

Ambassador John D. Negroponte leaving Kirkuk Business Center after meeting with local officials in 2004



U.S. Air Force (D. Myles Cullen)

Orchestrating Instruments of Power for Nationbuilding

By HENRY W. STRATMAN

According to the former senior adviser to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), Larry Diamond:

Any effort to rebuild a shattered, war-torn country should include four basic components: political reconstruction of a legitimate and capable state; economic reconstruction, including the rebuilding of the country's physical infrastructure and the creation of rules and institutions that enable a market economy; social reconstruction, including the renewal (or in some cases, creation) of a civil society and

*political culture that foster voluntary cooperation and the limitation of state power; and the provision of general security, to establish a safe and orderly environment.*¹

He goes on to say that all these components are interrelated, serving as the pillars upon which a new nation and government must be built.

Following the transfer of authority from the Coalition Provisional Authority to the Iraqi Interim Government on June 28, 2004, the orchestration of these four components became the responsibility of two new orga-

nizations: the U.S. Embassy Baghdad, which replaced the CPA, and the Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF–I), which replaced Combined Joint Task Force–7. MNF–I was established as a combined, multinational, and joint four-star headquarters to exercise the command, control, and integration of political and military efforts at the strategic level. Coordinating and synchronizing efforts between the U.S. Embassy and the multinational force—given “philosophical and operational differences of civil-military institutions” (the clash of cultures)—was one of the greatest challenges facing the leaders of these organizations, Ambassador John Negroponte

Major General Henry W. Stratman, USA, served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Political-Military-Economic Integration for Multi-National Force–Iraq, Baghdad.

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and GEN George Casey, USA, respectively, on their arrival in June 2004.²

Both Ambassador Negroponte and General Casey recognized the need to nurture the fledgling government, reestablish an infrastructure capable of providing essential services to the people, and prepare the Iraqi Security Forces to take on increasing responsibility for domestic security while dealing with a persistent and ruthless insurgency. Meeting these needs and building

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the four pillars necessary to support a secure, stable, and democratic nation would require an extraordinary level of teamwork and cooperation between the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I to ensure that efforts were coordinated and complementary, not in competition.

This article describes the situation in June 2004 and the means by which General Casey organized his staff to overcome these challenges and ensure integration and cooperation between the U.S. Embassy and the multinational force. Furthermore, it highlights the ongoing interaction and synchronization of efforts between the two to build a stable and secure Iraq while concurrently conducting counterinsurgent operations against a multifaceted enemy intent on derailing these efforts. This is not a doctrinal solution, as the situation defies a lockstep approach. Rather, it is presented as a case study that might inform interagency planning and cooperation for future efforts in the war on terror.

Synchronization before Transfer

Published accounts have noted the significant problems and challenges that plagued the predecessors to the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I in dealing with nationbuilding challenges during the occupation phase. Anthony Cordesman, for instance, was particularly critical of the management of the postconflict period and ad hoc nature of the coordination between the various agencies of the U.S. Government. He observed that many of the problems facing Iraq are the legacy of its formation as a state, exacerbated by the negligent and oppressive rule of Saddam Hussein.

While the invasion did expose the ethnic, political, economic, and infrastructure problems, it

did not create them. [The U.S. Government, however,] did much to make things worse. It did not prepare for stability operations before the war, did not carry them out as needed during the war, and had to improvise both nation building and counterinsurgency operations once the war was over.³

The pre-war planning effort showed that the Department of State could coordinate an analysis of Iraq's problems with reasonable

competence, but it had almost no operational capability to develop effective plans for nation building and was unready to coordinate such activity with military security and counterinsurgency activity. Both the Department of Defense and [U.S. Agency for International Development] staffs of the State Department dealing with political and economic aid lacked expertise . . . in dealing with the planning, analysis, program development, contracting, and management burdens of a large country.⁴

the CPA) to a State Department lead and the establishment of a traditional Embassy. The team's main goal was to ensure "a close and mutual partnership between the Chief of Mission . . . and the Commander, Multi-national Force-Iraq. . . . Furthermore, the team was to continue the spirit of 'jointness' as it support[ed] implementation of the plan within the [State Department] and DOD."⁵

The Interagency Transition Planning Team's work informed the development of the U.S. Embassy and the initial *Joint Manning Document* of MNF-I while also establishing policies and procedures for clear and effective command relationships and rapport between the Embassy's Chief of Mission and the commander of the newly formed multinational force.⁶

Organizing for Integration Effects

In recognition of the fact that security efforts were linked to diplomatic, informational, and economic efforts, Ambassador Negroponte and General Casey in July 2004 chartered an interagency strategy review to perform a strategic assessment of the



Polish Civilian-Military Cooperation Group touring new Al Diwaniyah police station

55th Signal Company (Arthur Hamilton)

These criticisms, along with observations from other national security pundits, did not fall on deaf ears. In the months before the transfer of sovereignty to the Interim Government and the concurrent dissolution of the CPA, the Departments of State and Defense established an Interagency Transition Planning Team to lay the groundwork for the shift of sovereignty from a Department of Defense (DOD)-led effort (through

nature of the insurgency in order to refine the MNF-I Campaign Plan and the U.S. Embassy's Mission Performance Plan.

In July 2004, the team reported:

the insurgency is much stronger than it was 9 months ago and could deny the Iraqi Interim Government legitimacy over the next 9 months. In response, the coalition must find ways to strengthen the Iraqi Interim Govern-

Commander of Task Force Thunder passing colors to Iraqi officer in Makhmur



557 Signal Company (Cyclist Kinchen)

*ment in all dimensions of national power (political/economic/security) and facilitate political reconciliation. Otherwise the insurgency will grow more violent and the election and constitutional process will be endangered.*⁷

The assessment team recognized that MNF-I was more mature than its political and economic capabilities and that all three were hampered by the lack of a unifying strategy, inadequate intelligence, ineffective

the nature of the insurgency radically changed the operating environment

*strategic communications support, and the embryonic nature of [Interim Government] counterparts.*⁸

The team also found that the economic and governance plans developed by the Coalition Provisional Authority had assumed a much more permissive security situation; however, the nature of the insurgency radically changed the operating environment. As a result of the new environment and the fact that no element of the CPA or the Embassy was organized to integrate military support

for the planning of political and economic effects, the team concluded that the various economic and reconstruction programs planned or under way were not likely to achieve the desired results.

Finally, the team determined that American civilian agencies had limited penetration into Iraq's social infrastructure, while the military had substantial penetration into Iraq's political and social landscape at regional and local levels. The military,

however, had little insight into the political process in Baghdad. In short, internal systems and processes

aimed at producing certain political and economic benefits were proceeding without overall integration. The Ambassador and Commanding General of MNF-I published a Joint Mission Statement that articulated shared vision and goals and specified political, security, and economic tasks that would be the focal point of integrated efforts mounted by the U.S. Embassy and the multinational force.

A follow-on analysis by a U.S. Joint Forces Command team, led by General Gary Luck, USA (Ret.), in August 2004, further

examined how the multinational force could best advance implementation of the MNF-I Campaign Plan. This team determined that there was a key role for the military in overall political and economic effects planning to support the establishment of a legitimate permanent government, but found that the mission was not well understood and that there were no traditional mechanisms or organizations to manage this important area. The team also concluded that such an organization could support the commander's campaign plan by identifying the effects MNF-I forces were generating in strategic cities, conducting coordination and analysis of efforts to achieve desired effects, and facilitating an interagency process to coordinate economic and governance efforts of both the force and the U.S. Embassy.⁹

Based on these strategic assessments, General Casey reorganized the MNF-I staff to achieve greater integration and coordination of diplomatic and economic strategies between the force and the Embassy, creating a new staff element to that end: the deputy chief of staff, political military economic (DCS PME). The purpose of this organization was to oversee MNF-I policy develop-

ment, political-military interactions and integration of governance and economic lines of operation with coalition embassies, the Embassy's Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) and Project and Contracting Office, the Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division, and the Iraqi government.

General Casey charged commanders with supporting reconstruction and committed resources for it. The Gulf Region Engineers, in coordination with the IRMO, integrated efforts to support the \$18.4-billion Iraq Recovery and Reconstruction Fund program. At the strategic level, DCS PME worked to fill the gaps in this program, recommending the use and prioritization of other funding sources, where feasible and acceptable, to support the execution of priority projects. As security became an increasing emphasis, difficult reprogramming decisions for the project appeared. DCS PME played an integral role in establishing the priorities for reprogramming funds from electricity and water to security and justice requirements. The teaming relationship was critical to integrating MNF-I reconstruction efforts and maximizing the benefits to the Iraqi people and economy.¹⁰

In addition to the DCS PME, the reorganization of the MNF-I staff included the formation of a deputy chief of staff for strategic communication to create synergy between public affairs and information operations and to integrate coalition information operation efforts with those of the Iraqi government. Additionally, the deputy chief of staff for operations was relocated to the Embassy compound to synchronize effects within the multinational force and to provide an interagency strategic operations center. With these new organizations, General Casey would achieve the integration of MNF-I actions with those of the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy, in turn, would have a single coordinating point for a wide variety of issues at the MNF-I, corps, and major subordinate command levels.

Factors Influencing Integration

Since the founding of the Embassy and MNF-I, the Iraqi people and the Interim and Transitional Governments have enjoyed many accomplishments through their coordinated efforts, not the least being the successful election in January 2005. That level of integration between two inherently disparate organizations is attributable to three key factors: the high-level commitment

to teamwork given tangible expression by the chief of mission and the Commanding General working together, the establishment of forums for robust information exchange and planning, and the optimal organization and integration of large staffs.

Of these factors, the commitment between General Casey and Ambassador Negroponte to establish a close working relationship is the most important. General

the real mechanics of interaction take place at the action officer level

Casey acknowledged as much in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee on June 24, 2004:

The Commander, MNF-I, and the U.S. Ambassador will work closely in formulating strategic direction and ensuring unity of effort in support of the Interim Government of Iraq. Creating a secure and stable Iraq requires careful coordination of military operations and objectives with other elements of U.S. national power, including economic, political, diplomatic, and informational objectives. Establishing a close and effective working relationship with the new Ambassador and the government agencies working out of the U.S. Embassy is a priority goal for me. I will also serve as his principal military advisor.¹¹

These were not hollow platitudes, but a commitment to a "one team, one fight" approach

that General Casey instilled in the multinational force.

Complementing this high-level commitment to integration was the professional relationship established between the Embassy's political-military counselor, Ambassador Ron Neumann, and the DCS PME, Major General Hank Stratman, USA. In addition, PME developed a working rapport with the Embassy's political and economic counselors and the IRMO director. Their frequent contact and coordination have enabled a high degree of integration and synergy between MNF-I and Embassy actions. This relationship was enhanced when the Embassy populated its political-military section with experienced political officers who were comfortable working with the military and by the placement of a liaison officer from DCS PME within the staff. Additionally, the Embassy established a two-person State embedded team for each division to liaison with the Embassy and work directly for the division commander.

Although a commitment to teamwork is vital to an environment of integration, the real mechanics of interaction take place at the action officer level, which requires robust forums for information exchange and planning. As with any large organization, there are recurring meetings in the daily routine. Both the Embassy and MNF-I staffs were able to integrate, synchronize, and coordinate issues, ideas, and actions by inviting participants from the other organization. Not only did this promote inclusion and build teamwork between Embassy and MNF-I staff



Soldiers and U.S. State Department official at reopening of the Najaf Teaching Hospital

Fleet Combat Camera Group, Pacific (Edward G. Mortenson)

sections, but it also fostered ownership for actions and decisions resulting from these meetings.

The most notable of these routines include the MNF-I daily Battle Update Assessment, chaired by the multinational force Commanding General and attended by the deputy chief of mission, the political/military counselor, and the IRMO director; the Embassy Country Team meetings, chaired by the chief of mission and attended by the DCS PME and his policy division chief; and the IRMO daily senior consultant meetings and weekly program reviews, attended by the



GEN George Casey, USA, Commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, transferring Husaybah to Iraqi forces

2^d Marine Division Combat Camera (Neill A. Sevelius)

PME policy division. These forums provide the senior Embassy leadership and the MNF-I situational awareness of operations and actions across all lines of operations: security, governance, economics, and communicating.

As the Iraqi governing body evolved from interim to transitional, the campaign plan for Operation *Iraqi Freedom* grew increasingly complex, requiring an even greater degree of integration in the governance and economic lines of operation. Two new forums were established to facilitate information exchange and planning between the Embassy and MNF-I. In February 2005, the IRMO director, economic counselor, and DCS PME began meeting twice a month to assure situational awareness on the issues, strategies, and priorities regarding the reconstruction of key infrastructure and the provision of essential services to the Iraqi people. Starting in March 2005, the chief of mission and the Commanding General established a Strategic Mission Council forum to enhance unity of effort, which provides a forum for issue resolution on matters impacting the political and military situation in Iraq. Both of these forums have proven effective bridges

between the civil/diplomatic and military cultures of the Embassy and the MNF-I and are important venues for stimulating strategic decisionmaking, communication exchange, and integration.

Key Outcomes

One of the first products of the teamwork and integration between the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I was the publication of the Joint Mission Statement on August 16, 2004. While it remains classified, the document was crucial to Embassy and MNF-I efforts and probably unprecedented in its

scope. As General Casey noted in his letter transmitting the document to subordinate commands:

Recognizing that the Multinational Force's effort in Iraq is inextricably linked to that of the U.S. Embassy... this document is intended to facilitate unity of effort by focusing all elements of U.S. and coalition power and influence in the theater on executing our counterinsurgency effort.

While the title of the document might suggest a missive of limited scope, the Joint Mission Statement was much broader. It focused Embassy and MNF-I priorities and identified the political, security, and economic tasks required to achieve the desired strategic effects detailed in the campaign plan and mission performance plan.¹²

Due to the evolutionary nature of the operating environment, the Ambassador and the Commanding General revised the Joint Mission Statement following the election in January 2005. The chief of mission and the Commanding General recognized the need to articulate the way ahead in order to build the government's capacity to lead the nation. Entitled "A Plan for the Year Ahead: Transition to Self-Reliance" and published in February 2005, this second Joint Mission Statement communicated the primary and mutually supporting goals of helping the Transitional Government diminish the insurgency and prepare Iraqi Security Forces and the government to begin accepting the counterinsurgency mission lead and to complete the timetable laid out for achieving a "federal, democratic, pluralistic, and unified Iraq, in

which there is full respect for political and human rights."¹³

Perhaps the most substantive demonstration of interagency integration and teamwork between the Department of State and DOD is found in a classified cable from the Secretary of State titled "U.S. Government Position on Political/Security Principles, and Priorities for Iraq Reconstruction."¹⁴ Although drafted in Washington, the political and security objectives and priorities aligned precisely with the priorities of the chief of mission and Commanding General.

Integration and the Government

A capable and representative government is clearly priority one for Iraq. Thus, there has been a logical shift of MNF-I focus to the governance and economic lines of operation. During its existence, the Interim Government, with assistance from the coalition, worked to form the basics of a government and prepare for elections. Reconstruction and economic development were modest as the insurgency increased in intensity, and now the Transitional Government faces much greater challenges. Not only must it continue the efforts of the Interim Government, but it also must take the lead in the counterinsurgency fight while learning how to deal with an increasingly influential parliament, drafting a constitution, and preparing for another constitutionally-based national election.

Building capacity and helping the Interim Government succeed will require continued coordination and engagement with the government. The centerpiece of the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I engagement strategy is to work with the various leaders and ministries of the Iraqi government. The Embassy and the force maintain frequent contact and work closely with the prime minister, deputy prime minister, and cabinet-level ministers and ministerial advisers. This work can only succeed if the actions of both bodies are fully integrated and their interlocutors are speaking with one voice to the Iraqi government.

The interaction with the government is highlighted by the actions of the Embassy and the Multi-National Force-Iraq in providing guidance and mentorship to the deputy prime minister and the national security adviser. The Embassy and MNF-I have developed recommended policy guidance on a variety of significant security, governance, and economic issues. The DCS PME has prepared numerous coordinated

talking papers for the Commanding General to help Iraq's political leaders analyze issues and promulgate the policy decisions to address the problems and challenges facing this burgeoning democracy, thereby putting an Iraqi face on the solution while building the capacity to govern. Working together, the U.S. Embassy and MNF-I promote management strategies to enable the government to assimilate the multitude of issues and information commensurate with the establishment of governmental capacity in the security, governance, economic development, and communication realms.

Integration with the Interim Government was particularly noteworthy in the battle to eradicate insurgents in Fallujah in November 2004. Forces on the ground communicated to MNF-I that various security measures restricting movement and enforcing curfews on the citizens of Fallujah were needed to protect military and civilian lives and to ensure mission success. MNF-I worked with the Embassy to refine these requirements and obtain Iraqi government approval of emergency decree restrictions,

integration with the Interim Government was particularly noteworthy in the battle to eradicate insurgents in Fallujah

which provided the optimum operational flexibility. The government's commitment to see politically sensitive operations such as the elimination of the Fallujah safe haven through to completion set the conditions for a free and fair election.

Dialogue, cooperation, and teamwork are necessary elements of the relationship between the U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Multi-National Force-Iraq, and the Interim Government in order to achieve the vision of a vibrant and democratic Iraq. That teamwork resolved many of the difficulties cited prior to the transfer of authority on June 28, 2004, and established the foundation on which to ensure mission success.

There was no doctrine outlining the steps to accomplish this team relationship. It was achieved through initiative and a high-level commitment to teamwork, through robust forums for information exchange and planning, and by organizing for integration. This cooperation did not occur simply by throwing the organizations together, nor did it happen overnight. With the exception of the resolve for teamwork by many, all had to



Marines patrol market area of Port-au-Prince, Haiti

2. Marine Division Combat Camera (Eric C. Ely)

be built from scratch and refined over time as capacity grew and new challenges surfaced.

U.S. Embassy and MNF-I organizations will continue to adapt to provide nation-building requirements to Iraq's transitional

and constitution-based governments while serving U.S. Government interests. The lessons learned from the Iraqi experience apply to future endeavors requiring the inter-agency efforts of a U.S. Embassy staff and a joint or coalition force headquarters. **JFQ**

NOTES

¹ Larry Diamond, "What Went Wrong in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* 83 (September/October 2004), available at <www.foreignaffairs.org/20040901faessay83505/larry-diamond/what-went-wrong-in-iraq.html>.

² Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Ventures*, vol. I, available at <www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_08v1.pdf>.

³ Anthony Cordesman, *U.S. Policy in Iraq: A "Realist" Approach to its Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 6, 2004), 2-3, available at <www.csis.org/component/option,com_csis_pubs/task,view/id,1831/>.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵ Marc Grossman, "The Iraq Transition: Obstacles and Opportunities," testimony before the

U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 108th Congress, 2^d session, April 22, 2004.

⁶ U.S. Mission Baghdad Interagency Plan brief, May 4, 2004.

⁷ Building Legitimacy and Confronting Insurgency in Iraq, team report, July 15, 2004.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ L. Hawley, "An Analysis of the DCS for Political and Economic Effects," August 19, 2004.

¹⁰ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division Organization and Budget brief, June 27, 2005.

¹¹ U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services, "Advance Questions for General George W. Casey, Jr., U.S. Army, Nominee for Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq," available at <www.senate.gov/armed_services/statement/2004/June/Casey.pdf>.

¹² MNF-I/Embassy Joint Mission Statement, February 7, 2005.

¹³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546, "The Situation between Iraq and Kuwait," June 8, 2004.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of State, cable 061748Z APR 05, SECSTATE 6360, U.S. Government Position on Political/Security Principles and Priorities for Iraq Reconstruction.

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