THE PROMISE OF PRTS

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By

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ABSTRACT

Eight years into their use in Afghanistan, Provincial Reconstruction Teams are being considered by policymakers as a permanent response to a gap in U.S. stabilization capacity. These integrated civil-military teams have proved somewhat effective at stabilization in areas that are too insecure for traditional reconstruction actors like NGOs, USAID, and the UN. Though PRTs have been imperfectly implemented, the PRT model, combining civilians and soldiers into a single team for integrated operations, shows significant promise for resolving this stabilization gap. A civil-military approach is a major break from traditional U.S. stabilization efforts however, and institutionalizing the PRT model will be difficult.
This thesis is dedicated to my fiancée,
without whom this project would have been impossible.
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Introduction

Nine years into the Afghanistan War and seven years into Afghanistan, policymakers are beginning to take the solutions hastily created for the last war and institutionalize them for future operations. One of the foremost lessons learned from these wars was the need to rebuild America’s capacity for stabilization operations, especially in environments unsafe for humanitarian organizations. Provincial Reconstruction Teams were the ad hoc solution for this need, and they are now being considered a template for future operations. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review identifies stability operations as a core mission of the Defense Department and commits the military to a renewed focus on civil affairs, including PRTs.¹ The State Department's Civilian Response Corps, which aims to address the lack of trained and available government civilians for stabilization and provides support to PRTs, is growing in strength and capacity.² Anticipating future civil-military stabilization efforts, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction Stuart Bowen proposed a U.S. Office of Contingency Operations, reporting to both State and Defense, to coordinate disparate efforts.³ Taken together, these bureaucratic movements make it clear that a “PRT-type tool” is becoming the preferred option for future U.S. post-conflict and stabilization

Despite Washington's enthusiasm, PRTs have received a mixed review in both academic and policy literature. A body of writing from the NGO community has criticized PRTs as wasteful and dangerous, blurring the humanitarian-combatant divide and littering the countryside with stagnant wells and shoddily-built schools lacking teachers. Security and defense analysts and scholars have been more optimistic, but catalog a list of structural problems including fragmented command and control, lack of clear and unified strategy, and insufficient training. Useful as these evaluations and criticisms are for refining the way PRTs operate today, it is difficult to separate poor performance due to a flawed concept from poor performance due to poor execution. To understand if PRTs make sense as a policy for future conflicts, we need to break away from attempting to measure PRT performance and evaluate the PRT idea. PRTs are not just a collection of teams scattered across the Middle East and Central Asia; they are a model for a future approach to warfare. This debates is similar to how early discussions over the value of airpower turned on the tactical viability of the weapon. While many questioned if an airplane could indeed sink a battleship, the more important question that thinkers like Giulio Douhert wrestled with was how this new tool would revolutionize the

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conduct of war.

**The PRT Model: Concept and Reality**

In 2002, the U.S. military established a small number of “Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells” staffed by civil affairs (CA) soldiers and tasked with small scale reconstruction, humanitarian assistance, and liaison with the UN and NGOs. These “Chiclets” as they were known, evolved into Regional Reconstruction Teams, later renamed Provincial Reconstruction Teams at the request of President Karzai. Other nations fighting in Afghanistan quickly adopted the PRT model, with Britain, New Zealand, and Germany taking over three of the original PRTs. For ISAF, PRTs became the primary mechanism for expanding its reach across the rest of the country, taking over the German PRT in Kunduz (northern Afghanistan), taking command of and establishing two more PRTs in western Afghanistan in 2006, and taking command of four PRTs in southern Afghanistan. For the first three years, American PRTs were assembled ad hoc from units and assets already deployed to Afghanistan, only later being trained together before deployment. In 2005, PRTs were stood up in Iraq at the initiative of Amb. Zalmay Khalilzad, who had seen them operate in his previous assignment in Kabul.

PRTs, as the name suggests, operate at the provincial level, building ties with provincial governors and development councils. While sizes vary considerably, a typical team is between fifty and one hundred personnel. In Afghanistan, those personnel are

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almost exclusively military, drawn from civil affairs, military police, intelligence, psychological operations, and administrative support. Teams typically have three civilians, one from the State Department, one from USAID, and one from the Department of Agriculture. Iraq PRTs differ from their Afghanistan counterparts in several ways, most notably by being more civilian in character by reporting to the embassy instead of to the military command, by having larger civilian components, and by having State Department commanders instead of Air Force and Navy leaders. The provincial-level work of PRTs is supplemented by the district-level work of District Support Teams in Afghanistan and e-PRTs (embedded PRTs) in Iraq.

What explains the rapid adoption of this novel institution? Early in the war in Afghanistan, U.S. commanders and embassy officials discovered a mismatch between American resources for stabilization and the situation on the ground. The U.S. had considerable reconstruction expertise in State and USAID, as well as the UN and humanitarian organizations, but much of the country did not have organized enemy resistance but were too unstable for these reconstruction organizations to safely operate:

This problem exists because often no actors aside from the military can operate in unstable areas...However, moving these areas further along the spectrum of intervention is beyond the expertise and capabilities of the military. While such expertise does reside in diplomatic and development

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agencies, these agencies are not able to operate in these areas using their traditional program delivery mechanisms because of the instability.11 U.S. leaders in Afghanistan had identified the need to be able to conduct reconstruction and stability concurrently with pacification. Moreover neither security nor stability could progress independently of each other: a lack of governance and stability would produce lawlessness. The solution, according to the PRT handbook, was “a single unit incorporating the capabilities of both military and civilian organizations.”12 This is what this paper terms the PRT model: the idea of addressing the stabilization capacity gap identified in Afghanistan (and later in Iraq) with an integrated team of soldiers and government civilians. The PRT model is designed to capitalize on a number of advantages, although the PRTs active in Iraq and Afghanistan do not fully achieve all these strengths.

*Ability to operate in non-permissive environments*

The first advantage of the PRT model is to create a hardier reconstruction actor; PRTs are able to perform USAID and NGO-like aid missions in areas not secure enough for those organizations to operate. Hardiness takes two forms: location and activity. PRTs that are not located in insecure regions do not take full advantage of their compensative advantages. Further, PRTs must continue their reconstruction mission despite dangerous conditions. A “buttoned-up” PRT that can never leave its base because of security

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conditions is a waste.

Previous studies suggest that PRTs are in fact deployed to some unsafe provinces. Malkasian and Meyerle, studying PRTs in Khost, Kunar, Ghazni, and Nuristan between 2007 and 2008, found that PRTs and their partnered BCTs were regularly conducting projects in red (unsafe) districts.\footnote{Carter Malkasian and Gerald Meyerle, \textit{Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do We Know They Work?} (Carlile, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), 28.} Dziedzic and Seidl see a similar trend: “Most of the PRTs that began operation in 2003 and 2004 were located in ‘hotspots’ like Asadabad, Tarin Kowt, Lashkar Gah, Farah, Khowst, Sharana, and Qalat, where there was virtually no IO or NGO presence.”\footnote{Michael Dziedzic and COL Michael K. Seidl, “Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Military Relations with International and Nongovernmental Organizations in Afghanistan,” \textit{United States Institute of Peace Special Report 147}, (October 2005): 4.} At the same time, Robert Perito notes that initial PRT locations were selected primarily for political purposes, to establish a U.S. and Kabul presence among the four main ethnic groups, the Taliban's former capital, and nearby the most troublesome warlord.\footnote{Robert Perito, “The U.S. Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: Lessons Identified,” \textit{United States Institute of Peace Special Report 152}, (October 2005): 2.} Surveys conducted by USIP of PRT members in Afghanistan in 2005 and Iraq in 2008 also generally show an ability to maneuver despite difficult security situations. In a few cases, PRT members were confined “behind the wire,” but more often were limited by lack of military transport than by strict security concerns. In heart, for example, the PRT was able to continue working during a period of civil unrest when NGOs were forced to temporarily pull out.\footnote{United States Institute of Peace, “Oral Histories: Iraq Provincial Reconstruction Teams;” Oral Histories Project on Stability Operations, http://www.usip.org/resources/oral-histories-iraq-provincial-reconstruction-teams; United States Institute of Peace, “Oral Histories: Afghanistan Provincial Reconstruction Teams.”}
Data from the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office shows that many provinces with PRTs tend to have a high number of attacks on NGOs. It is probable that this level of violence targeting NGOs deters some groups from operating there, suggesting that PRTs do, as the interviews suggest, provide development when NGOs are forced out by security considerations. At the same time, the absence of attacks on NGOs in a given province may also indicate a low number of NGOs willing to operate in that region. The ANSO does not provide data on numbers of NGOs operating in specific provinces.

Provide reconstruction expertise

The second justification for the PRT model is that they are better equipped and trained to perform reconstruction and stabilization than conventional military units. PRTs are expected to draw on the expertise of U.S. government civilians to supplement military civil affairs (CA) specialists. Additionally, PRT members are expected to be able to “reach-back” to civilian agencies headquartered in Washington for advice and resources. As expected, execution is much more mixed. In the USIP interviews, senior PRT officials cited specific reach-back to the Corps of Engineers or to the Department of Justice. Lower-level PRT implements were more likely to say:

We decided we are on our own pretty much. That sentiment was echoed in

Reconstruction Teams,” Oral Histories Project on Stability Operations

Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, “ANSO Quarterly Data Reports,”
http://www.afgnso.org/index_files/Page595.htm

Sharon Morris et al, Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment,

both of those provinces and then also from other provinces I spoke with. They were there in Baghdad; they had their own multifaceted agenda with no one from any one agency or office talking to the other at any kind of length or in any meaningful way and they never produced anything useful that could be pushed down to the PRTs to execute. What happened was you had a bunch of captains, thirty year olds and thirty five year olds figuring everything out on the ground while a bunch of folks who had PhDs and whatnot and ostensibly had knowledge were doing very little in the rear.20

*Better access to resources*

Though not explicitly mentioned in PRT founding documents, these units benefit immensely from the vast resources of the U.S. Department of Defense, plus additional resources from the State Department, USAID, and other contributing agencies. No other development unit has a comparable access to both military lift, transit, technology, and money. This money often comes with much less strict distribution and reporting requirements than equivalent funding sources for USAID.21 While funding sources like the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) do provide large amounts of cash relatively quickly, in practice early PRTs had a hard time working out funding

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21 Malkasian and Meyerle 7.
USAID, for example, does not have a programmatic funding source for PRTs. While PRTs have forged ahead in interagency operations, bureaucracies, laws, and regulations on funding have not kept up.

*Better plugged into a counterinsurgency strategy*

While PRTs are intended to be able to coordinate with the many different actors in their area of operations, it is their relationship with the military that is critical. Many development actors, including USAID, NGOs, and the UN, operate at arms-length with the military so as to preserve their independence. PRTs, as a civilian-military unit answering to a military chain of command or to a U.S. Embassy, have no expectations of humanitarian independence, and thus are a better tool for conducting counterinsurgency. Interviews with PRT members strongly support this idea. Most interviewees frame PRT operations in counterinsurgency terms, and many felt that PRTs had a major impact in stopping insurgent activity.

A: I would say that in what we did was with the population, they regained their self-esteem, because now they were able to start providing a means to support their families, as opposed to picking up a gun and shooting at people.

Q: So you were an important part of quelling the insurgency?

A: Oh, yes, because once these people started getting it, and that trust was

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22 Dziedzic and Seidl 2-5

Alternatives: The Colonial Model and the Humanitarian Model

Adopting the PRT model to solve the stabilization capacity gap was not a foregone conclusion. In choosing to create combined civil-military teams, U.S. commanders passed over two alternative historic approaches. The first was a fully militarized approach. The PRT Handbook’s assertion that reconstruction and stabilization is beyond the expertise of the military is contradicted by history. The United States has a rich and, until this past decade, often ignored history of military-led reconstruction operations. Before World War Two, the U.S. performed multiple military interventions to end intra-state violence, restore governance, and oversee elections, such as in Cuba (1906-1909, 1912, and 1917-1919), Nicaragua (1912), Haiti (1915-1934), Santo Domingo (1916-1924), and Panama (1925). In these operations the military took full charge of civil administration until local institutions were able to take over:

While the State Department set the objectives and monitored progress, and the Treasury Department helped create financial systems, military commanders bore the brunt of not only military security responsibilities, but the wide range of civil functions necessary to rebuilding a state. Troops enforced sanitation, rebuilt decrepit infrastructure, provided local governance, managed customs revenues, enforced local laws, and hunted

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down recalcitrant opposition groups and armed criminals.\textsuperscript{25}

The military had no qualms about performing civilian duties, often serving officially and unofficially as mayors, constables, and political advisors. They saw resolving the complex issues that necessitated military intervention an indispensable part of their mission. In fact, the military's interest in conflict resolution often went as far as trying to change societies, such as ending discrimination of blacks in favor of mulattoes in Haiti. Reform of these deep-rooted causes was seen as imperialism by both Washington and the American people however, and military governments were generally prohibited from attempting the degree of social transformation they saw as necessary to lasting peace.\textsuperscript{26}

The U.S. military's willingness in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century to lead reconstruction efforts, and its reluctance to take on the same role since World War Two can be explain by three factors. First, while not themselves involved in imperial conquest, the imperial duties of other Western armies made civil administration seem like a conventional duty for an American military officer.\textsuperscript{27} Second, the Cold War created a long-term, formidable military enemy that the armed forces could dedicated their full attention to defeating. Finally, aid organizations such as the United Nations, USAID, and NGOs began to fill the civil administration gap, enabling the military's abandonment of its governance mission.

\textsuperscript{25} Richard Scott Moore, “Ending the Bloodshed and Bridging the Chasm: Military Intervention and Conflict Resolution,” (PhD diss., George Mason University, 2007), 89.
\textsuperscript{26} Moore 94-5.
\textsuperscript{27} Moore 83-84, 182.
Both the military and aid organizations began to defend this redefinition of the “proper” post-conflict role of the military.²⁸ Though today terrorism and instability are military's primary focus, the decline of imperial-style rule as an acceptable military mission and the existence of these powerful new actors mean that while the military may now be willing to return to a reconstruction and stabilization mission, it is politically and culturally unlikely to assume such a comprehensive role as in the past.

The second historical approach to resolving the stabilization capacity gap is to have the military and independent reconstruction teams working side-by-side, with the military providing as much security as possible for reconstruction to begin. As security improves, the military steps back and humanitarian aid workers play a larger role. This was the character of American efforts in the 1990's: while humanitarian interventions were relatively common, the military would establish security and quickly hand over stabilization and reconstruction to humanitarian groups or the UN.²⁹ The humanitarian model is advocated today by NGOs in Afghanistan; the proper role of the military, to these organizations, is to provide security, and PRTs and other forms of “militarized aid” should be eliminated.³⁰

Instead of these alternatives, the U.S. went with a model that has remarkably weak historic precedent. In most of America's wars, civilians have played a very small role in stability operations. An minor early exception was the U.S. counterinsurgency campaign

²⁸ Moore 110.
³⁰ Jackson 5.
in the Philippines. The islands had been ruled by American military government since its seizure from Spain when in 1901 William Howard Taft was sent to oversee a transition to civilian governance in pacified parts of the country.\(^{31}\) Though Taft mostly worked with friendly Filipinos, augmented by a handful of American civilian and military leaders, he also brought one thousand American teachers to rebuild the education system.\(^{32}\) This proto-Peace Corps, under the supervision of Frederick Newton, is the first example of a large deployment of U.S. civilians for counterinsurgency.

Not until the Vietnam War however did the U.S. make civilian forces a central part of a war-fighting strategy. In Vietnam the Department of State, USAID, the CIA, and the U.S. Information Service all ran separate pacification programs, coordinated through the U.S. Embassy. This innovation also lead to a need for an integrated civil-military chain of command for stabilization efforts. Several evaluations of U.S. pacification programs in Vietnam criticized the lack of coordination between military programs, run by Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) and the Embassy-run programs. Top-level coordination between the Ambassador and the MACV commander was insufficient for handling the mess of stabilization programs and in 1967 the separate military and civilian stabilization commands were combined in the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program (CORDS). CORDS eventually established something similar to PRTs by deploying civil-military teams to every district in South


Vietnam, with as many as 1,137 civilians serving alongside 6,464 soldiers.  

The Future of American Stabilization Operations

There is a general consensus that kind of war America faces today in Iraq and Afghanistan is not going away. Which then of the many historical approaches to stabilization will policymakers select? The military could bear the bulk of responsibility for reconstruction, as it did in the distant colonial past. The humanitarian model of the 1990’s continues to have many advocates too. What are the chances that these old models will be rejected in favor of the PRT model that has emerged from America's current battles?

The Colonial Model

Military-dominated stabilization may well end up being the template for future operations. The Defense Department is today the only agency with sufficient manpower and money to staff the stabilization mission. However today the military is eager to pass off some of this burden. There is a deep unhappiness within the military and Defense Department over committing so many resources to the stabilization mission. Moreover, counterinsurgency, for all the attention it received today, is not fully institutionalized in the military. Soldiers expected to fight in this new style of warfare are, by and large, 

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expected to teach themselves. In response Secretary Gates has frequently spoken of the need to build up civilian capacity to relieve the military of some this mission, a sentiment shared among senior military leaders:

The Department of Defense has taken on many of these burdens that might have been assumed by civilian agencies in the past, although new resources have permitted the State Department to begin taking on a larger role in recent months. Still, forced by circumstances, our brave men and women in uniform have stepped up to the task, with field artillerymen and tankers building schools and mentoring city councils...And as I’ve said before, the Armed Forces will need to institutionalize and retain these non-traditional capabilities...But it is no replacement for the real thing – civilian involvement and expertise....I hear all the time from the senior leadership of our Armed Forces about how important these civilian capabilities are. In fact, when Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen was Chief of Naval Operations, he once said he’d hand a part of his budget to the State Department “in a heartbeat,” assuming it was spent in the right place.

While Secretary Gates is largely incorrect in thinking that civilians have assumed these

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burdens in the past, the remarkable fact that the head of a government agency is loudly clamoring for resources to be diverted to a rival agency speaks to the depth of military discomfort with the mission. Given expectations of many stabilization missions in the future, the military is aware that it cannot fully escape stabilization responsibility, but its leadership is working hard to see that it doesn't take on the mission by itself.

*The PRT Model*

Another policy path is a more equal distribution of responsibility and capacity for stabilization. This sort of balance was attempted (though not fully achieved) with Iraq PRTs, and tentative steps have been taken towards making this promise a reality. The first significant change was the establishment by executive order of the Office of the Coordination for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in 2004. S/CRS most important mission is the creation of a civilian expeditionary capacity for stabilization. The Civilian Response Corps as announced will consist of a 250 member active component of U.S. government civilians ready to deploy in 48 hours, a 2,000 member government civilian standby component ready to deploy in 30 days, and a (currently unfunded) 2,000 member reserve component drawn from state or local governments and the private sector. The CRC, which was an unfunded mission for four years after the creation of S/CRS, has received a great boost of funding under the Obama administration, going from $65 million in 2008 to $323 million in 2010.36 Today, the CRC stands at 100

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36 Nina Serafino, “Peacekeeping/Stabilization and Conflict Transitions: Background and Congressional Action on the Civilian Response Corps and other Civilian Stabilization and Reconstruction
active and 800 standby personnel,\textsuperscript{37} growth that is promising, if not overwhelming.

In addition to an increased number of civilians ready and able to take on the stabilization mission, the military has shown a greater willingness to break down the wall between defense and the rest of the foreign policy community. The most illustrative example is the new Africa Command (AFRICOM). This new combatant command was established with conflict prevention in mind, signifying major military commitment to “phase zero” operations. It was also intended to be the first combatant command designed from a whole of government perspective, integrated interagency staff and a high-level civilian deputy for civil-military affairs from the start. AFRICOM is an interesting implementation of the PRT model at the command level and an indication of policymaker interest in the concept.

However there remain many significant obstacles to institutionalization of the PRT model. AFRICOM is a minor lightening rod for concerns about the militarization of U.S. foreign policy. AFRICOM in fact changed its mission to be less expansive and more in line with traditional, security-focused commands, in order to be less threatening to other stakeholders.\textsuperscript{38} Second, many observers are pessimistic about S/CRS’s ability to carry off a radical change of mission in the State Department, from traditional diplomacy

to expeditionary nation-building:

One scholar observed that it had become “a poster child for bureaucratic inertia.” The causes of S/CRS’s limited progress include the failure to receive adequate funding, the lack of a timely and sufficiently strong enabling authority, the lack of interagency acceptance, its early decision to not focus on Iraq and Afghanistan, and its marginalization within State’s bureaucracy. State commented that the development of S/CRS, like Defense’s Goldwater-Nichols reform in the 1980s, will take years to implement.\textsuperscript{39}

Using government civilians to deliver aid and perform reconstruction reverses deliberate decisions to outsource reconstruction and stabilization to NGOs and contractors. Congress eliminated America’s civilian expeditionary capability after Vietnam, and rebuilding USAID to do more than oversee contracts will take many years, not to mention building up expeditionary capacity in agencies like Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Education, that have never played that role before.\textsuperscript{40} Most damning is the likelihood that the American political atmosphere will block civilian-lead stabilization out of public disdain for nation building and foreign aid. U.S. foreign aid is a popular target for spending cuts\textsuperscript{41} and the proposed cutting of the foreign affairs budget

\textsuperscript{40} Parker 11.
\textsuperscript{41} The Economist, “This Weeks Economist/YouGov Poll,” Democracy in America, 7 April 2010.
for FY2011 despite interagency calls for it to be fully funded are indicative of its vulnerability.42

The Humanitarian Model

A third possibility is that the armed forces walk away from the PRT and colonial models. Instead interventions could return to the way they were conducted in the 1990's. The military would limit itself to establishing security, disarming combatants, and providing logistical support such as heavy airlift; all other stabilization responsibilities will be handled by non-governmental aid workers. This is the model promoted by NGOs when criticizing PRTs and other examples of military stabilization work.43 It is also the way the U.S. typically responds to foreign natural disasters: where the military plays the role of first responder and logistical manager, but medium and long-term stabilization and reconstruction is handled by governmental and nongovernmental civilians.

This division of labor is appealing but impractical, because it depends on wishing away the stabilization capacity gap that lead to the introduction of PRTs in the first place. While interventions in Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia, and Kosovo produced great strides in humanitarian-military cooperation, these conflicts are different in character than Iraq and Afghanistan, which demand a much greater level of integration between combatants and

42 Josh Rogin, “Senate Budget Committee cuts foreign aid request despite pleas from everybody involved,” The Cable, 22 April 2010.
43 Jackson 5.
development workers. Even NGOs that are sympathetic to U.S. policy goals and will coordinate with the U.S. military will not go as far as to integrate operations:

[F]idelity to the humanitarian imperative and to the principles of impartiality and independence makes it impossible for humanitarian NGOs to become part of the seamless web of [U.S. government-] supported actions which has been advocated by some American public officials for scenarios in which the [U.S. government] is engaged as a combatant or an occupying power.\(^{44}\)

The “clear conceptual distinctions between the ending of violence and the follow-on establishment of stable structures”\(^{45}\) that enabled NGO-military cooperation in the 1990s has dissolved.

It is conceivable that both the military and the civilian agencies will fail to institutionalize any of the templates presented above. Instead, future contingency operations may be addressed on an ad hoc basis, regardless of the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan. This possibility cannot be rejected out of hand; after all, following Vietnam both the military and USAID worked hard to put their pacification experience behind them. However a few factors make unlikely that at least the Department of Defense will not walk away from this mission. First, the political climate today is more receptive to counterinsurgency tactics than the political climate of the 1960s and 70's. Second, while

\(^{44}\) Interaction, quoted in Dziedzic and Seild, 6.

\(^{45}\) Moore 130
pacification was somewhat of a niche operation in Vietnam, a much larger proportion of Iraq and Afghan veterans have stabilization experience, many of whom will join the civilian veterans of stabilization in Iraq and Afghanistan as future policymakers.

The most important factor however is a realist consideration of threats. In 1975, the U.S. military could refocus on the main enemy: the Soviet Union. Today, the main enemy is instability. China, North Korea, and Iran are all regional powers, and at this stage are diplomatic concerns. However fervently some parts of the Defense Department might wish, it is clear that the next major attack on the United States will be of similar origin as the last major attack. The failed bombing by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, radicalized in unstable Yemen, reminds us that terrorism and stabilization are linked and that these will be the primary threat from some time to come.

**Policy Options**

Policymakers, when deciding how best to close the stabilization capacity gap for the future, face these four difficult paths. Recalling the hard won lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan, policymakers must not allow the fourth option, non-institutionalization, to happen. Nor does the third option, humanitarian development, meet America's national national security needs for the foreseeable future. Insurgency deliberately blurs the line between combatant and noncombatant, and to tackle it the United States must blur the line between solider and civilian.

The PRT model is a good response to the stabilization capacity gap and it is well
suited to address the problems of insurgency. But filling this gap by building capacity from scratch is a difficult task, and it is made even more difficult by the considerable bureaucratic and political obstacles to spending resources on civilian counterinsurgents. A few steps could speed the process of building civilian capacity. Defense Department funding currently being transferred to the State Department, known as the Section 1206 and 1207 accounts, should be permanently shifted to the foreign aid budget. While there are some advantages to shuffling funding from one cabinet branch to another, particularly when it can be allocated quicker than traditional funding, the uncertainty of the funding stream prevents long-term solution. At the same time the State Department and Congress need to ensure that civilian sources of stabilization funding can be as quickly and flexibly spent as military programs such as CERP.

Most importantly, policymakers need to reconcile the division between S/CRS and USAID. It is paradoxical that one part of the U.S. government, in the form of the Civilian Response Corps, is trying to recruit and teach federal employees to build an “in-house” capacity for reconstruction and stabilization. Meanwhile the primary U.S. aid agency no longer has that capacity and depends entirely on private contractors and NGOs to run its development programs. The culture of USAID, which changed in response to Congressional pressure after Vietnam, is to stay away from security missions. The U.S. cannot afford two separate reconstruction services, one that only deploys alongside the

military, and one that only deploys where the military does not go. The ultimate solution may be the absorption of USAID into the State Department, but that is an extreme and dangerous route, given the Department's historical aversion to a focus on reconstruction and the currently weak position of S/CRS. At a minimum, USAID and the CRC must cross pollinate, sharing knowledge and training, and later sharing funding and personnel.

Lastly, the military must recognize that even in the best of circumstances it will bear the biggest burden of stabilization missions. Any civilian reconstruction force will only constitute a small minority of the needed capacity; even if bureaucratic inertia within State and USAID is overcome, foreign aid is and nation-building is political unpopular, and an easy budgetary target because it has no constituency. Secretary Gates has tried to be that constituency by loudly and repeatedly urging Congress to augment the civilian agencies, but he has produced little success. The PRT experience has been especially instructive for the military, not only by developing institutional knowledge in civil-military cooperation, but also by realizing how many resources and people the civilian agencies can be expected to deploy. For stabilization missions, as for its other missions, the military must be ready to go it alone.
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