

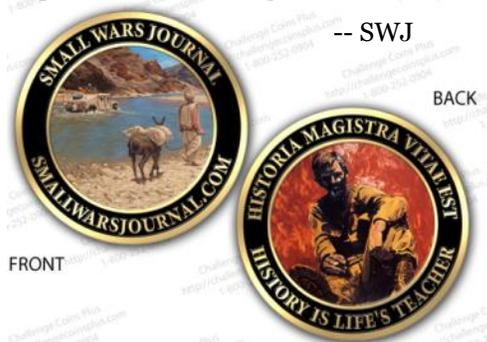


About This Issue

This month's Journal focuses on Iraq in review, through the various time periods of the American intervention and through different lenses ranging from strategic to tactical, economic to historiography.

Beyond Iraq, U.S. Army Major General Mike Flynn provides his thoughts on the future of warfare and U.S. Navy Commander Aboul-Enein concludes with a book review on Iran.

On May 1 we begin distributing a monthly newsletter by email, the first of several long overdue changes that should be coming to fruition over the next few weeks. See [this post](#) to sign up for the mailing list. And watch online for information on how to get an SWJ Challenge Coin.



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Watch for Robert Haddick's weekly editorial, [This Week at War](#). Friday evenings at Foreign Policy.

Iraq's Hard-Won Lessons for Future Transitions in the Middle East

by Peter J. Munson

Published [online](#) 30 April 2011

Eight years after the American-led invasion of Iraq, the Middle East sits at a crossroads. The pressure, building for nearly a century in the contrived states drawn up after western models after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, has finally begun to burst the dam. The oppression and inhumanity were so intolerable that Mohamed Bouazizi, a roadside fruit seller unable to cough up a bribe to keep his roadside turf, immolated himself after Tunisian authorities beat him. This tipping point led to weeks of rage, felling the Tunisian and Egyptian dictators, setting Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria on razor's edge, and forcing at least token reforms in Oman, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. The depths of the frustration felt across the region, however, indicate not the promise of rapid transitions to democratic rule,

but rather the extent of the damage to society, economy, and politics that will have to be overcome. While it is a unique case, the Iraqi experience holds hard-won lessons for what lies ahead. Rather than prescriptions on how to "do it better next time," the lessons should be that transition is an unpredictable and protracted process that cannot be predictably managed. This process can only find legitimacy in solutions that stem from the host society.

No matter how reviled the regime, it will always leave behind opportunists that profited from the status quo. While the regime's inner circle will be discredited, business people and powerbrokers not directly connected will seek to maintain their profitable positions or create new niches. In contrast

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to these powerful and well-organized elites, other actors in society are poorly organized and lack resources. As a result, the voice of the masses will be lost in a cacophony of independent politicians and small parties, while the powerful will organize quickly and back those groups most capable of safeguarding their interests. In this environment, democracy is less than ideally representative and positive change is slow to come by. On the economic side, extricating corrupt businessmen and politicians from the mix will cause necessary but significant disruptions.

Repressive rulers leave behind broken economies and societies. The economy is an inefficient

trough from which elites seek opportunities to skim profits and power. Early privatization is an opportunity for elites to corner markets while inflation undercuts the average standard of living. Corruption and shades of lawlessness drive businesses into the shadows where government officials' hands are less likely to pry. Lawlessness and the shadow economy heighten the prevalence of concepts of "face," tribal and ethnic solidarity, and vengeance, just as they do in neighborhoods and business sectors like those found in Tony Soprano's New Jersey or other gang havens. In such an unpredictable world, people are less likely to put their faith and their future in each other's hands. Trust is low and xenophobia runs high. Divisions are many. Urban/rural, economic class, tribal, sectarian, ethnic, and many other markers of identity and interest balkanize the population. In all, these are significant barriers to the rapid establishment of democratic politics and a rational, liberal economy.

Iraq is in many ways a unique case that is all too often oversimplified. The Iraqi narrative is often reduced to terms of the Sunni and the Shi'a; the Awakening and the Surge. The reality is far more complex, with all of the above factors and more yielding the chaos that gripped the state for years. The drawdown in violence owed as much to realignment of these divisions into acceptable power arrangements and the exhaustion of the hope that violence would profit as it did to the Surge or any high political resolution. Granted, the transition there was externally imposed, meaning perhaps that conditions were not as ripe for change as they may be in many Arab states today. Likewise, there is little or no foreign presence today to precipitate insurgency as there was in Iraq. For all the negatives of foreign involvement, Iraq also had significant foreign help. International experts were at hand to help with the matters of reconstruction, elections, and economic reform. Foreign governments applied significant diplomatic pressure to keep the political process on track and on timeline while making it clear that a relapse into authoritarianism would not be acceptable. In Iraq, a semblance of normalcy has returned. Lights are on and per capita gross domestic product is three times that in 2002. Even so, Iraq's latest government, nine months in forming, has yet to address some of the country's thorniest issues. Reforms demanded by Sunnis and Kurds are still outstanding. Crude oil production has returned to prewar levels only in the past few months. Violence, while far below the hellish levels of 2004 and 2005, continues. Iraq has come a long way, but is still haunted by the specters of dictatorship and war.

The Iraqi experience should remind us that transition is never as simple as toppling a regime, whether from within or without, and holding a vote. The scars of illiberal rule take years to overcome. Foreign assistance during the challenging times ahead for the Middle East should come at arm's length. It must eschew simplistic pronouncements on democracy and abstract references to the rule of law, focusing instead on shepherding the long process of finding a balance in society and economy that benefits most. Only with a reasonable amount of trust and equality will open politics flourish. The lessons of Iraq should not be that "we" could have done it more easily, more quickly, or better, although in some ways these observations may be true. Instead, the takeaways should be the unpredictability of the process, its great destabilizing effects in economy and society, and the requirement for a colossal dose of patience as indigenous peoples work out indigenous arrangements that they can live with. If open politics

are to endure, they must come in a form "of the people, by the people, and for the people": not the American people, but the people of the Middle East. The results may be objectionable to doom-sayers, but in our meddling and imposition of artificial, external, and (critically) ephemeral solutions we shall sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

Peter J. Munson is a Marine officer, aviator, and Middle East Foreign Area Officer. His first book, Iraq in Transition: The Legacy of Dictatorship and the Prospects for Democracy (Potomac, 2009), details the social, political, and economic legacies of the Saddam era and their intersection with the American-led invasion and its aftermath. He is currently working on a new project, tentatively titled War, Welfare, and Democracy: Rethinking America's Quest for the End of Democracy. The views expressed here are his own and do not reflect the position of the United States Marine Corps or the Department of Defense.

Sandals and Robes to Business Suits and Gulf Streams: Warfare in the 21st Century

by MG Michael T. Flynn

Published online 20 April 2011

Our model of warfare used to be of a bi-polar, state on state structure. The defense establishment was more concerned with templating our enemies in a force-on-force engagement that was grounded in understood "rules of war." The battlefield was linear and structured, with clearly defined battle lines. We could isolate, contain, outflank, and attack our enemies well into the depths of the rear of their formations. Our enemies had tangible and recognizable infrastructures that, when attacked, could shut down their telecommunications networks and transportation systems. We were able to counter their numbers. There were parallel technologies, and in most cases numerical capabilities that we could quantitatively overcome. There were observable indications and warnings that enabled our high-tech intelligence system the advantage to provide the necessary early warning to detect movement of our enemy's formations. Those were the days.

We are already in the second decade of the 21st Century and find ourselves still struggling to understand what kind of warfare we are in and what kind of warfare we will likely face in the coming years. Although there have been numerous docu-

ments written about the environments we are likely to face, seeing and believing in the reality for what it is still causes all sorts of machinations throughout the entire Defense Department. For instance, each of our services is trying to redefine itself as it considers shifting from a bi-polar structure to one requiring incredible agility and adaptability given a highly complex, low contrast cast of adversaries; adversaries who are as comfortable in sandals and robes as they are wearing business suits and flying around the world in gulfstream aircraft. They are confident in their ability to defeat our high tech weapons platforms and bold enough to think they can get away with it. These adversaries must be taken seriously.

How should we shape future force structure? How should our intelligence systems be designed to meet future threats? What are the roles and responsibilities of the services? How does each fit during an era of increasingly growing complexity and where operating within coalition environments is the norm?

While each of these questions should be addressed, this article will narrow their scope and

attempt to address what this author believes are the attributes of 21st Century Warfare we are likely to face. For purposes of any debate, this won't be about which specific capabilities are required or what missions are more appropriate for conventional or unconventional forces. It will address several factors worth considering as we think our way down a very murky path.

The evolution to 21st Century Warfare has not come easily, nor is it well understood. Achieving dominance in a battle space requires a number of activities to be brought together at the right moment and place to achieve some desired effect. These activities range from mud to space and include the cyber domain that surrounds it. They include activities not related to kinetic, military only solutions, and they encompass Interagency and Non-Governmental solutions with people who have very little understanding of military operations. They require rapid and effective team building by strong leaders simultaneously engaged with enemy forces. We must be capable of nation building, negotiating and fighting all at the same time.

Before exploring the attributes of 21st Century Warfare, it is worth understanding the categories of threats of this vast geographic, physical, and virtual domain. These threats are what we are facing now and are likely to face for the remainder of this century. There are five categories, and each requires a brief explanation.

Environmental challenges: These are threats related to access to food, water, and energy sources, many inside of current conflict zones or other ungoverned and under-governed spaces. For example, there exist numerous failed states and other physical locales with growing refugee problems living in chaotic times, many trying to come to grips with the extremist religious aspects of Islam and most lacking the basic necessities of food and water. Additionally, the constant problem of narcotics, especially heroin, cocaine, and the burgeoning hashish trade are all playing into the hands of the nexus between insurgent and criminal networks and state sponsors of terrorism.

Irregular threats: The primary threat is Al Qaeda and its associated movements and the extremist environments in which these movements operate. However, much like a franchise business enterprise, AQ is expanding its operational reach. This organization wishes to make as painful as possible the causes of freedom we seek to establish for other less fortunate people of the world.

Conventional threats: There is the ever-present China and Russia argument. Should we

see these nations as competitors contributing to the health and wealth of blossoming global societies or our enemies? That's for the politicians to decide, but they do remain conventionally powerful. Also, there remain other players on the world stage such as Iran and North Korea. These two, while still dangerous, are vastly less conventionally effective today than they were in previous times. While we must understand this latter grouping of actors, we also need to understand and consider those conventional military capabilities in other difficult parts of the world. For instance, the Pakistan-Indian border conflict has seen numerous wars in the past half century. These are large, capable conventional militaries and we can only hope they have no intention of attacking each other. In places like East Africa, there is the threat of violence along the Ethiopian and Eritrean line of demarcation. There are large numbers of military forces poised on either side of that line, and although there is no projected conflict on the near horizon, the dominant position astride a key sea line of communications is something we must continue to monitor. Lastly, there is the presence of the Israeli and Syrian militaries still staring each other down across the Golan Heights. All of these remain formidable, but still none at the level nor sophistication of the U.S. Military. But how long can that last?

Catastrophic threats: This has to do with the ever-present weapons of mass destruction (WMD)—chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN). Of them all, chemical and biological are the most difficult to detect but easiest for a terror group to get its hands on. These threats also include another 9/11 type event in the Continental United States or Europe. This is not out of the question nor should anyone believe for a second that our enemies aren't plotting another attack. They are.

Vulnerable interests / disruptive threats: These threats have to do with oil access, critical infrastructure, the vital sea lanes that exist and must be protected, and those key allies we have across the globe who see the world in much the same way we do—as stable and secure, where commerce can flow freely, people are able to thrive on a good living, and raise their families in a decent way. Further addressed and discussed are cyber threats and the vulnerable domain they represent. Bottom line, we are and will remain highly vulnerable, and the ability to shift from a disruptive threat to a catastrophic threat is real. To avoid this, a much more serious debate about what we are trying to achieve as a nation in the world of

cyber defense and protection needs to occur; time is not on our side regarding this debate.

With nearly a decade of war already behind us, what is 21st Century warfare starting to look like? Clearly, one of the principal battles we find ourselves within is the fight for knowledge; knowledge of the entire environment is vastly more important than any one adversary or competitor's military capability. To win, we must win the virtual and physical spaces we operate within, but we must also be prepared to win as a member of a coalition. We've heard a great deal about network warfare and the speed of decision making required to operate in today's battle space. People in organizations are vastly more effective when the organization has a high degree of trust in team, is mature, and are able to rapidly share information up, down, and laterally, across the entire network (coalition or otherwise). Additionally, if people feel empowered and responsible, we see their levels of effectiveness exponentially increasing over time as their experience increases.

Operating within this complex, highly charged, and increasingly uncertain environment where global financial resources are dwindling, access to food, water, and energy are being challenged, and growing populations of young people with little to do other than join insurgent movements, criminal cartels, or simply shooting an American for the price of a loaf of bread to feed their families, we need to better understand what we're facing. From past military experiences in conventional and unconventional assignments, countless combat deployments, numerous campaign planning sessions, and extended travels in a part of the world that currently remains alien to most, we must consider the following attributes of 21st Century Warfare.

Intelligence and information (I2) are the fire and maneuver of the 21st Century. The components of I2 are precision, perception and understanding, whereas those of fire and maneuver are speed, distance and lethality. Clearly, fire and maneuver remain necessary tools of any military's tradecraft (even insurgents), but they are no longer the decisive tools of warfare. More precise intelligence collection and smarter use of the open source information environment are critical. Greater focus based on more precise questions driven by modern commanders is more important than numerically outmatching an opponent with weapons. Perceptions about us, the people we serve to protect, and the adversaries we need to defeat are critical to our success. Finally, we must fight for the knowledge leading to a deeper understanding of the environment we operate within.

These are now the vital components that we struggle with today, though all together are necessary to win the peace.

Better intelligence and information enable our industrial age weapons to maximize their potential and provide modern commanders a fuller awareness of their battlespace. The U.S. military designed and built weapons systems over the past fifty years that remain in our inventory. What we are discovering in our current wars is that many have proved less relevant. Therefore, a much more agile and rapid acquisition, technology development, procurement, and fielding system were required to outsmart the enemy. A completely new framework within DoD requiring extraordinary leadership from our most senior leaders to include the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs was vital.

Succeeding in war demands this type of adaptation and leadership, and we owe it to the men and women serving our nation during a time of war. "I don't want to join a military because they have nice planes, ships and tanks; I want to join because they are seen as a winning team." In order to best enable our weapons systems in this complex battlespace, we must first arm our commanders and those they lead for a fight for knowledge above all else that is vastly more than a fight for physical turf.

The causes of war will be more complicated. What is more likely to lead us into a global conflict is an economic crisis in Europe than a land grab in Central Africa. What if there is another large-scale terrorist attack in America? All bets are off as to what our reactions are likely to be. Thousands of cyber-attacks occur every day, yet we have decided to fight this one "dot" at a time. Why not protect the entire spectrum of "dots" (i.e., .com, .mil, .gov, .edu, etc.)? I can see Congress now holding another post cyber-attack, 9-11 type commission, wondering why our current CYBERCOM was only responsible for a small component of the cyber spectrum versus the whole enchilada. Causes of war have always been complicated, but in this century, we've added a completely different domain. Yet, we still function with a fire and maneuver mentality.

Goals will be more limited. Consider our most recent quest into North Africa. If we get more involved for humanitarian purposes, where is it likely to end? We have to clearly outline our goals, but as warfare becomes more untenable in the age of social media and as the unacceptable

killing of civilians on any battlefield could lose the coalition of the willing, we have to clearly limit the goals of our wars. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves truly in an era of persistent conflict.

Contents of warfare will be richer. Our current reality in places like Libya, Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan are placing enormous stress on our entire system, yet we deal with each as single events. Not one of these is a prime mover for our nation, but taken together, they represent a tectonic shift in an emerging way of war for which we have yet to organize ourselves. Talk about needing to being adaptive; we don't have a choice. Where will the next major conflict occur? Are we overly focused staring at the gerbil on the wheel while massive global trends, which test our very fiber, are shifting underfoot? These include but are not limited to the growing energy imbalance, unclear climate issues, vast food and water shortages, shifting demographics that are changing the face of entire regions, transnational crime and criminal networks that appear legitimate but are anything but. We have to do a much better job of understanding the environments we are likely to operate within before we dive in head first. While our current reality is very reactive, understanding potential operational environments is something we certainly have the capability to do. At the end of the day, we should be capable of understanding the well-being of an environment better than those who live in it. Why not?

Duration of war will be shorter. This primarily refers to the duration of kinetic operations. Therefore, we have to think through, in a much deeper way, post kinetic phase outcomes. Looking back at previous wars, we should not be surprised at our kinetic capability to destroy airfields, air defenses, conventional ground forces, or other military and civilian infrastructure. That is what we designed our military to be able to do. However, in this coming century, the cost of rebuilding what has been physically destroyed, is prohibitive. Moreover, the longer term political, emotional and psychological effects of kinetic phase operations may end up causing us to lose in the end anyway. The growing trend of anti-American sentiment in large swaths of the Islamic world is testament to this notion. If we aren't able to reverse this sentiment, longer wars most certainly will not solve the problems we'll likely experience.

Physical damages will decrease; however, psychological damages are likely to increase. As stated above, we have to precisely understand what our objectives are. We must be very specific. We must see the end game before we start

the clock. We must understand the perceptions of those with whom we are about to enter into the fray, and we must have an understanding of the type of threats we are likely to face (initially and over the long haul). Otherwise, the damages we do cause may be insurmountable to changing attitudes. Winning the hearts and minds before the first shot is ever fired may be the right path to take in this coming century.

Intangible factors will play a much greater role. Developing relationships (now and in the future) will be critical. How do we develop these relationships? Are they based on honesty and trust or are they based on business or political interests? We have to know. The intangible factors of a strong or weak relationship cannot be understated. These have always been a critical enabler for solving crises, but in the future, they may be the seminal reason. Individual and organizational relationships matter more now than they ever have and will be critically important to overcoming incomplete or poor methods of communications. Additionally, understanding and sharing our American values and being honest and candid about those globally shared and accepted human values must be constantly addressed. From a military perspective, it is no wonder that military forces trained by the American Military tend to operate at a much higher acceptable standard. This is because the American Soldier brings not only a demonstration of enormous physical courage, but provides an example of trust, teamwork, compassion, and moral courage that we must reinforce in our men and women that we recruit into the ranks in the future.

Integration of operations will be higher. The most effective organizations on today's battlefields are those that have integrated capabilities. Teams and networks of people leveraging their parent organizations have demonstrated a high degree of success. The advent of fusion cells, threat finance centers, interagency task forces have all proven their value. There is little question that when you put people from multiple agencies and coalition partner nations with the right skills together, they will be more effective. We are doing this more and more in the Continental United States with the stand-up of various Joint Task Forces in many of our cities. These are proving of great value for their supported leadership. Can we do this on a larger scale? Can we integrate whole intelligence agencies? Can we create more of these integrated centers without diluting their value and creating additional layers of duplication? We have to go back to the threats we are likely to face and consider organizing more functionally against

known or suspected target sets as much as we organize geographically. To deter conflict and prevent surprise we must force integration in some cases as part of our peacetime mission. In our large bureaucracies, it will be easy to fall back into our protected silos. We cannot task organize into cells, workgroups or task forces only after conflict occurs and people are ordered to act. Bottom line, we are going to have to “incentivize” in order to cause people and organizations to integrate. We also have to create national structures that are able to “operationalize” decisions to rapidly understand the environment and to act against emerging threats in a timely manner (and in a much more politically sensitive climate). If we don’t seek or cause a higher degree of integration, we risk losing fleeting tactical opportunities where the potential for enormous strategic advantage is lost.

Warfare will require more decentralized decision-making but an increasing need to centralize situational awareness. This may be the hardest issue with which we are likely to deal. At the end of the day, accepting increasing levels of risk may be a leader’s greatest responsibility. We must consider pushing authorities and responsibilities down to much lower levels of command. We are going to operate in an increasingly dispersed battle space.

Leaders at every level must know their higher headquarters backs them on the decisions they are likely to make. As we consider this critical attribute, we need to understand that authority does not always equal permission. “If I have the authority to act, but my higher headquarters wants me to inform them before I do, this slows down action, in some cases, to a dead stop.” If we want to be agile, we will need to speed up our decision-making process. During an era of increasing numbers of fleeting targets, leadership—at the appropriate levels—must know they can act.

To achieve speed in decision-making we must centralize situational awareness. How do we achieve this? We have to become more comfortable operating in a networked, virtual world, which inspires inclusivity among various cultures and agencies and one that enables greater transparency of the information sharing environment. We must. We are in the 21st Century, the so-called “information age.” We need to start acting like it.

Where does this take us? In summary, the global outlook and existing networks that are emerging provide hope and opportunity. With influencers such as Brazil, Russia, India, and China, we must seek new ways for conducting trade, de-

veloping new energy supplies and markets, increasing wealth, and bringing together nations who today remain internally focused.

That is why we must apply intelligence and information in this century much as we applied fire and maneuver in the past, and in fundamentally different ways. We are operating in an era where turning the many complex challenges we face into opportunities is the true mark of success. We may be running out of time to recognize this, still however, time remains on our side – but only if we are willing to act.

The attributes discussed above are not all-encompassing and must be further thought out. However, each must also be understood, debated and smartly applied in our intelligence and information collection efforts, analytic judgments, counterintelligence, and overall planning efforts as well as in the way we operate in any future battlespace. The physical and virtual domains of war have fundamentally changed and we need to do the same. Instead of fighting future wars against large armor formations and vast armadas of aircraft or ships at sea, we are more likely to face adversaries in sandals and robes who are as comfortable in business suits and flying around in gulf streams. Not seriously considering these attributes is to do so at our own peril.

Major General Michael T. Flynn, USA, is an active duty intelligence officer with various command and staff positions in multiple tours to Iraq, Afghanistan, Grenada, and Haiti. Previously, Flynn served as the director of intelligence at Division, Corps, Joint Special Operations Command, Central Command and the Joint Staff. Flynn also holds three graduate degrees: a Master's of Business Administration in Telecommunications from Golden Gate University, San Francisco, a Masters in the Military Arts and Sciences from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and a Masters in National Security and Strategic Studies from the United States Naval War College. Previously published reports include the co-authored CNAS report [Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan](#).

Iraq: The Whole Thing Was Much Harder Than It Needed To Be

by Robert Tollast

Published online 19 April 2011

Three former diplomats who served in Iraq during three phases of the conflict share their thoughts on the security, economic and political issues of their time in country.

Interview with Keith Mines, former CPA Governance Coordinator for Al Anbar in 2003

Many who worked with Paul Bremer in Iraq believed oil revenues and a re-invented Iraqi private sector would win the peace. Years later however, we see immense infrastructure projects funded by Iraqi oil money and vast foreign investment. They may have jumped the gun in 2003 with a rush to privatize, but were the neoconservatives right all along?

No, those who argued for a quick transition to a fully privatized economy were completely lost to the reality of Iraq in 2003 and more lost to the realities of transition economics. I came to Iraq in 2003 from Hungary, the darling of the Eastern European transition economies (at the time). I was aghast at those who argued for a forceful transition to a fully privatized economy for Iraq and used Eastern Europe as a model. Hungary did not immediately privatize its economy when the wall fell, in fact it went a full four years through the first democratic transitional government before the Socialists finally implemented the Bokros Plan and began the hard work of economic transition.

The first four years were spent transitioning the political system, the economy was kept stable with no great shocks that would have brought into question whether the whole project was a good idea or not. I argued forcefully, as did every military commander and diplomat in the field, for large scale public works projects of the kind that would employ tens of thousands of otherwise out of work men. All to no avail, we were told to go back and suck it up, Iraq would be dragged into the modern global economy; heaven forbid it should be just another distorted petro economy with a large public sector. It went kicking and screaming all right, at us mostly. The whole thing was much harder than it needed to be.

A lot of people from Coalition nations (e.g. CPA Deputy Governance Coordinator for Maysan, Rory Stewart) have reported a very fine line between influencing Iraqi policy makers and being seen as colonial masters or patronizing. Do you think there was a suspicion, even among Iraqis who joined the coalition that we were somehow there to dominate them?

Yes of course. That was a constant for all coalition officials, military and civilian, at all levels. But it played out very unevenly. On the one hand Iraqis were accustomed to being led by a heavy hand. They were used to none of the normal give and take within the bureaucracy and governing structures of even the Gulf States, with their milder tempered leaders and more open political system. Most Iraqis we dealt with were looking for the big guy with the power and the resources whom they could come to and seek favors or redress.

We fell quickly into that role, reluctant though we were to play it. On the other hand there was widespread suspicion that we were there to steal Iraq's oil, or worse yet challenge its religious order, and that we were there to stay. It was interesting, and you can track this pretty clearly, that whenever there was an announcement from the Coalition that indicated the foreigners would be moving out of governing and turning things over to Iraqis, the violence went down.

I am thinking especially of the November 2003 timeline announced in Baghdad for a national turnover to Iraqi authorities combined with MG Swannack's December announcement that the coalition would be moving out of the cities as Iraqi forces were trained and equipped to assume security duties. Iraqis were very sovereignty conscious. When these announcements turned out to be less than promised, the violence escalated again.

On a day to day basis MG Swannack and I tried hard to shift as much power as possible to the Iraqi government. I worked very closely with Governor Burgis (Abel Al Kareem Burgess Alzaldin was the coalition selected governor of Al Anbar province.) I would have liked to have seen him in an even more empowered role, having been elected through

some form of a Loya Jirga like mechanism of provincial councils, but that wasn't possible so we worked with what we had. When I arrived there was a squad of U.S. soldiers living in the anteroom of the governor's office and I moved them out and then put myself in a smaller and less stately office upstairs to clearly indicated that he was the governor and I was a temporary representative of a temporary force.

We met daily in his office where I was careful to show absolute respect for him and his position. It helped to establish his authority and take some of the edge off the occupation, but at the end of the day we had the guns and everyone knew it and there were those times when our ultimate authority was laid bare.

During the provincial council caucuses in February 2004 we went to the mat with a raucous crowd over how to conduct the selection process. A decision had to be made and we, in the end, made it, over the protest of many in the room. So there were always going to be limits to how much we could finesse the issue.

In the end it might have been better, as many of us argued at the time and as was the original plan by Jay Garner, to quickly turn over power to a nationally selected Iraqi governing body that would be advised and supported, at their invitation, by the coalition.

*You asserted in the 2007 article *The Only Iraq Worth Fighting For* that there were serious doubts about the long lasting effects of "The Surge" because of Iraq's ongoing political turmoil. You argue an 18 state Federalism for Iraq as the way forward. We've recently heard allegations of people still being arrested on the grounds of false or spurious "Baathist" connections and Kirkuk is still a powder keg. Is Federalism still the best hope?*

It is virtually impossible for a country as ethnically and geographically diverse as Iraq to be a democracy that is anything other than federalist. The question I always had was what kind of federalism – the natural but probably impossible three state federalism where each ethnic group had its region and Baghdad was somehow "shared," or an 18-state federalism where each geographic state had to blend its people internally, and then show up in Baghdad with its state issues, not simply fall in with its brethren from elsewhere in the country and vote by ethnic block.

Two or three state federations do not tend to last and I was simply arguing that an 18 state federation would mix up the ethnic groups enough

that they could not fall into the toxic and ultimately fatal arrangement of a three state federation. So yes, I believe that if Iraq is to be a democracy, and it has no other good options for governance, it must be an 18 state federation. Federalism by the way is a "discipline" that is very poorly understood by most policy makers and could use more focus, in many cases more focus than democracy. Voting is easy, governing is hard, and in most of the countries in conflict in the past decade – Somalia, Sudan, the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan – federalism is probably the answer.

Do you agree with the following statement: South Korea took decades to become a healthy democracy, but were regarded as a vital ally in Asia all the same. Therefore, limited press freedom in Iraq should not affect their status as an ally: good democracy takes years.

I would be hard pressed to defend why Iraq in 2011 would not have full press freedom and if it did not, why we would condone it. I am also not sure South Korea couldn't have somehow muddled through with a bit more freedom of the press and fewer executions of dissidents during the Cold War.

Because we allowed it, it didn't make it right then, but in any event there is a huge difference between isolated and under the gun South Korea and contemporary Iraq which for better or worse is now a model for Arab transitions to democracy. Iraq simply must perform to a higher standard, and press freedom is pretty basic for a modern democracy.

What do you think is the biggest lesson you took from your time in Iraq that applies to your current role?

I have always been a huge fan of the Salvador and Colombia models for "small wars," with well-placed advisors and material support to assist our foreign counterparts in developing their own security and political structures, but a minimum of boots on the ground. In the end it is their fight and empowering them is the key to success. Too direct involvement only serves to tarnish their nationalist credentials and create a cycle of dependency that then has to be broken later.

Keith Mines is currently director of the U.S Embassy Narcotics Affairs Section in Mexico City. The views expressed here are his own do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the U.S Government either now or at the time in question.

Interview with Gary Grappo, former Minister Counselor for Political Affairs at the U.S Embassy in Baghdad from 2009 to 2010

A lot of people from Coalition nations have reported a very fine line between influencing Iraqi policy makers and being seen as colonial masters or patronizing. What were your experiences?

Since 2003, so many individuals have been involved in Iraq – members of Coalition armed forces, diplomats, government and NGO aid workers, contractors, etc. – that describing their efforts using dated terms such as “colonial masters” fails to capture the range, complexity and enormity of their efforts. During the time I served in Iraq (2009-2010), it was very clear that the U.S. – then the sole Coalition member with combat troops remaining in Iraq – had no interest in remaining in Iraq beyond what the Iraqis wished; indeed, the U.S. had earlier signed a security agreement with the Government of Iraq agreeing to withdraw our combat forces by the end of 2011.

The efforts of our servicemen and women and diplomats were directed at helping Iraqis rebuild national institutions – from parliamentary elections one year ago (generally regarded as free and fair) to organizations responsible for rule of law.

Far from patronizing, most every American with whom I had the honor to serve in Iraq, whether soldier, diplomat or aid worker soberly recognized the daunting task ahead for the Iraqis and the complex challenges Iraqis face and will continue to face for another generation. Of course, in the first year, we were in charge with the CPA and in subsequent years we and our coalition partners tried to influence Iraqis to make good decisions. Many of those Iraqi leaders had little experience in governance. That said, during the period I worked there, we were all very respectful of Iraqi sovereignty and understood very well that any hint of patronizing would be immediately rejected by Iraqis.

Many who worked with Paul Bremer in Iraq believed oil revenues and a re-invented Iraqi private sector would win the peace. Years later however, we see immense infrastructure projects funded by Iraqi oil money and vast foreign investment. Were the neoconservatives right all along?

You’ll want to check the figures. The hope of “vast foreign investment” certainly remains but hasn’t yet been realized. While Iraq is beginning to tackle the vital task of rebuilding its much diminished and neglected infrastructure, oil revenues are not yet at the level they will need to be in order to

undertake this task as ambitiously as Iraqis and their government might wish and also meet the many other needs of rebuilding the nation and serving the people. Infrastructure projects and foreign investment will come as Iraq’s oil reserves become more fully exploited and investor confidence grows. Importantly, foreign businesses and investors will watch closely developments in the country in 2012 following the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

There’s a simplistic view of Nouri Al Maliki having a sectarian bias. A closer analysis might find he is in fact politically biased in favour of Al Dawa. What do you think?

In the summer of 2009, Maliki had expressed publicly his interest in forming a non-sectarian political coalition but failed. Iraq, then facing its first post-security crisis election, was apparently not ready for such a coalition. His State of Law coalition ended up almost entirely Shi’a and was effectively led by his own party, Da’wa. His connection and association with Da’wa, however, were no more or less than those of any other political candidate with his/her respective party. Iraq still suffers from sectarian tension, which carries over to political parties and coalitions. This may change with time as Iraq moves away from the period of sectarian strife, but doing so will mean addressing the very problematic issues and suspicions responsible for many of those cleavages, e.g., distribution of oil revenues, Kirkuk, etc.

Some people want to hold Maliki responsible for the arrests of journalists and the shooting of protesters. While it’s clear that some of these abuses are not linked to Maliki, others are clearly I.S.F related. Is it right that the U.S Embassy in Baghdad publicly condemns this, as they recently did?

As I am no longer serving in Iraq, I cannot speak authoritatively to what is currently happening in the country. However, as a matter of standard policy, the U.S. remains strongly opposed to any abridgement of fundamental human rights, e.g. of press/expression, peaceful assembly, etc. The U.S. has also spoken against mistreatment of journalists and the use of force against peaceful demonstrators. In recent weeks, the U.S. position has been articulated repeatedly in Egypt, Tunisia, Bahrain and elsewhere.

Do you agree with the following statement? South Korea took decades to become a healthy democracy, but was regarded as a vital ally in Asia all the same. Therefore, limited press freedom in Iraq should not affect their status as an ally: good democracy takes years.

Irrespective of the time necessary for a nation to become a democracy, we should not shirk our responsibility to speak up on behalf of human rights. Allies and partners frequently criticize or offer advice to one another on how to improve each other's policies or societies. We have listened to candid advice from our European allies, for example, on our judicial system. We hope Iraqis will understand and listen when we advise them that respecting press freedom and other universal rights will make their democracy – and ultimately their society – stronger and more stable.

What do you think is the biggest lesson you took from your time in Iraq that applies to your current role?

I took many lessons from my experience in Iraq. It was one like none other in my 26 years as an American diplomat. However, the biggest lesson I took from my service in Iraq and that applies to my current position is that despite the misgivings of some over America's taking the lead on international issues, American leadership is often indispensable to solving global crises and making progress on the host of challenges other countries face.

Observers, analysts and the media have highlighted mistakes and shortcomings of the U.S.'s involvement in Iraq. Even within the U.S. Government, considerable soul-searching and examination of lessons learned have been and continue to be done. In an open and democratic society such as ours, this is useful and necessary.

However, it is also important to take stock of what we, our coalition allies and the Iraqis did accomplish. One of the Middle East's most repressive and brutal leaders was removed. Rather than being summarily executed, the customary fate of dictators throughout history, he was captured, imprisoned, tried, offered the opportunity to present his defense and, only once convicted, sentenced to death. Such was not the fate of the unaccounted for tens of thousands of victims of his brutality during his reign.

Even more important, during and following the savage civil war, the U.S. did two extraordinary things: we negotiated as opposed to dictated the terms for our withdrawal from the country we had invaded and occupied and then led a Herculean effort to get all the Iraqi sides to come to agreement on a constitution that allows them to govern themselves civilly and democratically. These are unprecedented achievements in Iraq's history, or indeed the history of any Middle Eastern country wracked with such deep sectarian and ethnic divi-

sions. While Iraq faces many tests in the months and years ahead, especially following the departure of U.S. forces at the end of this year, it now stands as the Arab world's first experiment in liberal democracy with a genuine chance of success.

There are other successes that could be mentioned – effectively imposing a sense of genuine freedom on a society that had never previously experienced such a phenomenon, laying a foundation in Iraqi law and its security forces for respect for human rights and the rule of law, providing support and guidance for the creation of civil society organizations, completing countless development projects, etc.

None of this would have been possible without the leadership of the United States. The debate will persist for years to come on whether the U.S. should have begun this exercise in the first place. The cost, especially in lives, to Iraq, America and other coalition countries has been estimable. But the result at this stage cannot be argued. And it was American leadership (and sacrifice) that made it happen.

American leadership will also play and indeed must play a critical role in finally bringing peace to Israelis and Palestinians. It will, of course, require considerable leadership and courage on the part of the respective sides' as well as vital support from the international community. But the United States, despite the challenges and problems we face at home, still remains the only suitable, capable and accepted leader for positive change in the world today.

Gary Grappo is currently Head of Mission for the Office of the Quartet Representative. The Middle East Quartet is a diplomatic mission spanning the U.N., E.U., U.S and Russia looking to mediate the Israeli -Palestinian peace process. The views expressed here are his own do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the U.S Government either now or at the time in question.

Interview with Matthew Lodge, former Deputy Chief of Mission at the British Embassy in Baghdad in 2007

Iraq's deputy P.M Saleh Al Mutlak recently said there will be an Iraqi business delegation headed to Finland soon. Before "The Surge," Iraqi trade could be summed up by the American soldiers who joked the slogan for Baghdad's Doura Market could be "shop 'til you're dropped." Now countries are rushing to set up consulates and sign contracts. Thinking back to 2007, did you ever think we'd get this far?

Although the situation looked very uncertain at the time, I don't think anyone doubted Iraq's ability to get back on its feet, or indeed the determination of the Iraqis to do just that. Although the country had encountered real difficulties and progressively mounting violence in the years before 2007, there was a strong sense of a country rich in natural and human resources and with enormous potential. The challenge was to stabilize the security situation, encourage political reconciliation and dialogue and enable Iraq and the Iraqi people to resume their everyday lives.

The recent trends towards greater normalization of Iraq's relations with the rest of the world and increasing trade cooperation with international business are a sign of how far we have come since 2007. At the time, I was confident that progress was possible – what was unclear was how long it would take and what price the Iraqis and others would have to pay to get there.

A few years ago an article appeared in The Independent (left wing British newspaper) claiming the U.S had selected a legal team to rig the Iraqi constitution and cripple their government's control of oil contracts. What we have seen since is quite the opposite- an independent hard bargaining Iraqi government. Is it time to bury the "no blood for oil" argument once and for all?

Yes. There was a lot of unfounded comment and criticism about the Iraqi constitution and foreign interference. Frankly I think it is insulting to the Iraqi people to suggest they were somehow in the pockets of the west. As we have seen, the process of Iraqi reconstruction and increasing prosperity and independence has been Iraqi-led all the way. That was self-evident for any who sat in on the proceedings of the Ministerial Committee on National Security during its meetings in 2007.

Events surrounding the abduction of Peter Moore and the cold blooded murder of his associates are well documented, as are allegations of Iranian collusion or alleged involvement of members of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior at the time. Jawad Al Bulani, who then ran the MOI, has been credited with purging it of corruption and sectarianism. But he'd been in charge a full year at the time of the abduction. He stayed on during the U.S/ British MOI transition team that re-invigorated the MOI, but how did Britain know whom to trust at the time?

In my experience of post-conflict situations such as that which existed in Iraq in 2007, it is always difficult for outsiders to know who can be trusted and precisely what deals and discussions

may be going on. But that uncertainty cannot be used as an excuse for keeping one's distance or not getting involved. You just have to manage the risks as best you can. I saw quite a bit of Jawad Al Bulani, but his English was limited and I don't speak Arabic, so cannot claim to have known him well. He had a very difficult task in reforming the Iraqi police and appeared to be fully committed. But it is quite possible that events such as the abduction of Peter Moore and his security guards could still have happened even if the Iraqi police and Interior Ministry had been in better shape than they were in mid-2007.

Moqtada Al Sadr: his latest public statements show he's still the firebrand. But it strikes me his deal with Maliki has got him on a leash and that it's better to have him in politics than on the fringes, which in my view could swell the ranks of the real dissidents- groups like The Swords of Righteousness. What do you think?

Moqtada Al Sadr attracted a huge amount of comment in 2007, and still does today. Many have observed how, for much of the difficult period Al Sadr was actually in Iran rather than Iraq. Others have commented on how he enjoyed an occasionally difficult relationship with Grand Ayatollah Sistani and seemed at times to have questionable influence over his "followers". But, whatever the truth, Al Sadr seems to remain a totemic figure whose name exerts some considerable influence. As such, I think a policy of engagement and bringing him into the political "tent" is probably wise.

David Petraeus and others have talked about a "whole nation" approach to fighting terrorists and insurgents, i.e. that everyone from border police, diplomats and politicians across the world to the troops on the ground have a unity of effort. When you think about the troops who were in Basra or the S.A.S in Baghdad, did you feel a part of that effort, or does it seem strange to think of it in those terms?

Coming myself from a military background, I am a firm believer in what NATO calls the "Comprehensive Approach" which aims to bring to bear the sort of whole nation effort you describe. But I think one needs to be clear that that comprehensive approach may, and arguably should, mean unity of purpose, a common effort and a consistent, complementary approach. But it does not necessarily mean unity of command as the military might see it. In some circumstances, important civilian actors need to enjoy a degree of separation from the military and security effort, and vice versa. For my part, working in an Embassy of 200

people including other foreign diplomatic missions, EU rule of law advisers, and UK civilian, government, development and military personnel, that collective comprehensive approach seemed both wholly natural and logical, and also extremely important. We also worked hard to ensure that what we were doing in Baghdad complemented what colleagues were doing in Basra, Erbil or, for that matter, London. And I think we generally succeeded.

Matthew Lodge is currently Britain's Ambassador to Finland.

Robert Tollast is an English Literature Graduate from Royal Holloway University of London and has published articles for the finance publication AccountingWEB. He became interested in events in Iraq through his late father, who was a Military Intelligence Officer in Iraq with General Sir Maitland Willson's Persia/ Iraq force (Pai-force) in 1942. He is currently learning Arabic and would be interested one day to visit Iraq, although he concedes this is currently quite an eccentric ambition. All opinions in this article are those of private citizens and do not necessarily reflect the policies of either the British or American Governments either now or during the times in question.

The Pacification of Zaganayah (Part One): Fighting for Intelligence to Overcome the Information Gap

by James Michael Few

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The attacks of 9/11 and subsequent Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) thrust the United States military General Purpose Forces (GPF) into a host of small wars. As we relearned the timeless art of counterinsurgency, much debate surrounds perfecting the proper mixture of gentle influence and violent coercion required as an external intervention force. In the beginning, this mixture is irrelevant. Instead, the most difficult problem facing the commander is one of information. How does one discover and define the current situation on the ground? This understanding is the critical foundation of all other planning and actions.

This essay describes how one Army reconnaissance unit answered this question in a small village perched in a rural, hostile valley. It is the first part in a larger work describing company-level counterinsurgency efforts in the Diyala River Valley during the Iraq Surge. The intent is to describe our initial reconnaissance efforts to define the operational environment and develop a plan to intervene. The purpose is two-fold: 1. inform policy makers on the costs, requirements, and time needed for such GPF interventions, and 2. provide young leaders with an example of applying theory to practice.

While this individual case is unique in study, the methodology is universal. Basic military tactics and techniques appropriately applied for the given environment provide the highest probability for a successful outcome. This valley would serve as watershed moment for the junior combat leaders

involved, and they would eventually apply these lessons learned in the streets of Baghdad at the tail end of the Iraq Surge, the ravaged airfield and slums of Port-au-Prince, Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, and the seemingly unconquerable valleys of Kunar Province along the Af-Pak border during the Afghanistan Surge.¹

Armis Exposcere Pacem²

By late 2006, Iraq bordered on the brink of civil war. Various Sunni insurgent groups some aligned with the al Qaeda terror network claimed control of Anbar, Salah ad-Din, and Diyala Provinces. These groups' militias and the predatory criminal gangs that sprang up in the chaos challenged the legitimacy of the nascent Iraqi government and U.S. occupying forces supporting it. These denied areas, defined as "area(s) under enemy or unfriendly control in which friendly forces cannot expect to operate successfully within existing operational constraints and force capabilities,"³ provided safehavens that al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) used as a

¹ CPT Jeffrey Black would command C/5-73 Recon (Airborne) in Sadr City in 2009. CPT Michael Anderson, B/1-73 Recon (Airborne) deployed as the first GPF boots on the ground after the Haiti Earthquake. CPT Tye Reedy currently commands Charlie Company/2-327th (No Slack) in the fight in Kunar Province.

² "They demanded peace by force of arms." Motto of Mortar Platoon, "The Lost Boys," Alpha Troop, 5-73 Recon (Airborne)

³ Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 31 December 2010, p.103, Available at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf. Accessed on 8Feb2011.

foothold to build and expand its shadow government, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). These groups used the “No-Go” areas as training camps, staging areas, and weapons depots in order to prepare for future offensive operations.



Figure One. Zaganiyah, Iraq, March 2007. A/5-73 Recon (Airborne) paratroopers seize an al Qaeda headquarters and convert to an American patrol base. Photograph by Yuri Kozyrev, Time Magazine⁴

My earlier work *The Break Point* described how al Qaeda operatives overtook the town of Zaganiyah, a central village in the Diyala River Valley (DRV), using “a four-phased plan: clandestine organization, psychological preparation of the people, expansion of control, and consolidation of power.”⁵ These efforts were deliberate, well-organized, coordinated, and ruthless. In three months, al Qaeda “established its zone of control, effectively killing or displacing 5,000 Shia residents, dissolving the Iraqi Government presence, instituting an Islamic government, and implementing Shar’iah law.”⁶ Government officials continue to uncover mass graves in excess of 150 men, women, and children murdered throughout Diyala Province by al Qaeda forces from 2006 to 2007.⁷

In February 2007, 5-73 Recon (Airborne) began clearing the DRV of AQI to reclaim the area for the Government of Iraq (GoI). During this operation, I served as the commander of Alpha Troop, 5-73 Recon (Airborne). We accomplished this mission using a three-phased plan: fighting for intelligence

to overcome the information gap, forced initial entry to establish a foothold, and destroying the enemy infrastructure and support networks. The end-state of this pacification was achieving the insurgent break point, the point at which the insurgents ability to control terrain is less than that of the counterinsurgent,⁸ a philosophy we dubbed terrorizing the terrorists.

While Ali Latif al-Zaharie’s al Qaeda network used Mao’s playbook to assume control,⁹ we countered with an operation akin to the British approach in the early stages of the Malayan Emergency. As noted by the historian, Karl Hack, “You cannot, for instance, go straight to a comprehensive approach for ‘winning hearts and minds’ and expect it to work, if you have not first broken up the larger insurgent groups, disrupted their main bases, and achieved a modicum of spatial dominance and of security for the population of the area concerned.”¹⁰ In Malaya, prior to the population-centric counterinsurgency campaign, Sir Robert Thompson and General Gerald Templer led a military effort that focused on psychological warfare, restrictive population control measures, persistent small-unit patrolling, and targeted ambushes to quell the violence and separate the enemy from the populace.¹¹

Zaganiyah would be no different. Simply put, given the existing levels of violence, we determined that the first part of our comprehensive counterinsurgency plan must establish security if there was to be a chance for a negotiated peace. This process of pacification would take four months with a price paid in thirty American soldiers,¹² many more in-

⁸ Gordon McCormick, Steven B. Horton, Lauren A. Harrison. “Things fall apart: the endgame dynamics of internal wars.” *Third World Quarterly*, Volume 28, Issue 2 March 2007, pages 321 – 367. Available at <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a771160834~frm=titlelink> Accessed 8 February 2011.

⁹ While “The Break Point” shows how Ali Latif conducted mobilization and occupation, the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at the United States Military Academy (USMA) has translated hundreds of intercept messages and doctrine from the al Qaeda network in Iraq. Specifically, see “Thoughts about Security of Principal Squads” available at <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq/pdf/AFGP-2002-600002-Trans.pdf> Posted on 17 Mar2006 and accessed on 24 Mar2011.

¹⁰ See Octavian Manea’s Interview “Setting the record straight on Malayan Counterinsurgency Strategy,” <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2011/02/setting-the-record-straight-on/> Accessed on 11Mar11.

¹¹ See R. W. Komer, “The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of a Successful Counterinsurgency Effort.” Rand, February 1972. Available at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/2005/R957.pdf>. Accessed on 24Mar2011.

¹² During the four month operation, twenty-one paratroopers from 5-73 Recon were killed. Additionally, one Navy EOD tech,

⁴ See also Mark Kukis and Yuri Kozyrev’s Photo Essay, –The Battle for Diyala, for Time Magazine, March 2007. http://www.time.com/time/photoessays/2007/kozyrev_qubah_multimedia/

⁵ See James Few, “The Break Point: How AQIZ established the ISI in Zaganiyah.” Available at <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/04/yet-another-17-april-swj-onlin/> Accessed on 8Feb2011.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jack Healy. “Bomber Strikes Shiite Pilgrims’ Bus in Iraq” <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/13/world/middleeast/13iraq.html>. Accessed on 11Mar11.

jured, and a heavy emotional toll that burdened us long after we returned home. In his song “Sand Hills to Sandals,” 5-73 veteran Stephen Covell expressed it best when he sang, “try as I might, I can’t escape it / those burning fields and nights spent awaking, / listening to the thunder we pulled down.”¹³

Some initial findings from our fight include the following:

Understand the limits of your own control. You won’t solve or transform societies in one year. It’s not your job to “fix” your area of operations. Concentrate on what you can accomplish—stopping the bleeding and reestablishing security. Limit your goals to reasonable ones.

Reconnaissance helps in overcoming the fog and friction of war. Use it. It is foolish to go into a situation blind when you don’t have to. Take the time to maximize your military and technological advances to help you define the environment. Additionally, these operations provide your soldiers with familiarity of the area and build confidence in their own abilities.

People are people regardless of culture. Human terrain and social sciences only go so far in sophistication to define our differences. In the end, people make decisions based on their hearts (emotions), minds (thoughts), and souls (will). Building personal and professional relationships is the key terrain in small wars. Discretion in whom to trust is paramount.

Engagements are tricky and similar to high stakes games of poker. Everyone wants something; there is always an angle. You must learn to discern interests and motivations. If you can’t identify the mark in the room, then you are it. Once understood, then you must determine how to best influence or coerce to accomplish your mission.

Squadron Philosophy

In June 2005, I redeployed back home to Fort Bragg, NC after my third tour and joined the paratroopers of 3-505 PIR to assist in transforming this famed battalion into a Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Targeting, and Acquisition (RSTA) squadron in accordance with the Army’s new modularity concept. As we designed the squadron, Iraq

weighed heavily on my mind. It felt like we were losing badly. While we did not have any answers to the problem, we decided that we wanted to try something different during our next tour. We refused to spend the year driving around waiting to get blown up by the random roadside bomb. During my previous tour, I served as a staff officer with 10th Special Forces group, and they provided me with instruction in unconventional warfare that I wanted to apply to the squadron and troop’s standard operating procedures (SOP).

The squadron was a mixture of infantrymen and cavalry scouts with backgrounds in Heavy and Light Cavalry units, regular Airborne Infantry units, Long-Range Reconnaissance Detachments (LRRSD), Ranger Regiment, and Scout Platoons. During pre-deployment training, officers and non-commissioned officers trained at Ranger School, Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader Course (RSLC), Sniper School, Air Assault School, and Scout Leaders Course (SLC). These intrinsic skill sets gave us a distinct advantage in the rural, wooden terrain of the DRV.

In garrison, we conducted a Spartan regiment of military and physical training developed by Major Townley Hedrick, then the squadron’s operations officer. All training was combat focused—strenuous, relentless efforts to build our phalanx. In September 2005, the squadron would deploy to New Orleans, LA to help secure the Big Easy in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Patrolling the ravaged parishes would provide our young paratroopers with an understanding of how society can break down after a traumatic event. This experience would prove pivotal as we entered into the breach of Zaganiyah’s collapse.

Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield

In any counterinsurgency effort, the most difficult problem facing the counterinsurgent is often identifying the enemy’s disposition and composition. Basically, the insurgent can see the government’s security forces, but the government cannot see him. This information gap provides a source of strength for the insurgent and a comparative advantage in the early stages of the conflict.¹⁴ This lack of information is often frustrating and sometimes feels as if “we attack an enemy who is invisible, fluid, and uncatchable.”¹⁵ We were neither

two Kiowa pilots, and six cavalymen from 6-9 ARS died in the valley.

¹³ See Stephen Covell, “Sand Hills to Sandals,” *YouTube*, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oj5mVD_QUa8.

¹⁴ See Gordon H. McCormick and Frank Giordano, “Things Come Together: Symbolic Violence and Guerrilla Mobilization,” *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 28, No. 2, 2007, p. 300.

¹⁵ Roger Trinquier’s *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*

Figure Two. Timeline of Events	
Time	Event
6 Aug -1 Nov 06	A/5-73 responsible for Diyala River Valley
Sept-Oct 06	Patrol base established in Abu Saydah
15-Oct-06	AQI declares Baqubah as Caliphate for Islamic State of Iraq
1-Nov-06	A/5-73 Recon leaves Zaganiyah to assist in dismantling AQI training camps in Eastern Diyala Province
1 Nov 06-1 Mar 07	The Break Point: AQI establishes the ISI in Zaganiyah
10-Nov-06	Break Point- AQI overruns Zaganiyah Police Station. Zaganiyah declared "No-Go" area. AQI occupies and establishes Islamic State of Iraq.
15-Feb-07	5-73 Recon receives change of mission to seize Diyala River Valley. Conducts move from FOB Caldwell to FOB Warhorse.
March-June 07	The Pacification of Zaganiyah
1-15 March 07	Phase One: Fighting For Intelligence to Overcome the Information Gap
16-29 March 07	Phase Two: Forced Initial Entry to Establish a Foothold
29 Mar-30 Jun 07	Phase Three: Destroying the Enemy Infrastructure and Support
30-Jun-07	The Insurgent Break Point
Jul-Nov 07	Transitioning Zaganiyah

immune to this frustration nor did we underestimate our enemy; however, we felt that by applying the basic military tactics described below that we could lower the detection threshold¹⁶ and overcome this gap.

The first step necessary is intelligence collection. There are many ways to accomplish this key task, but methods must be properly chosen to match the environment. The intent of this phase is to find the enemy's approximate size and location. As a reconnaissance squadron, our unit was uniquely equipped to handle this task.

Mission, Enemy, Time, Troops, Terrain, Civilians (METT-TC)

Squadron Mission. 5-73 Recon (Airborne)¹⁷ seizes the Diyala River Valley no later than 1 April 07 in order to destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and re-establish the Government of Iraq (GoI).

Enemy. In February 2007, the situation in the Diyala River Valley was uncertain; the problem set offered more unknowns than known facts. Early in the fight, we only knew that al Qaeda had forced out American and Iraqi forces. From our friends and sources, we received preliminary reports describing the severity of AQI's occupation, but we would have to sort through the muddle in order to

distinguish rumors from intelligence. An estimated 1,000 fighters (1% of the valley's total populace, 10% of Zaganiyah) operated in the valley under the military command of Ali Latif al-Zaharie. Political control was under Abu Masri al-Iraqi, and economic control under Sheik Septar al-Zaharie.

Time. Historically, counterinsurgencies take roughly ten years to conclude.¹⁸ During the Iraq Surge, we were not afforded the luxury of time. The American public was growing weary of external intervention, and General David Petraeus demanded quick results. We had six months to pacify Zaganiyah and show substantial results.

Troops. This operation would be a squadron (minus) effort of three hundred paratroopers dubbed Task Force 300. In Alpha Troop, I commanded around one hundred paratroopers with attachments. Additionally, two hundred Iraq police and military personnel would provide assistance to our troop in the latter part of the pacification.

Terrain. The Diyala River Valley is part of Iraq's breadbasket. Much of the terrain and industry depends on agriculture. The Diyala and Crescent rivers erect natural boundaries with few crossing points. That makes bridges key to controlling the roads, including the semi-paved and dirt byways interconnecting throughout the valley. Foot trails throughout the valley provide hasty dismounted movement and the lush vegetation and

¹⁶ The detection threshold defines the specific amount of information required to know where the enemy resides. In *Counterinsurgency*, Dr. David Kilcullen covers this topic in greater detail; however, our approach to overcoming this threshold would differ than his.

¹⁷ For this operation, 5-73 Recon deployed as a squadron minus element of 300 paratroopers dubbed Task Force 300. HHT, A Troop, and C Troop took responsibility for the Diyala River Valley. B Troop maintained responsibility for Turki Village.

¹⁸ See Ben Connable's "The End of an Insurgency." Available at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66749/ben-connable/the-end-of-an-insurgency?page=show>. Accessed on 28Mar2011.

farms lend excellent cover and concealment for reconnaissance forces.

Civilians. An amalgam of Iraq, sects, religions, and tribes intersect in the Diyala River Valley. This contested area is home to Sunni, Shia, and Christians as well as Arabs and Kurds. This mixture tends towards significant internal disputes and mixed factions with unknown or casual allegiances. In this area, truth and trust are often complicated and relative to the observer. An estimated 100,000 civilians lived in the valley with an estimated 10,000 in the village of Zaganiyah.

Reconnaissance Guidance

Even in small wars first impressions are important, and the initial reconnaissance guidance must reflect one's attitude and tone. Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Poppas¹⁹ today the commander of 1st "Bastogne" BCT, 101st Division (Air Assault), commanded 5-73 Recon (Airborne). His guidance was simple, "Go behind enemy lines and find the enemy." Alpha Troop would take the lead for this collection effort.²⁰ My guidance to my troop was to "terrorize the terrorist—find him, take away his security and protection, and put him on the defensive." For this effort, we would apply reconnaissance pull.

Psychological Warfare Operations

LTC Poppas felt that if we took the fight to the enemy, then we could force a decisive victory. He understood that in a protracted counterinsurgency most of "the population will support the team they know will win,"²¹ but there are always some folks whose minds will not change. On the battlefield, we would attempt to force a linear fight with those that continued to rebel, an area where we had another distinct advantage.

In LTC Poppas's mind, we had to be the strongest tribe.²² Since control is most often an illusion or fleeting feeling, we wanted the population to perceive that we were the most fearless, powerful force in the valley. Through a lethal targeting plan,

we wanted to force the enemy to fear us. This approach would allow us to move into the role as the neutral arbitrator. While this approach may seem extreme, the conditions on the ground demanded desperate measures. In order to reestablish law and order and stop the violence bordering on genocide in some villages, we would occupy as a benevolent dictator. Throughout the tour, we made it known to the populace that we could be anywhere at any time. We were always watching.

This mentality translated into a culture of decentralized, independent small unit teams capable of extended covert reconnaissance operations. This attitude would transcend our actions, and our actions would nest directly into our overall psychological warfare operations.

In reality, we realized the limits of our own control, but this posturing would work well in a village recovering from forty years of authoritative rule. Our goals were relatively limited. Rather than attempting to transform an entire society, we simply wanted to affect one behavior initially— that is, stopping the violence and reestablishing security. We were not trying to fix Zaganiyah. They would have to choose to do that on their own time.

Reconnaissance Pull: A Process of Discovery

My father was a commercial developer in a town transitioning from rural farmland into a major affluent suburb. As a child, he taught me his methodology that would later prove relevant in this valley. Prior to building a new medical park, we would survey the town using local maps. Then, we would drive around town, talk to our neighbors, and get to know the area. These trips would be made at various times during the day so that he could gauge the traffic congestion. Next, when he picked out a potential piece of land, we would rent a helicopter and fly over the area to see it from above. I asked him why we were this deliberate. He told me that it was necessary in order to get a feel of the land and minimize the risk of a bad investment. He needed to know how the city worked, who the key players were, and ensure that the medical offices were in the proper spot given the other neighborhoods, schools, and businesses in the area. I listened well and would translate this methodology into practice upon entering the Diyala River Valley. While my father built medical parks to help the sick, we would shape the terrain in this foreign valley to prevent further bloodshed.

The Army provides a "scientific method" for use when entering a new area where the situation is unknown called reconnaissance pull. It is a pro-

¹⁹ Colonel Andrew Poppas is currently applying a similar model to RC-East in Afghanistan.

²⁰ From August–November 2006, A/5-73 Recon was responsible for the Diyala River Valley.

²¹ William F. Owen, "Seek and Destroy: The Forgotten Strategy for Countering Armed Rebellion," *Infinity Journal*. Available at http://www.infinityjournal.com/article/9/Seek_and_Destroy_The_Forgotten_Strategy_for_Countering_Armed_Rebellion. Accessed on 24Mar2011.

²² In Anbar Province, according to Bing West in *The Biggest Tribe: War, Politics, and the Endgame in Iraq*, the Marines reached the same conclusion.

cess of discovery, bottom-up and intelligence driven, where the information gained from the ground drives the decision making process. We would apply reconnaissance pull in four forms: map reconnaissance, aerial reconnaissance, route reconnaissance, and ground reconnaissance.

During the initial Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), we would begin with a collaborative, brainstorming exercise asking four general questions:

- What do we think we know about the area?
- How permissive is the environment?
- What is really going on in the area?
- What information are we missing?

The preliminary answers would provide a hypothesis that we would later test through detailed reconnaissance and surveillance efforts.

Hypothesis to test. Al Qaeda occupied the DRV and established systems of government, economic, and military control.

Preliminary reconnaissance of over three hundred reconnaissance patrols was completed from August through October 2006 by Alpha Troop. Over the course of three weeks in early March 2007, Alpha and Charlie Troop would serve as the eyes and ears of the squadron conducting over one hundred reconnaissance patrols.

Raw information collected from the platoons would be sent to the troop's operations and intelligence cell. This team consisted of Sergeant Joshua Kinser and I in a dusty, makeshift command post (CP) forged inside the excess personnel tents at FOB Warhorse working late into the night trying to sort through and decipher the evidence. Kinser, a scout in third platoon, volunteered to help me with the analysis. He was on his second Iraq tour, had fought in the Battle of Fallujah and throughout the Diyala River Valley, and he taught himself conversational Arabic during his free time. His efforts were invaluable.

Next, our final reports were consolidated into an Intelligence Summary (INTSUM) and sent to squadron headquarters. Major Brett Sylvia the squadron's operation officer and senior brain trust would lead the staff sections through analysis to paint the picture in order to allow the squadron commander to define the environment.

- (1) *Map Reconnaissance.* Initially, we would study all existing maps and satellite imagery to gain an understanding of the physical terrain. Simultaneously, we would read previous intel-

ligence reports to learn from those who had worked in this area before us.

- (2) *Aerial Reconnaissance.* After intelligence briefings and prior to initial entry, key leaders would conduct an aerial reconnaissance over the new area of operations in order to see the area from a different perspective whenever possible. This process served as another approach to learning the area. In August 2006, squad leaders and above from Alpha Troop conducted aerial reconnaissance via Blackhawk helicopters. Flying near treetop level, my scouts were able to grasp a broader understanding of the restrictive terrain that they were about to encounter.
- (3) *Ground Reconnaissance.*²³ From area and zone reconnaissance to visual tracking and hunting, this form of reconnaissance required our paratroopers to covertly infiltrate on foot under the cover of darkness to "take a look around and see what's really going on." These patrols allowed us to confirm or deny intelligence reports and observe the enemy actions when he thought that he was "safe."

Paratroopers would maintain observation posts within the DRV for durations extending up to seventy-two hours. As a young tank platoon leader during the first five days of the initial invasion, I slept less than twelve cumulative hours and suffered the consequences of sleep deprivation. I knew that my scouts would lose their situational awareness after three days so we limited the duration of our fixed-site observation points.

In the case of detection, forces would react by fire to close with and destroy the threat. Otherwise, forces broke contact in order to maintain the element of surprise. The focus of this collection was to determine where the enemy operated, his size, and his routines.

In August 2006, Red Platoon, 1/A/5-73 Recon (Airborne) led by 1LT Michael Anderson and SFC Mitchell Gonzales, deployed north of FOB Warhorse to find a crossing point along the Diyala River. We wanted to know how the local fishermen crossed the river. The platoon drove to the release point (RP) where Mitch Gonzales established an assembly area (AA). He would be responsible for truck security, communications to the troop, and casualty evacuation. Then, Mike Anderson took the dismount team and began insertion. The teams

²³ See also John D. Hurth and Jason W. Brokaw's "Visual Tracking and the Military Tracking Team Capability." Available at <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2010/12/visual-tracking-and-the-milita/#c018196>. Accessed on 17 March 2011.

would break into two sections, and the section sergeants, our unsung workhorses, led the sections quietly into the palm groves navigating the dismounted elements along the river in search of boats, enemy caches and fighting positions, and rope bridges. Staff Sergeant (SSG) Glenn Bennett found boats stashed on the north side of the river. In subsequent missions, Mike Anderson and First Platoon would use these boats to covertly cross the river and bypass the enemy's early warning system.

In October 2006, Blue Platoon, 3/A/5-73 Recon (Airborne) led by 1LT Jeffrey Black and SFC Shane Bates, deployed north of Zaganiyah to monitor the village from across the river. Infiltrating in at night and conducting exfiltration before dawn daily over a two-week period, this platoon positively identified one safe house and command and control network. Maximizing our technological advantage, the platoon collected both image and video to help describe the target house. In a subsequent raid, one enemy sniper was killed and sensitive site exploitation revealed detailed maps of local American bases.

In March 2007, White Platoon, 2/A/5-73 Recon (Airborne) led by 1LT Tye Reedy and SFC Ray Hernandez deployed northeast of Zaganiyah to monitor the town of Qubba from across the river. Over a seventy-two hour period, combining mounted and dismounted patrolling, the platoon discovered the location of a building used to manufacture Explosively Formed Penetrators (EFPs). Locals detesting the al Qaeda occupation pointed out the location of the building. Later, as part of a combined attack, we would destroy this factory.

These patrols allowed us a significantly better understanding of the environment. When patrols gained contact with the enemy, we were able to define the boundaries of al Qaeda's physical control of the terrain. When the patrols went undetected, we were able to determine where the enemy was operating and begin to define his routine. Later, this understanding would allow us to interdict into his decision making cycle.

(4) *Route Reconnaissance*. During the fall of 2006, route reconnaissance was the first critical task issued to my troop. While we knew that most coalition and Iraqi forces travelled along Canal Road, we needed to know all available routes in and out of the valley. This information would provide key avenues of enemy movement for IED emplacement. In the spring of 2007, squadron-level route reconnaissance focused on determining what cross-

ing points existed along the rivers and how extensively al Qaeda had mined the main roads.

In March 2007, Jeff Black deployed Third Platoon southeast of Zaganiyah to survey crossing points along Canal Road. During their patrol, the platoon identified al Qaeda's primary avenue of approach to bypass Iraqi Army elements enroute to Baqubah. Later, during our initial infiltration, we would use this route to bypass the enemy's defensive network of one hundred deep buried IEDs, saving countless lives.

These mounted patrols were not without substantial cost. In trying to determine the utility of the roads, the squadron would receive two to three daily IED attacks. These attacks caused significant casualties in our squadron to include the squadron surgeon who suffered a traumatic brain injury as shrapnel penetrated his skull after a blast while on patrol with Charlie Troop.²⁴ Despite the cost, the patrols were essential to understanding the gravity of the situation.

(5) *ISR Assets*. To complement the work our paratroopers conducted on the ground, squadron would employ various ISR platforms throughout the valley in order to refine our assessment and provide a better understanding.

The Art of the Engagement

While our recon platoons focused on tactical ground reconnaissance, the command visited key government, social, and religious leaders to gather information to assist in confirming or denying our hypothesis. These meetings complimented the work of our recon elements allowing us to survey both the physical and human terrain prior to intervention.

In *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie reminds us that "when dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion, creatures bristling with prejudice, and motivated by pride and vanity."²⁵ Even in a protracted insurgency, people make decisions based off the *perceived* expected costs and benefits from both the government and the insurgency.²⁶ Sometimes, these decisions are rational when based strictly on thoughts (minds). Other times, the decisions are foolish when one base decisions from an emotional response (heart). Sometimes, this perception is driv-

²⁴ Thankfully, the doctor underwent a full recovery after medical evacuation and subsequent treatment.

²⁵ Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

²⁶ *Seminar on Guerilla Warfare*, Dr. Gordon McCormick. NPS, Monterey, CA, Winter 2008.

en from a combination of one's heart and mind. It can be influenced or coerced by a host of options ranging from physical violence to financial gain. At the confluence of the heart and mind, small wars appear as a contest of wills or a battle for the soul.²⁷

We learned that relationships are essential to counterinsurgency operations for intelligence and collection value; however, one must remember that the mission comes first and the intent is to influence, coerce, or persuade the subject in order to force him/her to agree to your mission. It is quite naive to believe that you are attempting to win anyone's heart and mind during a violent insurgency.

Honey not vinegar. The art of engagement is probably best practiced by seasoned journalists. People often simply want to be listened to, and a journalist quickly learns that skilled questioning, good conversation, and active listening pay great dividends. I learned a great deal of this art from my friends in media for initial engagements; however, as time would pass, our processes differed. While journalists try to remain objective, our mission was much more involved.

The most important meeting came from an unlikely ally named Sheik Adnon al Tamimi. From our previous time in the area, Adnon and I had developed a close relationship. Despite my continued pressure and persistence, he was often reluctant to provide exact intelligence given the sensitivity of his position.²⁸ Often, he would hint using metaphors and measured stories. Adnon, the cousin of Diyala Governor Ra'ad al Tamimi, served as both the political and economic leader in the Abarra Nahiya (the government designation for this sector of the DRV) for the Government of Iraq. Through a combination of savvy and intuition, Adnon successfully managed to mediate between the tribes, family, and religious factors since the initial U.S. invasion and regime change. Adnon did not take sides lightly, choosing instead self-promotion. In late October 2006, as daily attacks increased and the pressure continued to mount, Adnon was forced to dismantle the local government and suspend his business ventures.

In late October 2006, we visited Adnon's compound for the annual feast to celebrate the end of the fasting for the end of Ramadan, and he introduced us to the two hundred Shia refugees from the valley that he was housing. I listened to individual tales of horror: of homes destroyed, family members executed, and farms lost. By introducing me to the plight of the refugees, this was his first attempt to show the growing instability in the region. We talked late into the night about religion, our children's futures, and the future of Iraq, but he was still not convinced that he needed to personally intervene in the present situation. By March 2007, his tone changed. This decision was quite rational. The Zaharie tribe usurped control of the valley with the assistance of al Qaeda in Iraq, and the threat of the Islamic State of Iraq now outweighed his personal risks in cooperating with the Americans.²⁹

In early March 2007, we coordinated a meeting with LTC Poppas at Adnon's compound. From the outset, Adnon's appearance had deteriorated from the last time we had spoken: sunken, tired eyes, hunched shoulders, and a perpetual scowl. He admitted that months had passed since he could leave the protection of his compound due to the ever deteriorating security situation. Moreover, he was frustrated that he could not travel to Baqubah in order to see his mistress. This insight was his second attempt to describe the full impact of al Qaeda's occupation. As LTC Poppas talked to Sheik Adnon, we observed him intently trying to discern whether Adnon was being truthful or was playing us for a mark. Adnon was no fool. In truth, he was a sly political operative with a knack for self-preservation.

One of the main reasons that Adnon was so endearing was because he was always upfront about where his interest lay—that is, promoting the Adnon "brand." However, this conversation was different. First, Adnon provided a map from a source who gave us a detailed description of both the al Qaeda disposition and composition in Zaganiyah. This information accurately matched that provided earlier by Mufasa "Moose" Fahmi al Zaharie, my trusted interpreter. Secondly, he admitted to the overreach of the Iraqi Army and Police forces in forcing the Sunnis hand towards al Qaeda. In the past, the security forces, mostly comprised of Shia, used their power and authority within the valley to settle political and personal scores with the tacit or

²⁷ French counter-rebellion literature from the colonial period is very descriptive in describing the hearts, minds, and soul of small wars. Specifically, see the writings Jean Pouget in Major Jonathan D. Howell's *Law, Ethics, And Morality In War During The Battle Of Algiers*

²⁸ See also "Building Relationships and Influence in Counterinsurgency: One Officer's Perspective" by Eric von Tersch <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2011/03/building-relationships-and-inf/>

²⁹ See also Michael C. Sevcik's "Moral Intuition and the Professional Military Ethic." Available at <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2011/03/morale-intuition-and-the-profe/>. Accessed on 6 April 2011.

unknowing consent of American forces. This agitation laid the groundwork for grievances amongst the Sunni community which al Qaeda exploited. This specific revelation was the key factor that led to me believing Sheik Adnon. He finally informed on his own people, information that I had waited impatiently for six months to receive.

Simultaneously, we attempted to reach out to Sheik Septar Al-Zaharie, the local Sunni leader for possible negotiations to disarm prior to intervention. Unfortunately, events had escalated to a point where his faction became non-cooperative and different measures were necessary.

Defining the Environment

Combing the collected information, initial observations, and survey collection provided confirmation of the most dangerous enemy course of action: the enemy effectively occupied the DRV and established systems of government, economic, and military control. As we navigated along the Diyala River during insertion, bloated bodies of civilians executed by the shadow government floated eerily south down the river every day. An extensive network of deep-buried IED's along Canal Road, the main avenue of approach through the valley, provided a blocking minefield. Local paramilitary forces ran checkpoints and security patrols as measures of population control. Moreover, these forces utilized captured Iraqi police trucks and radios for transportation and communication.

In the town of Qubba, government, economic, and judicial offices were established for the Islamic State of Iraq. In Zaganiyah, forces occupied the local girl's elementary school to establish the military headquarters. The towns of Had Masker and As Sadah were used as buffer zones and staging areas to plan and execute attacks on the Iraqi Government in Abu Sayda, al Abarrah, al Durah, and Baqubah. In the farmlands, extensive military training camps provided recruits from Baqubah and Baghdad with military skills and tactics. While our small unit was a mere shaping force to the supporting operations in Baqubah, this safe haven provided strategic importance to al Qaeda's efforts in Iraq. The next step was course of action development to determine how we would intervene to stop the bleeding.

Course of Action Development

After we defined the environment, we narrowed the parameters and determined that we had two preliminary problems to solve. First, what to do about the corrupt, overbearing Iraqi security forces on the periphery of the DRV fueling the Sunni/Shia

divide? Second, how do we infiltrate and ultimately seize the DRV? Before we could answer these questions, a third problem arose that was potentially fatal.

We found that selection and retention of good interpreters another critical task. The interpreter is your guide through both the physical and human terrain, and they control the conversation. We had to be cautious and aware to the interpreter's internal motivations and external feuds. Moreover, in Diyala Province, many interpreters were Kurdish and spoke only broken Arabic. After exhausting six interpreters, I found Mufasa "Moose" Fahmi al Zaharie. Long considered the best interpreter in the province. Moose hailed from Zaganiyah, and his rolodex included every major sheik and power player in the province. Furthermore, Moose personally saved my own life on three separate occasions by having his friends call us when insurgents would place an IED on our path. This prestige led to privileged status on American Forward Operating Bases (FOBs). Moose was my right-hand man. He lived and dined with us, characteristics unheard of on FOB Warhorse where interpreters were segregated. This status provoked much jealousy amongst the other interpreters outside of our squadron, and they concocted a plan to undermine and spite him.

The civil war raging in Iraq was not isolated within the American FOBs, and the same Sunni-Shia divide affected the interpreters. In mid-March, I received a call from MAJ Sylvia after returning from a reconnaissance patrol. The Brigade S2, intelligence officer, wanted to arrest Moose on suspicion of working with al Qaeda. I laughed and deemed it impossible. Not only had Moose provided us with a house by house description of Zaganiyah to include exactly who the power players were and how they had gained control, but his house had been destroyed by AQI in December 2006 in retribution for working with the Americans. However, I soon found that this arrest was deadly serious. When I asked for the source, it was two Shia interpreters who were simply jealous of Moose. Without context, the evidence appeared staggering. Moose was in the Zaharie tribe related to both Sheik Septar and Ali Latif. On some black and white link diagram, it seemed like a perfect connection that Moose was operating as an al Qaeda spy—that is, until you consider that he was informing on the same folks that he supposedly working for. I pleaded my case through the brigade command and lost. When it was time for Moose to go to jail, I personally escorted him, hugged him, and apologized. We lost Moose prior to intervention, and

with his absence, we lost our best guide into the valley.³⁰

Despite our feelings over losing our friend and comrade, we had to concentrate on the mission. The next step was determining what to do about the corrosive security forces. Their individual actions helped ease this decision. Charlie Troop caught LT Ali, a Shia from Kharnabhat and commander of the IA, torturing prisoners in the Al Abarra IA compound. We arrested LT Ali and convinced COL David Sutherland, 3/1 BCT CAV Commander to whom we were attached, to reposition this sectarian laden force to Baqubah and replace them with a more seasoned army unit. With these changes made, we were able to mitigate the government's internal attempts to persecute the Sunnis.

Next, we had to decide how to seize the valley. LTC Poppas decided that we must clear through the valley with an endstate of establishing a patrol base in Zaganiyah, the key terrain of the valley. To get there, we would village hop through As Sadah and Qubba enroute to Zaganiyah while attempting to bypass the extensive defensive network. Phase One ended with his decision and subsequent planning. This phase would take three weeks, and during the reconnaissance, approximately ten paratroopers were wounded and fifteen insurgents killed. However, this deliberate reconnaissance effort would allow us a greater understanding of the area prior to intervention.

Conclusion

As I reexamine this reconnaissance effort four years after the operation began, I sometimes wonder if enough time and space have passed for proper analysis. I am keenly aware that it is a one-sided story, and there is a natural tendency to unintentionally inflate the direct impact my troop had on the village. For a proper historiography, we would need to interview the enemy combatants and citizens of Zaganiyah to gain their perspective. Currently, I cannot facilitate that process. With these shortcomings identified, I will share what I learned from this operation as honestly as I can.

For some young leaders, soon, you may be tasked with a mission similar to mine in an isolat-

ed, rugged valley in a foreign country. My hope is that you can learn from our successes and my failures prior to experiencing them on your own. While Zaganiyah will be different from your fight, the principles remain the same. You just have to learn to interpret the METT-TC.

My own watershed moment occurred in Western Baghdad in May 2003. After the Thunder Runs and the capitulation of Saddam's Army, Iraq did not immediately convert into a Jeffersonian Democracy. After the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) disbanded the Army and outlawed the Ba'ath Party, the state essential support structures crumbled.³¹ Without something or someone to replace these structures, I watched with a sense of helplessness as the masses moved to the street looting and rioting. What I directly observed prompted me to remain in the U.S. Army until the mission was fully accomplished. I wanted to understand why the situation unraveled and attempt to fix it.

As I framed this narrative, I felt that it was important to separate the reconnaissance effort into its own story. Reconnaissance takes time and careful precision, and a commander pressured for action and quantifiable metrics may skip or minimize this step. This decision is a foolish one. As with the construction of a home, reconnaissance is the foundation of all other planning and operations. For the external intervention force, learning and understanding one's environment is a process of discovery. Reconnaissance provides the way towards gathering information and intelligence. Reconnaissance is a boring, tedious endeavor. Often, we would spend nights in observation post staring at an empty street. With persistence, eventually you'll find the right OP and the right street to observe.

Throughout this narrative, I expressed the feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and losing. I found that small wars have a way of abruptly breaking a young man's sense of invincibility, and a good counterinsurgent must harness and develop his/her emotional intelligence. This process begins with an understanding of one's limits of personal control. In Zaganiyah, I learned that I could not fix the village. Winning and mission accomplishment were not defined by lofty ideals. Rather, this understanding allowed us to concentrate on what we could accomplish. In the case of Zaganiyah, we set

³⁰ For the past four years, I followed Moose's case leading to his ultimate release from detention. For his assistance helping the United States Government, Moose faces daily assassination attempts. Currently, we are working through the US State Department and the Department of Homeland Security to garner him a United States citizenship. If he gets approved, I plan to sponsor his transition in the US. For his sacrifice, it is the least that I can do.

³¹The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA): Origin, Characteristics, and Institutional Authorities. CRS Report for Congress. Available at <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/RL32370.pdf> Accessed on 6Apr2011.

our goals to stop the rapidly escalating violence and suppress the al Qaeda presence.

Eventually, you may have to pick a side in the conflict. This requires discretion and discernment on whom to trust. Even in Zaganiyah, the overall conflict was local- tribes, families, and criminal gangs competing for political and economic control. Both al Qaeda and U.S. forces externally intervened to force their own objectives. The Zaharie tribe sided with al Qaeda, and the Tamimi tribe sided with U.S. forces.

This reconnaissance effort served as the first phase of our efforts to pacify Zaganiyah. During this two week operation, we conducted IPB, reconnaissance pull, and local engagements, defined the environment, and developed the specific course of action to employ. Next, we would conduct forced initial entry to establish a foothold. This phase would last two weeks. With a general understand-

ing of the valley complete, we would maximize surprise and speed to seize the valley and establish a patrol base in Zaganiyah. Once established, we began the final phase destroying the enemy infrastructure and support networks. This phase would take ninety days and require the support of the local populace to pacify the resistance. As we moved deeper into the valley, the fight would become much bloodier.

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The Philosophy behind the Iraq Surge: An Interview with General Jack Keane

by Octavian Manea

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How would you describe the US Army's mind-set in approaching the war in Vietnam?

I think we took an army whose primary focus was conventional operations against the Warsaw Pact in Europe and took it to war in South Vietnam. In the first three years of the war we were trying to use conventional tactics against an unconventional enemy. That strategy failed miserably. And it was not until General Abrams came in and took over from General Westmoreland who changed the strategy to a counterinsurgency strategy which was designed to protect the population. We saw significant progress against the insurgency and then, by 1971, three years later, it was essentially defeated.

Should we understand that World War II, the Korean War, and preparation for Fulda Gap campaigns - all this operational heritage - had an impact in shaping the mind-set of the US Military vis-à-vis executing war?

Yes.

What should have been the lessons learned from the Vietnam experience?

I think we learned all the right lessons in how to defeat an insurgency because we succeeded. We lost the war for other reasons, but in terms of defeating the insurgency, I think we learned the right lessons in terms of the preeminence of and the importance of protecting the population, winning the population to your side, using minimum amount of force, dealing with a government that is not effective and dealing with a population that has legitimate grievances against that government. Most insurgencies obviously have some legitimate grievances against the government – otherwise - it wouldn't be an insurgency to begin with. I think we codified the major tenets of the counterinsurgency we learned and it was in our memory up until 1975. When the war ended we purged it from our lexicon and put the doctrine we had developed on the shelf and embraced war against the Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union. I think it has much to do with how the war ended in Vietnam. The fact that it did not come out favorably to us-I think the military leaders of the time just wanted to get rid of it like a cancer. So we stopped educating our officers about counterinsurgency; irregular warfare never became part of our doctrine, or part of our training through the rest of the „70s and well into the „80s. In 1988

we started the Joint Readiness Training Center which became the fountainhead for training our light forces (airborne, infantry, ranger and SOF) in a complex battlefield which had irregular warfare as its center piece.

Unfortunately the heavy force Army was never exposed to such a training experience. In 2003 in Iraq, we put on the battlefield a conventional army, well trained for big wars, but ill prepared for irregular warfare. So the commanders started off executing what they were trained to do, using conventional tactics against an unconventional enemy. They were not educated and trained to conduct a counterinsurgency.

It is said that you were the Godfather of the “Surge”. What was the rationale behind the Iraq surge?

The US military started to understand that the things were not right in Iraq by 2004. From 2003 the level of violence increased every year, 2004 over 2003, 2005 over 2004 and then a catastrophic increase in 2006 - so much so that the newly formed Maliki government had become disconnected from its people as result of the Samarra Mosque bombing. The Sunni insurgents and the AQ tried for years to provoke the Shias so that their militias would come out on the offensive and not stay in the defense. Time and time again they provoked, but the Shias would not take the bait - except for some actions in the south during 2004. But the Samara Mosque bombing was a game-changer. The Sunni insurgents and the AQ leadership finally got what they wanted. Then they had Shias killing Sunni and Sunnis killing Shias. It was a blood bath in Bagdad - there were 100 people a week being killed, Iraq was a fractured state and heading toward becoming a failed state. Many people recognized our Iraq strategy was fundamentally flawed. In my mind it was a short war strategy designed to stand up a political apparatus as quickly as possible. The part of that strategy was to train the Iraqi security forces and transition to them as quickly as possible so we could get out of Iraq before the American people lost their will and their support for the war. I think that was the Abizaid strategy that Casey was executing and Secretary Rumsfeld and the President agreed to. The problem with it was that nowhere in that strategy was there the mission to defeat the insurgency. We were not doing that. We were transitioning to the Iraqis and someday they would defeat it. That was the plan. We did not really state it that way, but that's what was going on. Many of us knew the strategy was totally inappropriate and we had to defeat the insurgency. And that led to convincing

the administration that the strategy was failing and that we needed to explore a new strategy - a counterinsurgency strategy. The centerpiece of that strategy was to protect the population – something we were not doing at the time. The Iraqi security forces could not and the US made a conscious decision not to. We had to bring the level of violence down over those two years (2007 and 2008) so it would be within Iraqi capabilities to finally protect the people themselves. The simple fact that no one was protecting or controlling the population had exposed it to AQ, to the Sunni insurgents and Shia militias that took advantage of it. So we had to come out from the Forward Operating Bases and live among population at the platoon level and protect the population day and night. The issue we had in Iraq was the enemy safe havens, support zones and operating areas were all among the population. They used the population to hide, they used the population to store their ammunition and supplies, they lived among the population and their operating area was the population. There was a realization in Iraq among certain leaders, in the Army, in the Marine Corp, and at Fort Leavenworth, among some retired guys like me that the strategy we had was failing and we needed a strategy that could work. But in terms of counterinsurgency itself, and the Army adopting it as a doctrine, I think that as long as our adversaries are using that form of warfare you need to be highly capable of executing it as we are doing now in Afghanistan, where we finally are starting to succeed.

What is winning in a war amongst the people?

In most cases it is a stable secure environment where the host country security forces can deal with the level of violence that remains and a government that is capable of providing essential and effective services to its people. That is the best we can expect. We may not even achieve the last part of it. We can start to exit, as we did in Iraq, before we have a government that has a full capacity and is capable of providing essential services to its entire population. We do not have to stay there with significant military forces to assist that government to achieve those ends. But we have to stay with significant military forces as long as it takes to get the situation stable and secure enough that the host country military can take over and deal with what remains of the insurgency. We did it in Iraq successfully, I believe in Afghanistan we will bring the level of violence down to a level that the Afghan national security forces can deal with it. Essentially you are defeating the insurgency in the sense they can no longer challenge the legitimacy of the re-

gime. You don't have need a flag to be raised on the capital city, you don't have a big parade, but you have driven the enemy forces out of whatever territory they were occupying or whatever influence they had on the people in contested areas. The ending is much more ambiguous and judgment has to be used in regards to the right time to transition. The enemy in most cases is just going to fade away. It is not going to surrender or sign a peace treaty - it is just going to fade away - or recommit to the political process as in Iraq where former adversaries are now part of the political system. Yes, we still have Al Qaeda in Iraq and episodic bombings, but that is certainly within the capacity of the Iraqis to handle. You have to be comfortable with the ambiguity of the ending.

In a meeting with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, before the surge, you recommended he read David Galula. Why Galula?

I think he understood counterinsurgency very well and he also understood an urban insurgency and how to deal with it and how essential protecting the population was as the main effort in an urban insurgency. He is concise and I thought he would be a good primer for the Secretary of Defense to read and provide him with a background on what I was trying to express to him - why the strategy needed to be changed to a counterinsurgency strategy, why protecting the population had to be the main effort, how to operationalize that strategy so we could achieve that end.

“You can't kill your way out to victory” became the hallmark of a military organization reinvented during the Iraqi surge. Does this mean that today the US Military has succeeded in overcoming its Jominian tendency of being enemy oriented and becoming more comfortable in executing civil-mil comprehensive approaches and whole of government COIN operations?

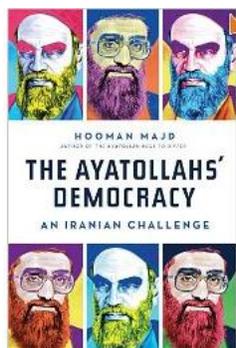
Yes it is true that in COIN operations the center of gravity is not the enemy, it's the people and all combat operations must be executed through the prism of what is the impact on the people. However, it does not mean that, at times, combat operations are not very offensive oriented, aggressively executed and highly lethal. In Afghanistan last year ISAF delivered a stunning defeat to the Taliban in Kandahar and Helmand province, so much so, that the gains are not reversible. The campaign was about taking the fight to enemy safe havens and support zones which were not in heavily populated areas. It was tough, foot infantry, close battle oper-

ations with combined arms (artillery, mortars, air) in support.

General Jack Keane is a Senior Partner at SCP Partners. A four-star general, he completed 37 years of public service in December 2003, culminating as acting Chief of Staff and Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army.

Octavian Manea is the Editor of FP Romania, the Romanian edition of Foreign Policy.

Errata, ~08:15, May 3 – placed Editor and Publisher in front leaning rest and placed the correct text for the Ayatollah's Democracy review here below. The first pressing of this mistakenly had the review of Muslim Brotherhood under this title.



Book Review: The Ayatollah's Democracy: An Iranian Challenge

by Hooman Majd

Published by W. W. Norton, New York. 2010, 282 pages.

Reviewed by Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, MSC, USN

Published online 20 April 2011

Hooman Majd offers a deep analytic look at the politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the varying interpretations of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in the 21st century. His previous book “The Ayatollah Begs to Differ,” was well received and widely read by those watching the nuances of the Iran’s Islamic polity. This book begins with an attempt at reconstructing the events of June 2009. It starts on June 12th, with a call from Speaker of the Parliament Ali Larijani to Presidential candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi, congratulating him on his win as Iran’s new President. What makes this even more of a curious phone call, was that it was published in a pro-government newspaper owned by Fatemah Rajabi, known as Fati the Saw, for her vicious attacks on opposition members who criticize her beloved President Ahmed-i-Nejad. The accusations of vote rigging by Ahmed-i-Nejad supporters and the way the election was called before the close of polls would lead to the Green Revolution. By June 19th, Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei took the unprecedented step of interjecting himself in the election dispute, siding with Ahmed-i-Nejad. This broke a cardinal rule of Khomeinism (the political philosophy of Ayatollah Khomeini, leader of the 1979 Iranian Revolution) that the Supreme Leader is to guide the moral course of the state, a key construct of what constitutes an Islamic polity in Khomeinism.

Majd immerses readers in the details of the political schisms within the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Assembly of Experts, composed of 86 clerics, is constitutionally charged with monitoring the Supreme Leader’s performance. It meets semi-annually and although led by Ayatollah Ali Rasfajani, a proponent of placing the Iranian Islamic Revolution on a more constructive path, and who has used his power to challenge the current re-

gime’s absolutism, also contains hardliners like Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi. Among the proposals to alter the current concentration of power in the hands of the president and Supreme Leader, is to replace the Supreme Leader with a council of three, and amending the constitution to allow non-clerics into the Assembly of Experts. The Expediency Council was created in 1988, and resolves disputes between the Guardian Council and Parliament, since 2005 it was given supervisory powers over the executive branch and presidency. Ahmed-i-Nejad chooses to ignore this constitutional amendment, leaving such leaders of the Expediency Council like Rasfajani, Larinjani, and until 2010 Ahmed-i-Nejad’s opponent Mir Hossein Mousavi outraged at the current president’s unwillingness to work within the bounds of the constitution.

The Green Movement is very much an establishment movement and is attempting to redefine some argue redirect the Islamic Revolution on a more positive course. To understand what this means, consider Ayatollah Hussein Montazeri, who died in December 2009. As Khomeini’s hand-picked successor, he would fall out with Khomeini over the issue of clerical moral oversight versus direct clerical rule. Motazeri did not believe in the absolute authority of the Supreme Leader, and is in line with Iraq’s Grand Ayatollah (Marja) Ali Sistani. He also stated that the notion of Velayet e-Faqih (Supreme Jurist) is incompatible with Islamic democracy. It is these nuances that the United States must comprehend to uncover the dynamics of Iranian discontent of the current regime. Another chapter of interest focuses on Iranian encroachment in such places as Latin America. In 2008, Bolivian leader Evo Morales moved the country’s sole Middle East embassy from Cairo to

Tehran. On Telemundo television, threats to President George W. Bush were made from Ciudad del Este in Paraguay in 2007. Majd highlights testimony from Defense Secretary Robert Gates expressing concern about Iranian and Hizbullah encroachment in Latin America in 2009. Despite this, Iran is not without its share of challenges, such as hard economic times that have led to questioning by people as to the amount of Iranian treasure spent outside of Iran on Hamas, and Hizbullah. Of note, the book stresses that no one knows how much money Iran has spends on both organization's annually.

Majd's book is a required read for those interested in Iran specifically, and the Middle East generally.

Already Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) forces have entered Bahrain to enable that country's forces to address growing unrest by its majority Shiite population, and fear of agitation by Iran's hardliners. Understanding the internal and external dynamics of Iran will be crucial in the decades to come and must go beyond just looking at all Iranians as supporting an interpretation of the Iranian Islamic Revolution.

Commander Aboul-Enein is author of "Militant Islamist Ideology: Understanding the Global Threat," (Naval Institute Press, 2010). He is Adjunct Islamic Studies Chair at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and is a Senior Defense Department counter-terrorism advisor.

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