PRE- & POST-CONFLICT STABILITY OPERATIONS (P2COP)

A JOINT DARPA and CSIS WORKSHOP

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS
June 22 and 23, 2004

On June 22–23, 2004, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted an off-the-record, non-media, invitation-only workshop on the subject of Pre- and Post-Conflict Stability Operations (P2COP). This event was sponsored by DARPA (POC: Dr. Robert Popp, Deputy Director – Information Exploitation Office). The two-day workshop brought together some of the country's leading academic, technical, government, policy, and military experts to identify and discuss key tactical, strategic, and operational challenges encountered in the pre- and post-conflict stability operations domain. In all, there were about sixty workshop participants.

After a topical introduction by former Deputy Secretary of Defense Dr. John Hamre, President and CEO of CSIS, the workshop's opening day consisted of a series of three panels, and a keynote address by our nineteenth Secretary of Defense – the Honorable William J. Perry. Reflecting on material and insights generated from the initial discussions, the workshop's second day focus was to identify and prioritize relevant new technologies that might be brought to bear against the pre- and post-conflict stability issues that were raised during the previous day.

This joint DARPA/CSIS workshop was conceived on the premise that with the guidance of internationally acknowledged experts, an entirely new generation of capabilities can bring tremendous benefits to our defense community. Our hope was that by merging DARPA-inspired creativity with front-line academic, technical, military, industrial, and policy-level expertise, we might be able to identify entirely new technologies or processes that could mitigate some of the most serious pre- and post-conflict weaknesses in both our defense arsenal and our national security strategy.

Introduction

The reality of American power can be thought of as having two facets—one of intimidation and coercion, and one of inspiration and persuasion. The United States is unmatched in its coercive powers but currently lacks commensurate persuasive influence. If relations with rogue states decline towards conflict or if failed states show signs of approaching collapse, then persuasive powers—including those of diplomacy, peace keeping, and humanitarian aid—are crucial to forestalling or even preventing conflict. However, if conflict proves to be inevitable, its aftermath requires persuasive influence to reestablish security and civil order. Although in standard military practice these two dimensions have been treated as distinct from one another, fully successful operations require that they be integrated now and in the future.

Pre-Conflict Operations

Successful pre-conflict planning requires thorough knowledge of regional cultures as well as a commitment to a diplomatic solution reflecting a coherent plan with well-defined objectives. Effective pre-conflict efforts could very well prevent conflict altogether and the term "pre-conflict" must not suggest that conflict is inevitable. At its best, careful pre-conflict planning can maintain the peace. And at worst, if conflict occurs, good pre-conflict planning will facilitate a swifter, lower-casualty conflict and will facilitate secure and effective reconstruction operations after the fighting has ended.

Ensuring peace is not possible without a thorough understanding of a region's language, its ethnicity, its people, culture, and its history. Maintaining world peace requires monitoring countries that are at risk for conflict. Obtaining and sharing accurate, up-to-date, political, economic, social and military intelligence is a critical tool for conflict prevention. Measurable indicators, such as knowing who controls the flow of money and arms within a region, and where and how governmental control is exercised in the region, provide valuable insights into at-risk societies. Other social measures are also critical to understand, such as: mounting demographic pressures; complex humanitarian emergencies such as those created by massive refugee movements or internally displaced persons; legacy of vengeance-seeking groups; uneven economic development along group lines; criminalization and/or delegitimization of the state; rise of factionalized elites; progressive deterioration of public services; intervention of other states or external political actors; etc. An upcoming election in a highly fractured society or legislation targeting a specific minority group, can provide indications of trouble ahead. Our experience has also shown that countries freshly emerging from a prior conflict are more prone to recidivism.

When diplomacy may suffice to preempt a conflict, a coalition based on strategic coherence and coordination, where allies are aligned from the outset, is critical. When states find themselves pursuing different policies driven by completely different interests, diplomacy may fail. Coalitions need to decide well in advance who will be at the negotiating table, and what

their goals are for final resolution. That is, do they want to direct the outcome or will they be satisfied with any result that brings about a ceasefire. Furthermore, during pre-conflict stages, diplomatic coalitions should be more representative than simply the permanent members of the Security Council. Bringing regional powers to the table early in the dialogue is more likely to achieve lasting stability.

Post-Conflict Stability Operations

Many of the issues involved in pre- and post-conflict stability operations do not separate neatly, and many of the pre-conflict issues also apply to the post-conflict stage. Post-conflict reconstruction requires a holistic approach and can be thought of as having four main pillars: security; economic and social well-being; governance and participation; and justice and reconciliation. Although without security none of the other pillars can be built, all need to be pursued simultaneously. Mirroring these four pillars, a helpful taxonomy (in no particular order) of post-conflict stability operations was provided by one of the panelists:

(1) Suppression of armed formations, peace*making*
(2) Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
(3) Peace*keeping* and enforcement of settlements
(4) Establishing and sustaining constabulary order
(5) Economic reconstruction
(6) Reconstituting political functions, i.e. the creation of an executive power, courts, prisons, and the electoral and representative functions.

Division of Roles and Managerial Constructs

There are numerous candidates able to take on these functions, including the U.S. military or other U.S. department/agency, a coalition of allies, the UN, regional organizations, NGOs, or the for-profit sector. This makes management a difficult task. Developing an architecture that clearly apportions the missions and functions during post-conflict operations is imperative. Neither the State Department nor the Defense Department has ever regarded nation-building as a core function, and neither has made the investments necessary to improve their nation-building capabilities. Developing plans on a crisis-by-crisis basis is dangerous and inefficient.

A formalized doctrine, or managerial construct, for the civil aspects of reconstruction is needed along with reliable and enduring agreements articulating the division of labor between the State and Defense Departments and other U.S. government agencies. This construct should transcend administration changes and may require legislation. The construct also needs to assign resources, systems of authority and accountability, and state who does what under different circumstances. Along these lines, one panelist suggested establishing a deployable corps, analogous to the CPA in Iraq, to provide a template for post-conflict operations. This is not simply a task of coordination; it requires adequate investments in institutions with specific capacities.

Planning

Organizational problems are made worse by insufficient planning. Planning for the post-conflict phase must move in lockstep with planning for the conflict. Because interagency processes do a poor job at producing a coherent vision and lack clearly defined roles and responsibilities, it is all the more important to have a clear answer to the question, "Who's in charge?" for the planning effort to proceed and for the resulting operations to succeed. One expert suggested this could be accomplished by exporting DoD's planning culture to the interagency community.

In order to facilitate sustainable security, planners and executors alike need to be able to get at the root causes of the conflict at hand, properly define the mission, and continually evaluate progress. They cannot get the remedies right unless they recognize the specific problems. U.S. intervention in places with diverse and complex networks of actors leads to emergent, surprising outcomes. Planning should reflect the unpredictable nature of conflict. Prioritizing mission imperatives is very important. Security is the priority insofar as it allows other tasks to move forward. Other objectives include neutralizing militias, breaking up criminal rings, establishing judicial and economic systems, and creating an adjudicative process for rehabilitating people.

Commensurate attention and planning should be given to both administrative and military operations. Tactical and political operations should be prepared in parallel in order to maintain traction during the transition from war to peace. For example, U.S. planning for its post-conflict embassy must be given high priority and start very early. Administrative competence requires good people who are committed for the long haul. Joint civil-military operations also matter. A common situational awareness, perhaps facilitated by a network-centric approach, can help win the peace.

Some panelists believed we need an international division of labor as well. Post-conflict operations are complex and expensive. When politically feasible, it makes sense to welcome assistance from nations and international organizations with equivalent or greater capability in given areas. A strict division of labor is not sustainable, but there needs to be some understanding of who is willing to do what and of the comparative advantage offered by different countries or international organizations. If proper actions are taken during the pre-conflict stage, and if organization aligns with planning, calling upon international support for post-conflict operations will be easier and result in higher payoffs.

Understanding and Mobilizing the Culture

One outcome of good planning will be a thorough knowledge of the situation at hand. Traditionally pre- and post-conflict stability operations have suffered from a poor understanding of the culture, people, and important actors involved. This inevitably leads to misjudging the political and economic characteristics at local and regional levels. Both elements are crucial indicators, and are critical not only to identify failing states before they become flashpoints but

also to successful post-conflict stability operations. Understanding the culture helps the U.S. to empower the indigenous population. When those wearing the boots on the ground are equipped with cultural sensitivity and linguistic competency, they can move from *dealing with* the indigenous people to *working with* or *supporting* them.

An effective public affairs campaign is necessary to convey U.S. intentions and to avoid misinterpretation. Ultimately, the U.S. wants to provide the framework for the given country to develop indigenous capacities for managing its own resources, people and priorities. Packaging forces for civilian operations, and more efficient training of the host nation forces is required. This could also include using locals not as spies, but as "strategic scouts"—local contacts who can provide accurate and ongoing updates on the pulse of the people. Regional investment to find people who can jump start civil society—like judicial and corrections personnel—is another means of mitigating conflict. These tasks are important in both the pre- and post-conflict stages.

Establishing Security

Above all, operations should focus on fostering sustainable security. Whether security is achieved by putting "boots on the ground" or by assuaging public discontent through replacement of the infrastructure, security is the prime facilitator of post-conflict operations. Urban insurgencies and asymmetric tactics are difficult to address. The Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) of combatants is clearly an important first step. The U.S. should be vigilant in preventing power vacuums. If criminal and extremist elements see an opportunity to intimidate either the population or the security forces and thereby consolidate their own situation, they become extremely difficult to displace, and confidence in the U.S. can quickly dissipate.

To conduct DDR operations, the imminent hurdle is providing protection for personnel, transportation, and infrastructure. Tools are needed to detect, contain, and track small arms and other illicit weapons. The current technology for locating, tracking and surveying potential WMDs is not good enough. New capabilities are needed to help record and mark sites that have been examined and to assist with document control and authorization. Technology that assists in detecting and neutralizing Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and mines would also save lives. In addition, new non-lethal weapons would assist in crowd control and force protection. Developing and deploying these capabilities will require the political will to secure additional R&D commitments.

The less physical aspects of security are important as well. These include better communication capabilities, continued intelligence, and the ability to restart civil society. In post-conflict operations, communication problems exist both among actors there to help, and between external actors and the indigenous people. Quickly deployable and interoperable communication systems and new translation devices would help keep post-conflict actors safe and establish quick rapport with the people they are trying to help. Other technologies that can model human behavior and environments, or methods of non-obtrusive truth detection for interrogations would also be useful.

New intelligence gathering capabilities and strategies are useful to monitor important economic, political, and cultural trends. Tracking local sentiments and the flow of money and arms provides a picture of which criminal elements are struggling for power. Significant intelligence communicated down the line enhances security and facilitates the reconstitution of social order. An early focus on building constabulary or police forces and education, healthcare, and judicial systems, will allow the host government to develop the capacity for day-to-day tasks—everything from starting a ministry to paying civil service salaries—that are necessary to restore order.

Learning From Experience

Historically, the U.S. has suffered from a steep learning curve in pre- and post-conflict operations. Expertise acquired through previous experiences has not been institutionalized, and as a result, there has been a consistent failure to develop modules of nation building. From all outward appearances, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the U.S. has treated each nation-building operation as if it were the first one it had ever done and the last one it was ever going to do. Even well-understood concepts—funding modalities and international expertise—are not necessarily utilized. We must learn from and institutionalize experience; there are immense startup costs to beginning anew, and ignoring lessons learned, each time.

Technology

Pre- and post-conflict stability operations are likely to benefit tremendously from new technologies. Many functions, security and intelligence gathering in particular, depend upon technological innovation and sophistication. There was, however, some caution from the panelists about relying too heavily on technology. It can *help with* the job, but it can't *do* the job. The technology-manpower trade-off will not be the same as it is in combat. Post-conflict operations will always require "boots on the ground," an organizational framework, and proper planning.

The panelists talked about specific technologies that could be useful. These do not separate neatly into pre- or post-conflict, because the technology can be applied at different phases for varying purposes. The following is a list of areas where panelists suggested technology might be helpful.

INTELLIGENCE
- Collecting data on insurgency
- Knowledge management
- Accessible source fusion tools with real data
- Establishing and disseminating information about the region and culture
- Small arms tracking
- Economic analysis, tracking the flow of money
- Environmental monitoring
- Biometrics for registration and tracking of people
- Tools for strategic scouts
- Cultural and regional research

- Non-obtrusive truth detection for investigations
- Utilizing GPS and Geographic Information Systems tools
- Documentation tools

RECONSTITUTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY
- Tools for integrating civilian capacities
- Rapid establishment of medical operations
- Training constabulary or police forces
- Education systems, distance learning
- Water technologies

SECURITY
- Non-lethal or energy-directed weapons
- Robotics
- Personal security
- Transportation security
- "Seeing through dirt"/water technologies
- Smart sensor networks
- Detecting and neutralizing IED's, land mines
- Detection of WMD
- Site surveying and recording

COMMUNICATIONS
- Proliferation of positive mass media and proper marketing of ideas
- Quickly deployable / interoperable communications
- Translation devices
- Technology to facilitate network-centric common situational awareness

MODELING
- Predicting / modeling unintended consequences
- Computer-based models on census, voting
- Modeling human behavior
- Simulating environments
- Early warning systems (looking for red flags common to failing states in economic and political trends)

Conclusion

The ability of the U.S. to prosecute combat operations is unparalleled, but insufficient, by itself. Work done during pre-conflict operations will either prevent a conflict altogether or make it less costly. Post-conflict operations ensure a tidier aftermath and help create a lasting peace. Effective pre- and post-conflict stability operations are those that fully comprehend the needs and values of the indigenous people and that initiate change from within the local culture.

Carrying out successful pre- and post-conflict stability operations in the future means tackling organizational considerations *now*. Operations such as these take a great deal of planning on both the military and civilian sides, but domestically, the role of the U.S. in nation-building is not an easy sell. There is no harm, however, in preparing the capacities and having

them reflected in force structures and military planning. Knowing that wars encompass more than fighting alone, the U.S. must acknowledge that pre- and post-conflict stability operations are a necessary part of the picture, and begin now to develop and implement a more robust, coherent pre- and post-conflict stability operations strategy. All the tasks – humanitarian, military, political, social, cultural, and economic – are interconnected.

If the U.S. gets the pre-conflict phase right, it can spare all involved parties enormous difficulties later. There are systemic and structural issues that can be dealt with before it becomes necessary to intervene operationally to solve a crisis. The U.S. must collect intelligence that permits us to monitor economic and political trends for the warning indicators of an at-risk country abroad. With this foreknowledge, diplomatic efforts can be launched in a pre-conflict planning mode along with humanitarian and peacekeeping aide if necessary.

If combat becomes inevitable, adequate and appropriate post-conflict operations must follow directly in its wake. Planning for post-conflict operations should commence as soon as it becomes evident they may be necessary, i.e., as soon as pre-conflict planning begins. Defining the mission—its scope, objective, and capabilities—is absolutely essential to the success of any reconstruction operation. Success should be measured through benchmarks, and priorities and updated accordingly. U.S. government agencies, international organizations and donors, and NGOs do not each exist in a vacuum. A clear division of labor with a common situational awareness among all parties is necessary. Moving away from *ad hoc* post-conflict strategies will also enable the U.S. to build systematically on its experience.

Planning ahead is important. The planners and conductors of pre- and post-conflict stability operations need to thoroughly understand the culture they are dealing with. This enables them to communicate intentions and gain favor. Sustainable security requires the support of the local population. Security comprises more than just providing armor and neutralizing insurgents. Security comes through reconstituting normal civilian life as well. It is also a forward-looking enterprise. For example, the detection and removal of mines is not just a security issue, but also a development issue. If peacekeeping forces can remove the landmines from the region, they can get people back to work in the fields and back into developing their own economy.

Insufficient attention has been given to applying technology to pre- and post-conflict stability operations compared to combat operations. Pre-conflict technologies to model and monitor failing states could help prevent war. As recent events have shown, the post-conflict phase of war is difficult, costly, and complex. Combat itself has been studied for millennia. Pre- and post-conflict stability operations, however, are new areas of concern and are now requisite components of modern conflict. The panelists were overwhelmingly united on this note: there are key tactical, strategic, and operational challenges in P2COPs, and there is a need to identify and invest in technologies and policies that could help mitigate some of the most serious weaknesses for the sake of national and global security.