naval Academy. Available at http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/publicpapers/1961/jfk232_61.html. Accessed on 6 May 2006.

¹⁹S/CRS website. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/c12936.htm>. Accessed on 4 May 2006.

²⁰Robert C. Orr, "The United States as Nation Builder" in Robert C. Orr, ed, *Winning the Peace: An American Strategy for Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2004), 3-18.

²¹Scott Feil, "Laying the Foundation: Enhancing Security Capabilities," in Orr, 39-57.

²²Robert C. Orr, "Governing when Chaos Rules: Governance and Participation," in Orr, 58-71.

²³World Bank, *Post Conflict Reconstruction: The Role of the World Bank* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1998), 2.

²⁴Robert C. Orr, "An American Strategy for Post-Conflict Resolution" in Orr, 289-304.

²⁵Michele Flournoy, and Michael Pan, “Dealing with Demons: Enhancing Justice and Reconciliation,” in Orr, 89-102.

²⁶Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Iraq War: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Lessons* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2003).

²⁷Carl Bildt, “Hard-earned Lessons on Nation-Building: Seven Ways to Rebuild Iraq,” *International Herald Tribune* (May 7 2003), 6. Quoted in Cordesman, 555-557.

²⁸Conrad C. Crane, and W. Andrew Terrill, “Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario” (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003). This short pamphlet should be regarded as essential reading for anyone interested in the practical military application of the results of detailed academic research.

²⁹Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-00.1, *Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning* (Washington, DC: GPO, January 2002), II-16. Phase I--Deter/Engage; Phase II--Seize Initiative; Phase III--Decisive Operations; Phase IV—Transition. This is the most recent official doctrinal guidance on the subject, in use at the time of the invasion of Iraq, although the construct has since been modified. A 2006 Command and General Staff College exercise used 6 phases: Phase I--Shape; Phase II--Deter; Phase III--Seize Initiative; Phase IV--Dominate; Phase V--Establish Security; Phase VI--Enable Civil Authority.

³⁰Crane and Terrill, 47-53.

³¹National Security Council, *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2005), 27-35 (appendix).

³²Department of State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs website. Available at <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/iraqstatus/2006/c16536.htm>. Accessed 26 April 2006.

³³Department of Defense, 2.

³⁴Crane and Terrill, 47.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

General

The literature review introduced the four main areas of existing evidence: existing official guidance and doctrinal publications; recent and ongoing work from professional military researchers; reports from recently deployed military personnel; the work of various professional authors and journalists. The review produced evidence to show that there is general shared agreement on a route to success in stability operations. There are also a number of extenuating reasons why armed forces have difficulty in reaching that success, regardless of the methods they employ. This chapter outlines the methodology for gathering evidence to add detail to the broad concepts already introduced, and to answer three subsidiary research questions. Collectively, the answers to these questions will be analyzed to provide an answer to the primary research question.

Research Plan

Three broad areas of research are used as a framework. First, the basic facts of the content of doctrine are studied and summarized, by simple précis of the relevant Army FMs. The factual results of this study are then compared with the literature review's analysis of the non-military suggestions on achieving success in stability operations. This will provide an answer to the basic question of whether or not the fundamental content of the doctrine is in some way lacking.

The primary area of the research is in analyzing the After Action Reviews (AARs), interviews and written articles of those intimately involved in either the

planning or execution of operations in Iraq. After setting the strategic context, both for the initial invasion, and for the ongoing operation, this evidence is divided in two: initial planning, the invasion and the immediate aftermath (to 15 June 2003); and the conduct of the “long war” throughout 2004 and 2005, and into 2006. Each section will consider the operational and tactical levels of war, as being the areas where the US Army has been primarily involved.

Sources

The evidence for the content of doctrine has been summarized directly from the publicly available US FMs. This is compared with the publications already discussed in the literature review. Most of the evidence for Secondary Question 3 has been drawn from the archives of the US Army’s Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) at the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. Although access is controlled, this is all unclassified material. The author was given special access to CALL’s restricted website, which allows the use of a huge number of documents produced by units, Geographic Component Commands, other military institutions and CALL’s own lessons learned system.

This is not new material, although the flow of data into the archives is constant. Much has been used previously in some form by the *On Point* project, to produce a comprehensive account of the US Army’s actions during the initial invasion of Iraq. The *On Point* archives occupy their own section at CALL, and comprise over 120,000 documents and interviews.¹ It does not, however, appear to have been studied in the context of OIF as the latest in a series of stability operations, particularly considering the

TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations work. Where appropriate, the archival records are supplemented with existing publications and individual personal comment.

Limitations and Parameters

The field of stability operations is a vast subject. In order to deliver an effective analysis in a paper of this length, it is necessary to define certain parameters. Therefore, although reference is made to a number of situations where the US military has been involved, the actual research is limited in three ways.

First, only one operation is discussed in detail: Operation Iraqi Freedom. While it would be an over simplification to predict that current operations in Iraq are the model for all such deployments in the foreseeable future, OIF has shown most possible themes of a stability operations scenario: conventional combat, counter-insurgency operations, humanitarian assistance, training of indigenous forces, stabilization and reconstruction, terrorism, political constraints, and interaction with other nations and NGOs, all in an extended time frame. Therefore, OIF is a broad enough operation that any findings can be taken to be generally representative of the issues as a whole. It is also relevant to the issue of whether the US Army's current reviews are heading in the right direction, in that these reviews started as a direct result of operations in Iraq. There is also the practical matter of space: it would be unrealistic for this paper to achieve more than a superficial view of more than one operation, especially one of the complexities of OIF.

Second, only US Army experiences will be researched and analyzed for this study. Although the majority of current operations are joint in nature, and naval, air and marine forces have significant capabilities to contribute to stability operations, such

operations are typically framed around the land component, which in most cases means the Army.

Third, although most forms of doctrine contain some degree of discussion on the conduct of stability operations, for the reasons listed above it is likely that US Army doctrine will be the most relevant to the majority of stability operations deployments. Joint doctrine publications do contain guidance for this area of military activity, but this is almost always directly in line with the Army field manuals. Therefore, the analysis of doctrine in this study is confined to Army doctrine, although Joint doctrine is referred to in areas where there is conflict or complication.

This paper is not an attempt to add to the discussion on whether or not the US led coalition was right to invade Iraq. That is regarded as a fait accompli; the important issue is how that operation was, and is, conducted. A number of the conclusions of this paper are critical of the work of certain individuals. The evidence makes it clear, however, that all such individuals are effective in line with their training and experience. Any criticisms are usually the results of their own candid admissions, reflecting a desire to allow future generations to learn from their successes and mistakes.

Units Studied

Operational Level

Pre-Invasion and Immediate Aftermath

Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), based on 3rd US Army headquarters, as the senior Army headquarters in the invasion of Iraq, and responsible for planning and commanding the entire ground campaign.

The Long War

V (US) Corps, which became Coalition Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7) as the senior military headquarters in Iraq on 15 June 2003 (on the redeployment of the CFLCC headquarters).

Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I), the ad hoc 4 star headquarters which replaced CJTF-7 as the senior military headquarters.

Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I), the 3 star headquarters which commands all ground operations, working to MNF-I. MNC-I has always been based on an existing US corps-level headquarters (usually Army).

Tactical Level

Pre-Invasion and Immediate Aftermath

V Corps, which took part in the invasion as one of two corps-level headquarters under the CFLCC (the other being 1st Marine Expeditionary Force), and its two primary subordinate divisions: 3rd Infantry Division, and 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

82nd Airborne Division, as the initial CFLCC operational reserve, before being task organized under V Corps as the invasion progressed.

The Long War

1st Cavalry Division, which had responsibility for the Baghdad Area of Operations (AO) from April 04 to April 05.

1st Infantry Division, which planned and executed major stability operations in Samarra for several months in 2004 and 2005.

3rd Infantry Division, which took over from the 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad from April 2005 to April 2006, on its second tour.

¹Gregory Fontenot, E. J. Degan, and David Tohn, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), iii.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Research Findings

The findings from the research are described below. This chapter summarizes and analyzes the facts; detailed conclusions and recommendations are left to chapter 5.

Secondary Question 1

Is the planning and execution of stability operations covered by current doctrine?

General Doctrinal Guidance

It has already been shown how doctrine is central to the US Army--to repeat the words of General Shinseki: "the Army is a doctrine based institution." However, it is important to clarify this statement. Doctrine for the US Army is not supposed to provide a prescriptive list of what to do in any given situation. This was made clear at the time of the publication of FM 100-5, *Operations* in 1993 by then CSA General Gordon R.

Sullivan, writing in the edition of *Military Review* largely devoted to that first post-Cold War manual:

doctrine in its most fundamental sense provides soldiers a way to think about the phenomenon of war; it is not designed to mandate what to think about war and its surrounding elements--that is, not *what* to think, but *how* to think (emphasis in original).¹

The point is repeated in the current version, FM 3-0, *Operations*:

(Army doctrine) is rooted in time-tested principles, but is forward-looking and adaptable to changing technologies, threats and missions. (It) is detailed enough to guide operations, yet flexible enough to allow commanders to exercise initiative.²

So, doctrine is designed to be a framework, to allow properly focused training and the development of interoperable units and procedures, but should not constrain commanders' use of adaptability and initiative according to circumstance.

Stability operations are included as part of that framework. FM 1 introduces the concept of "full spectrum operations" to show the breadth of possible tasks for the Army. This is expanded in FM 3-0, using four different "types of military operation": offensive, defensive, stability and support. This model is shown in figure 1. All the Army FMs are united in applying all the types of operation to both major combat operations and stability operations, with the caveat that the relative levels of importance of each will differ according to the scenario.

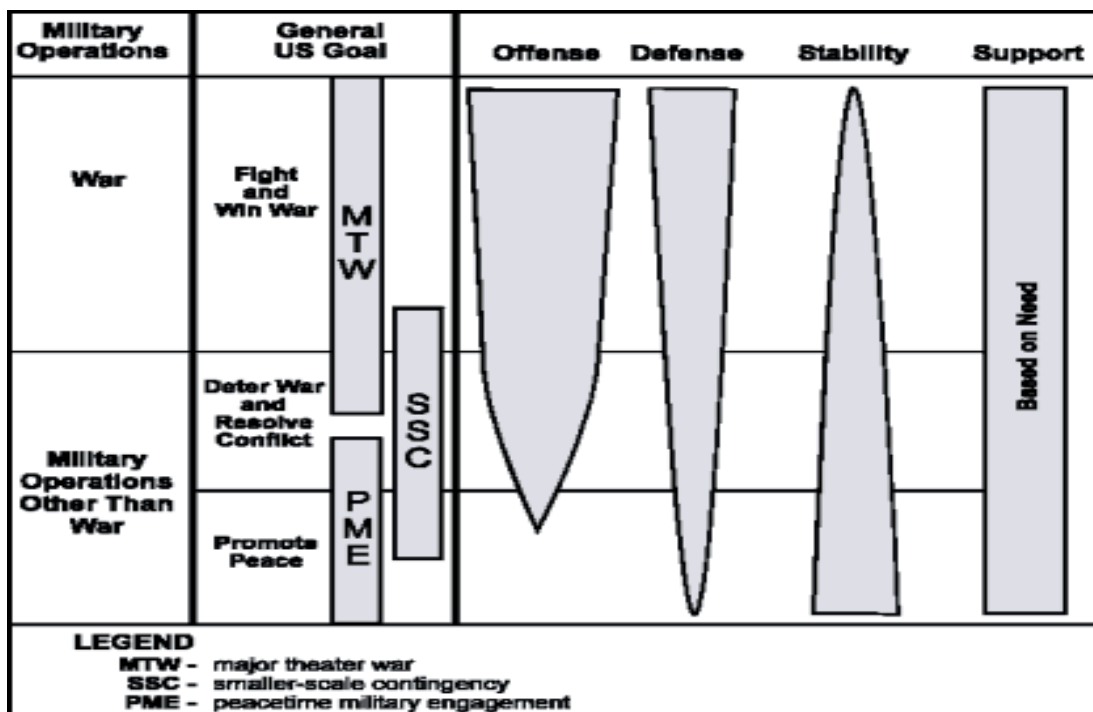


Figure 1. The Range of Army Operations

Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2001), 1-15.

Ongoing doctrinal developments, as a continuation of the work of TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations, retain the model with slight adjustments. Offense, defense and stability operations remain--in line with Department of Defense Directive 3000.05--but support operations are removed as a separate entity. The Combined Arms Center brief on the changes uses the example of Iraq in November 2004 to illustrate that at any one time a number of different emphases will exist: from the relatively stable area around Basra to the I MEF/Iraqi Army attack in Fallujah.

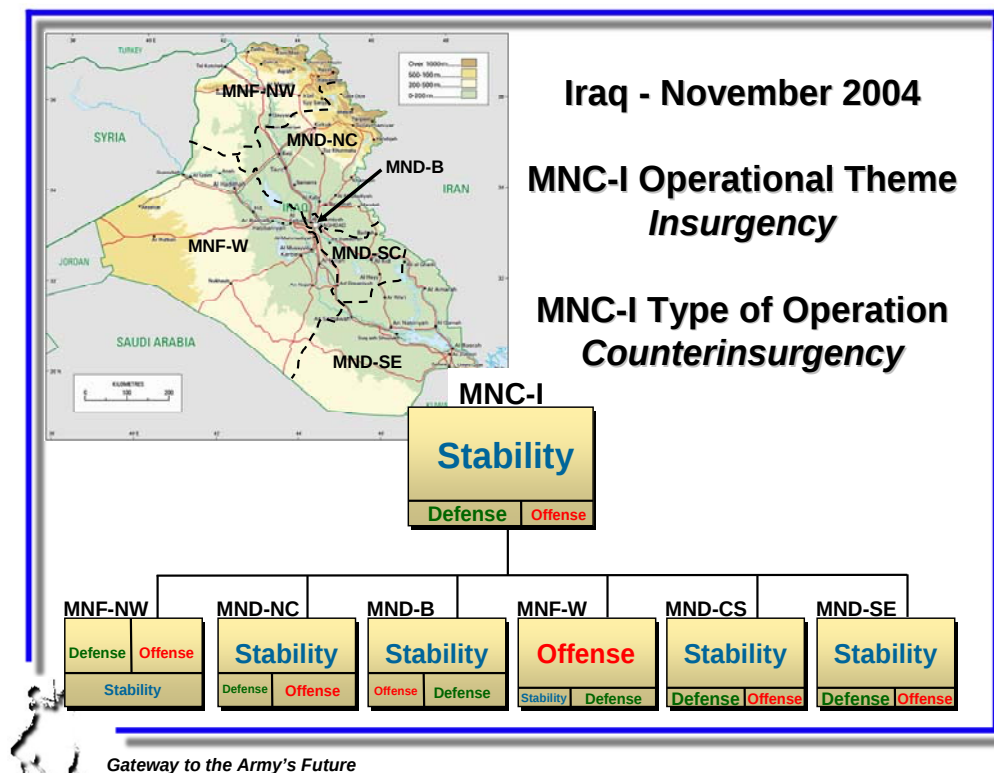


Figure 2. Full Spectrum Simultaneity.

Source: Combined Arms Center, "The Continuum of Operations in Doctrine" (slide pack provided to author by Headquarters, Combined Arms Center April 2003), slide 6.

Following this idea, the general guidance for conducting offensive and defensive operations is applied equally to stability operations. The same terminology is used, from the military decision making process, to the decisive, shaping and sustaining operations of the battlefield organization. The principles of war outlined in FM 3-0 as guidance for the conduct of operations generally also apply to stability operations: objective, offensive, mass, economy of force, maneuver, unity of command, security, surprise, simplicity. This is a subtle but important difference from joint doctrine, reflecting the Army's use of the full spectrum operations construct. In joint doctrine, without a model which reaches across both areas, Operations Other Than War have their own set of principles, albeit developed from the same principles of war: objective, unity of effort, security, restraint, perseverance and legitimacy, and are consequently presented as being a very separate set of activities from war.

Therefore, the doctrine in place at the time of the invasion of Iraq appears to consider stability operations as equal to offense and defense, and the model at figure 1 makes it clear that there is no straightforward line dividing one from another. Further, although there are some differences, essentially the same model is considered usable in the updated manual. There are, however, some contradictory subtleties in the text of FM 3-0. The chapter which concentrates on stability operations contains in its introductory words the phrase "although Army forces focus on warfighting, their history and current commitments include many stability operations."³ This is complemented by the assertion that "Army forces are designed and organized for warfighting."⁴ If any analysis is looking for evidence to show that the US Army is inherently focused on major combat

operations, it can be found. Even General Shinseki's foreword, while claiming to refer to both warfighting and "less violent actions," uses five "rules of thumb" which would appear to relate more to maneuver warfare than peacekeeping:

First, we win on the offense. . . . Next we want to initiate combat on our terms. . . . Third we want to gain the initiative and retain it. . . . Fourth, we want to build momentum quickly. And finally, we want to win--decisively.⁵

Subsequent research will decide whether Army commanders follow this tone--adding to the justification for TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations and Department of Defense Directive 3000.05--or whether they follow the spirit of the range of Army operations.

Specific Stability Operations Guidance

FM 1 provides a neat summary paragraph as a general introduction to the specific guidance provided for the conduct of stability operations:

(They) sustain and exploit security and control over areas, populations and resources. They employ military capabilities to reconstruct or establish services and support civilian agencies. Stability and reconstruction operations involve both coercive and cooperative actions. They may occur before, during and after offensive and defensive operations; however, they also occur separately, usually at the lower end of the range of military operations. Stability and reconstruction operations lead to an environment in which, in cooperation with a legitimate government, the other instruments of national power can predominate.⁶

FMs 3-0 and 3-07 give the following breakdown of types of stability operation (the first ten are under "stability"; the next four are under "support"):

1. Peace Operations.
2. Foreign Internal Defence.
3. Security Assistance.
4. Humanitarian and Civic Assistance.

5. Support to Insurgencies.
6. Support to Counterdrug Operations.
7. Combating Terrorism.
8. Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEOs).
9. Arms Control.
10. Show of Force.
11. Relief Operations.
12. Support to Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents.
13. Support to Civil Law Enforcement.
14. Community Assistance.

FM 3-07 is summarized by two areas: considerations (for planning and execution); and characteristics (of such operations). Both should be considered in the context of the guidance to approach stability operations in the same general manner as offensive and defensive operations, and of their general purpose as outlined in the specific FM 1 paragraph. The two areas from FM 3-07 are paraphrased below.

Considerations

The following considerations are designed to “help forces conduct (plan, prepare, execute and assess) stability operations”⁷:

1. *Leverage interagency, joint and multi-national cooperation*--unity of effort is fundamental to success.

2. *Enhance the capabilities and legitimacy of the host nation*--wherever possible encourage host nation forces and agencies to stand alone and/or take the lead, with

capabilities enhanced by US troops if necessary. Always demonstrate respect for host nation authority to consciously enhance credibility and legitimacy.

3. *Understand the potential for unintended consequences of individual and small unit actions*--the “strategic corporal”; all levels must be disciplined, proficient and knowledgeable, and aware of the disproportionate consequences (good and bad) of their actions.

4. *Display the capability to use force in a non-threatening manner*--the Army must be prepared for combat, but without provoking potential adversaries. Rules of Engagement must be well understood and publicized. Combined arms combat capability must be maintained.

5. *Act decisively to prevent escalation*--failure to act decisively causes a loss of respect for the force. Stability operations place constraints on normal freedom of action, but forces must be capable of taking the initiative without hesitation. This may involve negotiation as well as force.

6. *Apply force selectively and discriminately*--the use of force must be proportionate, and in accordance with assigned objectives, but not inadequate. The local commander is best placed to decide the degree of force required.

7. *Provide essential support to the largest number of people*--the greatest number guides prioritization, and tasks must be linked to support higher priorities.

8. *Coordinate actions with other agencies*--unity of effort requires constant coordination, given the amount of involved parties, and the supporting nature of the Army’s role.

9. *Establish measures of effectiveness*--establishing quantifiable objectives is critical to allowing effective handover to other authorities, and to demonstrating progress.

10. *Hand over to civilian agencies as soon as feasible*--Stability operations usually assist government and non-government missions. Being able to remove the Army's support is a key step towards long term success.

Characteristics

Stability operations require a mental adjustment, and proficiency in unfamiliar tasks. Understanding the following characteristics of these operations helps adapt to these requirements:

1. *Political objectives*--all levels must understand the political impact of their actions, and that political objectives can change without direct reference to the progress of the operation. Understanding political primacy is key to military success.

2. *Modified concept of the enemy*--traditional adversaries may not exist. The Army must avoid making enemies of warring parties or neutral forces or civilians.

3. *Joint, Interagency and Multi-national coordination*--achieving unity of effort requires significant coordination between many parties with differing priorities, capabilities and missions

4. *Risk of mission creep*--a lack of understanding of the complexities of stability operations, or of the original mission, can cause mission creep, into areas for which the force is not equipped, organized or mandated.

5. *Noncombatants*--a defining characteristic of stability operations, often integral to the mission, yet indistinguishable from adversaries or enemies, and the cause of major extra complications for freedom of action.

6. *Nongovernmental organizations*--NGOs require similar levels of cooperation as described in point 3 above. The nature of stability operations is that NGOs may play at least as important a role as the military, and their effective integration and support can be a key step to success.

7. *Information intensity*--mastery of information operations is central to success, to enhance legitimacy and publish messages to all involved parties. Constant media presence will amplify the complications of political involvement.

8. *Constraints*--military activities will rarely be able to use the full range of capabilities, and all activities, including combat, will be conducted under strict rules of engagement, which may impinge on usual military judgment.

9. *Cross-cultural interaction*--a lack of understanding of the cultural context of an operation will result in problems with legitimacy and acceptance, and will limit effective host nation cooperation. The welfare and perceptions of the local civilians are often fundamental to success, and require a sensitive and knowledgeable approach.

From the lists above, although the planner or commander knows he must act within the same broad principles and framework as for any other operation, it is clear that a very different set of constraints and parameters apply to stability operations. How this guidance is actually interpreted is examined in Secondary Question 3.

Summary of Secondary Question 1 Findings

1. At the time of the invasion of Iraq, Army forces did have a doctrinally mandated role to play in stability operations, which may exist at any time in relation to major combat operations

2. Despite this, there is evidence within the FMs to suggest that a bias against stability operations does exist; this may affect important practical issues of organization and equipment.

3. Despite the range of Army operations model, there is an impression that stability operations are either instead of, or subsequent to, major combat operations.

Secondary Question 2

Is existing doctrine validated by wider theories of how to succeed in stability operations?

The literature review established that there is broad agreement regarding the best approaches to achieve success in stability operations. This agreement comes from a variety of sources, with different types of experience and research. Some authors have personal recent involvement, while others use historical analysis of stability operations reaching back to the 19th Century and involving many other organizations than the US Army. The analysis of these sources produced five common lines of operation, paraphrased from the deductions of the existing research:

1. The establishment of a secure environment, imposed or enabled by force.
2. The creation and widespread acceptance of effective self-governance.
3. The development and sustainment of a self-sufficient economy.
4. The need for all efforts to start as close to “immediately” as possible; full prior planning is an obvious inference.
5. A significant degree of political, domestic and military patience to provide resources and moral support for an indefinite period.

None of these has priority over any other, although each will carry different weights at different times.

Simply put, the aim of this question is to examine--objectively, without the complication of the practical issues of the real world application of doctrine--whether or not these five lines of operation match up with the guidance provided in the doctrinal manuals.

The answer is best phrased as: yes, but . . .

The range of Army operations (at figure 1) does outline the concept that stability operations may have to take place at the same time as offensive or defensive operations, and the idea of “full spectrum simultaneity” indicates that there will be situations where stability operations are the dominant activity. Equally, the lists of considerations and characteristics suggest that the doctrine does take account of the complexities and idiosyncrasies of stability operations, particularly in terms of the differing constraints that exist in comparison with major combat operations. The need for a subtly varying mindset is also well described, as is the requirement to adjust that mindset as an operation progresses. The “but . . .” lies in two areas.

First, while there is no shortage of guidance about how to approach stability operations from a conceptual point of view, there is little relating to the specifics of the common lines of operation. The fourteen types of stability operation lie in the security field; addressing the first line of operation, but little else. There are few instructions about other likely requirements. In describing the importance of building the capacity of the host nation, it is mentioned that, where necessary, “Army forces enhance those capabilities through training, advice and assistance.”⁸ Unity of effort with other agencies is also stressed in a number of areas, but there is an assumption that some form of civilian expertise will be in place. The prevailing tone regarding non-security based activities is

summed up by the last consideration: “Hand over to civilian agencies as soon as feasible.”⁹

This point highlights the second area of concern. There is no mention in either FM 3-0 or 3-07 of the need to act fast. The range of Army operations construct presents the idea of concurrency, which is in accord with the opinions in chapter 2. However, this concept does not continue in the more practical guidance, beyond a sentence in FM 3-07: “following hostilities, forces may conduct stability operations to provide a secure environment for civil authorities.”¹⁰ This states the bald facts, but there is none of the urgency of Carl Bildt’s “it is important to establish a secure environment very fast.”

These two problems stem from a number of issues. Some of the wording appears likely to encourage a sequential mindset, relegating stability operations as a military activity to a secondary level. The most obvious example is the word “transition,” which indicates that one thing comes before another, making any discussion of concurrent activities extremely difficult. This impression is exacerbated by the lack of meaningful discussion of when stability operations occur in relation to major combat operations. Advice on campaign planning, with the idea of more than one linked operation, does exist in Army doctrine, but it is not emphasized in stability operations guidance. Campaign planning receives much greater emphasis in joint doctrine. Superficially, this does not appear to be a problem: only some form of joint headquarters is likely to be tasked with planning an entire campaign. There is a risk, however, if the joint headquarters is largely composed of Army staff, as with CFLCC, V Corps, MNF-I or MNC-I. Legacy experience of using Army doctrine without a focus on campaign planning would seem likely to hamper those staff officers and commanders.

Summary of Secondary Question 2 Findings

1. The Army doctrine matches the spirit of the lines of operation suggested by a range of external sources, but likely Army tasks may be focused too narrowly.
2. The urgency to commence stability operations is not emphasized on a practical level.
3. Army doctrine contains some potentially over optimistic assumptions about the range of civilian support available.
4. Major combat operations and stability operations are not well linked as complementary parts of a single campaign plan.

Secondary Question 3

Do US Army commanders approach stability operations in line with guidance provided by doctrine?

Operation Iraqi Freedom: An Outline

This paper will not cover every detail of OIF; that has been comprehensively described in many other publications--from a US Army point of view, *On Point* has a particularly clear account of the invasion. Considering certain details is, however, relevant to an understanding of the strategic context of the US Army's involvement in stability operations.

Timeline

Table 1 shows a timeline of a number of key dates, from the start of initial planning for OIF in 2001 to more recent political and military events. This timeline provides a framework for understanding the relative positions of the various sources of evidence in the following research. A map of Iraq is at Appendix 1.

Table 1. Operation Iraqi Freedom Timeline	
Date	Event
November 2001	US CENTCOM directed to begin planning for operations in Iraq
November 2001	V Corps begins Iraq based planning exercises
April 2002	Department of State's Future of Iraq project forms
June/July 2002	Major General David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Commanding General, is briefed on OIF planning by Lieutenant General William S. Wallace, V Corps Commanding General
21 January 2003	Department of Defense's Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) forms, replacing the Future of Iraq project
20 March 2003	Invasion of Iraq begins. "Regime removal" is expected to take up to 120 days
26 March 2003	82nd Airborne Division released from CFLCC to V Corps control
2 April 2003	ORHA placed under operational control of CENTCOM, after working direct to the Department of Defense
3-4 April 2003	US forces encircle Baghdad
7 April 2003	V Corps units establish first permanent presence inside Baghdad
9 April 2003	US Marine Corps forces pull down statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad; Lieutenant General Wallace holds this date as the start of Peace Support Operations; ORHA staff start operations in Baghdad
1 May 2003	President Bush declares an end to major combat operations
11 May 2003	ORHA is replaced by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)
15 June 2003	V Corps, as CJTF-7, assumes command of all forces in Iraq from CFLCC
28 June 2004	Handover of power from CPA/Governing Council to Interim Iraqi Government; MNF-I (overall military command) and MNC-I (overall ground command) replace CJTF-7
30 January 2005	First elections, for a Transitional National Authority
15 October 2005	Constitutional referendum
15 December 2005	Elections to decide Council of Representatives (ratified in February 2006)
22 February 2006	Bombing of Golden Mosque in Samarra

Three points stand out from this timeline as important context for the detailed research of the operational and tactical levels:

1. Although some problems with just in time logistics and unit deployments are well documented, the major headquarters and planning staff had no shortage of time to prepare for OIF.

2. US led forces were in control of--and therefore responsible for--Iraq significantly earlier than expected: 21 days from invasion as opposed to 120, according to some CFLCC estimates.

3. Command and control of both military and civilian organizations changed frequently in the first 18 months of the operation.

Within this framework, the following pages cover the detailed results from research of the operational and tactical levels.

Operational Level

Pre-Invasion and Immediate Aftermath

This period is defined as including any Army planning specific to OIF, stretching back into 2001, until the transfer of authority for all ground forces in Iraq on 15 June 2003--from the CFLCC to V Corps, as CTJF-7.

After spending some months planning the invasion and subsequent operations, a summary of the end result can be seen in two central products of the US Army's planning process: mission and commander's intent. The CFLCC mission was:

When directed, CFLCC attacks to defeat Iraqi forces and control the zone of action; secure and exploit designated sites and remove the current Iraqi regime. On order, CFLCC conducts post-hostilities stability and support operations, transitions to CJTF-7.¹¹

This was further explained in the intent of the CFLCC Commanding General, Lieutenant General David D. McKiernan:

Purpose: overthrow Saddam's regime.

Key tasks: control/isolate the regime; simultaneous, multi-directional continuous effects; control as we go: Lines of Communication, Sensitive Site Exploitation, formations and populations; *regime always under pressure* (emphasis in original).

Endstate: Baghdad/regime removed, other regions controlled; Regular Army/Republican Guard defeated/co-opted; vital infrastructure sustained.¹²

This represented the end of the initial planning, and the start of a four phase operation, in line with the joint doctrine of the time: Phase I--Deter/Engage; Phase II--Seize Initiative; Phase III--Decisive Operations; Phase IV--Transition. Months of planning effort had filled the time before March 2003, and a series of interviews with McKiernan from November 2002 to June 2003 does much to reveal the direction of that effort.

The greatest volume of discussion relevant to stability operations is concerned with the issue of the now famous transition from Phase III to Phase IV. Throughout the interviews McKiernan is very clear that a "blurred transition" was important, summarized in these comments from 1 May 2003:

So your stance, which I equate to combat power and position, has to be right for that transition to post-hostilities. The other thing is that in my intent, I always talked about a blurred transition between Phase III and Phase IV wouldn't happen at the same place at the same time, which in fact even with the speed of this campaign is still true. We started Phase IV operations in Umm Qasr, Az Zubayr, Basra, a week or two before we started in Baghdad, and that was a week or so before we started them in the north.¹³

This notion of a flexible transition period is borne out by comments on 30 June 2003, nearly two months after President Bush had declared an end to major combat operations: "we've never formally gone to Phase IV."¹⁴ These points are not just the

opinions of the overall ground commander, given in hindsight. The leader of the CFLCC C-35 (Future Operations) cell, Colonel Barry Fowler, supports the view in remarks made after his return to the US on 27 May 2003: “we knew that we were going to have a rolling transition of Phase IV. . . . And I still don’t know if they’re officially in Phase IV.”¹⁵ There is also evidence to back up McKiernan’s claim that he had always appreciated the “blurred transition” requirement. In December 2002 he remarked that “part of the base plan (has) lots of options . . . on how we can transition to Phase IV tasks while we are still fighting Phase III.”¹⁶

So, it appears that the CFLCC headquarters was very aware that stability operations would be required, and appreciated that there would not be a simple black and white boundary between Phase III and IV. Given this understanding, McKiernan has some candid opinions on how well this transition was eventually executed. On 20 June 2003:

I think where we probably, in retrospect, could have done more planning would have been in the transition and the post-decisive combat operations.¹⁷

And, on 30 June 2003:

In retrospect there was a hell of a lot of energy put into Phases I, II and III, I mean there was a lot of energy for a long time put into planning, preparation and execution of decisive combat operations. I think in retrospect, everybody was maybe a little late in planning and synchronizing stability and support operations.¹⁸

An unmarked report in the *On Point* archives, under the CFLCC section, entitled *Transition to PSO* (Peace Support Operations), makes the same point:

Before the onset of the war, planners focused almost solely on the removal of the Saddam regime. Phase IV . . . was pushed aside at virtually all levels. Army planners predicted that the entire operation would take 120 days, and that the Army would have 30 days to plan Phase IV. . . . According to CFLCC planners,

CENTCOM planners did not begin looking at Phase IV when US forces began closing in on Baghdad.¹⁹

There is also more detail on the results of this problem. A telling example of the practical application of such an approach is the testimony of the CFLCC deputy C2, Colonel Steven W. Rotkoff. During the Phase III operations, when McKiernan's "stance had to be right" for Phase IV, Rotkoff states that "the measure of effectiveness was things killed."²⁰ The lack of focus on Phase IV started when, "beginning with the initial (CFLCC) planning for OIF in the fall of 2002, the responsibility for planning post combat operations was unclear."²¹ This offers an explanation as to why CFLCC was working on unnecessary Phase IV issues. The plans that were made were based on humanitarian crises, particularly to do with oil fires and refugee movement, which proved not to be problematic issues. Instead, McKiernan and CFLCC were surprised when "the crisis was security, political governance and economic recovery,"²² which "wasn't the most likely course of action."²³

One possible reason is suggested by the *Transition to PSO* report: "if there is one overarching failing by the Army in this operation, it is the lack of providing a clearly defined plan for the entire campaign."²⁴ Given this criticism, it is interesting to note-- particularly in the light of the lack of emphasis in Army doctrine on campaign planning-- that in November 2002 McKiernan was very aware of his responsibilities in that regard: "It is quite clear in my mind that the CINC (Commander in Chief: General Franks at CENTCOM) has told me to plan, prepare and execute the land campaign."²⁵ It is not stated whether McKiernan interpreted "campaign" as a formal series of linked operations, or with a more colloquial definition, perhaps meaning simply a single major operation. The pre-invasion operational level planning is perhaps best summarized as:

If . . . that Phase III military process fails to extend to the realm of fulfilling strategic policy, then we have won a military operation, but not the war.²⁶

The Long War

Although there were failings in the initial planning for stability operations in OIF, by the time V Corps took over from CFLCC in overall command in Iraq, the basic requirements were better understood. Where CFLCC was initially surprised by the need to deal with political and economic issues, the V Corps mission of 15 June 2003 allowed no such error:

V (US) Corps transitions to CJTF-7. Conducts offensive operations to defeat remaining non-compliant forces and neutralize destabilizing influences in the AO in order to create a secure environment. Concurrently conducts stability operations which support the establishment of local government and economic development in order to set the conditions for a transfer of operations to designated follow on military or civilian authorities.²⁷

The intent comprized three “objectives”: create a secure environment; facilitate the establishment of local government; and support economic development. Of 22 key tasks, 13 were not of the sort mentioned in the FM 3-07 lists, from restoration of electrical power, to developing healthcare systems.²⁸

The process started at the handover from CFLCC to V Corps continues to this day. MNF-I’s current (April 2006) mission is:

MNF-I, in partnership with the Iraqi government, conducts full-spectrum counterinsurgency operations to isolate and neutralize the enemy. MNF-I also organizes, trains and equips Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in order to create and maintain a security environment that permits Iraq’s economic and political development.²⁹

The MNF-I lines of operation can be summarized as: security; governance; economy and fundamental services; and communicating. This approach is repeated at MNC-I level, with the “keys” of XVIII Airborne Corps--MNC-I from January 2005 to

January 2006--inclusive transitional government; emergent Sunni leadership (within that government); and competent, loyal ISF.³⁰ Whatever mistakes the original planning teams made, from mid-June 2003 the US Army and organizations such as the CSIS would have been in full agreement about the required approach.

Tactical Level

Pre-Invasion and Immediate Aftermath

Pre-invasion, the evidence regarding tactical units supports the general findings produced from analyzing CFLCC. Regardless of OIF, V Corps staff were aware of the need to be able to achieve stability operations objectives at the same time as those required for major combat operations. Since the end of the Cold War “V Corps (had) expanded its set of missions to prepare for military operations at any point along the spectrum of conflict from heavy force battle to humanitarian aid.”³¹ Despite this, a summary of the “plans/training linkage” of the CFLCC and V Corps exercises from 2001 to 2003 emphasizes the warfighting nature of the planning effort (shown at figure 3).

A deeper examination of the training objectives of these exercises clarifies the point. As only one example, Exercise Victory Focus had six training objectives: conduct offensive operations; conduct defensive operations; conduct lethal fire support; conduct non-lethal fire support/ offensive information operations; perform combat service support operations; and exercise command and control.³² With the possible exception of “non-lethal fire support,” none of the exercises illustrated in figure 3 contained any training objectives relating to stability operations in general or Phase IV of OIF in particular. There were exceptions, in two less significant training events. An urban operations seminar in November 2002 did have “civil military operations, humanitarian assistance

and population control issues” on its agenda.³³ In early 2003, Exercise Gotham Victory, a seminar to develop urban operations tactics, techniques and procedures, had the key task of “planning, preparing for, and supporting Humanitarian Assistance Operations in urban terrain.”³⁴ Therefore, in line with McKiernan’s approach, there was an awareness of the requirement to conduct stability operations of some sort. The exclusion of stability operations from the major build up exercises, however, reinforces the view that the focus was heavily towards the offense and defense areas of the range of Army operations.



Figure 3. CFLCC-V Corps Plans/Training Linkage
Source: V (US) Corps, “V Corps: The Road to Victory in Operation Iraqi Freedom” (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 19 June 2003), slide 5.

The theme of the V Corps preparation is borne out by its subordinate divisions, and illustrated by a number of examples. The mission of the 101st Airborne Division (Air

Assault) considered stability operations, but there was none of the emphasis, or clarification of the requirement, that existed for the air assault tasks:

On order, attacks to seize Forward Operating Base 5 and destroys enemy forces in order to extend the V Corps operational reach and support ground maneuver forces. On order, attacks to seize Objective Bears and Objective Lions in order to set the conditions for Phase IV. On order, secures Iraqi sensitive sites in order to allow their subsequent exploitation.³⁵

By 26 April 2003, however, this had changed. The division took on responsibility for AO North, becoming one of the first units to demonstrate a real understanding of what full-spectrum operations meant in OIF. Nine key tasks included five which were outside the scope of existing military planning, including enabling *Iraqi* restoration of emergency services (emphasis added) and securing public records. The more common military activities such as securing key infrastructure were also closely linked to the endstate: “sector clear of organized para-military forces; access to life support services restored; and economic situation better than pre-war period.”³⁶ The division was so far ahead of the rest of the Army planning that its efforts were hampered by a slow approvals process for development projects, exacerbated by minimal funding for such efforts.³⁷

The example of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) is consistent with the other two Army divisions involved. Initial missions for both 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) and the 82nd Airborne Division reflected the same focus on Phase III, and the early key tasks were all aimed at combat operations.³⁸ 3rd Infantry Division units were the first to enter and occupy Baghdad in early April 2003; the division then became responsible for stability operations in the city. The division’s AAR paints a positive picture of the attempts to deal with an unexpectedly rapid transition:

The transition occurred while the division was still fighting the Republican Guard, paramilitary and terrorist cells. This required a great deal of flexibility and discipline; the soldiers and units executed superbly.³⁹

The division was able to start establishing the correct “priorities for security of government facilities, utility infrastructure, museums, banks, hospital, the reestablishment of services and utilities, and the removal of weapons caches and unexploded ordnance.”⁴⁰ From the same report, however, it can be seen that this effort was hindered by a lack of stability operations planning in most major areas. This criticism is applied to the fields of intelligence, fire support, civil military operations, engineers and explosive ordnance disposal.⁴¹ The report from the 82nd Airborne Division has the same tone, mentioning in particular engineer units organized and equipped for conventional warfighting, and the reluctance to use civil affairs teams until after combat operations were complete.⁴²

Two quotes from 3rd Infantry Division are an accurate synopsis of what must have been an extremely demanding time for the soldiers involved. The official OIF history of the division’s 2nd Brigade Combat Team points out that “it is not easy to go from killing and destroying, to helping and defending.”⁴³ The divisional AAR points out that this was made particularly difficult because “higher headquarters did not provide ... a plan for Phase IV. As a result, (the division) transitioned into Phase IV in an absence of guidance.”⁴⁴

The primary stability operations lesson identified by 3rd Infantry Division is a straightforward conclusion; the Army “must have a detailed plan prior to transition.”⁴⁵

The Long War

At the tactical level, as with the operational headquarters, by the time the 1st Cavalry Division assumed responsibility for the Baghdad AO in April 2004, the right answers were understood at the planning level. 1st Cavalry Division, under Major General Chiarelli, used five concurrent lines of operation: combat operations, train and employ Iraqi security forces, restoration and improvement of essential services, promoting government, and economic pluralism.⁴⁶ Chiarelli demonstrated an awareness--with the benefit of hindsight--that what he euphemistically describes as a “gray period” had been allowed to follow initial combat success, and “conditions ripe for fundamentalist ideologue recruitment” were created.⁴⁷ An AAR from a company commander in the division demonstrates the flexible approach required in such an environment, exactly in line with the adaptable mindset described in FM 3-07. C Company of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment left their M1A1 tanks in the US, and proudly called themselves “light cavalrymen.”⁴⁸ They used their existing urban operations knowledge, adapted by specific stability operations training, and played a successful part in a deployment which has now become celebrated in the US Army. The 1st Cavalry Division lines of operation are now included in the interim doctrinal manual on counter-insurgency operations, and the now Lieutenant General Chiarelli is currently deployed in Iraq as commander of MNC-I.

At the same time as 1st Cavalry Division was responsible for Baghdad, the 1st Infantry Division was deployed further west, and engaged in Operation Baton Rouge in Samarra. Again the lines of operation construct was used, along with the term “campaign plan.” These lines of operations were similar to those of 1st Cavalry Division:

governance; communications; economic development; and security.⁴⁹ The most publicized event was a large ground attack involving a US Brigade Combat Team and Iraqi Security Forces, but this was not the most important part of the campaign:

The fight for Samarra was not won on completion of the kinetic phase of operations. A months-long division effort along four lines of operation executed from the strategic to the tactical level preceded and followed the kinetic phase. In fact, the kinetic phase much read about in the newspapers was not at all the decisive point in the fight for Samarra.⁵⁰

This level of understanding has not been universal, however. A problem throughout the 2005-2006 MNC-I tour of XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters was an emphasis on combat operations in the training programs of deploying units. The Commanding General, Lieutenant General John J. Vines, uses the example of the training of combat service support unit convoys to explain this issue. Accepting that such convoys are likely to be engaged in combat in the non-linear threat environments of stability operations is an important step, but the training in many cases focuses only the battle drills of reacting to contact. There is often little or no training on whether or not to return fire, and how the second and third order effects of such action might relate to the wider campaign plan.⁵¹

In general, however, by 2005 the concept that lines of operation are required beyond combat operations appears to have become de rigeur. Shortly after the 1st Infantry Division left Iraq, in March 2005, the 3rd Infantry Division took over from 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad, the first Army division to start its second tour. Again, the theme is repeated in the AARs: simultaneous operations throughout the spectrum of conflict are an essential concept. This appreciation perhaps reflects a developing

corporate understanding of a relationship between complementary operations that goes well beyond chronological sequencing.

Summary of Secondary Question 3 Findings

1. Before March 2003, although most levels of command claimed to understand the range of Army operations construct, and the subtleties of “blurred transitions,” it appears that this knowledge was little more than theoretical; something prevented it becoming a meaningful part of operational or tactical planning.

2. Planners appear to have made unimaginative assumptions about the scale and type of the problems likely to face the Army after the collapse of the regime.

3. The view that stability operations are, by definition, “post-*decisive* combat operations” exaggerated the problems caused when the regime collapsed so much quicker than expected.

4. Only a few months after the fall of Saddam, the approach towards stability operations became much more sophisticated. This progress has continued, usually based around lines of operation which contribute to a wider campaign.

5. The US Army’s current approach could be said to have outgrown the doctrine, in that, while the current plans fall in line with the general complexities and characteristics of stability operations as described in FM 3-07, they also reach the levels proposed by the non-military research.

This research must now be connected with the discussion in the rest of this paper to ascertain what, if any, changes are required in stability operations doctrine, and to what extent the problems described above are due to more fundamental issues.

¹Gordon R. Sullivan, "From the Editor," *Military Review* 73, no. 12 (December 1993): 1.

²Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2001), 1-14.

³*Ibid.*, 9-1.

⁴*Ibid.*, 10-3.

⁵*Ibid.*, Foreword.

⁶Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 1, *The Army* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2005), 3-7.

⁷Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, February 2002), 1-4.

⁸*Ibid.*, 1-4.

⁹*Ibid.*, 1-7.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 1-3.

¹¹82nd Airborne Division, "Tech Conference Presentation: Iraq and Lessons Learned" (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 10 December 2003), slide 5.

¹²*Ibid.*, slide 6.

¹³David D. McKiernan, interview by Colonel James H. Embury, Colonel James K. Greer, Colonel Neil Rogers, and Colonel Steve Mains, CALL transcript, 1 May 2003, Camp Doha, Kuwait, 23.

¹⁴David D. McKiernan, interview by Major Wm. Shane Story, CALL transcript, 30 June 2003, Camp Doha, Kuwait, 4. Hereafter cited as McKiernan, 30 June 2003.

¹⁵Barry Fowler, interview by Colonel (Retired) Fontenot, CALL transcript, 27 May 2003, 3.

¹⁶David D. McKiernan, interview by Major John Aarsen, CALL transcript, 19 December 2002, Camp Doha, Kuwait, 3.

¹⁷David D. McKiernan, interview by Major Wm. Shane Story, CALL transcript, 20 June 2003, Camp Doha, Kuwait, 5. Hereafter cited as McKiernan 20 June 2003.

¹⁸McKiernan, 30 June 2003, 5.

¹⁹Operation Iraqi Freedom Study Group, 7.

²⁰Steven W. Rotkoff, interview by Major Weisler and Major Corey, CALL transcript, 7 May 2003, 9.

²¹*Ibid.*, 3.

²²McKiernan, 30 June 2003, 5.

²³McKiernan, 20 June 2003, 5.

²⁴Operation Iraqi Freedom Study Group, 7.

²⁵David D. McKiernan, interview by Major John Aarsen, CALL transcript, 30 November 2003, Camp Doha, Kuwait, 7. Hereafter cited as McKiernan 30 November 2003.

²⁶Operation Iraqi Freedom Study Group, 2.

²⁷V (US) Corps, “V Corps: The Road to Victory in Operation Iraqi Freedom” (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 19 June 2003), slide 56.

²⁸*Ibid.*, slides 57-58.

²⁹Multi-National Force-Iraq, “Report to Congress” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 6 April 2006), 6.

³⁰Lieutenant General John J. Vines, US Army, Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps (and Multi-National Corps-Iraq from January 2005 to January 2006), comments used with permission from lecture to Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth on 18 April 2006, author’s notes.

³¹Kirkpatrick, Charles, “V Corps in Operation Iraqi Freedom” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 10 June 2003), 2.

³²V (US) Corps, slide 7. This brief contains the training objectives for most of the exercises conducted during the build up period for V Corps and its subordinate divisions.

³³*Ibid.*, slide 11.

³⁴*Ibid.*, slide 14.

³⁵101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), “101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Operation Iraqi Freedom” (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 14 April 2003), slide 20.

³⁶*Ibid.*, slides 55-58.

³⁷101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), “AO North” (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 26 June 2003), slide 31.

³⁸3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), “After Action Review” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 12 May 2003); 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), “Lessons Learned Presentation” (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 23 June 2003); 82nd Airborne Division, “Lessons Learned by the 82nd Airborne Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 1 May 2003).

³⁹3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), “After Action Review” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 12 May 2003), 2-3.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 2-1 to 2-10.

⁴²82nd Airborne Division, “Lessons Learned by the 82nd Airborne Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 1 May 2003), 18 and 21.

⁴³2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), “Stability and Support Operations” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 10 July 2003), 29.

⁴⁴3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), “After Action Review” (paper from CALL *On Point* archive, 12 May 2003), 31-15.

⁴⁵3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), “Lessons Learned Presentation” (slide pack from CALL *On Point* archive, 23 June 2003), slide 30.

⁴⁶Peter W. Chiarelli and Patrick R. Michaelis, “Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations,” *Military Review* 85, no. 4 (July-August 2005): 7.

⁴⁷Chiarelli, 5.

⁴⁸C Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, “OIF 2 After Action Review” (paper from CFLCC section of *On Point* archive, 28 May 2004), 1-3.

⁴⁹John R. S. Batiste, “The Fight for Samarra: Full-Spectrum Operations in Modern Warfare,” *Military Review* 85, no. 3 (May-June 2005): 3.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 1.

⁵¹Vines, author’s notes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Primary Research Question

Are the US Army's difficulties in achieving long term success in stability operations due to a lack of effective doctrine?

This paper started from the premise that the US Army has had enduring difficulties in achieving long term success in stability operations. The area of doctrine was identified as being so central to the Army that these problems could stem from issues with the content of the Army FMs. Doctrinal improvements have been recommended by the research group TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations, which was set up to examine ways of improving the Army's capacity and capability in stability operations. The purpose of this paper was to analyze the content of existing doctrine in the light of its practical application in OIF, to answer the above question.

An Analysis of Doctrine

The US Army's stability operations doctrine is generally validated by the non-military research of a great number of such operations, as analyzed in the literature review. In the views of a variety of experts and professional researchers, success depends on an acceptance that much more is required of the military than combat, and that there is no clear line between a cessation of major combat operations and the start of stability operations. Both of these points are covered in doctrine. The evidence in chapter 4 suggests that the range of Army operations model, within the idea of full spectrum operations, explains the idea of concurrency: that stability operations may be required at the same time as offense and defense. The types of stability operations, with the

accompanying lists of considerations and characteristics, also show that conventional warfighting techniques will require modification for stability operations. Soldiers will have to understand a range of new challenges, from the political implications of their actions to the need to work with--and enhance the capability of--a variety of civilian personnel. These civilians may be from the general population, specialist agencies actively assisting the Army, NGOs acting in parallel with the military effort, or insurgents and terrorists requiring a “modified concept of the enemy.”

Therefore, the doctrine appears to be in agreement with the non-military opinions. Moreover, the evidence in this paper from individuals and units involved in OIF shows that the operational Army is fully aware of its doctrine. Comments from Lieutenant General McKiernan, commander of CFLCC for the invasion of Iraq, demonstrate a full understanding of the requirement. McKiernan refers to a “stance,” where combat operations set the conditions for the success of stability operations, and to the challenges of conducting Phase IV at the same time as Phase III. McKiernan calls this a “blurred transition.” This is reinforced by the V Corps official OIF history, which states that the corps had acknowledged the need for a full spectrum operations capability since the end of the Cold War. All of the unit missions prior to the invasion of Iraq included some reference to the need for stability operations as well as the combat tasks involved in defeating the Iraqi regime.

This knowledge was not acted on as part of the invasion plan, as illustrated in almost every testimony examined in chapter 4. Yet the evidence also shows that, using the same doctrinal framework, units quickly adapted and began to develop campaign plans which were increasingly similar to the common lines of operation identified in this

paper. This conclusion explores why those initial failings happened, and why the subsequent change in approach occurred. First, as these issues were judged severe enough for General Schoomaker to direct the TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations effort, it is worth briefly examining the nature of the difficulties in Iraq.

Operation Iraqi Freedom: Doctrine in Practice

David L. Phillips, who served as a senior advisor to the Department of State's Future of Iraq project prior to the invasion, highlights a number of serious mistakes in his emotively titled *Losing Iraq: Inside the Post-War Reconstruction Fiasco*. In Phillips's view, these do stem from a serious lack in the planning for stability operations, but principally at levels above the Army. He focuses heavily on problems with the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), the group tasked with leading the stability operations effort, headed by retired Lieutenant General Jay M. Garner. This point ties closely to the CFLCC staff uncertainty about who was responsible for Phase IV. The evidence shows that there was a feeling within the Army that, since another organization would have the lead, there was little impetus to plan in detail at CFLCC level. Phillips describes the basic problem to be the late establishment of ORHA--21 January 2003--which did not allow time for proper assimilation of the work previously accomplished by the Department of State. This led to an incorrect focus on potential humanitarian crises instead of security and bureaucratic reconstruction; this was exacerbated by a lack of integration with military planning. Combined, these three issues created a situation where:

The first days of liberation were an unmitigated disaster. . . . The looting had a devastating effect on the postwar administration of Iraq: Seventeen of Baghdad's twenty-three ministries were destroyed. The professionals on whom the US was

relying to rebuild the country were demoralized. The unrest undermined confidence and respect for the US authorities. . . . [M]any Iraqis could not comprehend how the powerful US military could vanquish Saddam's Republican Guard yet fail to prevent looting.¹

On 9 April 2003 as US units occupied Baghdad, the separation between military and civilian planning culminated in:

Garner and his staff languishing at a five star hotel in Kuwait and trying to keep a low profile . . . itching to receive country clearance and start operations in Iraq. However, General Richard Myers, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, insisted that Garner did not need to be in Iraq to work. . . . Meanwhile, Garner watched in dismay as the basic nihilistic impulse of Iraqis led to chaos and looting across the country.²

The criticisms conform to the admissions of various Army personnel, as shown in chapter 4. It is, however, important to note that Phillips's argument suggests there were significant errors outside the Army.

These matters relate to the invasion of Iraq and the immediate aftermath. It would be incomplete not to consider the years since then. The evidence in the "long war" sections of chapter 4 shows a developing awareness of the importance to success of some of the issues described by Phillips. This illustrated by the increasing popularity of campaign plans involving lines of operation; normally including some form of governance and economic focus. The advances made are captured by a number of sources.

The MNF-I Report to Congress in April 2006, while admitting that there is still room for improvement, makes some impressive claims about progress. These cover a variety of areas, but some specific highlights stand out as being very close to the five common lines of operation: Iraqi security units have primary responsibility for 65% of Baghdad; the independent verification of the December 2005 election results allows the

next political stage of forming a government to progress; the Iraqi government ministries have improved dramatically since their development became the responsibility of the military rather than an under resourced Department of State. These developments are further illustrated by the Department of State's *Iraq Weekly Status Report*,³ which provides a raft of statistics, from the number of Iraqi security forces in training, to the amount of independent newspapers and websites, to the figures for oil revenue.

More subjectively, individual US officers have also made promising claims. The Deputy to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence at MNF-I, retired Colonel Russell Thaden, was, by his own admission, "quite concerned" about the chances of success when he assumed his post in January 2006. Now, although he is clear that there will certainly be setbacks from time to time and that there is much hard work still to do, he is "relatively optimistic." Thaden cites his experiences of working with motivated and committed Iraqi officials, and of witnessing the stalwart reaction of both the Iraqi security forces and the population to the sectarian violence of March and April 2006. He is now convinced that, while the end is not yet in sight, the US is at least on the right road.⁴ General McCaffrey is in agreement, with the following comments made after his recent visit:

The situation is perilous, uncertain and extreme--but far from hopeless. The US Armed Forces are a rock. This is the most competent and brilliantly led military in a tactical and operational sense that we have ever fielded. . . . The Iraqi political system is fragile but beginning to play a serious role in the debate. . . . There is no reason why the US cannot achieve our objectives in Iraq. . . . We have few alternatives to the current US strategy which is painfully but gradually succeeding.⁵

These sources do not provide a truly independent analysis of Iraq, but they do appear to contain enough honest admission about the long term difficulties for claims of at least some improvement to be taken seriously.

An alternative view of the performance of the Army was highlighted in a 2005 presentation on the *Current Insurgency in Iraq* at the Naval Postgraduate School. The presenters, Glenn E. Robinson and Kalev Sepp, went beyond the invasion planning to discuss ongoing “US Assistance to Insurgency,”⁶ blaming the Army for both initial and enduring problems. Their points were summarized as: Phase IV wishful thinking; mediocre senior US leadership in Iraq; denial of realities; Abu Ghraib and Information Operations dysfunction; changing campaign plans and strategy; threat-based approach (kill/capture); killing of civilians; Special Operations Forces as infantry; and training, equipping and paying large numbers of unvetted insurgent infiltrators.

Whichever view one supports, the real point is that the jury is still out: “surprise--these things take time.”⁷ Even those stability operations held up as examples of success, such the British campaigns in Malaya and Northern Ireland, took many more years than the US Army has currently spent in Iraq--12 years in the case of Malaya; over 35 in Northern Ireland. In both British cases, an initial period of inappropriately violent and discriminatory tactics and strategies lasted at least as long as total length of OIF thus far; in Northern Ireland, this period can be said to have lasted over a decade. After only three years in Iraq, even the highly critical David L. Phillips sees hope:

Is Iraq really lost? To be sure, the ideal of a Jeffersonian style liberal democracy in Iraq perished almost immediately after US forces tore down Saddam’s statue. . . . The failure to implement a postwar plan brought unnecessary hardship to the Iraqi people. Delays in handing over sovereignty fueled the insurgency and embittered Iraqis [but] Iraq’s future remains uncertain. .

. . Iraqis were hopeful on election-day; their country might yet emerge stable, whole and free.⁸

In this light, and if it is accepted that there has been at least some improvement in performance, it can be argued that the US Army is doing as well as can be expected. There may be a real possibility that the OIF will eventually be viewed as a success.

The evidence examined so far suggests four conclusions. The doctrine provides generally the right direction; it is understood by the units; it has been interpreted increasingly effectively--if at times imperfectly--from June 2003 onwards; and some of the issues which caused the most serious long term effects cannot be blamed on the Army. Why then did the Army's performance in OIF seem to continue the trend of "certain shortcomings . . . appear(ing) with depressing regularity"⁹ requiring a CSA directed review? This paper offers two recommendations: doctrinal adjustments, and the more important root causes.

Recommended Adjustments to Doctrine

Some of the recommendations of TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations are very specific--such as the improvement of doctrine for financing development projects, or the alteration of Mission Essential Task Lists. This is necessary to formally justify changes to the US Army's institutional development functions of organize, train, and equip. The findings in this paper support these changes. The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) identified problems with the slow release of money in Mosul, and both the 82nd Airborne and 3rd Infantry Divisions highlighted a lack of capability in certain areas, notably engineers and explosive ordnance disposal. The more conceptual doctrinal advice, however, was deliberately left vague as it was passed on to the specific subject

matter experts for further development. An example of this is “improve the processes necessary to successfully achieve Stability and Reconstruction Operations objectives.”¹⁰ The following proposals are designed to add some practical detail to this general suggestion.

Despite the general validation of stability operations doctrine, the analysis of the planning efforts for OIF does highlight some areas requiring adjustment. The bald facts of the doctrinal guidance are correct; the evidence in this paper, however, suggests that the guidance has been misinterpreted, and therefore requires clarification. Central to these recommendations is that they are not specific to stability operations; all address issues that should be at the heart of keystone and capstone doctrine in FM 1 and FM 3-0.

The primary concern is the lack of emphasis on the relationship between the different types of operation--offense, defense and stability--as complementary parts of a single campaign. Campaign planning, while discussed in Army FMs, and acknowledged by McKiernan as a CFLCC responsibility, is given most emphasis in joint doctrine. This is because campaigns typically take place at the operational level of war--usually the preserve of joint headquarters. Not emphasizing the Army's role in campaigns, however, risks imparting an impression that Army forces are not responsible for the operational level. This has potential repercussions both for the effectiveness of Army involvement in joint headquarters, and for subordinate units' appreciation of their role in issues beyond their own tactical immediacy. Both problems are illustrated in this paper, in the lack of Phase IV effort by CFLCC, and in the surprise felt by 3rd Infantry Division units “suddenly” encountering stability operations in Baghdad. There will always be a requirement for service specific doctrine, but the idea that “a range of *Army* operations”

exists as a single service entity should be reviewed. Doctrine frequently emphasizes the idea that all Army operations are part of a wider joint force; this should be reworded to clarify that this does not simply mean working with different services, but that all Army operations contribute to other operations' objectives.

A second issue is that many doctrinal terms are based on chronology: expressions such as "transition" and "phase" cannot help but reinforce a conviction that one operation comes before another. McKiernan and the CFLCC staff wrestle with the challenge of conducting operations in Phase III and IV simultaneously, producing a base plan with "lots of options" but that needed more effort in the "planning and synchronizing." This is exacerbated by the phrase "post-decisive operations," which supports the view that whatever happens second chronologically is less important operationally. Further, the analysis in the literature review shows that, when historians review stability operations after their completion, combat is never "decisive." An acceptance should be developed in doctrine that there is no chronological progression between major combat operations and stability operations. The full spectrum operations model is an attempt to come to terms with this, but the fact that McKiernan understood the idea in November 2002, but still did not enforce it in practice indicates that it does not work well. It may be that the graphic depiction is flawed, in that it attempts to show an inherently non-linear concept on a two dimensional chart which can only appear as a progression from one thing to another. The terminology in doctrine should be centered on the concept that there are only "operations." There are no subordinate "types," only different but equally important activities. The common lines of operation from the literature review make it clear that there are only different themes aimed towards the same goal. At times security--which

may involve major combat--will be the priority; at other times or in other places, other lines of operation will take precedence. The model of a *sphere* of operations may help to get around the difficulties of representing non-linear ideas graphically.

The third area for improvement relates to the guidance in doctrine that the Army will have to “enhance civilian capabilities.” As a base fact, this is true; the problem comes when it is interpreted literally, with the assumption that some meaningful capacity will exist. This was the case when CFLCC was surprised by the need to assist with governance and economic recovery. In part, this can be blamed on intelligence failures or on General McCaffrey’s “grossly inadequate” interagency support, but the non-military research does repeatedly state that the military will be required to carry most of the load, at least initially. This was eventually appreciated by both the 3rd Infantry Division, and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and can be seen in the evidence of their priorities in Baghdad and AO North respectively. Unfortunately, this was not realized at CFLCC level. One of the reasons for doctrine is to ensure that all units are heading in the right direction: as General Warner puts it “things should not go right by accident.”¹¹ The guidance in FM 3-07 to “handover to civilian agencies as soon as possible” holds true, but increased emphasis should be given to the likely military tasks of acting as quasi-mayors or developing economic regeneration plans.

So, some adjustments are required for doctrine to fully support the successful prosecution of stability operations. The evidence reveals, however, that the doctrine in place at the time of the invasion of Iraq was close enough to the methods suggested by historical analysis. Rather than doctrine being the primary problem, it follows that there must have been some reason why that doctrine was not implemented correctly.

Fundamental Concepts

The view taken by TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations is that, because the Army did not have stability operations as a core mission, it did not pay them due attention. This has been ratified by General Schoomaker, and has now passed from the approval stage to development--resulting in Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, and in the detailed changes to be made throughout the DOTMLPF construct. General Warner is optimistic that, if the current emphasis is maintained, the same problems would not recur.¹²

The conclusion of this study is that, while the TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations work is valid and is likely to result in marked improvement, it only addresses symptoms; the root of the problem is deeper and more complex.

The most important issue is that this does not relate only to stability operations. The practicalities of adjusting doctrine to emphasize campaign planning are important, but will only have the desired effect if a more complete intellectual understanding is developed. The reality is that "there are only wars."¹³ There is no fundamental difference between conducting the D-Day landings in support of US political aims, and operations in Somalia. The tactics and methods will certainly vary, but the general principles remain the same. They involve different military activities aimed at the same objective: the pursuit of US national interests. Even the three clearest examples of total war--the American Civil War, and World Wars 1 and 2--did not end without the military having involvement well beyond the tactical successes at Petersburg, Amiens and the Rhine. There have very rarely been wars where armies could afford to rely on its tactical

expertise for long term victory. This is in line with the doctrinal recommendation above, that there only operations. Professor Gray describes this idea as:

War is war and strategy is strategy. Forget qualifying adjectives: irregular war; guerilla war; nuclear war; naval strategy; counterinsurgent strategy. . . . A general theory of war and strategy, such as that offered by Clausewitz and in different ways also by Sun-tzu and Thucydides, is a theory with universal applicability.¹⁴

Accepting this may prevent a repeat of the intellectual contortions required to synchronize different types of operation in different phases, at the same time. There are differences between those activities, as John Keegan makes clear, and the specific characteristics and considerations of FM 3-07 hold true. The central challenge is understanding the difference between “the sort of sporadic, small-scale fighting which is the small change of soldiering and the sort we characterize as battle” while maintaining a conceptual appreciation of their symbiotic relationship.

General Smith’s model of “confrontation and conflict” provides one of the clearest explanations of this. Smith presents a modern interpretation of Clausewitz’s often quoted theory that “war is merely the continuation of policy by other means.”¹⁵ The phrase is now so well used that it has become a poorly understood cliché; in reality it remains a timelessly astute observation of the relationship of warfare to political-strategic ends. Too often the theory is interpreted as support for the idea exemplified by the doctrine of Caspar W. Weinberger, that war is the last step in a scale of escalation. The resulting impression is that, as the method of last resort after everything else as failed, military action can solve Smith’s “confrontation.” Clausewitz’s line reflects a much more subtle concept. The whole of his seminal chapter “What is war?” explains the complex interdependence of military *force*--that is, combat--and wider political objectives which

can only be attained by other efforts--some of which fall under stability operations. This is exactly the concept which must be understood to allow the Lieutenant General McKiernans of the future to regard the Army's role as only one aspect of a wider political matter. Currently, this understanding stops at the range of Army operations, suggesting that offense, defense and stability operations are ends in themselves. An operation may or may not require major combat operations; indeed, it may *only* require combat. But the focus must be on the endstate, not on which doctrinal manual should be followed to get there. Clausewitz again: "means can never be considered in isolation from purpose."¹⁶ Making adjustments to the field manuals which relate to stability operations specifics will help, but it will not achieve this level of understanding.

If Professor Gray's compelling view of the American Way of War is accepted, this level of comprehension will be difficult for the US Army, but not for the obvious reason of an institutional bias in favor of combat operations. General Warner holds a more subtle view, that the culture of the US Army is not based around combat, but around "mission accomplishment": now that stability operations are part of the mission, they will be considered fully.¹⁷ The material studied in this paper does support the idea that the issue is not as simple as a predisposition towards combat. The subtlety, however, lies not in mission accomplishment but in a preference for tactics over strategy. This does not mean that divisions should be creating their own strategy; rather, that the link of tactical activities to the strategic level of war is not well understood. This idea was originally and most famously identified by Harry G. Summers, in *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context*.¹⁸ The principal evidence in this study comes from the units involved in OIF. Despite repeated acknowledgement of the requirement for some kind of

stability operations in order to achieve the political goal of a free and stable Iraq, there was little or no meaningful effort put into planning those operations. Instead, the focus was put on the initial tactical and operational plan. As McKiernan himself admits by inference, his acceptance of the responsibility to “plan, prepare, and execute a campaign” was in name only.

This paper does not show evidence to go as far as the dramatic assertion of one speaker at the November 2005 Strategic Studies Institute colloquium on OIF, that “the war plan was perhaps the worst in American history.”¹⁹ The admissions of McKiernan, the V Corps training exercise objectives, and the 3rd Infantry Division’s surprise at being confronted by stability operations, do, however, suggest an agreement with General Smith:

The analysis and planning [should] have started with the outlining of the strategic objectives--the will of the Iraqi people and their leaders, and the necessary measures to capture it, or at least keep it neutral. This means the proper process should have been to start to define the successful outcome of the *occupation* before the occupation started--before the invasion [emphasis mine].²⁰

Smith goes on to say that much of this planning should have been the responsibility of politicians, but this only strengthens the point. Rather than absolving the Army of blame, it reinforces the idea that military leaders are content to act without proper political guidance. Without clarification of these strategic objectives, McKiernan could never have given any meaningful focus to the stability operations that he had in his base plan; crucially, he could never have identified that Phase IV would be the decisive operation.

The long-term problems of such a concentration on tactical achievement are illustrated in a recent monograph on the German Army, provocatively titled “Victories are Not Enough” by Dr Samuel J. Newland. This monograph seeks to examine why a

superb field army was unable to deliver victory for its nation, and, more relevant to today, whether we have drawn the wrong lessons from studying the Wehrmacht.

. . . students of modern Germany have pursued a fascination with the tactical and operational victories won by the Germans. . . . Granted, whether one studies the 1870 Sedan operations or the almost staggering victory brought about by the Wehrmacht through the 1941 Kiev encirclement, tactically and operationally the German Army was an amazing force in the field.²¹

Even the most ardent critic of the US Army's long term performance in Iraq would have to admit that the operation which defeated Saddam's regime was a great success. Not Kiev, perhaps, but a swift and efficient demonstration of tactical and operational authority in the face of numerical superiority, great distances and major logistic challenges. The problem comes, as shown in the evidence in this paper, when everything is focused at the tactical and operational levels and the link to strategic objectives is largely ignored. As Newland shows, without "logical strategies, tactical and operational victories in the field will come to naught."²²

Conclusion

It would be a misreading of both the evidence in this paper and of Dr Newland's conclusions to say that this is solely an Army issue. David L. Phillips, General McCaffrey and Joseph Collins are not alone in laying at least part of the blame on other areas of government. There are also likely to be situations which are simply "unwinnable"--the frequent recurrence of endemic problems in Haiti may be an example. The fact remains, however, that the US Army has spent the vast majority of its 230 years' history engaged in some form of stability operations, a pattern which shows no sign of changing. It is also a certainty that these operations will continue to require Army forces to fill roles they are not specifically trained or equipped for. The changes currently in

progress as a result of the Army's own internal review are important, and will make a difference. They do not, however, address the two fundamental concepts discussed above.

First, "there is only war": there are no separate types of operation, with neat dividing lines which indicate which FM to use. All military activities, whether divisional tank battles or building schools, are simply different aspects of "operations". Second, the Army cannot rest on the laurels of its tactical and operational excellence. Commanders at all levels must identify the *final* objectives; once identified, the Army has to accept responsibility for covering all the ground to those objectives. The decisive operation may be neither first nor obvious.

The article explaining the work of TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations ends by summarizing the project as a "contribution to the conceptual breakthrough that allows a new generation of Army leaders to recognize stability and reconstruction operations as a core military mission, rather than a distraction."²³ This is exactly what is required by the recommendations in this paper. The evidence in this study shows that the US Army is made up of some extremely capable, committed and adaptable people; officers and soldiers who should be capable of such a "breakthrough." The evidence also shows, however, that this will take a lot more than changes to the text of US Army doctrine or Department of Defense Directives.

Areas for Further Study

Four broad areas of potential interest are suggested by this paper. The most obvious will develop over time, as OIF moves towards fruition and shows whether the US Army's growing appreciation of the requirements of stability operations achieve a

positive result. The key section of this area will be the extent to which the TF Stability and Reconstruction Operations recommendations are incorporated and utilized. Second, the practical suggestions of this paper also require some expansion if they are to develop from ideas to actual doctrinal amendments; the idea of a “sphere of operations” seems particularly compelling.

Going to the heart of the rationale for this paper would be studies of how the US Army is constrained or assisted by the wider US political establishment. A strong indicator of progress (or otherwise) will be the level of capability achieved by the Department of State’s Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, in terms of developing civil-military integration for stability operations planning and execution. Finally, material which gives an insight into the US Army’s role in the future conceptual development of OIF--as either long term commitment or premature withdrawal--will go a long way to establishing the ability of military leaders to influence politicians.

¹David L. Phillips, *Losing Iraq: Inside the Postwar Reconstruction Fiasco* (Westview Press, 2005), 134-135. It is worth noting that Phillips, as a Middle East expert with significant experience in Kurdish Iraq, was a senior figure in the Department of State’s Future of Iraq project. This team had worked extensively through 2002 to develop plans for nation building, and was summarily replaced by ORHA, who worked to the Department of Defense. Some of Phillips’s emotive language, and a number of minor factual errors, may belie a strong sense of injustice.

²*Ibid.*, 133.

³Department of State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, *Iraq Weekly Status Report* (2006). Accessed on 26 April 2006. Available at <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/iraqstatus/2006/c16536.htm>.

⁴Russell Thaden, Deputy to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence at Multi-National Force-Iraq from January 2006 to present (comments used with permission from e-mail dialogue with the author from January to May 2006).

⁵Barry R. McCaffrey, “Academic Report: Trip to Iraq and Kuwait,” (memorandum for United States Military Academy, 25 April 2006), 7.

⁶Glenn E. Robinson and Kalev Sepp, “Current Insurgency in Iraq in the Context of Historical Islam” (presentation to the Conference on Understanding Terrorist Networks and Organizations at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, slide pack accessed from CALL CENTCOM archive, 7 April 2005), slide 6.

⁷Richard W. Stewart, “Occupations: Then and Now” (presented to *Armed Diplomacy* conference 7 August 2003). Quote from speaker’s notes, reproduced in US Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Armed Diplomacy: Two Centuries of American Campaigning* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2003), 280.

⁸Phillips, 224.

⁹Roger Spiller, “The Small Change of Soldiering and American Military Experience” in US Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Armed Diplomacy: Two Centuries of American Campaigning* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2003), 284.

¹⁰Army Focus Area Stability and Reconstruction Operation, “Chief of Staff of the Army Brief,” (presentation to the Chief of Staff of the Army on 31 May 2005, slide pack seen by the author April 2006), slide 26.

¹¹Volney J. Warner, Brigadier General, US Army, Deputy Commandant of the Command and General Staff College, and head of Task Force Stability and Reconstruction Operations, interview by author, author’s notes, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 3 May 2006. Hereafter cited as Warner interview.

¹²Warner interview.

¹³Stuart Kinross, “Clausewitz and Low-Intensity Conflict,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 27, no. 1 (March 2004): accessed 21 March 2006; available from <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/01402390.asp>.

¹⁴Colin S. Gray, “Irregular *Enemies* and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?” (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 4.

¹⁵Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1976), 99.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 99

¹⁷Warner interview.

¹⁸Harry G. Summers, *On Strategy: the Vietnam War in Context* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1982).

¹⁹Shane Lauth, Kate Phillips, and Erin Schenck, “US Military Operations in Iraq: Planning, Combat and Occupation” (Monograph, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 20.

²⁰Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 395.

²¹Samuel J. Newland, “Victories Are Not Enough: Limitations of the German Way of War” (Monograph, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), 74.

²²*Ibid.*, vii.

²³Edward L. Bowie, “Setting the Conditions for Institutional Change: Task Force for Army Focus Area ‘Improve Capabilities for Stability Operations’” (draft version 2, seen by the author April 2006), 17.

ILLUSTRATION: MAP OF IRAQ



Figure 4. Map of Iraq

Source: Combined Arms Center, “The Continuum of Operations in Doctrine” (slide pack provided to author by Headquarters, Combined Arms Center April 2003), slide 6.

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