

The First Step to Interagency Reform

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Over the past several years a variety of in-depth studies and comprehensive proposals on how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the interagency (or whole of government) have been put forth by political leaders, high level federal bureaucrats, think tank experts, and military professionals. By in large, they have contributed significant, thoughtful ideas that range from very comprehensive, sweeping reform goals to more focused approaches to what is an extremely complex and important issue that could potentially involve every department and agency within our federal government. The precedent for this type or level of reform is found in the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols (G-N) Act which led to significant improvements in the integration, cooperation, and coordination between all branches of the US military that had suffered from poor communication, coordination, and execution of joint operations undertaken in the late 1970s with the failed Iran hostage rescue and in the 1980s with operations in Grenada and Panama. Some would take this a step farther and argue that we didn't reap the true benefits from the G-N Act until the invasion of Iraq in 2003, a truly combined, joint operation between all branches of the United States (U.S.) military. This paper will provide background on the main points associated with the ongoing discussion concerning interagency reform; inform the reader as to why this topic is important to current and aspiring public administrators, and finally, to present some possible means to address the human resource needs of a national security interagency rotation program. Tackling the personnel aspect of this issue is arguably the most critical aspect of interagency reform and one that could be addressed by the U.S. military almost immediately.

Literature Review

As a result of considerable effort by think tanks, legislators, and military professionals, I have been able to find a substantial amount of helpful insights, discussion, and thoughtful recommendations on how to best address enabling the interagency or whole of government approach to problem solving. Most all of the past and ongoing discussion of this topic seems to speak with one voice on what the problem is and ways of addressing it, especially the need for legislation. Much of the discussion revolves around the need to develop a national security professional career track for certain members of federal government departments and agencies. As one Army general recently said, resources are going to be much more limited, so we will have to get more creative with what we have and the issue of interagency reform is no exception. Other valuable sources have included a book on the early stages of reconstruction in Iraq published just a few months ago, that describes much of the planning phase leading up to the invasion. The book not only describes some of the mistakes made resulting from a lack of strong relationships and cooperation between members of the interagency, but also highlights the limitations of any plan, no matter how great it is, given the primacy of politics and the constraints or restraints linked to those political realities. Additionally, I have gained interesting insights through the eyes of the gentleman who led the planning effort for the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Finally, I have had the advantage of my own personal observations having had the opportunity to work closely with the Department of State (DoS) on projects such as long term police training and contingency planning while serving as a planner on the United States Forces-Iraq (USF-I) staff in 2010. As Richard Fenno so correctly points out, “This immediate proximity to data about serious political

activity produces sensitivities and perspectives which, I shall argue, do give observation some "value added"-almost certainly for students of American legislative politics, and quite possibly for all political scientists who think about politicians”(Fenno 1986, 4). Of course, one can apply this to almost anything as this comment is more about a type of research and a statement on the importance of personal involvement and first-hand experience. Fenno’s comments on the value of personal observation definitely ring true for me as a great deal of what I’ve put into this case study is based on my own experiences in the U.S. Army, especially over the past six years.

Methods

As I mentioned in the literature review, much has been written over the past several years concerning the reform of the interagency. But as I have alluded to previously, a lot of my thoughts and issues raised in this paper are a direct result of my personal experience fulfilling a wide range of duties while serving in Iraq in 2006-2007 and 2010. Even though I’m deeply invested personally in the U.S.’s efforts to bring about peace and stability to Iraq after our invasion in 2003, I’ve done my best to take an objective look at our faults and shortcomings; providing what I believe is an objective opinion on a way we could perhaps begin the process of reforming the interagency of the U.S. government. Because my experience ranges from performing duties as a trainer/advisor to the Iraqi National Police in 2006-2007, executing the plans of others to serving as one of the planners who designed and developed those same types of plans in 2010, I believe I have a unique perspective that may provide insights and understanding of what is an incredibly complex issue. In addition to my own experiences, through interviews I was able to draw on the experiences and lessons learned of a lead planner

who was heavily involved in preparations for the invasion in 2003. His experience perhaps demonstrates more than anything, the critical relationship between the military and our civilian leadership and the absolute primacy of policy as it relates to the military instrument of power.

The Problem

Often overlooked or misdiagnosed, proper identification and articulation of the problem is first and foremost on the minds of planners if they are to have any hope of finding a solution. In many instances, especially with overseas operations where very few outside the DoD deploy in support of or in conjunction with military operations, the interagency is generally ineffective or even non-existent. There are indeed many causes for the lack of formal interagency cooperation. In an article written by James Carafano, the author uses five major points to address fundamental reasons why the interagency needs reform. He cites the lack of formal, historical references to past interagency successes and failures, a need for a formal planning process that informs ways of adapting organizations and their practices to the problem at hand, the need to prepare leaders who have the skills, knowledge, and attributes necessary to solve complex problems, and draws attention to a Congress that has done very little to address reform (Carafano, 2011). My proposal focuses on the personnel (skills, knowledge, and attributes) piece of Mr. Carafano's reasons for interagency reform, putting forth an idea on how to initiate this type of reform.

To better illustrate how these problems manifest themselves in real world operations, I will share an example of interagency dysfunction learned through my own experience as a member of a brigade training team advising and assisting an Iraqi Federal

Police brigade headquarters operating in eastern and southern Baghdad. In the early part of the war in Iraq, building and maintaining the nation's security forces, both police and military, was of the highest priority. But because Iraq had no modern banking system, many of the police were forced to travel to their homes so they could deposit their pay in the local bank to make it accessible to their families. In my case, many of the federal police lived a considerable distance from Baghdad which meant that some security forces were away from their jobs for several days at a time to simply deposit money at their local bank, not to mention exposing themselves to the risks of traveling by themselves given the overall security situation at the time. The resulting lower readiness rates negatively impacted units engaged in ongoing counterinsurgency (COIN) operations as well as disrupted the training and development of new members of the federal police. While the problem was largely solved over a period of several years, the challenge could have been a case study for successful interagency collaboration and would likely have solved the problem much sooner than what actually occurred, thus perhaps preventing Iraqi and U.S. casualties while maximizing resources. The U.S. Department of the Treasury has the expertise to help solve a problem like this and if it had been given the directive, the Deputy Secretary of Treasury was prepared to help Iraq establish a modern banking system to enable Iraqi security forces to send pay home without having to leave their units and ongoing combat operations. The Secretary's proposal to address this problem was not implemented at the time because the Department of the Treasury was not tapped to conduct overseas national security operations with other government agencies (Davis, 2010).

Importance of Reform

By now a current or aspiring public administrator should be intellectually engaged and perhaps beginning to understand the importance of this topic as it relates to good governance and ultimately, national security. My assumption is that bureaucrats in general would endeavor to make government work more effectively and efficiently in every way possible. Based on what I have already said, one can get a sense of why interagency reform efforts have grown in importance over the past several years.

My hope is that this study will make one consider the challenges of fiscal constraints, large and disparate bureaucratic agencies and departments, and most importantly, the importance of reforming a bureaucracy in such a way that we have the ability to efficiently and effectively solve the seemingly endless complex problems our nation is faced with on a regular basis. In terms of interagency reform, realizing a more professional, focused national security professional personnel system would likely improve planning and preparations that range from peace time humanitarian missions to stability operations in locations all over the world. This would presumably mean more efficient use of resources and most importantly, improved planning and preparations for various scenarios that positively impact the lives of those being helped and contribute to a favorable view of the US around the world.

The realities of current and future budgetary constraints for the DoD in particular are cause for concern as it relates to national security. Even best case scenarios indicate that the largest policy action arm of the U.S. will have to carry out its mission with considerably less resources for some time to come. In a year-long study conducted by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), researchers examined how the United

States should maximize its national security efforts in an era of defense spending reductions and as a result of their efforts, one can clearly understand why increased collaboration, cooperation, and coordination across the interagency are needed to develop and execute the type of comprehensive plans necessary to solve wicked problems. As the report states, “The U.S. military faces significant budget cuts in the years ahead. Yet unlike the drawdown after the Cold War, the United States today is involved in major military and civil support operations abroad; fields a military force that needs modernizing despite a decade of soaring budgets; and suffers from a strikingly volatile global economy. Most importantly, the United States faces more serious security challenges than it did after the Soviet Union’s collapse, with potentially aggressive regimes and transnational terrorism presenting clear threats to America and its allies” (Barno, Nora, and Sharp 2011, 6). Providing the perspective of a senior Army planner on the importance and need for interagency cooperation, Dr. Kevin Benson, a retired Army colonel who led the planning effort for the invasion of Iraq in 2003, provided his take on the importance of the topic, “The Department of State and USAID should be informed of the scope of the plans developed by the geographic combatant commands. The current state of affairs in a geographic combatant command area of responsibility must be coordinated with US foreign policy specific to the region and directed at attaining US policy goals. Such an effort demands close coordination; closer than what I experienced while I was on active duty” (Benson, 2011). The type of coordination and collaboration described by Dr. Benson would afford the kind of detailed planning necessary to provide the combatant commander the quality courses of action to select from and would

ultimately support the policy objectives as set forth by the political leaders (Benson, 2011).

Informing Practice

This case study should help an aspiring public administrator at any level to start thinking about creative ways to not only get the job done, but more importantly, how to improve the system, even in a resource constrained environment. It's a reality that has been dealt with before, and even though fewer resources are not a preferred situation, it is a reality for the foreseeable future. A tight budget isn't an excuse to not find or develop better ways of conducting business, especially when bureaucratic efforts have the ability to indirectly impact lives all over the world (including at home). The reality we face in the near future is one where we might not be able to do as much, but we better be able to do just as well, if not better with the missions and roles that we are given. Today, national security involves a much wider array of issues that can only be addressed with a broader set of capabilities that are highly synchronized and carefully calibrated (Davis, 2010).

Historical Perspective – Possible Solutions

This section will provide the reader with a brief historical summary of some interagency reform efforts and then conclude with what I think a small, yet vital step in initiating interagency reform is. The call for needed interagency integration dates back at least as far as the immediate aftermath of World War II when some federal officials raised the issue of starting a form of interagency cadre career development program (Dale, 2008). Fifty years later the National Defense Panel recommended the establishment of an interagency cadre based on a long-term, comprehensive career

development plan. This idea was included in the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which recommended that interagency professionals should gain “joint” experience similar to that prescribed for military officers in the Goldwater-Nichols Act (Dale, 2008).

Similar recommendations on developing National Security Professionals (NSPs) were made again in 2001 by the Hart-Rudman Commission. In 2007 President Bush signed an executive order launching the National Security Professional Development (NSPD) program in order to develop interagency NSPs (Dale, 2008). This effort to improve the effectiveness of the interagency included a national strategy, an organizational structure, and a pilot educational program, yet received little attention on the Hill until 2008. As a result of a growing consensus between national security professionals and scholars from across the political spectrum, several congressional committees began a more earnest study of this proposed reform. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Armed Services Committee, in particular, held hearings and sponsored projects focused on interagency reform, including proposals for facilitating increased integration among federal agencies (Dale, 2008). To sum it up, several attempts at addressing the problem have been made by multiple administrations along with a lot of critical thought and recommendations by various think tanks and military professionals, but until just recently, legislation had not been proposed to more formally address the problem and begin some measure of reform.

Some would argue that there are a number of key reforms necessary to make this daunting task a reality. While nobody would deny the degree of difficulty that this effort requires, the reality is that our nation deserves our very best effort to improve our

government, to strengthen its ability to govern, and to fulfill its commitment to serve and protect its citizens and our way of life. To provide one with a good overview of the significant reform thought to be necessary for the interagency to best enable improved overall national security, I have provided an overview of five recommendations for comprehensive reform. While the five recommendations described below each have their own merit, one should keep in mind this is a stab at comprehensive reform that would require sweeping legislation to make them a reality. Though G-N gives lawmakers a model to follow for interagency reform, it is important to remember that although ultimately successful, it was directed at a single department of the federal bureaucracy, the DoD. Taken on the whole the reforms listed below are too much to push through in the form of sweeping legislation that would impact all pertinent departments and agencies of the federal government. There is value in the discussion though, as reviewing and contemplating these reforms helps one think about the challenges to realizing widespread reform and perhaps enabling creative thought about how to tackle these reforms in different ways and on different timelines, thus creating realistic expectations for all involved. Some of this, such as a national security professional program, is already being addressed through current legislative efforts, so reform efforts are underway.

Sweeping Reform – Five Recommendations

Continue efforts made by the Bush Administration to develop a national security professional (NSP) program that is designed to produce individuals that possess the skills and experience to operate effectively and efficiently across the interagency environment. While the 2007 executive order was certainly a step in the right direction, this initiative is now gaining visibility and being addressed in current legislative efforts. The professional

education and joint assignment requirements laid out in G-N have provided an excellent model for developing effective interagency leaders. The stark reality is that without specific education and interagency rotation assignment guidelines, without requirements and incentives spelled out in legislation, this effort will likely languish in the hands of agency directors who may or may not believe in the program's potential. Many who have studied this issue believe strongly that a well-designed and professionally implemented NSP program provides what is probably the most critical and likely tool for interagency reform out of all proposals in the discussion mix. This also happens to be the approach that Representative Geoff Davis (R-KY) has taken with his current legislative effort focused on the personnel development aspect of reform.

Combine the Homeland Security Council and the National Security Council into an organization with one staff. The idea with this proposal would be that merging these two staffs would ensure that securing the homeland gets the attention it deserves from the executive branch and will help develop comprehensive strategies and policies necessary to guide our efforts towards overall improved national security. The separation of these two entities has only impeded progress and efficiencies only recently realized in response to natural disasters and improved preparations for manmade disasters. This merger will improve communication and coordination of resources and assets necessary to give homeland security the kind of attention that is given to OCONUS threats. On the surface this seems to make sense and would be feasible. The reality is that this is a proposal requiring detailed analysis and a proposed methodology that would enable this to become a reality. This may be a reform to defer to a later date.

Clarify the role that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has in taking the lead in responding to catastrophic events, but also ensure that the Department of Defense (DoD) understands it is expected to play a significant role whenever needed. Posse Comitatus is still relevant; it prevents the federal government from running roughshod over local and state authorities and getting into legal jams. But the days of DoD avoiding civil support operations are over. Having said that, there are positive signs that proper preparations are being undertaken to ensure an approach that facilitates federal responses to both natural and manmade disasters. This has been recently demonstrated in the improved performance of local, state, and federal authorities in their evacuation efforts during more recent hurricane seasons that have impacted the Gulf Coast of Texas, along with the first few iterations of the chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives (CBRNE) Consequence Management Response Force (CCMRF) mission undertaken by units from the active component of the U.S. Army and filled on a rotational basis. The improvements to the hurricane response are due in part to 2006 legislation that gave teeth to stated reforms and provided sufficient appropriations to cover the expense of a completely revamped communication system, thereby fixing one of the critical problems in the Hurricane Katrina response by all levels of government.

Create a comprehensive national security review patterned after the DoD's QDR process. A national security review would provide the federal government with an integrated set of national security priorities and assign the roles and responsibilities associated with these priorities across the interagency. This review could serve a similar

purpose to the QDR in refining and updating priorities and ensuring a fresh look at national security threats and how best to confront and overcome them.

Create a strategic planning group led by a director within the newly consolidated National Security Council (NSC); this group would conduct strategic planning efforts and provide oversight of their implementation. This group would craft the kind of integrated, comprehensive strategy needed to deal effectively with a constantly changing, complex global environment. This strategic planning directorate could be patterned after the NSC Planning Board and Operations Group established and effectively used by President Eisenhower. The strategic planning directorate would assume full responsibility for the national security review and national security planning guidance. To find the most qualified director, the president should nominate this individual and the senate should confirm the nominee. Thus the appointment would receive national attention, and would prevent the installation of a political appointee.

Recent-Current Legislative Efforts

The U.S. has a tremendous opportunity to initiate interagency reform and better organize the federal government to provide national security in a complex and rapidly changing global environment. Private think tanks, the Congressional Research Service (CRS), and members of Congress have conducted in depth studies of various departments of the federal government and their associated elements of national power. Over the past several years, these worthwhile efforts have produced myriad useful observations, lessons learned, and informed recommendations that have made it possible to introduce legislation that could begin to address this issue. The resulting legislation will need to specify these reforms, set priorities and oversight responsibilities to ensure compliance,

and require feedback on the effectiveness of the system. The executive and legislative branches must manage expectations across the interagency and communicate the reality that reform will require a collaborative effort along with patience and discipline to see it through to its successful conclusion. Representative Geoff Davis (R-KY) and the recently retired, House Armed Services Chairman, Representative Ike Skelton (D-MO), announced interagency reform legislation in the later part of 2010, called Interagency National Security Professional Education, Administration, and Development System Act (INSPEAD) of 2010. Specifically, the bill was designed to provide education, training and interagency assignments to select personnel across the federal government (Davis, 2010). The objective was to develop “National Security Professionals” in various agencies. These civil servants, in addition to their regular day-to-day duties, would participate, as required, in the planning and execution of national security interagency operations. As Rep. Davis stated, “The greatest impediment to effective national security interagency operations is that many agencies lack personnel who have the skills and experience necessary to execute mission priorities as a multi-agency team in a crisis situation” (Davis, 2010).

More recently, The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2011 required the Department of Defense to select an “appropriate independent, nonprofit organization” with “relevant expertise in the fields of national security and human capital development, to conduct a study to assess the current state of interagency national security knowledge and skills in DOD civilian and military personnel,” and then to make recommendations for strengthening that knowledge and those skills (Dale, 2011). Additionally, the Interagency Personnel Rotation Act of 2011, introduced simultaneously

in the Senate and the House during the 112th Congress, aims broadly at the same goal shared by the INSPEAD bill, which was more effective and efficient interagency collaboration. While the INSPEAD bill would have established, to that end, a robust career development system including education, training, and exchange service, the Rotation Act would create a more streamlined mechanism based on a program for interagency rotations. The Rotation Act explicitly aims to limit costs, yet still move forward with reform. It is designed to achieve one for one matching between rotating personnel and host agency positions, in order to avoid gaps and eliminate the need to establish personnel “floats” as had been proposed in previous recommendations concerning national security professional programs. The expectation is for modest participation at the onset of the program with between 20 and 25 persons serving in rotational assignments per year (Dale, 2011). In terms of participation, the Rotation Act would include both national and homeland security practitioners, from the GS-11 through GS-15 pay levels for civil service participants, and would leave the participation by military officers to the discretion of the Secretary of Defense (Dale, 2011). It is this last point concerning the participation of military officers in an interagency rotation that I find somewhat puzzling and one which I address below in my own thoughts on how to initiate the personnel development program.

The First Step in Reform

In designing my own contribution to the discussion on interagency reform, I began with what is generally accepted as the most important and most likely aspect of interagency reform that could be addressed formally and informally before other reform initiatives can move forward with any kind of legitimacy. From here I decided to narrow

my focus in terms of a solution that I thought the DoD, and more specifically, the Army could propose to effect reform in terms of personnel assignment and development.

Although probably not as effective as major reform legislation, the process of changing individual practices, many sociologists would argue, is the most effective way to change shared culture over time. Similar to the military's joint qualification system, the overall intent of the Rotation Act may best be described as less about the creation of a cadre of interagency-qualified officers who serve together and work on interagency matters, and more about the development of an increasingly "interagency-minded" total force that benefits from—and relies on—the infusion of whole of government perspectives using the mechanism of interagency rotation assignments (Dale, 2011).

To begin with, the U.S. Army already possesses two distinct groups of personnel that are well-suited to understanding and working with the various members of the interagency. The first group is a career path specialty known as Army Strategist. This functional area, as it is also referred to, is comprised of some four hundred officers who are trained and educated to serve from the tactical to the strategic levels of our defense department and even serve in some nominated positions within the DoS and in the Office of Congressional and Legislative Liaisons (OCLL). The vast majority of Army Strategist assignments exist at various four-star level commands, to include Combatant Commands, the Army Staff, the Joint Staff, and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). These individuals find themselves filling planning functions that range from planning a campaign in Afghanistan to writing Army and Joint Doctrine to serving as speechwriters for senior commanders and even researching and contributing to the development of DoD policy. These individuals not only complete specialized training in critical thinking and

the development of strategy, they also complete fellowships, master's programs or PhDs in subjects such as history, political science and economics, to name a few. All of this is to say an Army strategist is trained and developed to think, read, and write about complex problems and topics that help inform the decisions of senior leaders. Additionally, Army strategists are often called upon to coordinate the considerable expertise of large and sometimes disparate staff organizations in an effort to develop detailed, comprehensive plans for the full spectrum of operations.

The Army also has a group of mid-career and senior officers that go through its grueling School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) that serves as an exclusive master's-producing course whose mission is to "educate the future leaders of the U.S. Armed Forces, its allies, and the interagency to be agile and adaptive leaders who think critically at the strategic and operational levels to solve complex ambiguous problems." While some of these officers go on to command Army and joint formations at the two, three, and four-star levels, many of them will serve out successful careers as senior staff planners from the division-level headquarters to the Joint Staff. Like their peers in the Army Strategist career track, they also possess similar backgrounds in terms of military and civilian education along with a demonstrated aptitude for coordinating large and sometimes unwieldy planning groups designed to solve very complex problems.

While both groups of highly skilled planners are heavily sought after throughout the Army and even the joint community, there are equitable ways of employing a certain percentage of these officers in many of the most critical departments and agencies within the broader interagency and beginning the process of NSP reform. Within the Army Strategist career field alone there are some thirty officer positions that are at the tactical

level that could be pulled back and dedicated to interagency authorizations along with other less critical assignments that could potentially be pulled back and recoded for the interagency. Through a reprioritization of assignments and the removal of other less critical jobs, the Army's Human Resource Command could redirect some thirty to forty officers to key assignments across the interagency. I believe that similar measures could be taken with SAMS officers in terms of prioritizing assignments for both the mid-career and senior officers in such a way to further support a rotation program in the interagency.

Although it would require more detailed analysis, in addition to the Army personnel who possess advanced planning skills, both the Air Force and Marines also have officers who have completed similar schooling and assignments that could contribute their own unique perspectives to the interagency rotation. The bottom line is that more than any other department of the federal government, the DoD has the human resources available to fill rotational positions almost immediately. In theory, military planners could act as the conduit between the various departments and agencies in a rotation program and substantially increase the overall involvement in the program, taking it from just twenty to twenty-five participants to somewhere around fifty to sixty total personnel. Over time, this level of interaction between different departments and agencies would enable the increased awareness and understanding of the various capabilities within the interagency, thus informing future planning efforts concerning both combat and humanitarian assistance operations as well as updates and revisions of contingency plans. As the rotation plan became more established and other members of the interagency could increase their involvement, the DoD contribution could be reduced

to those officers who preferred working in that environment and possessed the requisite skills, training, schooling and aptitude to excel at that level.

Conclusion

While reform legislation has thus far been focused on the development of national security professionals within other federal departments and agencies, DoD's vast resources afford it the ability to contribute to improved coordination and collaboration across the interagency and Army Strategists and SAMS-qualified officers are the means to that end. Even though this type of effort does not equate to the measures required to enable widespread interagency reform, it does offer a realistic and manageable way to initiate what is a challenging and somewhat overwhelming undertaking with potentially far-reaching implications for the U.S. and its global engagement strategy for years to come.

I have chosen to close this case study with a brief discussion on the primacy of policy and its importance when considering the scope and value added to our federal bureaucracy through interagency reform as I have described it in this paper. I will illustrate this point through references to the stability operations planning that was conducted in support of the overall plan to invade Iraq in 2003, to include the perspective of one of the lead planners. In response to one of my questions pertaining to limitations faced in coordinating with the interagency during the planning for the invasion, Dr. Benson learned of an open source, unclassified effort led by the State Department called the Future of Iraq (FOI) project. This was a series of meetings held in Washington, DC in the fall of 2002 designed to address a regime change for Iraq. A friend of Dr. Benson's from the Pentagon was able to send him what amounted to three CDs worth of

information and which equaled the sum total of Dr. Benson's collaboration, such as it was, with the interagency (Benson, 2011).

This is not to say that meaningful effort was not put forth to carefully consider and better understand the challenges that could possibly be faced as a result of regime change for Iraq. Of the three different studies conducted to address regime change—the FOI project at the DoS; the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) report at the National Defense University; and a monograph produced by the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) at U.S. Army War College—the FOI effort was the most extensive with 200 participants, over a dozen working groups, and a final report over 1,000 pages long. It lacked a common format and a useful summary and came across as disjointed. The chief of the executive steering group charged with monitoring and reporting on findings for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, was not impressed by the work and did not follow its progression. Ultimately, the FOI project would have little or no play with the DoD, the NSC, or those who would go into Iraq (Rudd, 2011). In contrast to the FOI project, both the INSS and SSI papers were more easily read and understood and while they could have been useful to planners, neither were well distributed and rarely reached those that might have benefited from their findings (Rudd, 2011).

There was indeed an extensive interagency effort in 2002 that while well-intentioned, lacked integration and adequate resources. Even the Pentagon's efforts at addressing plans to stand up a joint task force to manage post-conflict operations demonstrated a lack of cohesion and failed to adequately coordinate efforts to form an interagency group that would work under the DoD and would become known as the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance or ORHA (Rudd, 2011).

What the disjointed nature of interagency planning efforts illustrates is the ongoing challenges of reacting to the desires of policy and decision makers. Examples such as these highlight the importance of developing and refining systems and processes so that an organization has the adaptability and flexibility to react in a manner that will best support the stated policy. The reality is that not every operation is a success and examples such as those listed above demonstrate that there are limitations to what an organization can accomplish if not given the resources (including time) needed to accomplish the mission.

Future research on this topic might consider a focus on the specific positions within the interagency that professional military planners could serve in to best enable the diffusion of knowledge that would better inform the wide array of planning and coordination necessary to develop plans for contingencies that range from combat to humanitarian aid to disaster response operations here at home and around the world. Additionally, ideas on how to assimilate information and make available to all departments and agencies so that it can be used to inform planning efforts across the interagency, would be another avenue of research to consider. At a minimum, information gathered and understood by military planners working across the interagency would need a conduit to the combatant commands to better inform their respective contingency plans.

(Appendix A)**Interview Questions for Dr. Kevin Benson****Background(Please Complete)**

Rank and duty assignment at military retirement:

Colonel, Director, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS

Current Occupation-Position:

Seminar leader, University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS

Educational Background:

BS, USMA 1977; MS, Catholic University of America 1986; MMAS, School of Advanced Military Studies 1992; PhD, University of Kansas 2010

Significant/Key duty assignments/positions both as an army officer and civilian:

US Army-Planner, Third US Army 1996-1998, Commander, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry 1998-2000, Asst Chief of Staff G5 (Plans), Third Army 2002-2003. Private sector-Seminar leader, University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies 2007-present

Specific roles and responsibilities as they pertained to the planning efforts leading up to the invasion of Iraq in March, 2003 and through the first phase of the operation:

As the G5 (Plans), Third Army I also served as the J5 (Plans), Combined Forces Land Component Command, directly responsible to the Commanding General for the development of the plan for the invasion and subsequent stability and support operations in Iraq, OPLAN COBRA II and ECLIPSE II respectively. I also contributed to the development of the US Central Command campaign plan for the Iraqi theater of operations, Operation Iraqi Freedom, 1003V.

Interview Questions

1. What, if any, interaction did you and your planning group have with other government agencies/departments as you developed and refined the campaign plan for Iraq in 2002/2003? At my level of headquarters the only civilian agency that participated in our planning efforts was the CIA.
2. If there was collaboration with the interagency, with what agencies did this occur and to what extent did they contribute their expertise to the overall plan, specifically as it may have been applicable to Phase IV/Stability Operations? In our major operations plan and the CENTCOM campaign plan Phase IV was titled Regime removal and Transition. In the CENTCOM campaign plan Phase IV

- itself was broken out into three sub phases. These were Phase IV a - stabilization, IV b - recovery and IV c - transition and redeployment. The extant term of military art used to describe operations in Phase IV was stability and support operations. In my case CIA assisted in the development of our assessment of the range of potential enemy groups we would face during Phase IV.
3. What limitations (constraints and restraints) were there on collaboration and coordination efforts between your planners and DoS/DoTreas/DoJ/etc. planners? (This could be from DoD, the *Interagency* or both) I knew of an open source, unclassified effort led by the State Department called the Future of Iraq project, a series of meetings held in Washington, DC in the fall of 2002. I asked for a copy of the final report or reports. A friend of mine in the Pentagon sent me what amounted to three CDs worth of information with the caveat that I must not let anyone in the office of the Secretary of Defense, OSD, know I had this information. That was the extent of my collaboration, such as it was, with the interagency.
 4. From your perspective and knowledge of the overall plan to invade Iraq, aside from overall troop strength constraints, what parts of the stability operations portion of the plan were missing, incomplete, or lacking sufficient detail? At the risk of sounding proud I do not think the plans me and my officers developed missed any parts, were incomplete or lacked sufficient detail. We erred in not going back and checking to see whether or not our assumptions were still sound and would become fact. We assumed that we could recall the Iraqi civil bureaucracy and the regular Iraqi Army. We did this based on research and with what we thought was the approval of senior military leaders with the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Army Chief of Staff, as well as the CENTCOM commander. When those assumptions were invalidated in May 2002 by AMB Bremer and the Secretary of Defense halted the flow of forces into Iraq our plan became untenable. *Are you talking about May, 2003 or 2002? If the assumptions were invalidated in 2002, you would have been able to adjust for that.....I'm assuming. I just wanted to be sure I understood you correctly on this point. I'm also assuming that when you say halted flow of forces, you are getting at the point that we didn't have enough ground forces to adequately deal with an insurgency if one should take hold???*
 5. If there had been an already well-established working relationship between agencies like USAID under DoS and military planners under DoD prior to the invasion, would it have potentially helped inform the overall plan and if so, how?

Given the political climate in Washington DC that existed at the time I really do not think such a relationship would have mattered. Writing an even more nuanced plan with all other conditions remaining unchanged, de-Baathification and disbanding the Iraqi Army would not have mattered in the main. *Just a point of clarification or further explanation.....what do you mean by would not have mattered in the main?*

6. In your estimation, what concerns would all potential stakeholders have to consider when collaborating on any kind of operational planning effort?
ANSWER: All involved would have to recognize Soldiers and etc would be put at risk in the pursuit of attaining policy goals. All involved would have to come to an understanding of the policy objectives that required military action to set conditions that would allow policy success.

7. What current restraints or constraints would need to be addressed and overcome to enable current and future OPLANS to be refined and developed adequately by the collective interagency, or at least by those with a stake in the plan and its outcome? ANSWER: Current restraints or constraints, based on when any plan would be executed, will change as conditions change. Military and civilian planners must recognize that what constitutes planning is different in the various departments and agencies of the US government, and because of this we need to understand each other's culture. DoD would need to sponsor planning events and exercises with the larger interagency to foster this wider understanding

Appendix B

Follow Up to Interview Questions for Dr. Kevin Benson

1. From your perspective and knowledge of the overall plan to invade Iraq, aside from overall troop strength constraints, what parts of the stability operations portion of the plan were missing, incomplete, or lacking sufficient detail? At the risk of sounding proud I do not think the plans me and my officers developed missed any parts, were incomplete or lacked sufficient detail. We erred in not going back and checking to see whether or not our assumptions were still sound and would become fact. We assumed that we could recall the Iraqi civil bureaucracy and the regular Iraqi Army. We did this based on research and with what we thought was the approval of senior military leaders with the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Army Chief of Staff, as well as the CENTCOM commander. When those assumptions were invalidated in May 2002 by AMB Bremer and the Secretary of Defense halted the flow of forces into Iraq our plan became untenable. *Are you talking about May, 2003 or 2002? If the assumptions were invalidated in 2002, you would have been able to adjust for that.....I'm assuming. I just wanted to be sure I understood you correctly on this point. I'm also assuming that when you say halted flow of forces, you are getting at the point that we didn't have enough ground forces to adequately deal with an insurgency if one should take hold???* Chris, my bad. I meant to type 2003. The flow of forces was halted before we had a glimmer of an insurgency, notwithstanding the fact that our plans team proposed insurgency as a potential enemy course of action in April 03. OSD halted the force flow after 1AD was allowed to come into theater and then only to relieve the 3ID. The Marines were already leaving Iraq as fast as possible. Coupled with the disbanding of the Iraqi Army by Bremer we were shorting ourselves even before the fighting broke out all over the country.

2. If there had been an already well-established working relationship between agencies like USAID under DoS and military planners under DoD prior to the invasion, would it have potentially helped inform the overall plan and if so, how? Given the political climate in Washington DC that existed at the time I really do not think such a relationship would have mattered. Writing an even more nuanced plan with all other conditions remaining unchanged, de-Baathification and disbanding the Iraqi Army would not have mattered in the main. *Just a point of clarification or further explanation.....what do you mean by the phrase, 'would not have mattered in the main'? I'm assuming you are saying that because of de-baathification and disbanding of the Iraqi Army, no matter how good of a plan*

you had beforehand, you couldn't make up for the damage caused by those two decisions? Chris, you are correct. Even if there was an established relationship at the worker level, and I am not sure that there wasn't one-I did get several CDs worth of the DoS Future of Iraq study from an Army source who got it through someone in DoS-worker level relationships can only get you so far when senior level folks no longer listen to each other when they meet. That was my impression in FEB 03 after GEN Shinseki was ignored and openly mocked by DoD senior civilian leaders.

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