

## DEVELOPING INTERAGENCY PLANNING CAPABILITIES: A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

BY

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USAWC CLASS OF 2009

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| <b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                    |                                                    |                                                    | <i>Form Approved</i><br><b>OMB No. 0704-0188</b> |                                                  |
| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. <b>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                    |                                                    |                                                    |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b><br>17-03-2009                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                    | <b>2. REPORT TYPE</b><br>Strategy Research Project |                                                    | <b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b>              |                                                  |
| <b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b><br><br>Developing Interagency Planning Capabilities: A Bridge Too Far?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                    |                                                    |                                                    | <b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>                       |                                                  |
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| <b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b><br><br>Colonel John Laganelli                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                    |                                                    |                                                    | <b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>                        |                                                  |
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| <b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br><br>Dr James Embrey<br>US Army Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                    |                                                    |                                                    | <b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>  |                                                  |
| <b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br>U.S. Army War College<br>122 Forbes Avenue<br>Carlisle, PA 17013                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                    |                                                    |                                                    | <b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>          |                                                  |
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| <b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b><br>Distribution A: Unlimited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                    |                                                    |                                                    |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                    |                                                    |                                                    |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>14. ABSTRACT</b><br>This paper looks at the level of progress in U.S. Government interagency coordination from 2001 to present. It reviews some of the achievements towards interagency cooperation and capability to conduct planning and preparation for complex contingency operations to include government changes as a result of National Security Presidential Directive-44, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, and the establishment of the Interagency Management System and Office of the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction within the Department of State. Despite these initiatives the interagency process is still not capable of detailed, coordinated, planning and action. A few of the reasons for this stalemate are due to institutional biases, poor organizational construct, and limited budgetary support. The paper also identifies reasons that change has not occurred, explores several new interagency planning structures to facilitate the needed reform within the national security structure, and recommends a new leadership and organizational structure within the National Security Council. |                                    |                                                    |                                                    |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b><br>Contingency, Campaign, Stabilization Operations, Government                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                    |                                                    |                                                    |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                    |                                                    | <b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b><br><br>UNLIMITED | <b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b><br><br>32             | <b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b>           |
| <b>a. REPORT</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>b. ABSTRACT</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED | <b>c. THIS PAGE</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED                |                                                    |                                                  | <b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (include area code) |



USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**DEVELOPING INTERAGENCY PLANNING CAPABILITIES: A BRIDGE TOO FAR?**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

AUTHOR: Colonel John Laganelli  
TITLE: Developing Interagency Planning Capabilities: A Bridge Too Far?  
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project  
DATE: 17 March 2009      WORD COUNT: 6,477      PAGES: 32  
KEY TERMS: Contingency, Campaign, Stabilization Operations, Government  
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

This paper looks at the level of progress in U.S. Government interagency coordination from 2001 to present. It reviews some of the achievements towards interagency cooperation and building of capabilities to conduct planning and preparation for complex contingency operations, to include government changes as a result of National Security Presidential Directive-44, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, and the establishment of the Interagency Management System and Office of the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction within the Department of State. Despite these initiatives the interagency process is still not capable of detailed and coordinated planning. A few of the reasons for this stalemate are institutional biases, poor organizational constructs, and limited budgetary support. The paper also identifies the reasons that change has not occurred, explores several new interagency planning structures to facilitate needed reform within the national security structure, and recommends a new leadership and organizational structure within the National Security Council.



## DEVELOPING INTERAGENCY PLANNING CAPABILITIES: A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

If you concentrate exclusively on [military] victory, with no thought for the after effect, you will be too exhausted to profit by the peace, while it is almost certain that the peace will be a bad one, containing the germs of another war.

—B.H. Liddell Hart

Despite being engaged in over seven years of conflict and the establishment of new organizations to ensure integrated interagency efforts, to date the U.S.

Government has not generated a significant transformation in civil-military planning and preparation for complex contingency operations. Notwithstanding a tragic series of events such as the destruction of the World Trade Center, and the ensuing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, we have not embraced a viable process to achieve interagency coordination on matters of national security. In an address at the National Defense University in September of 2008 the Secretary of Defense relayed four challenges to change despite identification of both the problem and the solution, as described by one of his colleagues about our national security apparatus since Vietnam. Those lessons apply to our current challenges with changing our interagency system. First, he noted that there is a reluctance in the interagency to change preferred ways of functioning, and when faced with lack of results agencies tend to do more of the same. Second, attempting to conduct a war with peacetime management structures and practices has been ineffective. Third, there is an incorrect belief that the current set of problems have been either an aberration or would soon be over. Last, where a certain problem – in this case, a counterinsurgency – did not fit the inherited structure and preferences of organizations, the problem became simultaneously everybody's business to critique and no one's business to solve.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the failures in reaching conflict termination in Iraq and Afghanistan have been a direct result of the organizational inability of the various agencies of government to operate efficiently and effectively with one another during crisis. There are several schools of thought on why we can not achieve interagency cooperation. One such school contends that interagency coordination has been and will continue to be unachievable due to our constitutionally directed governmental structure; that interagency discourse and dissention, or at least tension, was a conscious decision by our founding fathers to ensure balance of power. Furthermore, the founding fathers designed our government to resist efficiency for the sake of effectiveness and balance of power, and due to this design there is a natural limitation on interagency cooperation. However, the existing need for more effective interagency coordination is not to circumvent the original intent of balancing power across the three branches of government but to more effectively implement the policies of the government. Stated another way, the inherent inefficiency of our government structure is not mutually exclusive of effective execution.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, military traditionalists believe that continuing and expanding U.S. military and interagency coordination in Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations is unnecessary, since these roles should be transferred from the military to the Department of State (DOS) and other governmental and non-governmental agencies. Common themes among non-governmental and international governmental organizations, as well as many in the diplomatic corps, see the dominance of the Department of Defense (DOD) in SSTR as “militarizing foreign policy.”<sup>3</sup> Finally, Congress has failed to recognize and act on the importance of this initiative and therefore have not seen fit to properly fund this

enterprise. Apparently a presidential directive to fix the interagency process lacks the broad support and emphasis necessary to fully implement a new process within and across our government; therefore, the U.S. Government (USG) continues to lack the crucial mechanisms for effectively integrating all branches of government to achieve unified action.

Perhaps the most significant problem associated with interagency coordination is the lack of clarity in our specified policy goals, which results in differing interpretations of what the goal is by government agencies. The first step in achieving unified effort is to define the strategic problem so everyone is solving the same problem. Einstein once said, "If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes."<sup>4</sup>

Without an interagency structure whose overarching purpose is to frame clear guidance and bring together seemingly disparate elements of our government and national power together to achieve common understanding of the problems facing our nation, we will never effectively achieve our national security goals nor achieve unity of effort. The U.S. national security structure that was designed after the Second World War worked well in a Cold War environment, but in the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous globalized 21st Century environment, the parochial, agency-centric approach to coordination has been counterproductive to effective policy accomplishment. Developing an effective "whole of government" approach to national security can not be each agency doing their own thing in pursuance to the stated policy goal as "stovepipes of excellence", but the system must consider and integrate all

elements of national power. In order to achieve this goal the USG will need to embrace the need for change, build the organizational structure and capacity that breaks down the impediments to change, and reorient agencies whose focus has traditionally been domestic for more globally oriented action across the current and future strategic landscape.

According to our National Defense Strategy, the strategic environment for the foreseeable future is one of global struggle against a violent extremist ideology, irregular challenges, rogue states seeking nuclear weapons, and significant geo-cultural changes in populations, resources, energy, etc. Each of these challenges will produce significant uncertainty for the future,<sup>5</sup> but not all can nor should be dealt with through the use of military power. In order to mitigate these problems before they become crises, the USG will need an integrated capability to respond with all elements of national power in a concentrated, directed manner.

#### Interagency Planning Problems and Coordination Efforts to Date

One of the nine essential tasks defined in the “National Security Strategy of The United States of 2006” is to transform America's national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.<sup>6</sup> The NSS articulated a way ahead for this transformation that focused on several essential “transformation tasks” for improving interagency effectiveness:

...Improving our capability to plan for and respond to post-conflict and failed state situations... ... Developing a civilian reserve corps, analogous to the military reserves...skills and capacities needed for international disaster relief and post-conflict reconstruction... Improving the capacity of agencies to plan, prepare, coordinate, integrate, and execute responses covering the full range of crisis contingencies and long-term challenges...strengthen the capacity of departments and agencies to do comprehensive, results-oriented planning.<sup>7</sup>

These needed changes are a direct result of shortcomings identified in our national security structure in the aftermath of “911”. To assist in this daunting transformation task, the U.S. Government took a number of actions to transform the interagency coordination and post-conflict planning processes in order to achieve a more coordinated “whole of government” planning effort.

To date, there have been significant efforts made in the interagency’s ability to conduct predictive planning for post-conflict operations. The emphasis of this paper is not that the interagency has been inactive in correcting the challenges and problems which have come to light, but activity has not necessarily equated to progress. Instead, this paper identifies ways in which we can advance our capabilities beyond where they are today and achieve a greater degree of proactive, interagency coordination and planning capability.

The abundant problems of faulty interagency planning for Iraq are a case-study in why change is needed. In Fiasco, Thomas Ricks noted that prior to hostilities, interagency post-war planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom was either non-existent at worst, or incoherent at best. This major task was given to an exhausted staff at U.S. Central Command and later taken over by the Pentagon. The resulting fix was the President’s National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 24 on Iraq in January, 2003 which established under DOD the under-strength Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance that assumed post-conflict planning responsibility.<sup>8</sup> To exacerbate long-standing unity of effort challenges, personnel within the Department of State and other agencies were excluded from planning due to operational security concerns as well as political infighting between State and Defense.<sup>9</sup> A Congressional

Research Service Report has asserted that while planning did occur, especially after National Security Presidential Directive 24 was issued, there were separate plans in Defense and State, which were by no means synchronized.<sup>10</sup>

Our national security structure is a complex system. Complex systems can have several types or categories of complexity, to include structural complexity, according to the numbers of parts in the system, and interactive complexity with respect to the behavior and interaction differences.<sup>11</sup> Our interagency system possesses both categories of complexity, which demands greater integration in order to achieve results, but it is precisely that characteristic, its nature, which makes it inherently more difficult to achieve coordinated action. To help alleviate some of the inherent complexity in our interagency system and achieve a more unified effort, military doctrine has developed a cognitive process called the "Commander's Appreciation for Campaign Design." A fundamental tenet within this process is the necessity of achieving unity of effort in planning and preparation in response to a perceived challenge. The way to accomplish the required unity is to develop options in concert with other instruments of national power that are:

...only possible if based upon shared appreciation of the problem and a common approach to problem solving. This demands that leaders from other agencies and nations participate fully in Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design (CACD).<sup>12</sup>

This means that other agencies preparation and input must occur simultaneously, and preferably in coordination with military preparation. We have not designed an organization within the government capable of handling both the complexity and coordination to achieve a common problem solving approach. However, the question

remains: what has the USG done to ensure a coordinated, coherent planning process across all elements of national power?

To correct reconstruction and stability planning deficiencies, National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44 was signed on December 7, 2005 with the purpose to:

to promote the security of the United States through improved coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for foreign states and regions at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife.<sup>13</sup>

The Directive charges the Secretary of State with the responsibility “to coordinate and strengthen efforts ... to prepare, plan for, and conduct reconstruction and stabilization assistance...and to harmonize such efforts with U.S. military plans and operations.”<sup>14</sup> It charges both the Secretaries of State and Defense to coordinate actions with each other, and establishes a Policy Coordination Committee (PCC) for Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations responsible for overseeing the planning process. NSPD -44 was an attempt to correct the shortcomings of the Clinton Administration’s Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56, of May 1997 (the Clinton Administration’s Policy on “Managing Complex Contingency Operations”) which established policy and procedures for political-military planning and preparation.<sup>15</sup> Although PDD-56 established goals and requirements for political-military planning, the intent of the Directive was not fully realized due to a lack of adequate resourcing and limited agency emphasis and support. In short, PDD-56 prescribed the requirement for interagency planning with no implementing structure or resources.

Both the President Bush’s National Security Presidential Directive -44, and the Department of Defense’s Directive 3000.05, “Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations” have directed that planning and

preparation be on equal footing with major combat operations, and that in the future DOD and DOS should consider and include provisions for stability operations across all phases of an operation. It also directed Defense to ensure military plans be integrated with all other U.S. Government agencies.<sup>16</sup>

In August 2004, the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) was created to "enhance our nation's institutional capacity to respond to crises involving failing, failed, and post-conflict states and complex emergencies."<sup>17</sup> Since then, the S/CRS has been active in developing a planning framework for U.S. Government planning for reconstruction, stabilization, and conflict transformation, which as of October 2008 is "in draft" and is being reviewed by an interagency working group.<sup>18</sup> This planning framework outlines a "whole of government" planning process which emphasizes that unity of effort only comes from active participation by all relevant U.S. Government agencies that share a common understanding of the problem and are working towards common goals.<sup>19</sup> In furtherance of this need for integrated planning, a National Security Council Deputies-Level decision instituted the "Interagency Management System" that directs the framework for U.S. Government planning using three level of effort: the Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG), the Integration Planning Cell (IPC), and the Advance Civilian Team (ACT).<sup>20</sup>

In concept, S/CRS would form the core of the USG planning effort supported by a full-time staff, which in turn would coordinate the day-to-day activities for reconstruction and stability for crisis response planning in Washington. During a crisis a Crisis Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG) would coordinate activities for

the heads of the regional secretariats within the State Department, the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, and the regional advisor from the National Security Council. Supporting their efforts would be the Integration Planning Cell of full-time interagency planners and regional and sectoral experts. The IPC would travel to and coordinate “whole of government” planning with the Geographic Combatant Commands and multinational headquarters in order to better integrate civilian and military agencies ongoing planning efforts. Finally, at the country team-level would be the Advance Civilian Teams acting as regional field teams who provide similar support to Chiefs of Mission (Ambassadors).<sup>21</sup>

To codify these structures, requirements and responsibilities of the various government agencies, Title XVI U.S. Code for Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management was specified under The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 on October 14, 2008. Within the Act are provisions for full-time governmental personnel support for reconstruction and stabilization and provisions for some training of a Civilian Response Corps. Finally, moving beyond planning and into execution, the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization has designed several deployable entities, such as the Field Advance Teams to actually work and implement Reconstruction and Stabilization action much like the Provincial Reconstruction Teams do today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Concurrently, a U.S. Government rapid response capability for R&S has been constituted at three levels through the creation of the Civilian Response Corps: an active component, a stand by component, and a reserve component. The current plan for the Civilian Response Corps calls for 4250 personnel comprised as follows: The

Active Response Corps of 250 personnel, with 40 percent in the State Department, 40 percent in USAID, and 20 percent in Justice, Treasury, Agriculture, Commerce, and other agencies. Once trained and ready, the Active Response Corp could be deployed within two to three days of a USG decision, and be capable of deploying 80 percent of the force continuously. The Standby Response Corps of approximately 2000 personnel will come out the same agencies as the Active Corps with the ability to deploy within 45 to 60 days of a decision, sustain approximately 10 percent of its numbers deployed at any given time, and provide a surge capability upwards of 25 percent. The third component of this capability is the Civilian Reserve Corps made up of 2000 people from the private sector as well as state and local governments who would be on call for a four year period, and who could be committed to upwards of one year of deployment during a given 4 year period.

A significant challenge to this initiative is sustained funding. The State Department's estimated start up cost for this program is \$248 billion with an estimated \$131 billion for sustainment.<sup>22</sup> Without an increased budget, the best the State Department can do in the short term is to increase their active corps capability by 100 personnel and the standby corps capability by 500. Estimates on implementing the growth of capability outlined in the Interagency Management System are that it could take upwards of 18 months to put into action from the time an adequate budget for the initiative is approved. Once approved, there will continue to be annual budgetary requirements for operating and maintenance funds for this organization. Additionally, future programs will also require periodic "plus ups" during periods of significant activity,

such as in the transition within Iraq and Afghanistan from military security and stability operations to long-term reconstruction.

In addition to the Interagency Management System construct, there are several Department of Defense initiatives underway to improve civil-military integration. These include establishing Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs) and providing liaison teams between the Departments of Defense and State to work in each other's headquarters. Additionally, the new USAFRICOM is not only a Geographic Combatant Command but also an integrated interagency organization with a Department of State official filling the position of Deputy to the Commander for Civil-Military Activities. It also has civilian agency personnel in their Foreign Policy, Humanitarian Assistance, and Strategy, Plans and Policy directorates.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately these organizations generally only have a coordinating or liaison authority that requires approval of and coordination with their home offices in order to commit resources to a plan. In short, directors in these structures have absolutely no decision making or directive authority over an embassy or ambassador in countries in which they wish to plan or execute operations.

Within the Department of Defense, the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) guides planning processes and directs how military planners interface with civilian efforts. In JOPES, the development of a detailed outline for support requirements by the interagency for the military campaign, or "Annex V," is the approved method for planners to relay to their interagency partners the capabilities that they have determined are necessary to execute the military plan.<sup>24</sup> The fundamental flaw in this approach is that it is a military view of what joint planners believe other governmental agencies can and must bring to the fight instead of a more informed,

interagency perspective of what could and should be used in the other elements of national power. Compounding the problems of coordination is that Annex V's requirements and information often arrive too late in the planning process for the interagency to conduct truly effective and integrated planning, and often does not capture or express the unique capabilities and limitations of the other agencies. Even with additional interagency personnel to man all the combatant command headquarters full time and provide the front-end expertise to the planning process military headquarters with military processes, would ultimately lean towards a military solution to complex national security issues.

#### Continuing Challenges

Including stabilization and reconstruction resource requirements for the whole of the U.S. Government within the Defense Authorization Act of 2009 was a first step in the right direction. However, despite this there have not been adequate appropriated monies made available to all agencies to achieve the much needed identification, training, and employment of skilled planning and field personnel. In addition to lacking definitive long-term funding for this initiative, the Act also fails to alleviate the greater issue of flawed organization architecture within the national security, interagency environment. Once identified, resourced and provided, the additional assets for planning and executing reconstruction and stabilization will still not achieve coordinated action without an organizational construct that provides the coherent guidance necessary to achieve our policy goals and national security objectives.

Some of the greatest challenges to unity of effort in planning in an interagency environment are due to the fact that differing agency contributors have inherently

different goals, capacities, policies, resource capabilities, standards, and operational philosophies. Despite these disparities we can only succeed in our national security objectives through close interagency coordination and cooperation.<sup>25</sup> Or can we? When other government agencies lack the budget, personnel depth in numbers or ability, or availability of other resources, the task invariably will fall to the military to either plan or resource future success in reconstruction and stabilization. Recent history has already demonstrated that the spirit of cooperation in the interagency is easily derailed when politics, egos, attitudes, or personality take precedence.

Continuing a military-centric approach to reconstruction and stabilization lacks support in military channels and has negative civil-military implications. Traditionalists in the military fear that extensive military involvement in stabilization and reconstruction type operations such as in Iraq and Afghanistan will continue to degrade the military's basic warfighting capabilities. In a 2008 World Affairs article, Gian Gentile aptly framed the problem:

Let's be clear: the U.S. Army needs to be able to conduct stability operations, to combat insurgencies, to keep the peace. But after six years of performing almost nothing but counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, Army Chief of Staff General Casey is quite correct to assert that the army is "out of balance." And the balance, such as it is, ought to be weighted more heavily toward the requirements of conventional warfare.<sup>26</sup>

Despite Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, statements by the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarding their support to these non-traditional roles for the U.S. military, traditionalists in DOD, other governmental agencies, and Congress continue to argue that the U.S. military has no business conducting sustained Peace and Stabilization Operations, and that extended missions like Bosnia, Kosovo, and now Iraq and Afghanistan have "Blunted the Spear."<sup>27</sup> In all,

these traditionalist views are nothing new: they simply are an extension of the views set forth in the 1995 Government Accounting Office report on Peace Operations that concluded that participation in these types of operations can degrade a unit's war-fighting capability.<sup>28</sup> However, reinforcing this older view is the report of the National Security Advisory Group, chaired by William J. Perry, which concluded in 2006 that the U.S. military is under strain in part due to continuous support to stabilization and transition operations.<sup>29</sup>

Another facet or consequence of prolonged use of military force for these types of operations is that they have the potential to increase the likelihood or tendency to use military might rather than other elements of national power to accomplish development and policy. In essence, traditionalists stress that a more balanced mixture of elements of national power would ultimately result in a less belligerent foreign policy and that overreliance on the military actually weakens our overall national security. In fact, a recent article in *Joint Forces Quarterly* noted that our military geographic combatant commanders have become more like ancient Roman proconsuls or regional governors, who are charged with not only military matters but larger diplomatic roles as well.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, the article contends that because of the military's ability to perform so many disparate missions, that "Presidents and policymakers...find an irresistibly ready tool in the military, and many find it convenient to make use of this tool in ways that may ultimately weaken the military."<sup>31</sup> In essence, traditionalists believe that military forces should be reserved for fighting wars and not used as a USG multipurpose capability. Regardless of which school of thought you might support on the use of military power, any policy that relies too heavily on only one fourth of its strength or capability (DoD

assets alone) is not realizing its full potential. In the case of our interagency coordination, having a military which is overly capable of performing the stabilization and transition planning and execution reduces the other agencies immediate need to develop their own capabilities. Likewise, the urgency for lawmakers and decision makers to force the other agencies to develop planning and expeditionary capabilities is significantly reduced, ultimately resulting in a less capable, less balanced execution of national policy.

### The Necessity of Change

The cultural, organizational, and resource impediments to more effective interagency coordination require reform. Agencies whose traditional focus has been domestic operations, who lack expeditionary capability, and who don't consider themselves as having requirements or responsibilities within the national security system must wake up, transform, and prepare themselves for future, more expeditionary interagency roles. In all, these agencies must develop standard procedures to operate abroad as needed, identify the necessary resources to accomplish required tasks, and exercise their processes repeatedly.

However, these changes won't happen by themselves because organizations as a rule resist change. Bureaucracies tend to default to "no change needed" when faced with a new challenge or requirement. Leadership is essential to effectively change an organization and to overcome resistance to change. While we have made some changes in our interagency process there have been far too many traditionalists that have inhibited implementing interagency reform. In John Kotter's book "Leading Change" he identifies several pitfalls to overcome in changing an organization. Many of

them apply to our efforts to date in changing the interagency system. These pitfalls include too much complacency, failing to create a sufficiently powerful coalition for change, underestimating the power of vision, failing to create short-term wins, and neglecting to anchor changes firmly in the corporate culture.<sup>32</sup> Our efforts at changing the interagency system suffer from many of these pitfalls, among which the most significant has been the over emphasis on management and the lack of effective leadership. As Kotter notes, while management has its own role, it is not a substitute for effective leadership:

Management is a set of processes that keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly...leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations in the first place or adapts them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles.<sup>33</sup>

Notwithstanding the USG efforts already outlined, the overall effort for improving planning does not have a passionate, effective senior leader that is constantly pushing for change within the interagency system. The Presidential directive has given the responsibility to conduct interagency coordination to the S/CRS but has not given the necessary authority or the appropriate organizational structure to actually make the needed changes. Additionally, the Coordinator is limited in that he only has the responsibility for interagency planning and coordination for reconstruction and stabilization activities, with no responsibilities over the myriad of other national security issues requiring development of future “whole of government” solutions. In all, we have not yet created a powerful advocate and supporting organization for change. For success, the USG needs a National Security Council-level integrating organization to coordinate the “whole of government” interagency process.

When President Eisenhower proposed reorganizing the defense department in 1958 he noted that good organizational structures don't guarantee success, but bad ones guarantee failure.<sup>34</sup> In the same vein, Sun Tzu tells us "... to control many is the same as to control few... Order or disorder depends on organization."<sup>35</sup> A 2006 report by the U.S. Military Academy's Department of Social Science noted that simply transforming an existing organization or improving policy coordination will have little or modest improvements in performance. To be effective, we may need to move past incremental reform of interagency process as previously noted, and move onto the creation of completely new organizations and processes.<sup>36</sup>

The Center for Strategic and International Studies published an insightful report in 2004 on defense reform. In this report they identified the need for improved interagency operations, citing Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq as examples of failures in integrating strategies to achieve national objectives. They further detailed limitations in planning culture or capacity outside the Department of Defense, the lack of capability on the National Security Council Staff for leading the integration of strategy development, and the lack of a common planning standard or methodology throughout the interagency. After identifying these shortcomings, the report made several recommendations. First, the study recommended that the President designate a deputy assistant responsible for leading and integrating the interagency process. Second, that the President periodically review guidance and procedures for planning complex operations. Third, that each government department or agency develops planning capabilities. Fourth, that the USG establish an "Agency for Stability Operations" along with a deployable capability (much like the Reserve Corps described above). Fifth, that

Congress provides authority, resourcing, and funding to these initiatives.<sup>37</sup> The report also noted a lack of civilian agency capability to deploy personnel in support of contingency operations. Based on research, it is the author's opinion is that a number of these recommendations have been implemented by the government, but there continues to be only grudging movement forward in building departmental/agency planning capability. Additionally, while Congress is beginning to recognize the need to fund reform, in the five years since the Center for Strategic and International Studies report came out the improvements in our national security interagency capabilities remain sadly inadequate and funding is still virtually non-existent.

In addition, Congress has noted other needed changes within the government system to include ensuring that proper national security planning guidance is issued to the interagency team, requiring appropriate levels of training for senior personnel in the interagency system their new roles, and building regional expertise in the various departments as they revise and synchronize the alignment of regions between the Department of Defense and Department of State. For example U.S. Central Command coordinates across four State Department regional bureaus; aligning regions across agencies would streamline coordination processes, reduce redundancy, and improve overall interagency cooperation.<sup>38</sup> It appears that President Obama's administration will rectify this disparity. A February 8, 2009 Washington Post article states that the new national security adviser, James L. Jones, will change the organizational maps for all government agencies so that they will all utilize the same regional construct in their dealings around the world.<sup>39</sup>

Additionally, the new NSC will gain more authorities to oversee matters of national security which are of a strategic nature. President Obama has authorized the NSC to form “action groups” from the diverse government agencies having vested interests in the national security issue that will remain together until the crisis or issue is resolved.<sup>40</sup> While this approach seems admirable, the previously mentioned cultures of “not enough” personnel, resources, or complex contingency planning experience will be a major stumbling block in the implementation of these action groups. The difference between ability in theory and capability in reality will be a major impediment to this process achieving success in execution. While the military has a planning process in JOPES that may offer a usable format and methodology for these groups, it might not support planning within the diverse cultures and processes that make up our interagency environment. Achieving unity in interagency planning will require a new planning process, which incorporates military and other agency planning processes and considerations.

From an interagency cultural perspective, designating the Coordinator S/CRS as the office with primary responsibility for ensuring interagency coordination while keeping it under the Department of State may not have been the best choice for promoting change and increased cooperation within the interagency. This observation is based upon comments by several senior Career Foreign Service Officers who are currently posted to the State Department as well as my own experiences with Department of State employees. In all, the Department of State’s culture is less operational and more analytical in nature. They are less inclined to react to the crisis requirements of the day and more inclined to look at long-term effects of policy and long-term goals. While they

are exceptional at understanding the secondary, tertiary, and greater order effects of programs, policies, and activities, they view time as an ally and not as an enemy (as during crisis action) in that time provides the opportunity for developing additional perspectives and options. Diplomacy and inclusiveness are more important than endstate. The very strengths that make them so good at establishing small, incremental, long-term development programs are weaknesses in the atmosphere necessary to rapidly establish a new organizations, processes and solutions composed of significantly disparate organizations, cultures, and capabilities.

A frequent complaint by some government agencies is that they lack the personnel, resources, money, or training to contribute to a coordinated planning organization. While true in some cases, it is also irrelevant if we are to realize the organizational improvements described. The focused efforts by a few individuals from each agency to conduct planning and coordination will not severely disable the major efforts of any agency. While establishing a planning capability may initially be painful, the end results of having personnel dedicated to representing each agency's capabilities, limitations, and interests during a "whole of government" planning process would provide distinct advantages down the road. If current plans hold to build a Civilian Response Corps of 25,000 personnel<sup>41</sup> and if Congress authorizes the additional funding necessary to build and sustain this organization, then the impacts on agencies would be short-term at most. Additionally, if future planners were incentivized through advancement possibilities, career path progression, and additional salary incentives, they would not only be more productive but eventually progress to positions of

responsibility where they would reinforce the essential need to plan effectively across the USG.

Again, without an organization whose overarching responsibility is to bring seemingly disparate elements of our government and national power together to achieve common understanding of the problems facing our nation, we will never effectively resolve our national security issues nor achieve unity of effort in developing our policy goals and implementing strategies. If true change and effective organization is to occur in our national security structure it must include far reaching reforms. This change must be authoritative and the organization overseeing it must have comprehensive authority. Each of the governmental agencies with any national security responsibilities, to include the Defense Department, must answer to this new authority. The regional bureaus within the State Department as well as the Ambassadors, who currently answer directly to the President, must also fall under the authority of this new organization. This idea will not be popular, nor will it be implemented without generating turmoil or ruffling significant feathers in the current, disorganized, interagency structure.

Enhanced synchronization and coordination demands the establishment of an office separate from the Departments, and preferably under the National Security Council, with authority over the various governmental agencies to plan and direct effectively. Through this new office, the President could relay a vision for interagency direction and cooperation that could break down obstacles to change. One option might be to give responsibility for leading and directing this new structure to the Vice President. As the number two leader in our government, he already has the statutory authority to direct agency actions in support of nation objectives and ensure

implementation of the President's overarching strategic direction. As this is the first year of a new administration, it is a perfect opportunity to use the transition period and the turmoil associated with administrative change to put in place the change agents, leaders, and connectors necessary to ultimately change the "corporate culture" of our interagency system.<sup>42</sup>

The National Security Council is the appropriate place for this new organizational structure to reside. Not as a policy formulation group, but as an interagency coordination and fusion body capable of performing integrated agency planning for complex contingencies as well as having the ability to pull together teams of experts from across the governmental agencies as well as from a pool of Response Corps personnel from across the country. The nucleus of this organization's staff can initially come from the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction Office and be relocated from State to the National Security Council. If the responsibility for overseeing this new organization and mission is not given to the Vice President as previously mentioned, then the Coordinator position should be changed to a Special Assistant to the President or a congressionally appointment position with broad authority to direct agency cooperation. This, along with Presidential involvement in the form of emphasis, guidance, and prioritization, as well as Congressional power to withhold agency funding for non-compliance with support requirements to the process, will provide much needed leadership and a catalyst to reforming our interagency processes and changing the current stagnant state of interagency cooperation.

Further changes could occur through Congressional action. In a Strategic Studies Institute Report on "National Security Reform", the Honorable James R. Locher

III recommended a range of options from amending House and Senate rules to create new committees on “Interagency Affairs” with oversight and jurisdiction for ensuring the necessary transformation of interagency processes, all the way through to recommending a painstaking review of our national security system on the scale of Goldwater-Nichols that was charged with “reviewing all elements of organizational effectiveness, vision and values, processes, structure, leadership, organization, culture, personnel incentives and preparation, and resources.”<sup>43</sup> Congressionally legislated reform of government agencies is not an unprecedented occurrence. The Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 reorganized our governmental intelligence structure due to the failures in our intelligence sharing capabilities in the wake of “911” and The National Security Act of 1947 set up our current system in the wake of World War II.

As discussed before, James L. Jones, the current National Security Adviser, has recently announced that the National Security Council will have significantly more power and ability to coordinate interagency actions.<sup>44</sup> His goal is to remove the background forces which have impeded interagency cooperation in the past. While this approach has merit, it does not provide a long-term solution to the interagency problem. The current Administration may be able to generate short-term gains in interagency coordination through personality and force of will, but the NSC cannot achieve lasting interagency cooperation. The National Security Council only has a miniscule budget to conduct its day-to-day operations. Additionally, when there is another administration change the benefits gained under the current construct can be modified however the incoming President sees fit. A lasting solution requires a long-term answer that is

codified in law, supported with personnel, and resourced by Congress and the agencies.

### Conclusion

The past eight years have heralded a time in our history when our strategic environment is significantly different than it has been in the previous sixty. We have just elected our first African-American President who campaigned on a platform of change. Our recent history has shown that the way we approach foreign policy and prepare for complex contingencies is in dire need of reform and despite significant effort we have not achieved an equally significant change in capability.

Every agency in our government will experience considerable changes in leadership over the coming months as we transition from one administration to another. The friction generated by this transition must be capitalized on to produce the traction necessary to fully implement a change to our interagency processes. This catalyst, along with the leadership necessary to sustain change, may be able to produce a new organizational structure for the interagency process. With bi-partisan backing within Congress we may overcome the stagnant state that dominates and prevents change within our interagency processes. In all, we can prevail over the organizational change pitfalls which have hamstrung us for eight years despite the efforts of good intentioned public servants. Our ability to regain our stature in the globalized world of today and in the future will be a directly proportional to our ability to adapt ourselves first.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> A Speech by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates to the National Defense University, Washington, D.C., Monday, September 29, 2008, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1279> (accessed January 26, 2009)

<sup>2</sup> Governance - government; exercise of authority; control. a method or system of government or management. The act, process, or power of governing; government: "Regaining a sense of the state is thus an absolute priority, not only for an effective policy against . . . terrorism, but also for governance itself" (Moorhead Kennedy). The state of being governed. governance. *Dictionary.com*. The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/governance> (accessed January 27, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Militarization of foreign policy is a theme in numerous articles and papers today. Eric Green, in a December 18, 2008 article "U.S. Military Implements Policies Set by Civilian Leaders" discusses it. Gordon Adams, in an April 1, 2007 article "The U.S. Military's Growing Role in Foreign Policy" also discusses it, as does Mark Marzetti in his December 20, 2006 New York Times article "Military Role in U.S. Embassies Creates Strains, Report Says."

<sup>4</sup> *Einstein Quotes Home Page*, <http://www.einstein-quotes.com/content/view/23/37/> (accessed January 28, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Robert M. Gates, *National Defense Strategy* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, June 2008), 2.

<sup>6</sup> George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, March 2006), 43

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 44-45.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco*, (New York, NY: The Penguin Press, 2006), 78-81.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 102-104.

<sup>10</sup> COL Bryan Watson, *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Three Pitfalls of Adaptive Planning*, Warfighting Studies Program Research Paper, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 26, 2006), Pg 3-11 to 3-12. COL Watson cites NSPD-26 as outlining specific strategic goals and objectives for Iraq however, NSPD 26 outlines Intelligence Priorities. Also see, Catherine Dale, *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Strategies, Approaches, Results, and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress, (Washington, DC: March 28, 2008), 3-16.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *The United States Army Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design*, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5-500 (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, January 28, 2008), 5. Each of these systems has a structure of independent parts that interact. Some of these parts interact with parts of other systems. It is the number of parts and the ways in which they interact that define the complexity of a given system. (1) Structural complexity is based upon the number of parts in a system. The larger the number of independent parts in a system, the greater its structural complexity. (2) Interactive complexity is based upon the behavior of the parts and the resulting interactions between them.

The greater the freedom of action of each individual part and the more linkages among the components, the greater is the system's interactive complexity.

b. Structural Complexity. It is possible for a system to have many parts and therefore great structural complexity, but to exhibit almost no interactive complexity. Machines function this way. A microchip may have billions of internal circuits and therefore great structural complexity, but its responses to a wide range of inputs are entirely predictable. It is therefore interactively simple. Similarly, an automobile driver knows when he puts his foot on the accelerator that his vehicle, which is constructed from thousands of parts, will go faster.

c. Interactive Complexity. Interactive complexity makes a system more challenging and unpredictable than structural complexity. These systems are non-linear because they are not proportional, replicable, or additive, and the link between cause and effect is ambiguous. They are inherently unstable, irregular, and inconsistent. The most complex systems are those that are both structurally and interactively complex. However, even a structurally simple system can be interactively complex and therefore unpredictable. Take for example, the highly interactive dynamics associated with a small group of friends. A system composed of people is inherently interactively complex because people have great freedom of action and links to many others in their society.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *The United States Army Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design*, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5-500 (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, January 28, 2008), 21.

<sup>13</sup> George W. Bush, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization*, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44 (Washington, DC: The White House, December 7, 2005), 1.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>15</sup> William S. Clinton, *Managing Complex Contingency Operations*, Presidential Decision Directive/PDD-56 (Washington, DC: The White House, May 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Gordon England, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 (Washington, DC: The Department of Defense, November 28, 2005), 3.

<sup>17</sup> The United States Department of State, "Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization", <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/> (accessed December 30, 2008)

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of State. Extract from the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), Draft Version, *Overview of the Emerging USG Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation* (Washington, DC: The Department of State, October 28, 2008), 1 footnote.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>20</sup> The Deputies Committee approved the Interagency Management System for Reconstruction and Stabilization (IMS) and the associated triggers for initiating planning on March 29, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> The United States Department of State, "Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization Frequently Asked Questions", <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/66427.htm> (accessed January 5, 2009)

<sup>22</sup> Ambassador John E. Herbst, Coordinator for the Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization, "Briefing on Civilian Stabilization Initiative", February 14, 2008 <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/100913.htm>. (accessed January 8, 2009)

<sup>23</sup> General Kip Ward, "US AFRICOM Congressional Testimony", March 13, 2008, <http://www.africom.mil/printStory.asp?art=1799>. (accessed November 24, 2008)

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning*, Joint Publication 5-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, December 26, 2006), II-8.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, II-6.

<sup>26</sup> Gian P. Gentile, "A (Slightly) Better War: A Narrative and Its Defects." *World Affairs Journal*. Summer 2008, <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/2008%20-%20Summer/full-Gentile.html>. (accessed January 8, 2009)

<sup>27</sup> Blunted the Spear is a term used by Matt Bennett and Jon Cowan, *The Blunted Spear III: The Iraq War and US War-Fighting Ability*, (Washington, DC: The Third Way National Security Program, April 2, 2008) [http://ww2.americansforgunsafety.com/data/product/file/125/The\\_Blunted\\_Spear\\_III\\_-\\_The\\_Iraq\\_War\\_and\\_US\\_War-Fighting\\_Ability.pdf](http://ww2.americansforgunsafety.com/data/product/file/125/The_Blunted_Spear_III_-_The_Iraq_War_and_US_War-Fighting_Ability.pdf) (accessed January 9, 2009)

<sup>28</sup> U. S. Government Accountability Office, *PEACE OPERATIONS Effect of Training, Equipment, and Other Factors on Unit Capability: Report to Congressional Requesters*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office, October 1995), 2. <http://www.gao.gov/archive/1996/ns96014.pdf> (accessed January 8, 2009)

<sup>29</sup> William J. Perry, "The U.S. Military: Under Strain and at Risk, " (Washington, DC: The National Security Advisory Group, January 2006) [http://democrats.senate.gov/pdfs/NationalSecurityReport\\_01252006.pdf](http://democrats.senate.gov/pdfs/NationalSecurityReport_01252006.pdf) (accessed March 15, 2009)

<sup>30</sup> Derek S. Reveron and Kathleen A. Mahoney-Norris, "Military Political Relations: The Need for Officer Education," *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 52, (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2009): 64-65.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid: 66.

<sup>32</sup> John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press), 4-14.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>34</sup> Major David Dudas and Major Christopher Hornbarger, *The Nature of Public Diplomacy Challenge*, Public Diplomacy Project (West Point, NY: United States Military Academy, Department of Social Sciences, February 23-24, 2006), 6.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Command and Control of Joint Land Operations*, Joint Publication 3-31 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 23, 2004), III-1

<sup>36</sup> Major David Dudas and Major Christopher Hornbarger, *The Nature of Public Diplomacy Challenge*, Public Diplomacy Project (West Point, NY: United States Military Academy, Department of Social Sciences, February 23-24, 2006), 9.

<sup>37</sup> Clark A. Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols, Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase I Report*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2004), 60-67.

<sup>38</sup> Congressman Geoff Davis, "Interagency Reform: The Congressional Perspective," *Military Review*, July-August 2008, 5. <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/JulAug08/DavisSpeechEngJulAug08.pdf> (accessed January 5, 2009)

<sup>39</sup> Karen DeYoung, "Obama's NSC Will Get New Power," *Washington Post*, February 8, 2009, 2. <http://ebird.osd.mil/cgi-bin/ebird/displaydata.pl?> (accessed February 8, 2009)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> Barack H. Obama, *The Agenda: Defense*, (Washington, DC: The White House, January 23, 2009), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/defense> (accessed January 23, 2009)

<sup>42</sup> W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002), chapter 12. According to *Organizational Change: Theory and Practice*, mavens, connectors, and salesmen are terms to describe certain individuals in an organization; Mavens are collectors of information; Connectors have a special gift for bringing the world together; Salesmen are critical to spreading the change virus.

<sup>43</sup> "The Honorable James R. Locher III," *Keynote Address: Leadership and the National Security Reform Agenda*, in Joseph R. Cerami, Robin Dorff, and Lisa M. Moorman, "Colloquium Report: Leadership and National Security Reform: The Next President's Agenda," (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, October 2008), 29.

<sup>44</sup> Laura Rozen, "James L. Jones and the Committee to Run the World," *The Cable*, February 10, 2009, 1. [http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/02/10/james\\_l\\_jones\\_and\\_the\\_committee\\_to\\_run\\_the\\_world](http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/02/10/james_l_jones_and_the_committee_to_run_the_world) (accessed February 18, 2009)