

A WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO STABILITY OPERATIONS AND COUNTERINSURGENCIES

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**A WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO STABILITY OPERATIONS AND
COUNTERINSURGENCIES**

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The current US grand strategy of defeating, dismantling and disrupting Al-Qaeda and other violent transnational extremists, currently the focus in Afghanistan and Pakistan, has evolved into a COIN and stability strategy prosecuted at a level and spectrum unprecedented in US history. In many ways we have committed to a national COIN and stability strategy. Supporting a successful COIN campaign within a stability context requires a whole of government approach on a scale unparalleled in our nation's history. Despite some positive approaches, there has been no concerted effort from a national policy level to harness and direct the full effects of all instruments of national power. We have taken a mostly singular Military approach when the true answer lies in applying Diplomatic, Informational, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence and Law Enforcement (DIMEFIL) elements in an integrated and unified effort. Concomitantly there are several policy changes required to integrate the instruments of national power along with definitive actions to harness those actions into a unified whole of government approach.

A WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO COUNTERINSURGENCIES

My message is that if we are to meet the myriad challenges around the world in the coming decades, this country must strengthen other important elements of national power . . . and create the capability to integrate and apply all of the elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad.

—Secretary of Defense Robert Gates¹

The re-emergence of counterinsurgency (COIN) theory has served as a catalyst for significant change in US military doctrine in this decade and has improved operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in a similarly significant manner. It has served as a useful and healthy debate within both the US Government and the US Military on a wide variety of subjects ranging from force structure to training. More importantly, until the US came to grips with the necessity for a population centric COIN strategy in Iraq in early 2007, we were in grave danger of suffering a major strategic defeat. While much work needs to be accomplished in Iraq, it has been stabilized enough, through an intense COIN effort, to focus on Afghanistan and future threats. More recently, documents such as DOD directive 3000.05² and National Security Presidential Directive-44 (NSPD-44) have acknowledged the necessity for COIN and stability operations at the operational and strategic level.

The current US grand strategy of defeating, dismantling and disrupting Al-Qaeda and other violent, transnational extremists, currently the focus in Afghanistan and Pakistan, has evolved into a COIN and stability strategy prosecuted at a level and spectrum unprecedented in US history. In many ways and on many fronts, whether we like it or not, we have committed to a national COIN and stability strategy. At the very least, supporting a successful COIN campaign within a stability context requires a whole

of government approach on a scale unparalleled in our nation's history. Certainly, much of this commitment is driven purely by the change in the nature of warfare in the post Cold War period. But we have also been drawn into a larger global insurgency against extremists and terrorists who chose to attack us and demands a grand strategy underpinned by COIN principles.

In December of 2009, President Obama outlined a new US policy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. This new strategy clearly defined the ends and means to meet what the President defined as a "vital national interest....to seize the initiative, while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan."³ Besides committing 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan, the new strategy also committed a dramatic increase in civilian efforts to build the Afghan government.

While a needed and welcome change, this new policy for Afghanistan highlights the challenges faced by the Administration in implementing a comprehensive approach to implementing a COIN strategy –something the US government has struggled with for the past eight years. The military part is relatively easy. The real challenge is how to synchronize and harness *all* instruments of national power in support of a COIN strategy.

This paper is not intended to debate the efficacy of a COIN focus for the US military or the US government. It does not advocate whether or not US military capability should be focused on traditional warfare versus an irregular warfare construct with COIN and stability as a major operational focus. As we shall see, the conditions and requirements for COIN and stability operations are extant and required by both our

grand strategy and our leadership – now and in the near future. Rather, this paper addresses the fundamental challenge of a government faced with operating in complex environments – either by choice or circumstance. It addresses the different conditions present in the conflicts of today and the near future, particularly with a population centric focus, as well as the inherent danger of using primarily a military approach. More importantly, it offers concrete solutions involving policy and other strategic aspects to implement a comprehensive solution that ultimately arrives at a whole of government approach to COIN and to a large degree, stability operations.

Description and Conditions of the Current Environment

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11th, 2001 served as an opening blow in what has become a global insurgency waged by terrorists, and extremists aimed at undermining the dominance and power of the United States and our allies. In the nearly eight years since 9/11, the US faces an era of immense complexity. We find ourselves in a protracted struggle against powerful, violent, non-state actors: principally Al Qaeda and other transnational terror networks operating within the boundaries of willing, unwilling or semi-willing states. This complexity has been compounded by globalization and a corresponding urbanization as well as multiple factors such as proliferation of advance technology and violent transnational actors.⁴ As the President stated in his policy speech on Afghanistan in December of 2009:

...unlike the great power conflicts and clear lines of division that defined the 20th century, our effort will involve disorderly regions, failed states, [and] diffuse enemies. So as a result, America will have to show our strength in the way that we end wars and prevent conflict -- not just how we wage wars. We'll have to be nimble and precise in our use of military power. Where al Qaeda and its allies attempt to establish a foothold --

whether in Somalia or Yemen or elsewhere -- they must be confronted by growing pressure and strong partnerships.⁵

The President succinctly described the complex challenges that we face; mainly, a host of inherent asymmetries in our current conflict against today's adversaries.⁶ Foremost is our conventional military superiority, especially when it is applied in a unilateral approach. Too often, we inadvertently force our adversaries to avoid our strength and migrate towards unconventional approaches in an attempt to balance this conventional superiority and the physical odds stacked against them.⁷ Thus, the primacy we enjoy in a conventional manner is often offset by our adversaries, especially in a COIN environment. Future adversaries will observe this trend and likely respond with asymmetric or irregular methods involving concealment amongst the population.⁸ This unintentional asymmetry, caused by military centric actions or other incomplete responses, causes our adversaries to move to a different "ground" that offers them sanctuary and offsets our perceived strengths.⁹ Given this tendency and absent a full spectrum, whole of government approach, our adversaries undoubtedly choose the social and political fabric of the state as their battleground.¹⁰ More often than not this new battleground is within a traditional state that has a high degree of internal conflict and some elements of an insurgency (for example already present, as in Afghanistan; or created by our actions, as in Iraq and to an extent Pakistan). This internal conflict allows transnational non-state actors, often with violent intentions, a high degree of freedom of action in ungoverned spaces, under governed spaces or within a complicit regime.

Central to this problem is the population, more often than not caught somewhere in the middle. The population is critical to insurgents, transnational terrorists and violent

non-state actors and other actors operating outside of legitimate governments for their own freedom of action. Conversely, the population is also of utmost importance to the legitimate government and the US to not only eliminating transnational terrorist freedom of action but also for the specific legitimacy of the government in question and their overall sovereignty.

The US has pursued a strategy focused, partly at least, on limiting the ability of these actors to operate with impunity or near impunity in traditional states either with complicity or illicitly. Our strategy as outlined in the White House white paper on Afghanistan advocates, "Promoting a more capable, accountable, and effective government in Afghanistan that serves the Afghan people and can eventually function, especially regarding internal security, with limited international support."¹¹ Conversely, ineffective governments are both incubators of revolution and impediments to successful COIN.¹² The ends of US strategy therefore are not necessarily winning or defeating these insurgencies or even gaining control of the state in question. As President Obama stated with regards to Afghanistan, "...America seeks an end to this era of war and suffering. We have no interest in occupying your country."¹³ The nature of protracted struggles amongst the people does not lend itself to decisive military victory.¹⁴ Rather, US end(s) are containing regional destabilization, maintaining access to markets and resources, reducing transnational crime and more importantly allowing host governments the time, space and security to regain ungoverned or under governed space that allows the US and/or partner nations to more effectively isolate and destroy insurgents and violent transnational non-state actors and specifically prosecute a grand strategy against al Qaeda.¹⁵ The US path to victory rests on managing threats and a

dichotomy comprised of building host nation forces and capacity for governance enabled by the tacit or explicit acceptance of the population.¹⁶

Challenges to the COIN Practitioner-The Dangers of the Military “Going it Alone”

For better or worse, the US military is the most preeminent and viable instrument of national power and is likely to be called on first in most contingencies, particularly those that involve major violence or exceed the capacity of US government agencies or foreign partners.¹⁷ While the military role in COIN is essential for providing security and is clearly a critical requirement, it will not defeat an insurgency on its own.¹⁸ In a counterinsurgency, the military is, in a sense, an enabling system for civil administration.¹⁹ Utilizing a clear, hold and build methodology,²⁰ the military can set the required conditions for restoration of the basic necessities required for acceptance of a legitimate government by the population: security followed by essential services, rule of law and effective governance using US or indigenous force (likely trained by US military forces).²¹ This can be accomplished through moderate levels of civil-military integration led by US or host nation military forces and augmented with a modest infusion of well planned civil works projects funded primarily with military funds. However, without an aggressive follow up by civilian agencies more adept at understanding, harnessing, and synchronizing disparate entities such as non governmental agencies, host nation non-military elements and inter-governmental agencies,²² actions undertaken by the military alone will have, at best, short term effects. Concomitantly, the military must undergo a significant cultural shift towards accepting interagency, inter-governmental, and non-governmental assistance and integration. In the words of Andrew Krepinevich, noted historian, author and former US Army officer:

Counterinsurgency requires a unity of effort and command among the military, political, economic and social dimensions of the conflict. Reconstruction efforts in the absence of security will almost certainly fail, as will attempts at political reform.²³

In order for the host nation to work safely with and within its population, achieve long term economic revival, garner political reconciliation, effect non-governmental assistance and ultimately insert the government between the insurgency and the population, civil and military measures must be applied nearly simultaneously. As FM 3-24 states:

Unity of effort must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation. Otherwise, well-intentioned but uncoordinated actions can cancel each other or provide vulnerabilities for insurgents to exploit.²⁴

The failure of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Iraq offers the most striking example for uncoordinated actions and the uneven application of instruments of US national power. The CPA was grossly understaffed and disconnected from the military efforts. Tom Ricks summarizes this situation rather well in *Fiasco*:

The CPA was ineptly organized and frequently incompetent, working badly not only with Iraqis and the media, but even with the US military, its partner in the occupation.²⁵

Unfortunately this fundamental disconnect of US strategic ends in Iraq, plagued US efforts for nearly four years.

Despite the ineptness of the CPA in Iraq, there were some early signs of interagency coordination and an attempt at applying more instruments of national power, specifically, early on in Afghanistan. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's) were initially established in Afghanistan as early as 2003, to integrate military and civilian personnel involved in security, stability, transition and reconstruction (SSTR) operations.²⁶ This model was later transferred to Iraq in 2005 with some success,

especially during the surge in 2007. While PRTs represent a modicum of success at the tactical and operational level, a deleterious imbalance continues to exist at the strategic level.

Policy Attempts to Correct the Imbalance Between DOD and Other Agencies

Recognizing the imbalance between military and other instruments of national power at the strategic level, President George W. Bush issued NSPD-44 in December of 2005. NSPD-44 was the next logical iteration of national policy and built upon Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56 issued under the Clinton Administration.²⁷ PDD-56 suffered from a large degree of strategic latency, given that it was developed immediately after the Cold War, in response to Somalia and conditions that had largely been overwhelmed by events in the post 9/11 security environment. Under the Bush Administration prior to NSPD-44, there was a strategic disconnect over lead agencies in charge of stability and reconstruction efforts in Iraq, most evident in the ineffectiveness of the CPA. NSPD-44 attempted to address the fundamental issue of unity effort in Iraq after the failure of the CPA and designated the Secretary of State as the lead for coordinating and integrating efforts among government agencies:

The Secretary of State shall coordinate and lead integrated US Government efforts, involving all US Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing US military operations across the spectrum of conflict.²⁸

A full year prior to NSPD-44, the State Department created the State Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) to handle responsibilities for which it had been unprepared in Iraq and Afghanistan. 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. The Core Mission of S/CRS is to lead, coordinate and institutionalize U.S. 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.²⁹

In order to meet those requirements, S/CRS established a Civilian Response Corps (CRC) of 250 active civilian experts. The CRC is composed of active component members that are full time employees of the DOS and are able to deploy and support a U.S. mission or military operation, engage with a host country government, coordinate with international partners, and conduct assessments in the field.³⁰ Additionally, S/CRS has a standby component of the Civilian Response Corps (CRC-S) made up of 2000 members. There is also the Reserve Component of the Civilian Response Corps (RC-CRC) made up of another 2000 members. The 2000 members of the CRC-S is comprised of current U.S. Government employees who fill ongoing job responsibilities in their agency and are trained to deploy with the Corps on 30 days' notice for reconstruction and stabilization operations.³¹ The other 2000 members come from a yet to be determined pool of civilian reconstruction experts from the private sector, not currently employed by the government.

NSPD-44 attempted to strengthen the efforts of S/CRS, providing presidential authority for lead agency responsibility, in this case resident within the State Department. While NSPD-44 serves as a great example of the interagency correcting itself and the administration addressing many years of painful lessons learned, this does not necessarily mean the State Department has all the capabilities required to perform stability and reconstruction operations, or is even the even the right entity to do so.³²

S/CRS has faced Congressional unwillingness and hesitancy to support an effort deemed as peripheral to national security resulting in a fundamental lack of funding and capacity.³³ As well as facing skepticism on Capitol Hill, S/CRS suffers from its location within the State Department where it threatens long standing regional bureaus, as well as the traditional turf and equities of functional offices.³⁴ S/CRS has struggled to establish working relationships with the regional bureaus within main State, as well with the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (ODFA) and United States Agency of International Development (USAID).³⁵ More importantly, until recently, S/CRS has been unable to generate a deployable roster of personnel to alleviate the burden of current US military stability operations.³⁶ Despite these challenges, S/CRS represents the most convincing and comprehensive efforts to date to develop and deploy a civilian capacity for stability operations.³⁷ This effort, while a positive initial initiative, represents but one agency and a “pickup game” of other agencies – lacking the authority and expertise needed to coordinate across the interagency.

Since 9/11, other federal agencies have also expanded their scope of foreign security and stability assistance and engagement. For instance, the Department of Energy’s nonproliferation programs are now budgeted at over \$1 billion a year. Within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Justice (DOJ) through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has also increased overseas foreign assistance programs.³⁸ These are but a few of the examples of the disparate efforts across the interagency to affect stability and reconstruction efforts in support of our grand strategy.

Serious challenges across the whole of government involving planning, budgeting, synchronization and coordination result from this dispersion of activities.³⁹ Despite a clear lead for security and reconstruction as directed under NSPD-44, the Secretary of State does not have sufficient authority to coordinate the vast amount of programs, nor is there any coordination or direction from or with the White House. Even if it did, State Department culture focuses on diplomacy, not strategy, planning, programs and implementation, which are critical requirements for stability and reconstruction efforts.⁴⁰ When DOD efforts are included, the problem becomes one of an order of magnitude exceeding billions of dollars, but more importantly one that is disconnected from the priorities of the President and the grand strategy of the US. Efforts dispersed across a wide swath of disconnected agencies, within regions and countries that may not best serve the vital interests of the US or our current grand strategy are at the least a waste of valuable resources and at worst counterproductive in support of that grand strategy.

In order to truly implement a national strategy in support of stability operations in general, and specifically COIN, the US needs a comprehensive and centralized policy. This policy must link resources and authorities, while providing sufficient guidance from the President in support of vital US interests and US grand strategy.

Identifying the Key Elements for a Whole of Government Approach

While the S/CRS has been able to garner support from several agencies within the US government, the disconnected activities outlined previously are a significant impediment to implementing a true whole of government approach. In order to better harness all of our instruments of national power in support of national interests,

executed as COIN and stability strategies, the US needs to re-examine its application of instruments national power.

Traditionally, when we look at applying instruments of national power to a strategy and concomitant policy, we start with a continuum consisting of Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic (DIME) elements. Uniting the diverse capabilities necessary to achieve success and resident across this continuum requires a collaborative and cooperative policy focused on a common goal.⁴¹ Whereas military operations require unity of command, the challenge for the policy maker is in achieving unity of effort, manifested as a whole of government unified of action.⁴²

In this case, we have addressed the Military aspect in great detail – clearly the military has a significant role in providing security, and initially enabling a comprehensive, whole of government approach. We have also addressed how the military cannot do this in isolation. This is the classic military simile of “if the only tool you have is a hammer, every solution looks like a nail.” The challenges of synchronizing and coordinating a whole of government unified action plan demands more than a hammer to pound the nail of violent, transnational extremists and certainly more than a hammer in complex operations involving COIN and stability. This has been addressed within NSPD-44, the diplomatic effort resident in the S/CRS, expanded capacity in USAID and other initiatives across the interagency. While not perfect, this has been the best attempt at a US whole of government, unity of effort, approach to date.

Going forward we need to recognize that there are more players within the interagency that are involved in stability, COIN and reconstruction. We need to expand our traditional horizon beyond DIME – especially DOD and DOS to include more

agencies that bring additional instruments of national power to bear. More importantly, we need to recognize the limitations inherent in a policy that places a lead agency in charge of national policy – in this case S/CRS.

Current Policy Disconnects

Current US policy and strategy has drawn an unnecessary and dysfunctional differentiation between the concepts of COIN and the tasks of stability operations. As we have seen, there is substantial overlap between COIN and stability – especially when those operations have strategic implications. Additionally, there is much debate within the interagency as to the definitions of both COIN and Stability. In order to develop a comprehensive, whole of government policy – within the context of the strategic environment outlined previously, a grouping of strategic realities of concern to policy is offered; not by definitions, but by the attributes they share in an attempt to highlight the challenges faced when crafting policy. Towards that end, David Ucko has identified three specific attributes of key import that stability and COIN operations share:

- A medium to high level of hostile activity targeting the “stabilizing” forces, whether foreign or local; this is also known as a nonpermissive operational environment.
- An underlying state-building initiative, of which the military stabilization effort is but a subset. State-building is loosely understood as primarily nonmilitary assistance in the creation or reinforcement of state structures, culminating in the formation of a government that is, at the very least, able to maintain stability in the territory under its jurisdiction.
- The deployment of ground troops to conduct operations in the midst of a local population.⁴³

It is when the three of these characteristics have coexisted within our policy that the US has struggled to achieve our desired ends.⁴⁴ Pertaining to our current policy for

Afghanistan and Pakistan (AFPAK), it also has implications for any future strategy which must be addressed to secure vital US interests.

Currently, the Pakistanis, with a large amount of US indirect support, are waging an internal counterinsurgency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas against al Qaeda and a Taliban sponsored insurgency. Within this internal conflict and under governed space, al Qaeda and other groups of jihadist terrorists remain entrenched and operate with a high degree of impunity. From this sanctuary al Qaeda can support a Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan while planning and conducting global operations. Pakistan represents the non-permissive operational environment for the US, mainly due to Pakistan's unwillingness to allow a heavy US presence, but equally for the Pakistanis due, in large part, to insurgent activity, population complicity, and al Qaeda presence.

At the same time, we are directly engaged in a COIN campaign amidst the population in conjunction and with the support of the Government of Afghanistan. Within this campaign we are also attempting to promote and build democratic institutions within the Afghanistan Government to strengthen and legitimize it amongst the population. Exploiting this internal conflict, al Qaeda seeks to reestablish their old sanctuaries in Afghanistan. The growing size of the space in which al Qaeda is operating is a direct result of the terrorist and insurgent activities of the Taliban and related organizations within Afghanistan and, to a large degree, Pakistan. If the Government of Afghanistan were to lose to the Taliban, Afghanistan could once again revert to a terrorist base of operations for al Qaeda. Afghanistan represents the attributes of both a US presence in the midst of the local Afghan population and an underlying state-building initiative.

While there may be an important tactical and operational distinction between stability operations in Pakistan and COIN efforts in Afghanistan, this has created a false strategic dichotomy; both are but a part of the broader grand strategy. Because of the major conditional differences, based on the unique attributes extant in each country, we have developed a strategy and policies that address each separately. We have also fallen into a definitional trap, trying to separate stability and COIN within an AFPAK construct that confines our thinking and drives our policy formulation and execution into discreet stove pipes based on these definitions. Although the terms COIN and stability are not entirely interchangeable, as we have seen, both comprise simultaneous military, informational, diplomatic and economic efforts to assist a government to stabilize and consolidate in its own territory – in this case AFPAK. Instead of addressing the stability attributes inherent in Pakistan and the COIN attributes in Afghanistan within one policy, we have tried to fit the issues in Pakistan in one “box” and the issues in Afghanistan into another – each with their own policy. In reality, they both coexist as equals in our policy and must be treated the same in terms of interagency response, resourcing and prioritization.

This is the fundamental problem with our current policy, as manifested in NSPD 44. NSPD 44 addresses only stability and reconstruction, while ignoring security and COIN. It charges the Department of State with oversight for stability but allocates no additional resources or authority. More importantly, it neglects the attributes of both stability and COIN as outlined above and is not nested within our current AFPAK strategy. In fact, the processes prescribed within NSPD 44 have not been used to craft current Afghanistan or Pakistan policy. The net result is a strategic disconnect within

our policy that relies heavily on military efforts at the expense of other instruments of national power.

In order to succeed in the complex operating environment of today and address the requirement to integrate many disparate instruments of our national power, the US needs a national policy that recognizes this reality. The US needs to create a national security structure process that empowers, resources and harnesses all instruments of national power ensuring a synchronized application of ways and means towards the desired end(s) in stability and COIN operations. Designed for near term ends in AFPAK, this construct can be applied for the duration of our grand strategy against global, transnational, violent extremists and overseas contingencies.

The United States has a significant stake in pursuing stability in Pakistan, defeating the insurgency in Afghanistan and creating stable governments in both countries. A better means of assisting the President in integrating all instruments of national power must be created. Additionally, an improved mechanism, beyond NSPD-44, that delegates Presidential authority and provides unity of effort across the whole of government must be an integral component of this policy. All options proposed acknowledge the underlying fact that a new combination of authorities, appropriation and structures are required to redress the shortcomings of NSPD-44 and the realities of COIN and stability inherent in our grand strategy. These options must provide success not only in the short term vis-à-vis AFPAK, but also in the long term against other potential threats across a COIN or stability spectrum.

Policy and Structural Changes Needed to Prosecute an Effective US Strategy

With so many agencies involved in national security, the coordination of strategy, planning and budgeting ultimately resides with the White House. Two organizations are

the primary leads for the President: The National Security Staff (NSS),⁴⁵ and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The NSS is responsible for coordinating, implementing and integrating national security issues across the interagency and advising the President on national security issues. During times of national security crisis, the NSS assumes the lead for the President in integrating and planning a whole of government response.

OMB is the lead for the executive branch budget process. OMB sets the requirements for the preparation and submission of every budget submitted by all federal departments and agencies. Each year, it provides each agency with fiscal guidance that determines the size of the annual budgets. OMB coordinates across the interagency to ensure that programmatic are linked and consistent with the President's priorities.⁴⁶

These two organizations form the core of necessary policy changes. The major issues posed by stability and COIN, on a national level, are interagency in nature.⁴⁷ No single agency is structured, empowered or capable to carry out the significant strategic development, programming and planning required to address the intricacies involved in the extant stability and COIN requirements of the strategic environment. Only by consolidating the power of policy and budgetary authority under one entity will the US be successful.

The first requirement is for the President to appoint a Deputy Assistant to the President for Security, Stability and COIN, reporting to the President's National Security Advisor and resident within the NSS. Concurrently, the President should publish a PPD that establishes a planning staff for this individual that is representative and

incorporates all instruments of national power. This PPD should not abolish S/CRS, but should seek to augment the capabilities resident within S/CRS and DOD by expanding interagency planning and authorities. In this case, permanent representation within this new staff from DOS, USAID, DOD, OMB, DOJ, DHS, Director of National Intelligence (DNI), DOE, Department of Commerce (DOC) and Department of Transportation (DOT) at a minimum would provide a representative cross section that would guarantee an appropriate level of capacity to address current attributes of stability and COIN currently present in Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as any future contingency across a wide spectrum of stability and COIN operations. This organization also would complement S/CRS and DOD stabilization and COIN efforts by ensuring their actions are nested within the larger strategic context. Within this PPD, the White House should also establish a standing Interagency Policy Committee (IPC) chaired by the Deputy Assistant to the President for Security, Stability and COIN (or his appointed deputy). This IPC will allow temporary inclusion of other agencies not included in the baseline staff, based on specific contingencies, as well as provide the required equity necessary in interagency relationships.

The PPD must provide enough staffing to support three simultaneous planning efforts – accounting for two concurrent operations (in this case, Iraq and AFPAK) and some capacity for future planning.⁴⁸ Under this new policy, OMB should be required to adjust and augment departmental budgets to account for interagency support for this staff. This is an important requirement as it allows the interagency to support new staffing requirements without a decrement to agency budgets or personnel allocations. This “supra staff” would be charged with developing policy and strategic guidance to the

interagency and empowered with budgetary authority resident in the OMB staff, directed by the President and appropriated by Congress. This new staff, within the NSS, should operate within the authorities outlined in Presidential Policy Directive-1(PPD-1)⁴⁹ to ensure coordination and collaboration across the interagency, but empowered to operate outside of PPD-1 in exigent circumstances. Because this staff would receive direct guidance from and report to the President, it would provide rapid strategic and policy options while allowing the National Security Advisor to maintain his role as an “honest broker” in the overall policy advice to the President, as well as maintain the integrity of the NSS.⁵⁰ This option offers not only a large degree of top-down, directive authority, but also access to diverse expertise within a staff comprised of groups with representation from all the relevant departments and agencies concerned with stability, COIN or other contingencies present within our grand strategy. It seamlessly addresses the complex issues in both Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as future contingencies by consolidating policy, strategy and resources at the executive level.

Much of the catalyst for change can start with a revamped National Security Strategy. The National Security Strategy, prepared by the National Security Staff, is usually a lightly edited statement of broad generalities – and in many cases is a series of “wish lists” for disparate agencies.⁵¹ A NSS that lays out the President’s vision for embarking on a whole of government approach in support of a national strategy implementing COIN or stability, imbedded with the changes outline above might provide the top down impetus needed to effect a change. Additionally, Adams and Williams propose another aspect that may provide an added element - resourcing:

The White House should oversee a mandatory quadrennial national security review, which would go beyond the current NSS to identify key

national security priorities. That review should be conducted jointly by OMB and the NSS, with agency participation, parallel to the defense and foreign policy reviews....A classified National Security Guidance should grow out of that review, and be conducted every two years. The guidance should provide a detailed roadmap to agencies, including budgetary guidance, focusing on key national security priorities.⁵²

This could be a powerful mechanism. When coupled with budget submission, testimony and interaction with Congress, NSS focus and oversight, agency responsiveness it will empower strategic leaders of agencies and departments across the government. It provides the right message from the President with the appropriate budgetary influence. The key priorities yield much needed clarity across all agencies and departments throughout the government. The National Security Guidance implements a singular direction for all agencies and departments to pursue in support of the key priorities. It incorporates more than just DOS and DOD –it empowers the Assistant to the President for Security, Stability and COIN and his staff, as well as all supporting agencies, especially those with capability and capacity within a DIMEFIL continuum. Those agencies could craft similar strategies that are not only embedded with the NSS, but properly resourced and structured.

Lastly, the structure created by the State Department under the S/CRS must be expanded and continued. The President has called for a civilian surge in Afghanistan “that reinforces positive action.”⁵³ The current organization of S/CRS consisting of 4,250 is clearly insufficient. A larger force of 10-15,000 is optimal for the US to mitigate current and potential crisis in fragile and failing states in support our grand strategy. The costs of this force are large, but not insurmountable.⁵⁴

There is some risk in creating an additional bureaucratic structure in the midst of multiple overseas contingency operations, especially within Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Afghanistan is of particular concern given the narrowing window of opportunity for success. There is also danger in this staff becoming directive and not collaborative, despite the diversity envisioned in the staff make up. If it is too directive then the level of support from the participating departments and agencies will be less than desired. These risks are minimal and mitigated by the executive authority inherent in the structure.

Congressional Reform

The President can ensure a whole of government approach when structuring the executive branch. Without Congressional support, however, he is limited by the real power of policy: money. National security budgets and appropriations to agencies and departments are the most accurate reflections of US security policy.⁵⁵

While Congress has played a critical role in national security and policy since 9/11, there is a strong need for congressional reform. The reforms outlined above will have minimal impact absent tangible changes in the way Congress appropriates and authorizes budgets. While Congress has taken an important first step in integrating nearly all of the appropriations functions for international affairs into one sub-committee, action is needed to strengthen the authorizing committees in both chambers and restoration of authorization bills for foreign policy institutions such as USAID.⁵⁶

Congress must undergo a similar reduction of stovepipes and centralization of authority similar to the executive branch initiatives listed earlier. Congress should also consider legislating requirements for national security planning and strategic guidance documents as outlined above. Finally the President should be required to transmit to Congress a single national security budget that outlines all stability and COIN requirements in support of our grand strategy.⁵⁷

Conclusions

The dawn of a new decade will likely look much like the previous; a protracted series of conflicts against a global insurgency in a complex environment. Within this complex environment, the US will base a significant portion of its strategy within a COIN or stability environment. In order to be successful, wholesale policy changes are needed in order to employ all of our instruments of national power in a whole of government approach. This will only happen if we implement major policy changes to create the structures and processes necessary to succeed.

Endnotes

¹ Remarks by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, in *Landon Lecture*, November 26, 2007, linked from U.S. Department of Defense, at Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), "Speeches," <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1199> (accessed December 18, 2009).

² DOD directive 3000.05 updates policy and assigns responsibilities for the identification and development of DOD capabilities to support stability operations. For further review see, U.S Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, "DOD Number 3000.05: Stability Operations," Department of Defense Instructions, Washington, DC, September 16, 2009.

³ Remarks by President Barack H. Obama, in *Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, December 1, 2009, linked from *The White House Home Page*, at "Speeches and Remarks," <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan> (accessed December, 2, 2009).

⁴ Frank G. Hoffman, "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 52, (1st Quarter 2009): 34.

⁵ Remarks by President Barack H. Obama.

⁶ Over the past decade, the term asymmetry has become so common that is almost rendered meaningless. A 1999 RAND Corporation report provides a concise definition suitable for discourse throughout this paper: "Asymmetric strategies attack vulnerabilities not appreciated by the "target" (victim) or capitalize on the victim's limited preparation against the threat. These strategies rely (primarily, but not exclusively) on CONOPs that are fundamentally different from the victim's and/or from those of recent history. They often employ new or different weapons. Additionally, they can serve political or strategic objectives that are not the same as those the victim pursues. It is important to recognize that symmetric and asymmetric strategies are defined in relative terms: Some strategies are more asymmetric than others.

⁷ David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 293.

⁸ BG Robert E. Schmidle and Frank G. Hoffman, "Commanding the Contested Zones," *United States Naval Institutes Proceedings*, 130 no. 9, (September 2004): 49.

⁹ Mark O'Neill, *Confronting the Hydra*, (New South Wales, Australia: Lowly Institute for International Policy, 2009), 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

¹¹ *White Paper of the Interagency Policy Group's Report on U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan*, linked from The White House Home Page, at "Documents," http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Afghanistan-Pakistan_White_Paper.pdf, 1 (accessed October 13, 2009).

¹² Samuel P Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CN: Yale Univ. Press, 1968), 274.

¹³ Remarks by President Barack H. Obama.

¹⁴ US Department of Defense, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations version 3.0* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2009), 4.

¹⁵ Steven Metz "New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency," *Parameters*, 37 no. 4, (Winter 2007-2008): 27.

¹⁶ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964), 7.

¹⁷ Nathan Freier, "The Defense Identity Crisis: It's a Hybrid World," *Parameters*, 39, no. 2, (Autumn 2009): 82.

¹⁸ Henrietta Fore, Robert Gates and Condoleeza Rice, *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Political Military Affairs, 2009), 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 15.

²⁰ Clear, hold and build is a cornerstone of US Army COIN Doctrine. For a comprehensive description, readers should review, U.S Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, pages 5-18 thru 5-25.

²¹ U.S Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-18.

²² JP 1-02 defines intergovernmental organizations as "an organization created by a formal agreement (for example, a treaty) between two or more governments. It may be established on a global, regional, or functional basis for wide-ranging or narrowly defined purposes. IGOs are formed to protect and promote national interests shared by member states." Of course the most notable IGO is the UN. But other regional organizations like the Organization of American States and European Union may be involved in COIN operations. See Joint Publication 1-02,

Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2007), 271.

²³ Andrew F. Krepinevich, "The War in Iraq: The Nature of Insurgency Warfare," *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments*, (June 2004): 2.

²⁴ U.S Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, 1- 22.

²⁵ Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 209.

²⁶ Michael J. McNerney, "Stabilization and Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Are PRTs a Model or a Muddle," *Parameters*, 35, no. 4, (Winter 2005): 1.

²⁷ For a detailed description of PDD-56 readers should review John F. Troxell, "Presidential Decision Directive -56: A Glass Half Full," *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction Roles*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute US Army War College, 2007), 25-52.

²⁸ George W. Bush, "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization," *National Security Presidential Directive-44*, (Washington, DC: The White House, 7 December 2005), 3.

²⁹ US Department of State Home Page, <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/> (Accessed December 20, 2009).

³⁰ Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization Home Page, <http://www.crs.state.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.display&shortcut=4F2H> (Accessed 20 December, 2009).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Gregory L. Cantwell, "Nation Building: A Joint Enterprise", *Parameters*, 37 no. 3, (Autumn 2007): 58.

³³ David H. Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era: Transforming the U.S Military for Modern Wars*, (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 97.

³⁴ Ibid, 97.

³⁵ Gordon Adams and Cindy Williams, *Buying National Security*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010), 78.

³⁶ Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era*, 97.

³⁷ Ibid, 98.

³⁸ Adams and Williams, *Buying National Security*, 85.

³⁹ Ibid, 85.

⁴⁰ Adams and Williams, *Buying National Security*, 35.

⁴¹ US Department of the Army, *Stability Operations*, 1-3

⁴² Ibid, 1-3.

⁴³ Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era*, 9-10.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 10.

⁴⁵ Formally known as the National Security Council (NSC) Staff, the Obama Administration has labeled the NSC staff as the National Security Staff.

⁴⁶ Adams and Williams, *Buying National Security*, 5.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 251.

⁴⁸ Christopher J Lamb in *Civilian Surge*: ed. Hans Binnendijk and Patrick M. Cronin, (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2009), 50.

⁴⁹ On February 13, 2009, President Obama signed Presidential Policy Directive (PPD-1). PPD-1 significantly expanded the NSC structure from President Bush and changed the interagency policy coordination mechanism. While it seems a major step forward in coordinating policy and programs across multiple agencies, actual policy change and interagency improvement is yet to be seen. See Barak H. Obama, Presidential Policy Directive 1 (Washington, DC: The White House, 13 February, 2009).

⁵⁰ Lamb, *Civilian Surge*, 53.

⁵¹ Gordon Adams, William I. Bacchus and David Glaudemans in *Civilian Surge*: ed. Hans Binnendijk and Patrick M. Cronin, (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2009), 215.

⁵² Adams and Williams, *Buying National Security*, 251.

⁵³ Remarks by President Barack H. Obama.

⁵⁴ Adams et al, *Civilian Surge*, 213.

⁵⁵ Adams and Williams, *Buying National Security*, 1.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 253.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 253.

