

## RAISING AND MENTORING SECURITY FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ

*By T.X. Hammes*

Security force assistance played a leading role in both Afghanistan and Iraq, where local security forces were often spoken of as “our ticket home” or “our exit strategy.” The effort to raise, train, equip, field, and advise army and police forces eventually became the center of gravity in both theaters. Yet for some years, the effort was ad hoc, under-resourced, and complicated by internal bureaucratic struggles in Washington and by corrosive corruption and mismanagement within host-nation governments. If the United States were to undertake similar efforts in the future, the quality and effectiveness of its security force assistance programs will again play a decisive role in achieving successful outcomes.

While there are many similarities, there are also significant differences between the efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as between the army and police in each country. This chapter deals in turn with Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)—the army, national police, and village police program—and then the Iraqi army and national police. It includes some discussion of the efforts to establish effective ministries of defense and interior in both countries.

Each section tracks the effort chronologically, which most effectively highlights some of the key issues the training teams struggled to overcome. As with all lessons-learned efforts, this one focuses on the problems encountered in the examined period. However, one remarkable success cannot be denied: Starting from scratch in functionally destroyed nations, the coalitions, led by the United States, raised, trained, and equipped an Afghan security force of over 350,000 personnel and an Iraqi force of over 625,000. These are truly

remarkable accomplishments and speak highly of the dedication and talent of the military and civilian personnel who made this happen. It is even more remarkable given the enormous obstacles they had to overcome—from the absence of institutions in both countries to the complex nature of U.S. bureaucratic processes. Subsequent events in both countries indicate that host-nation politics will remain the dominant factor in the effectiveness of future advisory efforts.

### **Afghan National Security Forces**

The difficulties in raising these forces started at the beginning of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. The rapid U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks meant the planners focused on defeating the Taliban and al Qaeda and understandably had little time to consider postconflict governance. This oversight was exacerbated by the fact that senior leaders in the Department of Defense (DOD) did not give much thought to who would govern Afghanistan and how after the Taliban were removed.

Not until mid-October 2001 was Richard Haass, then with the Department of State Policy Planning Staff, named the U.S. Government's coordinator for the future of Afghanistan. He notes that there was a "clear reluctance" to think about providing security or extending the reach of the central government, which may have been based on the George W. Bush administration's skepticism about nation-building.<sup>1</sup> In fact, well before the initial campaign had concluded, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had shifted the DOD focus. On November 27, Rumsfeld called General Tommy Franks, USA, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) commander, to discuss the status of military planning—for Iraq.<sup>2</sup> The shift of resources further degraded planning for the governance of Afghanistan.

Rather than attempt to govern as an occupying power, the United States turned to the United Nations (UN). Under UN auspices, the International Conference on Afghanistan (the Bonn Conference) was convened in December 2001. It established an Afghan Interim Authority, and on December 20, 2001, the UN adopted Security Council Resolution 1368, which established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).<sup>3</sup> The original ISAF mandate was to provide security for Kabul and train Afghan security forces. No provision was made for an ISAF security presence outside of Kabul. For their

part, U.S. forces remaining in country were focused on the counterterrorism mission of killing or capturing surviving members of al Qaeda and the Taliban. In short, no one was responsible for the security of the Afghan people except the Afghan Interim Authority, which had no national security forces and had to contend with the numerous armed militias present in Afghanistan. While the Bonn Agreement established a goal of a 50,000-person Afghan National Army (ANA) and a 62,000-person Afghan National Police (ANP),<sup>4</sup> it provided no resources to meet those goals.

The next month, January 2002, at the Tokyo Donor's Conference, the mission to develop Afghan security forces and disarm the militias was established on a lead nation basis. Italy was responsible for establishing the legal system—drafting the laws and establishing the courts. Germany was responsible for the police. The United Kingdom led the anti-narcotics efforts. Japan assumed the mission of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of the militias. The United States took on the job of raising the army.<sup>5</sup>

### *Afghan Army*

Under the ISAF mandate to raise security forces, the United Kingdom (as the first nation commanding) and then Turkey (as the second nation) did not wait for the United States to start training Afghans. During each nation's turn as ISAF commander, it trained a single battalion (*kandak*). The U.S. effort started in February 2002, when a team led by Major General Charles Campbell, USA, USCENTCOM Chief of Staff, did an initial evaluation of Afghan plans for the army. U.S. Special Forces, however, did not arrive to fulfill the U.S. mission as lead nation for training the Afghan army until May 2002. Special Forces detachments began to work with small units in various parts of the country. The program was not centrally directed, nor did it attempt to build the national institutions necessary to develop an effective army. It was not until October 2002 that Major General Karl Eikenberry, USA, arrived as Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation–Afghanistan (OMC-A) with the mission of building the Afghan army. He realized the mission would require more resources than Special Forces could provide; they had done well in forming platoons, companies, and battalions, but the Afghan army needed to progress beyond battalions to brigade-, corps-, and national-level functions. Eikenberry noted that the Afghan army lacked a recruiting force, trainers, living facilities, equipment, and

any form of logistics or personnel support, all of which are fundamental to forming an army. OMC-A was literally building the Afghan army's supporting base even as it was training and deploying the combat units of the army.

Eikenberry established Task Force (TF) Phoenix, which would use a U.S. Army infantry brigade to train the Afghan army.<sup>6</sup> Indicative of the expedient nature of the effort, OMC-A received the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division to execute its mission. The brigade consisted of the brigade headquarters, one infantry battalion, and a logistics battalion. Upon arrival in country, it was augmented by individuals and training teams from the Marine Corps, National Guard, and nine different countries to form TF Phoenix. An essentially ad hoc organization executing a mission it had not trained for, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade also had a change of command only 2 weeks before it deployed in May 2003.

The brigade took over directly from the Special Forces units. It started by establishing a centralized training location in Kabul. Up to this point, Special Forces Soldiers had been training small units of Afghans in the field. TF Phoenix focused on training at the company and battalion levels while starting to build brigade and corps staffs. However, an infantry brigade is not manned with personnel appropriate to establish national-level institutions, so that mission was contracted out to Military Professional Resources, Incorporated (MPRI). By the time the brigade left in December 2003, it was sending platoons, companies, and *kandaks* out to conduct operations with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. Working with MPRI, it was also forming the brigade and corps staffs.

During this 6-month period, the task force also handed the 4-week basic training course over to the Afghans, supported by American advisors. During the same period, the French ran the officers' course, and the British ran the noncommissioned officer (NCO) course, each of which ran separately. When NCO and basic training courses graduated, the NCOs joined the troops and formed companies. They worked together on small-unit tactics until the longer officers' course graduated, at which point the officers and the U.S.-embedded training teams joined the companies. Three companies formed a *kandak*, which began a unit-training program to prepare for combat. Given the significant differences between the military cultures of Britain, France, and the United States, there were inevitable issues when the officers, NCOs, and troops began to work together. This problem was further exacerbated by the signifi-

cant number of officers who had been trained by the Soviets. Once certified, the unit was paired with a U.S. battalion and deployed to the field. Some units were also assigned to Kabul and thus did joint patrolling with ISAF.

A critical challenge for OMC-A was the integration of former mujahideen fighters and commanders into the national army. Naturally, militia commanders and the political leaders they supported were reluctant to relinquish control to the national army. For the United States and donor nations, there was serious concern about moving potential war criminals into the new Afghan army. For the Afghans, the concern was the ethnic balance of the force and the potential for its dominance by a single group. Thus, Eikenberry and his Afghan counterpart had to carefully screen applicants prior to assigning them to key billets. They then spent 3 weeks briefing every political leader in Kabul, from the president and four vice presidents to cabinet members to faction leaders.<sup>7</sup> Those who were not integrated were “theoretically” processed by the DDR program run by the Japanese.

The ongoing war and resultant lack of overall security, however, ensured the Afghan DDR was not fully effective. Lorenzo Striuli and Fernando Termentini succinctly highlighted the requirements for a successful DDR program. They noted:

- fighting in the theater of interest must be completely or at least nearly ended, and a significant peacekeeping force must be deployed to ensure no renewal of conflict
- all former fighting factions must be included in the process because, without disarming all combatants, the potential for conflict renewal remains high
- sufficient resources must be assured for the duration of the process because an incomplete reintegration of former belligerents leaves a dangerous situation in postconflict societies.<sup>8</sup>

None of these requirements was achieved by 2002 in Afghanistan or even by the end of 2014. As a result, despite a series of well-funded programs, ISAF, the UN Development Programme, and the Afghan government have failed to disarm the numerous militias that have plagued Afghanistan. The DDR effort succeeded in quarantining warlord tanks and artillery. However, it was

functionally impossible to collect all the small arms, to include machine guns, mortars, and rocket-propelled grenades. Thus, militia activities were curtailed, but the militias could not be eliminated. In fact, some were incorporated into the ANSF, and their loyalties remain split between the national government and their militia leaders.

Despite the continued presence of the militias, TF Phoenix was tasked with raising the Afghan army. As the task force expanded to meet the train, equip, and advise mission, Brigadier General F. Joseph Prasek, USA, assumed command. Even as TF Phoenix worked to field the new Afghan army, insurgents began their first attacks against the coalition and new Afghan government in April 2002.

At the Bonn II Conference in December 2002, the Afghan government and donor nations agreed the army would expand to include “(1) 43,000 ground combat troops based in Kabul and four other cities, (2) 21,000 support staff organized in four sustaining commands . . . (3) Ministry of Defense [MOD] and general staff personnel, and (4) 3,000 air staff to provide security transportation for the President of Afghanistan.”<sup>9</sup> In contrast to the small army envisioned by the Bonn II Conference, Afghan defense minister Marshal Fahim called for a force of 200,000 to 250,000 troops to provide security for the entire nation.<sup>10</sup> Donor nations refused to consider this much higher number. Ironically, by 2011, ISAF was building the ANSF to a total of over 350,000 personnel.

Upon 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade’s departure in December 2002, the expanded mission was passed to a National Guard brigade. Throughout this period, MPRI conducted the training for corps headquarters and the MOD.<sup>11</sup> During the same timeframe, the Taliban as well as local guerrilla groups continued a low-level insurgency from bases inside Pakistan. By fall 2003, the U.S. strategy was clearly failing. Taliban elements were moving freely through most of the south and east, unchallenged by any Afghan government presence. Security had deteriorated to the point that the United Nations and aid organizations were pulling their people out of the south and southeast.<sup>12</sup> The Taliban had recovered from its initial setbacks and was taking the offensive. As 2004 started, the situation in Afghanistan was deteriorating as insurgent attacks increased steadily.

In response, from late 2003 to 2005 OMC-A focused on building the Afghan National Army. Basic training was formalized and established at 8 weeks

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with training base throughput capacity increasing steadily. Efforts continued to build effective headquarters above brigade level—that is, corps headquarters and national institutions. By July 2005, however, the ANA had reached a strength of only 24,300 trained and equipped, with 6,000 more in training—less than half the force authorized in the December 2002 Bonn Conference. Over this period, training for the newly raised infantry battalions was standardized at 14 weeks (6 weeks individual training, 6 weeks advanced training, and 2 weeks of collective training). Despite being undermanned and lacking resources, OMC-A planned to complete training the then-authorized 46,000 soldiers by the fall of 2007.

In its June 2005 report on Afghan security, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted that U.S. funding for the ANA started at only \$179.2 million in 2002 but rapidly increased to over \$2 billion by 2005. Despite the major increase in funding, the GAO stated, “efforts to establish sustaining institutions, such as a logistics command, needed to support these troops have not kept pace. Plans for completing these institutions are not clear.” It went on to note the estimated total bill for police and army to be \$7.2 billion, with \$600 million needed annually for sustainment.<sup>13</sup> The GAO report also noted that OMC-A struggled with the numerous changes in the plan for the ANA as well as consistent shortages of training personnel. OMC-A had never been staffed at more than 71 percent of its approved personnel level.<sup>14</sup>

One of the key challenges was the steadily increasing level of violence in Afghanistan. As attacks on Afghan and coalition forces increased, leaders made the logical choice to increase the size of the Afghan army and police. With each increase, more trainers were needed, but before each new requirement was filled, the increased threat led to plans for further increasing ANSF strength.

On July 12, 2005, OMC-A was renamed the Office of Security Cooperation–Afghanistan (OSC-A). Despite the identified problems with manning and planning, its responsibility was expanded to include the entire Afghan security sector. In addition to training the ANA, OSC-A would assume responsibility for reforming the Afghan National Police.<sup>15</sup> Inevitably, the expanded mission required more resources. GAO noted that OSC-A requested \$7.6 billion for 2007, more than the estimated total bill in June 2005.<sup>16</sup> This amount was to cover the cost of 70,000 ANA soldiers and 82,000 police, as well as the

expansion and professionalization of the MOD and sustaining institutions. Even as OSC-A raced to build the ANA, the Taliban were increasing their attacks, requiring OSC-A to upgrade the equipment it was providing to ANSF.

In April 2006, OSC-A was redesignated as Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan (CSTC-A). It retained responsibility for training the army and police as well as mentoring the ministries of defense and interior. Unfortunately, the security situation continued to deteriorate, particularly in relation to attacks focused on ANSF and coalition forces. Improvised explosive device incidents increased from 844 in 2005 to 2,215 by 2007.<sup>17</sup>

While North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) reports indicated major progress in training the Afghan army during 2007–2008, GAO was much less optimistic. In its June 2008 report, it noted:

*The United States has provided over \$10 billion to develop the ANA since 2002; however, less than 2 percent (2 of 105 units) of ANA units are assessed as fully capable of conducting their primary mission. Thirty-six percent (38 of 105) are assessed as capable of conducting their mission, but require routine international assistance, while the remaining ANA units (65 of 105 units) are either planned, in basic training, or assessed as partially able or unable to conduct their primary mission. Building an Afghan army that can lead security operations requires manning, training, and equipping of personnel; however, U.S. efforts to build the ANA have faced challenges in all of these areas. First, while the ANA has grown to approximately 58,000 of an authorized force structure of 80,000—nearly three times the 19,600 Defense reported in 2005—the ANA has experienced difficulties finding qualified candidates for leadership positions and retaining its personnel. Second, while trainers or mentors are present in every ANA combat unit, less than half the required number are deployed in the field. Defense officials cited an insufficient number of U.S. trainers and coalition mentors in the field as the major impediment to providing the ANA with the training to establish capabilities, such as advanced combat skills and logistics, necessary to sustain the ANA force in the long term. Finally, ANA combat units report significant shortages in approximately 40 percent of critical equipment items, including vehicles, weapons, and radios. Some of these*

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*challenges, such as shortages of U.S. trainers and equipment, are due in part to competing global priorities, according to senior Defense officials. Without resolving these challenges, the ability of the ANA to reach full capability may be delayed.*<sup>18</sup>

In its 2008 report to Congress, CSTC-A stated it was working closely with the Afghan government on three lines of operation to develop the ANSF: “(1) build and develop ministerial institutional capability; (2) generate the fielded forces [*sic*]; and (3) develop the fielded forces.”<sup>19</sup> CSTC-A noted the target end-strength for the ANA had been increased to 80,000 and the ANP to 82,000.<sup>20</sup> This was yet another in a continuing series of rapid increases in target end-strength for the ANA. It would also require fielding different kinds of units: “13 light brigades, a mechanized brigade, a commando brigade, a headquarters and support brigade, enabling units and the initial operation of an air corps.”<sup>21</sup>

To assist in filling the shortage of trainers, the North Atlantic Council announced the formation of NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan (NTM-A) as an integral part of ISAF on June 12, 2009. NTM-A stood up formally on November 21 of that year. The command was a NATO organization that included personnel from 37 nations and was led by a U.S. lieutenant general who was dual-hatted as the commander of CSTC-A, which remained a U.S. command and was the administrative conduit for U.S. funds.<sup>22</sup> While providing a significant reinforcement in personnel, NTM-A also had an expanded mission to:

*provide higher-level training for the ANA, including defence colleges and academies, and [...] be responsible for doctrine development, as well as training and mentoring for the ANP. This will reflect the Afghan Government’s policing priorities and will complement existing training and capacity development programmes, including the European Union Police Mission and the work of the International Police Coordination Board.*<sup>23</sup>

However, NTM-A would not provide advice or training for the Afghan ministries. That mission remained the responsibility of CSTC-A. Keeping track of the collective NATO and individual national caveats concerning training and funding added to the complexity of the mission.

In August 2009, General Stanley A. McChrystal, USA, the new ISAF commander, concluded his own initial commander's assessment. In particular, the pessimistic report noted the failure to focus on the population, which General McChrystal believed to be the center of gravity for the conflict:

*[The Afghan government] and ISAF have both failed to focus on this objective. The weakness of state institutions, malign actions of power-brokers, widespread corruption and abuse of power by various officials, and ISAF's own errors, have given Afghans little reason to support their government. These problems have alienated large segments of the Afghan population. They do not trust the [Afghan government] to provide their essential needs, such as security, justice, and basic services.<sup>24</sup>*

In short, the NATO/ISAF effort in Afghanistan had lost ground since 2003. McChrystal stated that the size of the army needed to be 240,000, triple the size noted in the 2008 CSTC-A report to Congress. In addition, the ANP strength needed to almost double to 160,000.<sup>25</sup> However, by 2010, the international community and the Afghan government had agreed to strengths of only 171,600 for the ANA and 134,000 for the ANP. Furthermore, NTM-A was manned at only 52 percent of its authorized strength.<sup>26</sup>

Even as the international community refused to expand the army to the level McChrystal requested, the International Crisis Group's analysis of the progress of the training program to date indicated continuing major problems:

*Despite billions of dollars of international investment, army combat readiness has been undermined by weak recruitment and retention policies, inadequate logistics, insufficient training and equipment and inconsistent leadership. International support for the ANA must therefore be targeted not just toward increasing the quantity of troops but enhancing the quality of the fighting force. Given the slow pace of economic development and the likelihood of an eventual drawdown of Western resources, any assessment of the future shape of the army must also make fiscal as well as political sense. Although recent efforts to consolidate the training command structure under the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) are encouraging, the U.S. emphasis*

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*on rapid expansion of the army, in response to the growing insurgent threat, could strain NTM-A resources and outpace the capacity of Afghan leaders to manage an inherently unwieldy system.<sup>27</sup>*

In its 2009 report to Congress, GAO noted significant progress for the ANA in that 18 of its 72 units were now rated fully capable and 26 were capable with support. (It did not say why the total number of units had decreased from the 105 reported the previous year.) It noted that DOD identified the primary limitation on progress as the shortage of training personnel. It had only half of the 2,225 personnel needed to train the ANA at the approved level of 79,000 soldiers. This shortage was likely to get more severe with the newly approved strength increase for the ANA.<sup>28</sup>

In 2010, the International Crisis Group noted that from 2008 to 2010, the target date for 134,000 trained troops had been brought forward at least twice, first from 2013 to 2011, and then to October 2010. While recruiting had kept pace, shortfalls in NCOs and officers with specialized skills in medicine, transportation, and logistics were hindering growth.<sup>29</sup>

Lieutenant General William Caldwell, USA, who commanded NTM-A/CSTC-A from November 2009 to November 2011, noted that the following elements complicated NTM-A efforts to raise and train the ANA:

- eighty-six percent illiteracy rate: required teaching recruits and officer basic reading skills
- eighteen years of conflict: led to hoarding and survival mentality
- focus on quantity over quality in recruiting and training: resulted in need for retraining
- ANA negative growth: resulted in creating a recruiting command
- leadership shortfalls and challenges: led to creation of multiple schools and courses (officer/NCO schools)
- minimal oversight and accountability: required top-to-bottom review of inventory processes and the inculcation of an ethos of stewardship

- struggling sustainment: required creation of a logistics system from the national level to the local unit-level distribution
- high attrition: required extensive improvements to all soldier support systems, including the recruiting system
- lack of a manufacturing base: required creation and development of local suppliers; creation of the Afghan First program to build indigenous manufacturing for ANSF uniforms, boots, and other military materiel
- substandard pay: required constant dialogue with Afghan leadership to increase pay in all ranks to a living wage to reduce opportunities for corrupt behavior
- endemic corruption: mandated leadership changes, review of ethical standards
- tribal tensions: presented unique assignment challenges
- substandard equipment: required immediate procurement, acquisition, and maintenance efforts, including a mindset change from replacement to repair
- inadequate standards to evaluate training and operations (35 percent weapons qualification rate): required creation and enforcement of standards
- numerous language barriers among themselves and NATO: complicated training.<sup>30</sup>

Despite these challenges, Dr. Jack Kem, Deputy to the Commander of NTM-A, reported that by August, the ANA had reached the October 2010 goal of 134,000 and the ANP was at 115,000, exceeding the goal of 109,000. NTM-A had either corrected or managed the long list of problems while dramatically increasing the strength and competence of the ANA. New goals had been established for October 2011 of an ANA of 171,600 and ANP of 134,000.<sup>31</sup> A key part of the effort was a literacy program designed to bring 50 percent of the ANSF to third-grade reading and comprehension levels. One reason for the emphasis on literacy was the ANA and ANP needed to be able to read and write to operate in the way they were being trained. This emphasis on literacy training continued through 2010. GAO noted that ANA “staff members’ low literacy levels hinder their ability to use computers, effectively

manage staff functions, and exercise command and control. Partnering is essential to provide necessary supervision and oversight of planning for supplies (i.e., fuel and ammunition).<sup>32</sup>

ISAF still reported significant progress in establishing an accountability system for vehicles and equipment. One major issue remained the ethnic balance of the forces. In a nation that is roughly 40 percent Pashtun,<sup>33</sup> NTM-A had only succeeded in raising the number of southern Pashtuns to 4 percent of the force.<sup>34</sup> Given the historic animosity between the southern Pashtun and the Northern Alliance (Uzbek, Tajik, Hazara, and so forth), this was not a surprising result. Most southern Pashtun perceived the ANA as an occupying force and thus were resistant to joining. Insufficient numbers of southern Pashtuns has remained a problem for ANA to this day.

Even as NTM-A met recruiting and training goals for 2011 early, the security situation continued to deteriorate in some parts of the country. With the withdrawal of ISAF looming and operational demands for troops in the field increasing, the target strengths for both ANA and ANP were increased:

*In August 2011, a larger target size of 352,000 (195,000 ANA and 157,000 ANP) was set, to be reached by November 2012. The gross size of the force reached approximately that level by the end of September 2012, and remains at levels just below those targets. That figure does not include the approximately 30,000 local security forces.<sup>35</sup>*

Furthermore, there was some increase in reported capabilities with 7 percent of the units reported as “independent with advisors,” as were 9 percent of the ANP units. Also, the number of units had increased dramatically—to 219 ANA and 435 ANP units.<sup>36</sup> But the change of metric from “fully capable” in 2008 reports to “independent with advisors” in 2012 makes it difficult to compare the actual capabilities of the forces at the two different times. Also during 2012, the Army and Marine Corps began deploying Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams to facilitate the transition of all operations to Afghan forces. The relative priority the Services placed on transition teams versus U.S. operational units remained an issue. As was the pattern throughout our time in Afghanistan, advisory teams were formed late—sometimes actually in-country—and often without the appropriate mix of rank and skills.<sup>37</sup>

GAO went on to state that there was little or no progress in developing the critical ministries of Defense and Interior:

*We have previously reported that limited capacity in the Afghan Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI)—which oversee the ANA and ANP, respectively—present challenges to the development and sustainment of capable ANSF. For instance, MOI faced challenges, such as a lack of consolidated personnel databases and formal training in properly executing budget and salary functions. In April 2012, DOD reported that the MOD was assessed as requiring some coalition assistance to accomplish its mission, an assessment unchanged since October 2010, while the MOI was assessed as needing significant coalition assistance—an assessment unchanged since 2009. Additionally, DOD reported that the ministries face a variety of challenges, including, among others, MOD’s lack of human capital in areas requiring technical expertise and MOI’s continuing problems with corruption.<sup>38</sup>*

By early 2013, GAO was reporting shortfalls in promised funding for future Afghan security forces and inadequate staffing by the Services of the Security Force Assistance and Advisory Teams.<sup>39</sup> Each of these failings had been identified for years, but NATO had been unable to address them. At the end of 2014, NTM-A completed its mission and was replaced by a NATO-led mission titled Resolute Support:

*This mission will not involve combat. Its support will be directed primarily to Afghan ministries and institutions, as well as the higher command level of the Afghan security forces. . . . Approximately 12,000 personnel from both NATO and partner nations will be deployed in support of the mission. The mission is planned to operate with one central hub (in Kabul/Bagram) and four spokes in Mazar-e Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Jalalabad.*

*Key functions will include:*

- *Supporting planning, programming and budgeting;*
- *Assuring transparency, accountability and oversight;*

- *Supporting the adherence to the principles of rule of law and good governance.*<sup>40</sup>

Although NTM-A has become Resolute Support, the United States has maintained CSTC-A. However, its focus is on advising and assisting Afghans at the ministerial level. CSTC-A no longer has a direct role in the training, equipping, or employing ANSF.

A lively debate continues as to whether the ANSF can hold its own against a resurgent Taliban. Few question the ability of the ANA to fight. In fact, the fighting spirit and capabilities of the ANA have been demonstrated over the last two fighting seasons. Despite increased attacks and high casualties, ANA remains an aggressive, effective fighting force. This represents one of the most positive aspects of the current situation. Unfortunately, many observers question the ability of its institutions to sustain the combat forces. Thus, both the U.S. and NATO missions will focus on assisting the ministries with these critical sustaining functions. While Afghan forces have clearly continued to fight hard (as indicated by their casualties), the military outcome remains in question. As NATO forces have withdrawn from the country, the security situation has worsened. On July 9, 2014, for instance, the United Nations announced that Afghan civilian casualties in the first half of 2014 surged to the highest level since 2009.<sup>41</sup> By the end of November 2014, the *Washington Post* reported there were more attacks in Kabul during 2014 than in any year since the U.S.-backed Northern Alliance seized the capital city in 2001.<sup>42</sup> But the rate of attacks fell off sharply in January and February of 2015. A key indicator will be the results of the 2015 fighting season.

### *Afghan Police*

Afghanistan has never had a strong or effective civilian police force. Whatever progress was made in developing a civilian police force during the 1970s was lost during the more than two decades of conflict that followed. Following the defeat of the Taliban in the fall of 2001, anti-Taliban Northern Alliance commanders were quick to exploit the power vacuum and filled many of the district and provincial police forces with private militias that had little or no police training or experience. The daunting challenge confronting police reformers in the spring of 2002 was to create an effective civilian police force

from an untrained entity manned primarily by factional commanders and their militias who had little or no equipment or infrastructure, who were unpaid or underpaid, and who operated within the corrupt and factionalized institutional structure of the Ministry of Interior (MOI).<sup>43</sup>

With this as a background, representatives of the Afghan people and donor nations signed the Bonn Agreement on December 5, 2001. Annex I included authority to raise a police force that all agreed should be “a multi-ethnic, sustainable, and countrywide 62,000-member professional police service.”<sup>44</sup> As noted earlier, Germany assumed the lead nation role for forming the Afghan police at the January 2002 conference in Tokyo. It acted quickly by organizing a donor nations’ conference in Berlin by February. Germany’s plan focused on training senior police officers in a 3-year course and police NCOs in a 1-year course at the Kabul Police Academy. It did not plan to provide any training or mentoring for the vast majority of police officers who were ordinary patrolmen.

U.S. leaders believed that police would be critical to maintaining order in Afghanistan and that the German program was moving too slowly. So, despite Germany’s role as lead nation, the United States established a police training program. For bureaucratic and legal reasons, the Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement was designated as the program manager for the Afghan police. Since the bureau lacked the personnel to actually conduct the training, it contracted with DynCorp Aerospace Technology to train and equip the police, advise the MOI, and provide infrastructure assistance to include constructing several police training centers.<sup>45</sup> DynCorp had won previous contracts to train police forces in Bosnia and Haiti. The initial U.S. program was a “train the trainers” program. Experienced Afghan police officers completed a 3-week instructor development course taught by DynCorp advisors. They then conducted the 8-week basic training course for new police officers as well as the 2-week refresher program for veteran officers. For comparison, in 2008, police in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a much more literate and less violent society than 2002 Afghanistan, received 25 weeks of initial training.<sup>46</sup> Highway and border police each received an additional 2 weeks of training. While this provided some basic skills training, the contract did not provide for the essential post-training mentoring that had been critical in other programs. For comparison, both the New York and Los Angeles police

departments require a 6-month basic training course and a significant period of on-the-job, one-on-one mentoring before an officer is considered ready for duty. Brazil reformed its police training in 2007 to require 380 to 500 hours while Ukraine requires 6 months.<sup>47</sup> Further exacerbating the problem in Afghanistan, the requirement for interpreters cut the actual instruction time by at least half, leading to an inevitable decrease in quality.

Even more damaging to the effort was the fact that U.S. trainers could not vet the men who were assigned as police officers. Most were not trained police but attained the jobs either because they were “police” after the collapse of the Mohammad Najibullah government or because specific powerbrokers in Afghanistan insisted they get the job. Many were illiterate and had never been in a classroom.

By January 2005, Germany and the United States had trained more than 35,000 national, highway, and border police using the dual programs. They expected to meet the goal of training 62,000 by December 2005.<sup>48</sup> Despite the optimistic projections, by July 2005 senior leaders believed the police training was not progressing well. As part of the reorganization of the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, responsibility for police training was transferred from the Department of State to DOD so that OSC-A became responsible for training all Afghan National Security Forces. At the time of the turnover, the ANP were organized in multiple branches. The largest, the Afghan Uniformed Police, were responsible for day-to-day law enforcement countrywide and scheduled to increase from 31,000 to 45,000 personnel. The Afghan Border Police, with 18,000 personnel, were tasked with manning 13 border posts and patrolling the border. Theoretically, the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) were to be responsible for maintaining civil order in Afghan’s largest cities and acting as a reserve for crisis. In fact, because its officers received more training, better equipment, and better vetting than other police agencies, ANCOP were often used as an auxiliary to the Afghan military in combat operations. The last two branches were the Afghanistan Highway Police and Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan.<sup>49</sup> Due to exceptional corruption, the Afghan Highway Police were subsequently dis-established.

In a further reorganization of the advisory effort, Germany’s role of training and advising senior police officers was assumed by the European Union Police Mission (EUPOL) Afghanistan in the summer of 2007.<sup>50</sup> The EUPOL

mission is to “contribute to the establishment of a sustainable and effective civilian police, which works together with the Afghan justice system to improve the local population’s safety. The mission monitors, mentors, advises and trains at the level of senior management of the Afghan MOI, Afghan Ministry of Justice, Afghan Attorney General’s Office, in Kabul and in several regions.”<sup>51</sup> Recently, the European Union decided to extend EUPOL Afghanistan to the end of 2016.

EUPOL Afghanistan focused on training senior officials of the MOI and senior police officers with an emphasis on coordination and cooperation among various elements of the Afghan judicial system. Unfortunately, it was unable to fill about half of the allotted training slots and actually assigned many of their personnel to Provincial Reconstruction Teams rather than the ANP training program.

The fact that CSTC-A also provided training and mentoring for senior police officials created both coordination and execution problems since it and EUPOL Afghanistan had fundamentally different understandings of the role of police in counterinsurgency. Because it provided the bulk of both financial and personnel resources for the ANP, CSTC-A was the primary driver of the police training program. In late 2007, it initiated the Focused District Development (FDD) plan. Under this plan, all police officers were withdrawn from a district, replaced with Afghan National Civil Order Police, and then put through a 2-month training program before returning to their districts.<sup>52</sup> CSTC-A was enthusiastic about the progress of those police units that had participated in the program. A news release stated, “Initial reviews suggest that FDD is working, albeit slowly. Districts that have completed FDD have experienced a 60 percent decrease in civilian casualties.”<sup>53</sup> This optimism may have been premature. The January 2008 Afghanistan Study Group Report, led by General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.), and Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering, noted:

*The ANP are severely underfunded, poorly trained, and poorly equipped. Many months go without pay because of corruption and problems with the payroll system. In parts of the country the police are seen as a greater cause of insecurity than the Taliban. . . . U.S. assistance needs to*

*go beyond equipping and training, and be directed towards embedding foreign police officers into Afghan units.*<sup>54</sup>

In June 2008, a DOD assessment showed that not one Afghan police unit out of 433 was fully capable of performing its mission; over three-fourths of them were assessed at the lowest capability rating.<sup>55</sup> In 2010, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) called into question the validity of the mission-capable rating system in its entirety. It noted that the Baghlan-e Jadid police district had been rated capable of independent operations (CM1 in the rating system) upon completion of the FDD plan in June 2009. However, when the SIGAR team asked to visit the district, still rated CM1, in March 2010, they were told it was “not secure” and “overrun with insurgents” to the point the Baghlan-e Jadid police force “had withered away.”<sup>56</sup>

The problems were not limited to the police. It is a well-established fact that police reform must be accompanied by reform across the judicial system. Unfortunately, it is also clearly more difficult to educate the large numbers of judges, lawyers, clerks, and prison officials than it is to raise basic police forces. This was further exacerbated by the fact that the U.S. Government provided massive resources to the police in comparison to the relatively limited resources dedicated to supporting the other elements of the justice system. Without effective court and prison systems, even competent police operations have little or no impact on security. In its mostly pessimistic 2008 report, the Afghan Study Group noted important advances in the Afghan justice system: “The heads of the major justice sector institutions—the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Finance, and the Office of the Attorney General—have all been replaced with competent, moderate reformers.”<sup>57</sup> At the time, Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index rated Afghanistan 172 out of 179 countries. Despite intensive efforts, the reformers had limited success. By 2013, Afghanistan was tied with Somalia and North Korea for last place.<sup>58</sup>

In his initial commander’s assessment of August 2009, General McChrystal noted that 8 years into the conflict, “the ANP suffers from a lack of training, leaders, resources, equipment, and mentoring. Effective policing is inhibited by the absence of a working system of justice or dispute resolution; poor pay has also encouraged corruption.”<sup>59</sup> He pushed for the police training contract to be moved from State to DOD to improve the quality of the training. This

decision meant DynCorp, which had been selected by State and had held the contract for the previous 7 years, would not be eligible to bid on retaining it. In response, DynCorp sued in Federal court. Despite numerous audits over the years that indicated major problems with DynCorp trainers and the obvious lack of progress on the part of the ANP, DynCorp won the suit and then won the subsequent rebid of the contract.<sup>60</sup> In effect, a Federal court overturned the decision of the ISAF commander in Afghanistan and forced him to continue using a contractor that had consistently failed to execute its mission.

McChrystal was not the only senior official who felt the ANP was not progressing. In March 2009, Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke “characterized the ANP as ‘inadequate,’ ‘riddled with corruption,’ and the ‘weak link in the security chain.’”<sup>61</sup> In a joint report, the Royal United Services Institute and Foreign Policy Research Institute noted that “even by the Afghan government’s own admission, problems remain. Institutional and individual competence to tackle crime remains low, while corruption, police criminality and abuses of power are pervasive. Failing to provide sufficient civil security, the police are unable to fulfil their potential role as a key appendage to the reconstruction effort.”<sup>62</sup>

The formal establishment of NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan in November 2009 was an effort to correct some of these problems through better coordination of ANSF training. Although NTM-A stood up and was tasked with police and military training for Afghan forces, CSTC-A remained a separate command because NTM-A could not provide trainers for the ministries nor could it administer the U.S. funds provided for the Afghan security forces. Thus, NATO caveats and U.S. laws required the continued existence of CSTC-A. However, to ensure the two commands worked well together, a single officer was dual-hatted to command both organizations.

While improving the coordination of the various training elements, the shift of police training responsibility to NTM-A highlighted an ongoing dispute concerning the proper role of the ANP. Critics of ISAF’s use of the police believed the ANP were being misused as “little soldiers” and improperly assigned “to isolated posts without backup” and, as a result, “suffered three times the casualties of the ANA.”<sup>63</sup> They focused on the need for a police force capable of enforcing the rule of law in postconflict Afghanistan rather than as a counterinsurgency force. In contrast, proponents of assigning the police nationwide as a paramilitary security force understood the need for professional

police but believed that until the security situation improved significantly, the ANP had to focus on the counterinsurgency security mission. In fact, in those areas that were relatively secure, to include most Afghan cities, there was a critical need for an effective police force focused on the rule of law. At the same time, the higher literacy requirements inherent in community policing mean the training pipeline must be longer to allow for significant literacy education of even patrol officers. However, such a force simply could not survive in heavily contested districts. Many Afghan political and police leaders saw the police in a different light. To them, the police had to focus on protecting the regime and government personnel—not the population. This tension has never been formally resolved.

Unification of the command enhanced the coalition strengths that assisted the police training program—such as the Italian Carabinieri trainers who, unlike the British or Americans, were part of a professional national police force. While former U.S. and British police officers brought experience to the mission of training local law enforcement, they lacked the knowledge of operating in a national police force that maintains paramilitary capabilities.

Unfortunately, there were also numerous challenges. Despite the assignment of CSTC-A/NTM-A as the *de facto* lead for police training, “smaller bilateral missions and the European Police Mission (EUPOL) [continued] pursuing its own mandate.”<sup>64</sup> This divergence of national mandates for police training reflected only one small aspect of the coordination issues involved in conducting a counterinsurgency campaign with over 40 nations participating.

In addition to the problems created by dysfunction within the coalition effort to support the police, the SIGAR noted that as late as January 2015, the MOI was unable to track the number of personnel it employs or whether they are getting paid. The U.S. response has been to once again attempt to “implement a fully functional electronic accounting and personnel tracking system.”<sup>65</sup>

This action, over 10 years into the effort to build an effective police department, highlights one of the problems the United States faces when training a foreign force. U.S. planners continually try to install relatively sophisticated computerized systems to track personnel, pay, and equipment. The transparency provided by such systems is seen by U.S. personnel both as a management tool and an anticorruption tool. For instance, an effective sys-

tem will show how many personnel are actually in a unit—and thus eliminate payment to “ghost” soldiers. It will also allow for more effective accountability of equipment and consumables such as fuel. This reduces the losses to black market activities. Unfortunately, many Afghans, to include senior officers, do not want this level of transparency. They require the funds acquired through fraud to function in their organizations—and in too many cases, simply to enrich themselves. Furthermore, the shortage of literate, numerate, and computer-savvy personnel in the ANSF is simply insufficient to operate and maintain these systems.

### **Local Police Initiatives**

While not technically an element of the Afghan National Security Forces, any discussion of Afghan security must include the various local police initiatives that have been made across the country. The collapse of the Taliban government left local policing in the hands of various warlords and militias. The men who filled these jobs were not trained policemen. The United Nations’ initial plan called for a national police force to be trained, equipped, and deployed under lead nation supervision. Unfortunately, this project was started from a low baseline and would inevitably take a great deal of time. With a deteriorating security situation and insufficient ANA/ANP forces to protect the rural population, ISAF commanders from the local to the national level turned to militia/local men to provide security. Over the last decade, the United States and ISAF have made several attempts to form local militia units similar to the “Sons of Iraq” concept that was successful in that country. These local militias were referred to as police but, if trained at all, were trained as paramilitary units by soldiers, not policemen.

A series of programs was tried: Afghan National Auxiliary Police (2005), Afghan Public Protection Program (2007), Community Defense Forces (2009), Community Defense Initiative/Local Defense Initiative (2009), Interim Security for Critical Infrastructure (2010), Village Stability Operations (2010), and finally, consolidation under the Afghan Local Police (ALP) Program (2010).<sup>66</sup> Some reports from the field extolled the virtues of locally recruited police/militias.<sup>67</sup> Other reports have consistently detailed abuses, such as corruption, assault, rape, and murder, by local police/militias.<sup>68</sup> This is inevitable in a nation as diverse as Afghanistan where the coalition support to local programs varies

widely. In addition, in those areas with mixed populations with longstanding animosities, the police/militias are seen as another source of power in local conflicts. Even Special Forces teams living with the locals are hard-pressed to understand the local politics well enough to ensure a neutral security force. Despite these challenges, the policy of having Special Forces teams live with ALP units resulted in major improvements in their performance and professionalism. The teams dedicated a great deal of effort to vetting the individual militia members through local community leaders. This effort, plus their continued mentoring and presence, ensured that the ALP provided better security than the numerous previous programs.

However, significant problems remained, in particular the difficulty of assuring the loyalty of ALP units to the government or their adherence to their function as neutral enforcers of the law rather than as partisan militia in local disputes. As a result, the U.S. Embassy in Kabul forbade U.S. diplomats from meeting with tribal leaders to discuss tribal “pacts,” ruling out on-the-ground contact with local defense groups concerning counterinsurgency and counterterrorism chiefly out of concern that local defense groups might spur intertribal conflict and eventually oppose the national government.<sup>69</sup>

Each of the problems with the ALP has been magnified by the withdrawal of the Special Forces advisors. In some areas, Special Forces were replaced by Afghan special forces teams, which simply lack the resources available to their U.S. counterparts. Because the ALP lacks supporting institutions to provide pay, equipment, fuel, spare parts, and ammunition, some have been forced to turn to extortion to survive.<sup>70</sup>

### ***Continuing Problems***

From the beginning, the police training program has suffered from a number of significant problems. Insufficient manning, disagreement over the police mission, corruption, and the weakness of the justice system have degraded the program since its inception. The GAO’s Afghanistan Security Report of March 2009 noted CSTC-A was short over 1,500 police trainers.<sup>71</sup> Three years later, a subsequent GAO report noted ANP instructor manning levels still reflected a 46.5 percent shortage.<sup>72</sup> Despite the increased focus on ANSF development by successive ISAF commanders—General McChrystal, General David Petraeus, USA, General John Allen, USMC, and General Joseph Dunford, USMC—

manning levels for police trainers never approached even the modest levels requested by NTM-A. In his 2011 study, William Rosenau reported:

*the capabilities, performance, and leadership of the Afghan National Police (ANP)—like other Afghan institutions—differed from district to district, province to province, and region to region. In the view of a British police advisor in Lashkar Gah, the ANP showed signs of a growing commitment to serving and protecting the public. Specialized police units such as the Afghan National Civil Order Police (recruited on a national basis and provided with intensive and sustained advice, training, and support) displayed considerable professionalism and prowess. In many districts, however, the local police remained hobbled by drug addiction, endemic corruption, and poor leadership.*<sup>73</sup>

A different and equally significant disagreement has existed over whether the police should be centrally controlled from the MOI in Kabul or should be controlled locally in the form of local police. In some areas, district and provincial police chiefs have become a power unto themselves. Lieutenant General Abdul Raziq, the current chief of police for Kandahar Province, has succeeded in reducing Taliban attacks in the province by two-thirds. However, questions about Raziq's human rights record as well as the source of his newfound wealth have followed him since he appointed himself as chief of police of Spin Boldak.<sup>74</sup>

As early as 2006, when the United States began to advocate increasing ANP strength from 62,000 to 82,000, some partner nations expressed:

*concern that the focus of reform efforts is shifting away from establishing a civilian police force to a paramilitary or counter-insurgency force. . . . The most fundamental issue that must be resolved for police reform efforts to succeed in Afghanistan is the need for a shared vision of the role of the ANP, and a shared strategy on how to achieve that vision. In particular, there is a need to reconcile the "German vision" of the police as a civilian law and order force, and the "U.S. vision" of the police as a security force with a major counter-insurgency role.*<sup>75</sup>

Perhaps the greatest challenge in working with the MOI and the ANP has been corruption. Despite focused efforts by donor nations and the ISAF command element, corruption has remained a major issue for Afghanistan as a whole and the police in particular. Organizations as disparate as Transparency International, the World Bank, and the Asia Foundation have consistently reported *increasing* levels of corruption in Afghanistan from 2005 to the present.<sup>76</sup> The continuing and deleterious nature of corruption in the ANP has been the subject of dozens of government, academic, and think-tank reports. A recent Google search of the specific phrase “Afghan police corruption” brought 226,000 hits. If one takes the quotes off, it brings over 1 million hits. Nor are there indications the Afghans have a plan for dealing with this problem. In December 2013, Thomas Ruttig of Afghan Analysts Network noted, “The Ministry of Interior—known for its systematic sale of positions—has, according to the oversight body SIGAR, completely stopped its anti-corruption reforms.”<sup>77</sup>

Despite the prevailing corruption, Michelle Hughes, a former DOD official who has field experience in 12 countries, reports there are reasons for both optimism and pessimism concerning the future of the ANP. On the positive side:

- The international community’s heavy investment in police education, training, mentoring, and equipping has led to a large, increasingly effective police force.
- Public trust and confidence in the ANP are the highest they have been in 7 years.
- The Afghan Minister of Interior has developed his own 10-year vision to make the police an essential public service.
- Afghan officials are becoming the greatest proponents for the professionalization of the police as a law enforcement service.

However:

- There has been little progress toward action to take the ANP to the next level of professionalism. The effort continues to be ad hoc, disaggregated, and poorly defined.

- The MOI lacked an effective personnel management system. Not surprisingly, the heavily automated one established by the coalition was less than successful. As a result, in late December 2014, Resolute Support and the Afghan government unveiled the new Afghanistan Human Resources Information Management System.<sup>78</sup>
- The MOI lacks the capability for planning, programming, and budget execution.<sup>79</sup>

There are other developments that do not bode well for the police. Despite repeated reports from U.S. Government agencies noting major deficiencies and fraud in previous DynCorp contracts,<sup>80</sup> the company was awarded new contracts in 2015 to “provide advisory, training and mentoring services to the Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI/Afghanistan National Police) and the Afghanistan Ministry of Defense (MoD/National Army).”<sup>81</sup>

### Key Issues for the Future of ANSF

In April 2014, DOD expressed optimism concerning the ability of the Afghan security forces to deal with the Taliban. Unfortunately, the optimism had to be tempered with significant caveats:

*ANSF capability is no longer the biggest uncertainty facing Afghanistan. Since taking the lead for security operations nationwide in June 2013, the ANSF demonstrated an ability to overmatch the Taliban consistently, with limited ISAF support. The sustainability of gains to date will be dependent on a number of factors, to include: Afghan ownership of the security and economic problems facing their country to date; the outcome of the presidential elections and Afghanistan’s ability to reach internal political equilibrium, international financial support after 2014; the ability of the new Afghan government to put in place the legal structures needed to attract investment and promote growth; and the size and structure of the post-2014 U.S. and NATO presence.<sup>82</sup>*

Later in the report, DOD noted that “the logistics and facilities departments for the MOD and MOI still require coalition assistance and are expected to continue to require support in the near future.”<sup>83</sup>

## *Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq*

For its part, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) noted that funding will remain a major challenge for the ANSF. The CRS noted the discrepancy between currently pledged funds and those funds actually needed to maintain the ANSF at the 352,000 men deemed necessary for security:

*On the assumption that the post-2014 ANSF force would shrink to 228,000, it was determined that sustaining a force that size would cost \$4.1 billion annually. The United States pledged \$2.3 billion yearly; the Afghan government pledged \$500 million yearly; and allied contributions constituted the remaining \$1.3 billion. The Afghan contribution is to rise steadily until 2024, at which time Afghanistan is expected to fund its own security needs. However, the apparent U.S. and NATO decision to keep the ANSF force at 352,000 produced revised funding requirement levels of about \$6 billion per year.*

*With respect to the funding requirements for a 352,000 person force, the Administration has requested \$4.1 billion for the ANSF for FY [fiscal year] 2015. At the NATO summit, partner countries reaffirmed pledges of about \$1.25 billion annually for the ANSF during 2015–2017. The \$500 million Afghan contribution would apparently be required to reach the \$6 billion requirement for 2015, although Afghan government revenues have fallen due to the election dispute, and it is not clear that Afghanistan has the funds to honor its financial pledge for the ANSF.<sup>84</sup>*

Perhaps an even greater challenge will be maintaining ANSF professionalism and end-strength. As of late 2013, 31.4 percent of the Afghan National Security Forces do not reenlist each year.<sup>85</sup> With an end-strength goal of 352,000, ANSF will have to recruit, train, and equip 110,528 new personnel every year—more than the 2013 recruiting goal for the U.S. Army and Marine Corps combined.<sup>86</sup>

In late 2014, SIGAR released a list of seven high-risk programs that are particularly vulnerable to fraud, waste, and, abuse. Number one on the list was corruption and rule of law. Number three on the list was the Afghan National Security Forces.<sup>87</sup> All of this comes at a time of increasing disillusionment among NATO and other ISAF members. In December 2014, the Alliance was “struggling to find 4,000 non-American troops for the coming year. It is 1,200

short. . . . It would be a band-aid, however. There is no military solution to the insurgency, as NATO's failure to defeat the Taliban shows."<sup>88</sup>

On January 1, 2015, ISAF completed its mission and the NATO-led mission named Resolute Support was launched to provide training, advice, and assistance for the Afghan security forces and institutions.<sup>89</sup>

## **Iraqi Army**

Prior to the invasion, Pentagon planners made a key assumption about the Iraqi army. They believed that upon conclusion of hostilities, it would come back on duty and thus provide for the security of Iraq. Ambassador L. Paul Bremer's decision to disband the army invalidated this assumption. The debate about the decision to disband the army has been fully explored in numerous sources. Its importance for this discussion is the fact that the planners had no branch plan if this key assumption proved false.

With no viable security forces, the violence in Iraq steadily increased. Almost immediately upon disbanding the army, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), as the governing authority of Iraq, decided it had to build a new one. However, it lacked the expertise to do so and thus had to turn to the Pentagon to request personnel. The inevitable result was an ad hoc organization. Furthermore, the disbandment of the army combined with the de-Ba'athification decision created enormous difficulties for those tasked with raising the new Iraqi army.

It was not until late May 2003 that Major General Paul Eaton, USA, was tasked with creating that army. He would not execute the mission as part of the U.S. Army but as a member of the CPA. He was briefed on his mission in May and arrived in Baghdad on June 13. At that point, he had a staff of five and minimal guidance. Nor was there any plan to provide additional resources.<sup>90</sup>

Upon arrival, Eaton was told the CPA had already determined that the Iraqi army would be oriented toward foreign threats to its own borders.<sup>91</sup> To reassure its neighbors, its logistics support would all be provided by civilian contractors whose contracts prohibited delivery of any support more than 80 miles from the home station of the Iraqi unit.<sup>92</sup> In short, the new Iraqi army would not have sufficient logistics support to be a threat to any of its neighbors. However, it was unclear how civilian logistics firms would deliver supplies to battalions and companies in combat.

## *Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq*

The initial CPA plan was to create three motorized Iraqi divisions. At the time, the CPA was envisioning a 3-year period before allowing control of Iraq to revert to Iraqis. Thus, it allowed a year for fielding the first 12,000-man division. Then it would dedicate the second year to the establishment of two more Iraqi divisions.<sup>93</sup> Eaton developed the Coalition Military Assistance Transition Team (CMATT) joint manning document based on these planning factors. The CPA also placed some distinct restrictions on Eaton's efforts to raise a new Iraqi army. No brigadier or higher from the old army could return since they were also Ba'athists. (Keep in mind the Iraqi army had almost 10,000 brigadiers. By law, the U.S. Army can have no more than 231 total general officers from brigadier general to full general.) The army should also match the ethnic/religious makeup of Iraq—60 percent Shia, 20 percent Kurd, and 20 percent Sunni. (While Kurds are both Sunni and Shia, their primary identity is Kurdish, and therefore the CPA sought ethnic/religious balance based on the 60/20/20 formula.) Recruiting for the army specifically stated that it would fight external enemies only and would not be involved in any actions against the Iraqi people. While this made sense in reducing the Iraqis' fear of a new army, it created significant problems in early 2004 when the Second Battalion was ordered to Fallujah to support coalition forces in their fight against Iraqis. Finally, there was no punishment for desertion. At any point, a soldier could simply decide he no longer wanted to be part of the army and leave without fear of disciplinary action.

While the CPA struggled to reestablish the Iraqi army, the increasing violence drove coalition military commanders to take the initiative and begin raising, training, and equipping Iraqi units for local security. Coalition ground commanders needed Iraqis to augment their security efforts and did not feel they could wait for the first Iraqi army units to be fielded. In the fall of 2003, the CPA supported these decisions and allowed the establishment of Iraqi Civil Defense Corps units. The training of these units, soon re-designated the Iraqi National Guard, was determined by individual U.S. divisional commanders. Initially, training periods varied from 3 days to several weeks. Employment was also up to the individual commander. Some paired Iraqi National Guard units with their own forces. Others left the units to operate on their own.

Eaton and his small team had to start from scratch: develop all Iraqi army facilities, to include finding their own offices, phones, and computers; estab-

lish recruiting offices; find trainers; procure every item of equipment for the new soldiers and their bases; and have 1,000 men in training by August. While building the Iraqi army, the team also had to build its own organization—the CMATT. Eaton requested and was promised military trainers, but only four actually reported—two Britons and two Australians. Since Combined Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF 7), the military command in Iraq, did not work for the CPA, it could not be tasked to train Iraqi security forces (ISF) nor even required to provide augmentees to CMATT. This highlighted one of the major problems CMATT faced. Nearly everything it needed had to come through military channels, but it lacked influence in the Pentagon. CMATT worked for the CPA under Ambassador Bremer, who did not have a good relationship with Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, USA, the CJTF 7 commander. Eaton believes a key issue in the slow start to training the Iraqi army was the fact that CMATT was essentially an orphan in the military system. It lacked a four-star sponsor who could force the Pentagon to take action in support of the training effort.<sup>94</sup>

Partially due to personnel shortages, primary training responsibility was outsourced to Vinnell Corporation. This was both a blessing and a curse. Vinnell had a good record working with Arabic-speaking soldiers and had provided training for the Saudi Arabian National Guard for 25 years:

*[Vinnell's] force-generation methods included the training of Iraqi officers in Jordan at a non-commissioned officers' academy and a "recruit training" academy in Kirkush, Iraq. Trained and equipped Iraqi forces would then be used to train additional forces. The contractors would deliver "trained units" and "trained leaders" to larger Iraqi army formations. Because of the Geneva Convention, as well as legal and regulatory concerns, the contractors would not become embedded advisors once the initial training was complete and Iraqi units moved on to combat operations.*<sup>95</sup>

Besides fielding and training the Iraqi units, Vinnell moved quickly to provide essential services to the new Iraqi army—recruiting, mess, laundry, maintenance, refurbishing base buildings, and so forth. Unfortunately, by December 2003, it was obvious that an army trained by contractors alone was not

meeting the requirement. Training attrition in the First Battalion was nearly 50 percent. The April 2004 breakdown of the Iraqi Second Battalion when it was ordered to Fallujah to assist U.S. forces confirmed the shortfalls in training, equipment, and leadership.<sup>96</sup> What the Vinnell trainers could not do was instill the soldier's ethos in the Iraqi recruits. In response, CMATT developed a plan to use coalition noncommissioned officers to provide the "soldier" aspect of training. However, even when the joint manning document was produced, CMATT was manned at less than 50 percent strength. Furthermore, many personnel were assigned for 3- to 6-month tours, which were too brief for the personnel to truly understand the situation and have an impact. Again, without a four-star sponsor to push the Pentagon, CMATT could not overcome its low manning priority in the joint personnel system.

Compounding the training and personnel shortages, the slow release of funding for facilities and equipment by the Pentagon continually disrupted the plan. The slow construction of barracks meant that billeting space became the pacing item for producing Iraqi army units. Since all military bases had been thoroughly looted when the Iraqi army was dissolved, barracks rooms, offices, mess halls, armories, ranges, medical facilities, motor pools, and other facilities had to be built or refurbished so that Iraqi army units had somewhere to move after basic training.<sup>97</sup> Even when funding was released, the shortage of contracting officers led to both delays and quality control problems on the construction and logistical support contracts. The shortage of qualified translators contributed to further delays since, for good reason, the legally binding contract was in Arabic but had to be translated to English for processing in the CPA system. Inevitably, translation errors led to misunderstandings and disputes—from minor disputes over mess hall menus to major disputes over the condition and date of turnover of major Iraqi bases from the contractor to the Iraqi army.

Despite CMATT's severe shortage of personnel, the CPA decided that the training for the Iraqi police was progressing so badly that it transferred responsibility for the program to CMATT in March 2004. Just prior to that, the CPA changed the tasking to CMATT from raising one division in 3 years to raising three divisions in 1 year. The sudden requirement for the under-strength CMATT staff to both triple the production of army units and revise and implement a nationwide program to raise, train, and equip police obvi-

ously had a negative impact on the entire training program for Iraqi security forces. Beset with many problems at the outset, CMATT under Major General Eaton was nevertheless able to establish a foundation for much of the rapid expansion of the ISF that Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq (MNSTC-I) would lead over the next few years.

With the dissolution of the CPA and transfer of authority to the Iraqis imminent, National Security Presidential Directive 36, dated May 11, 2004, detailed the new command arrangements in Iraq. With respect to support to the ISF, it stated, “The Secretary of State shall be responsible for the continuous supervision and general direction of all assistance for Iraq. Commander, USCENTCOM, with the policy guidance of the Chief of Mission, shall direct all United States Government efforts and coordinate international efforts in support of organizing, equipping, and training all Iraqi Security Forces.”<sup>98</sup> In June 2004, CMATT was redesignated as MNSTC-I. Commanded by Lieutenant General David Petraeus, it remained responsible for developing the MOD, MOI, and ISF—military and police.

With only 45 days to prepare, General George W. Casey, Jr., USA, took command of Multi-National Force–Iraq on July 1, 2004. Indicative of the turbulence he faced, he noted that in his 32 months in command, he served with three Iraqi governments, two Secretaries of Defense, two Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), two Ambassadors, four Multi-National Corps–Iraq (MNC-I) commanders, and two MNSTC-I commanders.<sup>99</sup> Continuity clearly was not a characteristic of the multinational effort in Iraq from June 2004 to February 2007. As he took over, Casey found there were only about 30,000 trained police on duty, only 3,600 of 18,000 border guards had weapons, and only 2 infantry battalions had reached an initial operating capability. His new plan called for 135,000 trained police, 32,000 border guards, and 65 infantry battalions.<sup>100</sup>

Believing he had eliminated the insurgent sanctuaries in Baghdad and Fallujah in 2004, Casey concluded that the now 80 Iraqi infantry and special operations force battalions, with embedded U.S. advisors, could begin to assume the security mission. He was concerned that keeping U.S. forces in the lead would hamper the willingness and ability of the Iraqis to take over. Thus, he focused MNC-I on partnering with and mentoring the Iraqis. As part of the process of forcing the Iraqis to lead, two U.S. brigades were withdrawn

from Iraq without replacement. Unfortunately, security continued to deteriorate, particularly after the al-Askari mosque bombing in February 2006. Casey stopped the withdrawal of U.S. forces and focused on securing Baghdad. The conflict was shifting from an insurgency against the government to a sectarian civil war between Sunni and Shia.

On the positive side, the previous years of effort by MNSTC-I were beginning to pay off in the rapidly expanding numbers of Iraqi security forces. By January 2006, in its report to Congress, DOD stated 98 Iraqi and special operations forces (SOF) battalions were conducting counterinsurgency operations across Iraq. Almost 107,000 Iraqi soldiers, sailors, and airmen had been trained, and 82,000 police were in the field. This expansion followed a reduction in the number of U.S. Army combat brigades in early 2006 from 17 to 15.<sup>101</sup> The report went on to cite numerous statistics to show the progress being made in the political, economic, and security spheres in Iraq. But it could not finesse the fact that the weekly total number of attacks had almost tripled in the last 2 years.<sup>102</sup>

By late 2006, the Iraqi army had grown to about 138,000, an end-strength increase of almost 30 percent in less than a year.<sup>103</sup> Unfortunately, the early decision to focus on building a light infantry force to face external enemies meant the Iraqi army displayed serious weaknesses. It consisted almost entirely of light infantry battalions supported by motor-transportation regiments. It included only one mechanized brigade, part of which was equipped with tanks and infantry fighting vehicles donated by Eastern European countries. As a result, there was a wide disparity between the lightly equipped Iraqi army forces and the more heavily equipped U.S. forces trying to accomplish similar missions. In addition, the Iraqi army mirrored the sectarian and ethnic divisions that plague the country. Kurds, Sunni Arabs, and Shiite Arabs usually served in battalions that consisted largely or exclusively of their own groups. Furthermore, there was “no judicial system within the Iraqi Army to assure discipline, and soldiers can refuse orders with impunity.”<sup>104</sup>

The police forces grew even more rapidly, reaching a total strength of 188,200 by November—a remarkable 129 percent growth.<sup>105</sup> As could be expected with such rapid growth, both MOD and MOI forces were “hampered by immature logistics and maintenance support systems, sectarian and militia influence, and the complex security environment.”<sup>106</sup>

DOD noted that 2007 witnessed the continued rapid growth of Iraqi security forces, with the army reaching 194,233 trained personnel and the police reaching 241,960, with plans to expand to over 270,000 in the military and over 307,000 in the MOI:

*The Coalition's four main areas of emphasis in developing the MoD and MoI and their forces remain . . . (1) developing ministerial capacity; (2) improve the proficiency of the Iraqi forces; (3) build specific logistics, sustainment and training capacities; and (4) support the expansion of the MoD and MoI forces. Special problems within these areas include corruption and lack of professionalism, sectarian bias, leader shortfalls, logistics deficiencies, and dependence on Coalition forces for many combat support functions.*<sup>107</sup>

The history of the U.S. Surge in Iraq has been covered extensively elsewhere and will not be covered in detail here. Yet it is important to note that in addition to rapidly expanding the ISF prior to and during the surge period, MNSTC-I, during the tenure of Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey, USA, from September 2005 to June 2007, also drove quality improvements that enabled Iraqi forces to play a key role in surge operations and hold their own against anti-coalition forces. A strong focus on force generation paid major dividends in this timeframe. MNSTC-I's extensive use of the foreign military sales program also accelerated the flow of modern military equipment to the ISF, transforming army and police units in about 2 years from a force mounted principally in civilian pickup trucks to one equipped with 3,200 up-armored Humvees by the end of 2008. Entire divisions, such as the 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, were assembled and employed in action in as little as 12 months.<sup>108</sup> While many of the problems cited above were not fully solved, ISF units nonetheless far outnumbered U.S. and coalition troops, particularly in the crucial Baghdad operations, and on the whole performed successfully. They deserve a fair portion of credit for the eventual success of the Baghdad security plan and the major reductions in violence that followed across Iraq.

The rapid expansion of the ISF does not tell the full story. A major success story of the Surge was the formation of the Sons of Iraq. By late 2007, 91,000 volunteers had signed up. By mid-2008, the *Washington Post* reported that vio-

lence had decreased from 1,400 incidents per day to only 200.<sup>109</sup> With violence decreasing to early-2005 levels, the concern among Sunnis turned to integrating the Sons of Iraq into the official security forces of Iraq. The Shia-dominated government was not eager to incorporate so many men who were recently their enemies.<sup>110</sup> Less violence and an army and police force of over 530,000 meant the Shia also perceived much less need for the Sons of Iraq as separate forces. They did not want them integrated into the Iraqi army.<sup>111</sup>

Over the next year, violence continued to decrease even as U.S. forces started to draw down. By early 2009, the steadily increasing application of resources to raising and training the Iraqi army resulted in an army of almost 200,000, augmented by police forces of over 380,000. Operational units were improving but still required coalition support for intelligence, communications, engineering, and close air support. There also remained serious concerns about the ability of the MOD and MOI to execute the full range of their duties. While retention and recruiting looked good for meeting future goals, the ministries' development was slow and uneven.<sup>112</sup>

By June 2010, Iraqi forces had grown to 625,000, and DOD believed they were on track to achieve minimum essential capability in all areas except logistics and sustainment, with continued problems in planning, budgeting, and procurement. Furthermore, while the ISF would not be ready to fight an external enemy by the December 2011 deadline for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces, they were sufficiently prepared for internal security.<sup>113</sup> U.S. forces withdrew on time, and the U.S. Government's interest in Iraq declined precipitously until the sudden and rapid collapse of the two Iraqi army divisions responsible for the defense of Mosul in June 2014.

This collapse illustrated the difficulty of overcoming cultural and political realities when building another nation's army. With the departure of American advisors, "the army became [former prime minister Nouri al-] Maliki's private militia,"<sup>114</sup> according to Major General Eaton. As such, it discriminated against non-Shia, often functioning as an enforcement arm of Shiite political parties. The political reality for the Sunni in particular meant that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) might in fact be the lesser of two evils. The U.S. advisory effort was unable to change the culture of the Iraqi army. David Zucchina of the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "Officers in one of many units that collapsed in Mosul, the 2d Battalion of Iraq's 3d Federal Police Division, said their U.S.

training was useful. But as soon as their American advisors left, they said, soldiers and police went back to their ways. ‘Our commanders told us to ignore what the Americans taught us,’ Shehab said. ‘They said, “We’ll do it our way.”’<sup>115</sup>

Recent actions by the U.S., allied, and Iraqi governments have started the rebuilding process for the Iraqi army. As both an indicator of the significant challenges and a sign of sincere reform, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi stated that a preliminary investigation has revealed 50,000 “ghost” soldiers on MOD rolls. He expects the continuing investigation to find more such soldiers.<sup>116</sup>

## **Iraqi Police**

Reconstituting the Iraqi police as a force that served and protected the Iraqi people was always going to be a major challenge. Under Saddam, “The [Iraqi police] had been the bottom of Saddam’s bureaucratic hierarchy of security agencies and suffered from years of mismanagement, deprivation of resources, and lack of professional standards. . . . Iraqis saw the [police] as part of a cruel and repressive regime and described its officers as brutal, corrupt, and untrustworthy.”<sup>117</sup>

The complete lack of a U.S. plan for rebuilding the police greatly magnified the already daunting challenge. With disorder rising in Iraq, the Departments of Justice and State hastily initiated the process in May 2003 by dispatching a six-member team of police executives to assess the needs of the Iraqi police. That team recommended 6,000 international civilian police trainers and advisors be recruited and deployed to Iraq immediately. On June 2, 2003, Ambassador Bremer approved the plan but lacked the funds to implement it.<sup>118</sup> This was the first indicator the United States would consistently under-resource police training in Iraq. Recognizing the importance of an effective police force to the future of Iraq and seeing little progress to that point, USCENTCOM Commander General John Abizaid, USA, recommended to Bremer that the U.S. military assume responsibility for police training in September 2003. Despite his inability to resource the training through CPA, Bremer opposed the transfer of responsibility, and thus training remained the responsibility of the CPA for the time being.

Nonetheless, in October, CJTF 7 Commander Lieutenant General Sanchez told a senatorial delegation that 54,000 police were on duty. When Bremer inquired about the police training, he was told, “The Army is sweeping

up half-educated men off the streets, running them through a 3-week training course, arming them, and then calling them 'police.'"<sup>119</sup> Bremer directed Sanchez to stop training police. However, the CPA still could not provide a viable alternative training program. It took until December 2003 for the first 24 police trainers to arrive. Not until March 2004 did the United States decide to provide 500 police trainers through a DynCorp contract with the State Department. In the same month, the Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (CPATT) was established and subordinated to CMATT. Thus, the badly understaffed CMATT was given responsibility for both the army and the police. While CMATT remained under the authority of the CPA and not the military, the transfer of authority for the police highlighted a fundamental disagreement between the military and the Departments of State and Justice police trainers, who felt strongly that the training should focus on developing a community policing service dedicated to enforcing law and order:

*The problem was that the U.S. military and State/DOJ [Department of Justice] civilian police advisors had markedly different goals for the Iraqi police. This divergence of views meant that there was no common understanding among U.S. agencies about the mission of the Iraqi police. It also meant a divergence between the training provided to members of the Iraqi Police Service and their utilization in the field.*

*State policymakers and DOJ police trainers were intent on creating an efficient, lightly armed, civilian Iraqi Police Service (IPS) that utilized community-policing techniques and operated in conformity with Western, democratic standards for professional law enforcement.*

*Beyond utilizing the IPS in a counter-insurgency role, the U.S. military was determined to create an internal Iraqi security force that could protect itself and deal with the insurgency and hostile militias, ultimately permitting a U.S. withdrawal.<sup>120</sup>*

The initial CPA training program had in fact focused on community policing. To reinforce this point, they renamed the Iraqi National Police the Iraqi Police Service. However, with the rising violence, the military com-

manders responsible for security in Iraq believed the Iraqi police needed to be a militarized counterinsurgency force able to support coalition forces in the field. This was the primary driver behind CJTF 7's efforts to raise 54,000 local police. After the insurgency was put down, the force could be reoriented to a community policing force. This disagreement was not resolved with the transfer of police training to CMATT. Nor did the reorganization provide any immediate increase in resources for the police. By June 2004, as the CPA prepared to turn governance over to the Iraqis, there were still fewer than 100 civilian police trainers in Iraq.<sup>121</sup> Upon the departure of the CPA, authority over the police reverted to the Ministry of the Interior. However, MNSTC-I remained the primary force behind recruiting, training, equipping, and fielding the police.

With the rising violence dramatically illustrated by the coordinated Sunni attacks on coalition forces in Fallujah, Baghdad, Ramadi, Samarra, and Tikrit, as well as the Mahdi army offensive in Najaf and Sadr City, the under-trained, under-equipped Iraqi police collapsed in many areas. To fill the gap, MNSTC-I Commander Lieutenant General Petraeus authorized 750-man police battalions composed mostly of Sunnis who were former Iraqi special forces soldiers. Once raised and equipped, they were immediately dispatched to fight alongside coalition units. At the same time but without coordinating with the United States, Minister of Interior Falah Hassan al-Naqib started recruiting police commando units from the same source and using them in independent operations. The appearance of Naqib's forces on the battlefield surprised the coalition, but they proved effective.<sup>122</sup>

On May 3, 2005, there was another transfer of power as the Iraqi transitional government replaced the Iraqi interim government. Bayan Jabr Solagh (also known as Baqir Jabr al-Zubeidi), a senior official of the Shiite Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI), was appointed Minister of Interior. He consolidated the numerous ad hoc police battalions/commando units into the Emergency Response Unit (a special weapons and techniques battalion), 8<sup>th</sup> Police Mechanized Brigade (3 motorized battalions), Public Order Division (4 brigades/12 battalions), and Special Police Commando Division (4 brigades/12 battalions).<sup>123</sup> At the same time, Jabr appointed leaders of the Badr Brigade, SCIRI's armed wing, to the ministry and key police commands. He recruited thousands of Shia to replace Sunnis and effectively

turned the Iraqi police into a Shiite militia that was free to kidnap, torture, and murder Sunnis.<sup>124</sup>

In response, MNSTC-I declared 2006 to be “the Year of the Police” and started a major effort to reorganize training and discipline in the force. It convinced the MOI to combine the U.S.-created public order battalions with the Iraqi-created commando units in a single national police force that would be named the Iraqi National Police. It would have more training and equipment and serve as a backup to the Iraqi Police Service, the lightly armed street police created by the State/Justice training team:

*With this reorganization, the Ministry of Interior forces consisted of the Iraqi Police Service, the National Police, the Department of Border Enforcement, the Center for Dignitary Protection, and the MOI’s portion of the Facilities Protection Service. (The MOI is planning for the eventual incorporation of an estimated 150,000 members of the Facilities Protection Service who currently reside in other ministries.)<sup>125</sup>*

However, the deep civilian distrust of the new Iraqi National Police meant this effort failed to curb the violence against Sunnis—and the response of their militias against Shias. The next major coalition effort to reform the police followed the next transition of power between Iraqi governments in response to the December 15, 2005, national elections. It took almost 6 months for the political parties to agree to the appointment of Nouri al-Maliki as prime minister in May 2006. Due to political infighting, he was unable to name a new Minister of Interior until June 2006. In an effort to reform the police, Jabr was replaced as MOI by Jawad al-Bulani, who was given deputies from the Dawa, Badr, and Kurdish parties. In effect, this was an effort to establish a set of checks and balances within the MOI. Conspicuously absent was a Sunni deputy. Further reinforcing Sunni concerns about the police, Jabr did not leave government but merely moved laterally to the Ministry of Finance, where he controlled the police funding and actual payment of police salaries.<sup>126</sup>

In October 2006, with clear evidence the Iraqi National Police were participating in torture and murder, the United States took action. U.S. forces removed the entire 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Police Division from duty and arrested its officers. In 2007, all 9 Iraqi national police brigade commanders

and 18 of 27 battalion commanders were replaced for sectarian behavior, and all national police units were retrained by Italian Carabinieri.<sup>127</sup> For some policemen, it was the first training they had ever received. While this represented a major effort to provide supervision and training to convert the Iraqi National Police from an armed wing of the Shiite political parties to a genuine national police force, there were still insufficient trainers to align with most Iraqi police. The violence against the Sunni population continued.

At the same time that MNSTC-I, through CPATT, was working to improve the quality of the Iraqi National Police, the long-term efforts to provide training and mentoring to other police elements began to bear fruit. By November 2006, 117 training teams had been assigned to the Iraqi Police Service, which consisted of patrol, traffic, station, and highway police who handled law enforcement in the 18 provinces. As local police, the Iraqi Police Service ethnic and religious makeup was generally representative of their communities.<sup>128</sup> MNSTC-I also had Police Transition Teams (PTTs), National Police Transition Teams, Border Transition Teams, and Customs and Border Support Teams mentoring the various police agencies across the country. These police transition teams were generally composed of 11 to 15 members. Three to four of the members were contractor police trainers hired by the U.S. State Department, while the rest consisted of military personnel. These teams conducted joint PTT/Iraqi Police Service patrols in order to improve the performance of the Iraqi Police Service.<sup>129</sup>

In conjunction with the efforts to mentor Iraqi police in the field, MNSTC-I worked to develop the institutional skills necessary for the MOI to successfully run the police forces. During 2006 and 2007, the ministry gradually assumed responsibility for personnel, logistics, finances, and internal affairs. Corruption and sectarianism created severe problems. By July 2007:

*Iraq's MOI had become a "federation of oligarchs" with various floors of the building controlled by hostile militia groups. According to the report, police officials moved between floors protected by heavily armed bodyguards and internal power struggles were settled by assassination in the parking lot. . . . the congressionally mandated "Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq" stated that Iraq's MOI was crippled*

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*by corruption and sectarianism, and posed the main obstacle to developing an effective police force in Iraq.*<sup>130</sup>

The effort to build the MOI had suffered from the same tension as all advisory efforts in Iraq. Some advisors focused on getting it done for them. Others focused on helping them do it themselves. None had been able to address the underlying political infighting among the Iraqis.

Yet by December 2007, the Surge meant that DOD could report reduced levels of violence in most parts of Iraq. It could also report progress in police force generation, police operational success, and reform efforts. The MOI continued to take on more responsibility for planning, budgeting, personnel, and logistics. CPATT now fielded 247 PTTs but was still 17 percent short of requirements. CPATT focused on Baghdad, placing a PTT in every station, but in other parts of the country the ratio was as low as one PTT for seven police stations. The MOI consisted of over 370,000 personnel in the ministry, Iraqi Police Service, Iraqi National Police, and other elements. But in its quarterly report to Congress, DOD had to admit that “the Ministry remains hampered by corruption, sectarianism and logistics deficiencies.”<sup>131</sup> While police forces continued to grow quickly, there was little political will to reform.

Progress continued in most areas over the next year. The December 2008 DOD report to Congress noted that the MOI had demonstrated improved performance in all ministerial functions—particularly planning, budgeting, and execution of the budget. It noted that despite poor performance in Basra during March and April 2008, the Iraqi Police Service improved with each subsequent operation. In addition, 18 of the 33 Iraqi National Police battalions were capable of operating with only limited coalition support. Only one battalion was rated at the lowest level. Another 13 battalions were being formed with a stated goal of one Iraqi National Police brigade per province. On the negative side, the MOI failed to coordinate its operations well with MOD.<sup>132</sup>

By far the most important area of improvement was in depoliticizing the MOI. In June 2006, Prime Minister Maliki replaced the highly sectarian Jabr with Jawad al-Bulani, a technocrat who worked hard for 3 years to reduce the political and actual fighting within the ministry. In 2009, the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) reported that he had dramatically reduced the divisiveness with-

in the ministry while also improving its effectiveness. The key question was whether the reforms could be made permanent in order to withstand further changes in leadership or government.<sup>133</sup>

Even as USIP was finalizing its report, Maliki was in the process of quietly removing inspectors general in numerous Iraqi ministries. The *New York Times* reported:

*Whatever the precise tally, the events have begun provoking accusations that Mr. Maliki, who has never been an advocate of having his government's inner workings scrutinized, might leave the posts vacant or stack them with supporters of his party, Dawaa. The secrecy surrounding the moves has magnified suspicions that the government aims to cripple the oversight mechanisms put in place after the invasion.*<sup>134</sup>

The MOI continued to increase in strength. By October 2011, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction reported that the Iraq police had 325,000 personnel; Facilities Protection Service, 95,000; Training and Support, 89,900; Department of Border Enforcement, 60,000; Iraq Federal Police, 45,000; the Oil Police, 31,000; and the counterterrorism force, 4,200, for a total of 650,000 police.<sup>135</sup>

After his 2010 reelection, Prime Minister Maliki did not reappoint Bulari but instead personally assumed the roles of Minister of Interior, Minister of Defense, and Minister of National Security. Throughout his 7-year tenure, Maliki has implemented a divide-and-conquer strategy that has neutered any credible Sunni Arab leadership. Under intensifying pressure from government forces and with dwindling faith in a political solution, many Sunni Arabs have concluded their only realistic option is a violent conflict increasingly framed in confessional terms.<sup>136</sup>

This partially explains the rapid advance of ISIL into the Sunni-dominated areas of western Iraq. The Iraqi military and police forces had been so thoroughly pillaged by their own corrupt leadership that they all but collapsed in spring 2015 in the face of the advancing ISIL militants, despite roughly \$25 billion worth of American training and equipment over the past 10 years and far more from the Iraqi treasury. Now the pattern of corruption and patronage in the Iraqi government forces threatens to undermine a new American-led

effort to drive out the extremists, even as President Barack Obama is doubling to 3,000 the number of American troops in Iraq.<sup>137</sup>

## **Training Teams**

In Afghanistan, the initial advisory effort consisted of the Central Intelligence Agency and SOF teams inserted to support the Northern Alliance militias in the campaign to drive the Taliban out of Afghanistan. At this point, the advisory effort was the main effort for U.S. forces in Operation *Enduring Freedom*. Once the initial campaign was over, the emphasis shifted to operations conducted by U.S. forces. As noted earlier, initial efforts to raise Afghan forces were improvised. TF Phoenix took over training the Afghan army and was followed by OMC-A. The commanders understood the need for advisors and formed Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) to work with each kandak. The teams were initially assigned to a kandak after it completed its training cycle, but in March 2005, ETTs began to be assigned to kandaks on the first day of training.<sup>138</sup> When NATO became more involved in training Afghan forces, they formed NATO Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams. In time, 27 nations provided trainers to these 13- to 30-person teams, which were assigned to kandaks as well as brigade and corps headquarters.<sup>139</sup> Despite the international effort, the ANA never received sufficient numbers of advisors. By 2008, the GAO reported that:

*While trainers or mentors are present in every ANA combat unit, less than half the required number are deployed in the field. Defense officials cited an insufficient number of U.S. trainers and coalition mentors in the field as the major impediment to providing the ANA with the training to establish capabilities, such as advanced combat skills and logistics, necessary to sustain the ANA force in the long term. Finally, ANA combat units report significant shortages in approximately 40 percent of critical equipment items, including vehicles, weapons, and radios. Some of these challenges, such as shortages of U.S. trainers and equipment, are due in part to competing global priorities, according to senior Defense officials. Without resolving these challenges, the ability of the ANA to reach full capability may be delayed.<sup>140</sup>*

In 2010, drawing on the experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Secretary of Defense directed the services to develop the Afghanistan-Pakistan (AFPAK) Hands Program to improve the knowledge and continuity of the advisors who were to be assigned to Afghanistan and Pakistan. On September 3, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff published CJCS Instruction 1630.01, directing the establishment of the program:

*Afghanistan/Pakistan Hands: A cadre of military and civilian personnel who receive regional language, culture, and counterinsurgency (COIN) training for deployment to key billets in Afghanistan or Pakistan. APH personnel are placed in key positions where they will engage directly with Afghan and Pakistani officials and the population. Upon completion of their in-theater deployment, APH will be assigned to a key out-of-theater billet where their in-country experience will be applied to work Afghanistan or Pakistan regional issues.<sup>141</sup>*

AFPAK Hands proved a success. As the commanders came to understand the program, they began to request these personnel because the language, cultural, and historical training they received made them more effective advisors.<sup>142</sup> The program could not provide sufficient numbers of advisors for the large and rapidly growing Afghan National Security Forces, so the Services continued to improve their own programs. In 2013, as U.S. forces shifted to the advisory effort, GAO summarized how the United States had provided advisors for ANSF:

*In addition to conducting security operations, ISAF forces have long been training and advising the ANSF both in training centers and at unit locations after they have been formed and fielded. For the U.S. contribution, DOD has used a variety of approaches to provide U.S. forces to carry out the advise and assist mission. For example, prior to 2010, the advising mission in Afghanistan was primarily conducted with transition teams. These teams did not exist as units in any of the services' force structures and were instead comprised of company and field grade officers and senior non-commissioned officers who were centrally identified and individually selected based on rank and specialty.*

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*As previously reported, the demand for these leaders created challenges for the services because, among other things, the leaders were generally pulled from other units or commands, which then were left to perform their missions while understaffed. In part as a means of alleviating these challenges, the Army developed the concept of augmenting brigade combat teams with specialized personnel to execute the advising mission, and began deploying these augmented brigades in 2010. In early 2012, based on requests from ISAF as part of its shift to a security force assistance mission, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps began to deploy small teams of advisors with specialized capabilities, referred to as SFA [security force assistance] advisor teams, which are located throughout Afghanistan, to work with Afghan army and police units from the headquarters to the battalion level, and advise them in areas such as command and control, intelligence, and logistics. U.S. advisor teams are under the command and control of U.S. commanders within ISAF's regional commands.<sup>143</sup>*

In Iraq, commanders at levels from battalion to division quickly grasped the requirement to provide advisors and support to the units operating in their areas until the Iraqi ministries could mature to the point they could do the job. They did so on their own initiative starting with the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (later redesignated as the Iraqi National Guard). For its part, the Coalition Provisional Authority integrated Iraqis into the CPA structure for running the country. Upon the CPA's departure, the coalition continued to provide civilian and military advisors at senior levels. It also attempted to provide advisory teams down to the battalion level for Iraqi forces. Since this was a wartime requirement with no corresponding peacetime force structure except for SOF, the advisors were often drawn from the units in combat. Initially drawn from the U.S. and willing coalition units in country, the advisors provided both expertise to the host-nation forces and insights to U.S. commanders on what those forces and ministries were doing. Obviously, drawing officers from U.S. units in combat was not an optimal solution. In response, the Pentagon directed the Services to build Military Training Teams to embed in Iraqi units.

Both the Army and Marine Corps had difficulty finding enough advisors to fill the team billets. While the Services occasionally carefully picked advi-

sors (including a few screened for command positions), the mission generally fell to Reserve units. Initially, the advisors were organized into 39 10-man Advisor Support Teams that were assigned to each of the newly raised Iraqi army divisions.<sup>144</sup> Over time, team sizes were increased, with the Marine Corps assigning up to 40 members per team.<sup>145</sup> Unfortunately, these teams continued to be formed for the most part by assembling individual augmentees, who identified major problems with the program: they did not receive adequate preparation before deployment; they lacked guidance and authority; and the chain of command was rarely clear.<sup>146</sup>

As the Iraqi army improved, the training team focus changed from basic skills to training the Iraqis to operate independently of coalition support. As lower level units improved, the advisory focus shifted to higher level commands and critical support functions until the time of the final withdrawal of all U.S. advisory teams.

In both countries, similar efforts were made to provide advisors to the police forces. However, as noted earlier, police advisory efforts were seriously complicated by the divergence of views between military and civilian personnel concerning the proper training, equipping, and employment of police. An even greater problem was the dispersion inherent in police operations. Unlike military forces that generally functioned out of battalion or larger bases, many police were assigned to small stations spread over the entire country. While it was feasible to provide advisors to headquarters, provincial, district, and large city police stations as well as special units like the ANCOP, it was simply impossible to provide advisors to most police stations to allow close advising and joint patrolling. In response, some individual coalition combat units teamed up with local police in both theaters. Furthermore, entire deployed military police units were often tasked specifically to support the host-nation police. In short, efforts were made to provide advisors whenever possible, but police advising, by its very nature, is a much more challenging proposition than advising military forces. Police advisory efforts were therefore less effective than armed forces advisory efforts.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the complete destruction of the security forces institutions and infrastructure made it obvious that the newly formed security forces would need U.S. advisors and trainers. Since there was no plan to provide them for either country, initial efforts were ad hoc and took many

forms. As each theater matured, the process for assigning, training, equipping, and deploying trainers became more formal. As requirements were clarified, the Services attempted to move from individual assignment/deployment to deployment as teams. Despite the clear importance of advisors to the effective functioning of host-nation forces, advisory duty was not seen as career enhancing as service with a U.S. unit. This made finding personnel for the teams even more challenging. Moreover, the presence of numerous coalition partner nations in each theater drove a requirement for significant numbers of officers and NCOs to be assigned as liaison teams between U.S. units and the coalition units operating in proximity. The liaison effort also suffered from “ad hoc–racy.”

Despite major efforts by the Services and deployed units, the advisory effort never reached the required levels of personnel, often failed to match needed skills to the assigned billets, and usually failed to provide effective team training and uniform equipping prior to deployment.<sup>147</sup> Yet advisors had a major positive impact—and the AFPAK Hands revealed the much greater impact that could have been achieved by dedicating more resources and affording advisory efforts a higher priority.

## **Insights**

Iraq and Afghanistan are fundamentally different societies and presented very different challenges to those trying to raise, train, and equip their security forces. However, the most important insights that can be drawn from these campaigns are the same.

### ***Insight 1: Have a Plan***

This painfully obvious lesson should not have to be stated. Yet in both campaigns, efforts to establish security forces were ad hoc. While it may have been excusable for initial plans to be based on hasty estimates and poor understandings of the societies involved as well as the threats, the fact is that in both countries, it took years before realistic plans were developed to provide appropriately sized forces.

For different reasons, in Afghanistan and Iraq there was no plan to establish host-nation security forces. When the requirement became obvious, initial plans were not well grounded in reality, resulting in a severe underes-

timation of the number of host-nation security forces required and an initial failure to provide sufficient personnel and resources to train even those inadequate forces. It took 18 months to get 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, to Afghanistan to start a serious training program for the army. Police training and organization have remained serious problems up to the present. In Iraq, it took months even to establish the CMATT, which was never properly manned or funded but was nonetheless suddenly assigned responsibility for police training almost a year after the invasion. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the State Department decided to hire DynCorp to handle police training rather than requesting assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, which was used to train police in Bosnia and Kosovo.

In each case, successive plans increased the number of security forces to be recruited, trained, and equipped, but resourcing never caught up with the plan. Also in each case, command and control arrangements changed frequently with the eventual assignment of all security force training to the military command.

The lack of a plan meant that the key decision—whether to keep the existing security forces and build on them or start from scratch—was not taken until after Phase III operations. In both countries, the security forces were built from the ground up—and in Iraq, this reversed a major planning assumption. At the same time, in both nations many militias remained active and outside the command of the government. The planning process must decide which elements of any existing security forces to retain and what role militias and private military companies will play. While ideally neither entity will exist, in reality the very instability that leads to outside intervention means the government has proved incapable of providing security. Inevitably, subnational communities will turn to militias to defend themselves. Many businesses and other nongovernmental organizations, both domestic and international, will have no choice but to turn to private military contractors for security. In fact, when militias were ordered disbanded, some simply reappeared as private security companies. They could not all be banned because the government simply could not provide security.

A key element of any plan must be the advise-and-assist effort. These programs require large numbers of senior officers and NCOs and thus place a

disproportionate strain on the personnel resources of the services and civil organizations that provide advisors. The plan must account for providing sufficient numbers with appropriate skills and provide time to train them *before* deployment.

A final caution is that either building or improving another nation's security forces will take longer than planned.

### ***Insight 2: Understand the Problem to Be Solved***

A frequent error seen in dealing with interactively complex problems is a failure to clearly understand the real problem that has to be solved. In Iraq, initial efforts were focused on creating an army to defend the country from external enemies. This approach continued long after the insurgency was a clear and rapidly growing threat. In Afghanistan, the effort to create a centralized army and police force increased tensions between ethnic and tribal groups and the central government. In both cases, attempts to solve the wrong problem exacerbated the underlying real problem of insurgency.

The initial misunderstanding of the problem was compounded by the often repeated idea that host-nation security forces were our "ticket out." This was based on the incorrect assumption that if the United States could simply form effective security forces, it would have accomplished the mission—a fundamental misunderstanding of the political, social, and economic conditions in both countries. The key insight is that security forces are essential but insufficient.

In both theaters, a serious effort to understand the problem was long delayed. In Iraq, it was not until Petraeus took over, and in Afghanistan not until the 2008 Bush administration review, that the U.S. Government made a serious effort to understand each conflict and devise an appropriate solution. The Obama administration conducted its own review in 2009 in its attempt to understand the problem. This highlights the fact that despite major efforts to understand a complex problem, planners may still define it incorrectly. The U.S. efforts to transfer the population-centric approach used in Iraq to Afghanistan did not result in the dramatic improvements in security seen in Iraq. Bluntly stated, a flawed understanding of the political and social dynamics in Afghanistan led us to the approach of "population-centric counterinsurgency." The Afghanistan Surge did not significantly reduce the levels of violence there.<sup>148</sup> In both nations, failure to understand the conflict cost lives and years of effort.

Magnifying the difficulty of developing security forces is the fact that political, economic, and social conditions define what is possible in each case. The mission of the security forces can be clearly defined only after the problem is understood. The lack of clarity was most noticeable in the different approaches to police training taken by the State and Justice departments' training teams as opposed to those taken by the DOD team. But even within DOD, there was strong disagreement about the mission and hence the force structure of both the Afghan and the Iraqi armed forces. Similarly, due to a poor understanding of the actual problems in Iraq, the initial plan for the army was to build an army to fight a nonexistent external threat. Unfortunately, that army was not sufficiently organized, trained, or equipped to deal with the actual internal threat.

***Insight 3: Understand that the Situation Will Change and Develop Branches and Sequels Concurrently with the Primary Plan***

All insurgencies are wicked problems, the very nature of which means the problems will change as various players interact with each other. These changes often invalidate initial assumptions. Thus, a critical element of planning must be developing branches and sequels to compensate for invalid assumptions.

In each theater, the deteriorating security situation led to rapidly changing estimates of the situation and subsequent changes in planning. Each change included an increase in the proposed size and composition of the host-nation security forces. However, there is little indication that branch plans were developed to cover the eventuality that the situation would continue to worsen and larger host-nation forces would be needed. Thus, each increase had to be planned and executed from scratch.

The frequent changes led to reorganizations of the U.S. and coalition command arrangements. The confusion inherent in the constantly changing arrangements was exacerbated by the short tours of most trainers. It was difficult for the host-nation personnel to establish relationships with their coalition counterparts. Furthermore, the mix of government and contract training personnel contributed to fragmentation of coalition efforts. Finally, the training and mentoring establishments never received the number of personnel required by their tables of organization. Another complication was that personnel without the required knowledge or skill were often assigned in an effort to fill those billets.

While these problems could not have been overcome by effective branch and sequel planning, the impact could have been lessened by reducing the time needed to respond to each change.

***Insight 4: Understand the Culture That Drives the Societies in Conflict***

Coalition efforts in both nations seemed to be based on the idea of a two-sided conflict—the government versus the insurgents. The reality in both cases was much more complex. Ethnic, political, religious, institutional, and cultural differences drove much of both conflicts. Coalition failure to understand these underlying factors dramatically reduced the effectiveness of counterinsurgency efforts because the coalition failed to establish political structures appropriate for the individual nations.

In fact, the historical record of outsiders overcoming deep ethnic, religious, and cultural schisms within any society is poor. This is not a new factor, nor should it have been a surprise. In both nations, the United States attempted to build ethnically balanced national security forces. In both nations, there was great resistance to this idea. In Afghanistan, we still have not succeeded in enlisting sufficient southern and eastern Pashtun to balance the force ethnically. While the April 2014 DOD *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* shows the ANA has succeeded in recruiting Pashtuns in proportion to the population,<sup>149</sup> other sources note that most of the Pashtuns have been recruited from the north and that the southern and eastern Pashtun remain severely under-represented<sup>150</sup> and even viewed as outsiders because they cannot speak the local version of Pashtu.<sup>151</sup> This is a particular problem since most of the security incidents occur in the south and east.

In Iraq, shortly after our departure, Maliki began transforming the army and national police into Shiite-dominated forces that answered to him. Again, neither development should be surprising. In the past, decades of outside rule have been required to create the national institutions that can manage sectarian and ethnic tensions (think India). Understanding the impact of these issues requires a major effort during the initial phase of understanding the problem. Failure to do so will often result in outsiders taking actions that magnify rather than reduce those problems.

Any proposed solution must be functional within the cultural context in which it must operate. In both nations, the United States selected courses of action that were not appropriate to those cultures. A Joint and Coalition Operation Analysis report noted that the planned endstates were based largely on U.S. expectations instead of those consistent with the host nation and mission. For example, the planned endstate for Afghanistan was envisioned as a strong central government, despite only one instance of such a government in Afghan history—the extremely repressive rule of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan from 1880 to 1901—and a lack of broad popular support for that system of governance.<sup>152</sup> Despite this history, the Afghans at the Bonn Conference chose to adopt the 1964 Afghan constitution. Subsequent actions indicate the Hamid Karzai government assumed that Afghanistan could best be ruled by a central government with the power to reach into every district in the nation. This assumption, questionable at best, drove the structure, training, and organization of the MOD, MOI, and the security forces themselves. In a highly decentralized, multiethnic, multicultural, multi-religious society, security forces of the central government, especially those from a different group, are often distrusted and actively resisted.

At the Loya Jirga, Karzai sought a government based on the Afghan constitution of 1964. The Loya Jirga supported him. The constitution envisioned an Afghanistan with a Western-style justice system and planned to develop the police accordingly. Unfortunately, in 2002 Afghanistan lacked almost all elements of a Western justice system—and thus the initial concept for policing was severely flawed. Without effective courts and prisons to include sufficient numbers of trained judges, lawyers, clerks, corrections officers, and other personnel, police can function only as a poorly trained and equipped paramilitary security force.

In Iraq, the United States failed to understand the depth of the hostility between the Shiite and Sunni communities. In creating a highly centralized security force, it created a force that Maliki could control and use to suppress Sunni political participation in the government of Iraq.

Perhaps the single most challenging cultural problem in both nations was corruption—as the West understands it. Almost every after action report noted corruption as siphoning off a major portion of resources as well as placing unqualified personnel in key billets from district to national levels. The prob-

lem, of course, is figuring out what is considered corruption in the specific culture and what is considered greasing the wheels or a moral obligation to take care of family. In both countries, the reality remains that without the exchange of funds or favors, projects do not get completed. Clearly, we will have to deal with corruption in future efforts. However, we must understand what represents wasteful corruption and what represents necessary transactions or even moral obligations for that society. We should remember that while we may abhor contractors offering money to government officials to procure contracts, an outsider might think the U.S. lobbying system looks remarkably similar. Money is paid to a lobbyist or directly to an election campaign, and certain laws or programs are approved.

One of the cultures we must take into account is our own. For instance, DOD planning culture is based around accomplishing a mission. It assumes that there is a solution for the problem and that the solution can be expressed as an essentially linear plan. Unfortunately, both Iraq and Afghanistan are distinctly nonlinear, interactively complex problems. Thus, the first and most difficult step should have been to define the problem we were trying to solve and then develop an agreed-upon solution. Instead, U.S. decisionmakers made flawed assumptions about both countries and leapt immediately into military planning. Not surprisingly, in both countries the U.S. understanding of the situation was slow to develop and then changed frequently. It was not until 2007 that the Office of the Secretary of Defense even openly stated that Iraq was an insurgency/civil war. From this understanding, it devised the Surge that led to a dramatic decrease in violence. While some may question the Surge's long-term impact, there is no question it provided the Iraqis with breathing space to reach a political solution. The fact that they fell back to sectarian violence several years after the departure of U.S. forces does not alter this observation.

Another U.S. cultural requirement is a senior sponsor for host-nation security forces. Ensuring sufficient resourcing from the Pentagon requires the personal attention of a four-star officer. Throughout both wars, training security forces was not a mission the U.S. Armed Forces were organized, trained, or equipped well to execute. They were even less prepared to establish the necessary civilian defense institutions to manage and supervise those forces. Thus, the U.S. defense bureaucracy had to be forced to do something alien. Any attempt to force a bureaucracy to execute a function outside its design requires

senior leaders with the ability to force not only their organization but also others to respond quickly to rapidly changing events. (Recall the lack of progress in fielding Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles until very senior DOD officials took personal interest.) It was not until the security forces programs in both nations got this level of attention that resource shortages were alleviated. Unfortunately, particularly for police programs, personnel shortages were never really solved.

The U.S. Government has a tendency to default to police as the “frontline” in any counterinsurgency operation. This tendency was heavily reinforced in the 2006 edition of Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*. Unfortunately, doctrinal attitudes about the police role in counterinsurgency are based heavily on British experiences. In the primary cases—Malaya and Northern Ireland—Britain was the governing power and had spent centuries establishing the British system of policing and justice. Thus, police were culturally less threatening than army personnel to the native populations. However, in many parts of the world, the police are the most oppressive and corrupt element of the host-nation government.

As noted earlier, the Iraqi police were the bottom of the barrel of Saddam’s security forces. Corrupt, hated, and trained only to enforce fear of the government, these were the people to which the United States first gave weapons and put back on the street with authority to use deadly force in its name. In Afghanistan, various militia commanders simply declared their own people to be the police force. A fundamental lesson is that the police are not the default security force in a counterinsurgency. The United States should field and support police forces only in those areas where they are culturally appropriate. They may not be appropriate nationwide. While police may be seen as legitimate in better developed urban areas, they may be seen as a force of government oppression in rural areas.

***Insight 5: Structure Ministries and Forces Appropriate to the Problem and the Societies in Conflict***

In both countries, the United States developed ministries and forces modeled on U.S. institutions. The political, economic, and social (cultural) conditions of these countries made U.S. approaches problematic and unsustainable without a significant U.S. presence. Compounding the problem was a failure to un-

derstand that the actual organization and functioning of the ministries of defense and interior are inevitably tied to the political and social structures of the host nations. This was particularly damaging since ministerial development is both more critical and much more difficult than fielding forces. In both countries, the coalition attempted to establish apolitical, merit-based technocratic ministries. The domestic political situations and vicious conflicts within the governments meant this was an unattainable goal. The rapid takeover of the Iraqi ministries by Shiite militants illustrates the fact that structures designed and imposed by outsiders are unlikely to sustain themselves in this type of political climate.

This fact dramatically complicates any advisory effort. U.S. advisors can only train what they know, so advisors must be educated in different ways to organize ministries and forces before they deploy. If U.S. advisors are to assist existing ministries and forces, it is also essential they understand those organizations and their cultures prior to deploying. Planners should assumed developing and executing such a program—to include basic language training—will take at least a year. If advisory tours remain 1 year in length, this will effectively double the personnel requirement for advisory efforts.

From the outset, any program to raise, train, and equip a host-nation security force must be focused on how it must function after the departure of the United States. Unfortunately, in both countries, the United States attempted to build a national security enterprise modeled on its own. This was particularly visible in how we organized and trained the armed forces. Like all militaries, the U.S. Armed Forces are the product of unique historical and cultural conditions. The success of U.S. forces is heavily attributed to both technology and NCO leadership. Naturally, we sought to inculcate both those values into the Iraqi and Afghan forces. Yet in both cultures, the concept of someone who is socially and militarily inferior to another providing instruction, correction, and honest advice to his social or military superior is an alien concept. While a professional NCO corps has been essential to the success of the U.S. military, it has been neither necessary nor desired in other successful militaries. In the same vein, U.S. forces seek a technological edge—even at the expense of much greater training and maintenance requirements. A typical example was the selection of the G222 transport aircraft for the Afghan air force. While this aircraft met a definite Afghan need for in-theater airlift, its complexity was simply more than

the Afghans could manage. As a result, despite a purchase price of \$486 million for 20 aircraft, all eventually were sold for scrap for \$32,000 total.<sup>153</sup>

An integral and perhaps the most important part of any plan to build another nation's security forces are command relationships. In both theaters, responsibility and command relationships for the vital mission of host-nation security forces started as ad hoc arrangements. In both theaters, the early frequent changes in host-nation civilian governments inevitably led to changes in the host-nation personnel responsible for security. In Afghanistan, constantly changing relationships between the national commanders and ambassadors for coalition members, NATO command, and U.S. command caused confusion and delays.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan, coalition trainers showed remarkable creativity and tenacity in trying to build armed forces in the image of the United States. However, trying to impose a merit-based, technologically savvy, equipment-intensive approach onto societies where relationships and social standing have a heavy bearing on organizational behavior proved a bridge too far.

One of the biggest shortcomings of the MOI and police training programs was the imbalance of resources between police and other elements necessary for a legal system. Police are only one piece of the rule of law. Without effective courts, court administrators, and prison systems, police operations have little effect. In both nations, U.S., coalition, and host-nation security personnel frequently expressed frustration over the fact that those they arrested were often released in a matter of hours. While these releases were at times legitimate, they were often tied to corruption or incompetence in the rest of the legal system. If there is not an effective method for trying and imprisoning violators, then the Western concept of policing simply will not work.

Both police training programs were further hampered by the confusing U.S. legal authorities concerning training police overseas. In an effort to prevent perceived abuses such as torture and extrajudicial executions by U.S.-trained police in the 1950s through the 1970s, Congress passed laws restricting how U.S. support could be provided to overseas police. Given the continuing need for police training globally, Congress included a long list of exceptions to permit subsequent police training to be funded. In the intervening decades, executive branch officials have had to be creative to work around those restrictions in Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Yet no matter how creative the work-

around, the result was less than ideal. These restrictive laws still exist and will be the starting point for any future police training program. To date, they have prevented the United States from developing a coherent international police assistance program and instead force ad hoc programs to be developed each time the need arises.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan, we found ourselves fighting a well-equipped, aggressive insurgency. Yet we initially built police forces appropriate for community policing in an essentially pacified area. In both nations, there were locations where such police were appropriate, but for the most part we failed to match police training, equipment, and structure to the tactical situation they faced. In fact, we consistently sent police to stations in contested or insurgent-controlled areas that infantry forces could not hold. The inevitable result was that police suffered much higher casualty rates than either indigenous or foreign military forces. It is essential that appropriate security conditions are established *before* assigning community police. If the situation is too dangerous for police to operate effectively, security must be provided by military or at least paramilitary police units until security conditions improve.

***Insight 6: Develop Effective, Accurate, and Appropriate Metrics to Inform Senior Decisionmakers***

U.S. military culture combines two factors that reinforce each other and negatively affect metrics programs. First, the Services enforce short tours. Almost all after action reports from Vietnam highlighted the short tour as a major deficiency. Many noted that “the U.S. didn’t have 10 years of experience in Vietnam. It has one year’s experience ten times.” In Iraq and Afghanistan, 1 year was considered a long tour, with many units spending only 6 months in country and individual staff officers on tours as short as 3 months. Thus, planners should assume the Services will not impose long tours in future conflicts.

Short tours reinforce the second issue, which is optimistic reporting. British ambassador Sherard Cowper-Coles noted, “the military system of six-month combat tours seemed intentionally designed to compel officials to produce overly positive assessments. The pattern was always the same. At the beginning of each tour, the newly arrived commander would declare the situation grave. He would then implement a new short-term plan, which he would declare a success.”<sup>154</sup>

To be fair, the short tours prevented a commander from gaining a deep understanding of his area of operations. Thus, it was natural that he would be uncertain at the beginning of a tour but gain confidence as his relatively superficial understanding of the situation increased. And of course, the vast majority of successful military commanders are optimists by nature. Yet another element of military culture reinforced the normal optimism of a successful officer: the fitness report as commander in combat would be one of the most important of an officer's career and would be influenced heavily by his own reporting of success or failure in his area. Thus, institutional approaches drove commanders to overly optimistic reporting.

Despite these contradictions, metrics were considered central to the U.S. command's understanding of the fight in both theaters. The United States dedicated a great deal of effort to developing an effective set of metrics to allow commanders to understand the situation on the ground and track changes. Yet as Lieutenant General Daniel Bolger, USA (Ret.), notes, "The problem with numbers in Afghanistan related to the overall difficulty of combat reporting. All the computers and spreadsheets on earth couldn't change that basic old rule: garbage in, garbage out."<sup>155</sup>

The lack of language skills, short tours, enforced optimism, and sheer complexity of the political, social, and economic environment made accurate measurement nearly impossible. Bolger's observation is strongly supported by Ben Connable's deeply researched *Embracing the Fog of War: Assessment and Metrics in Counterinsurgency*, which revealed the fatal flaws in the system ISAF used to track progress in the campaign and the ANSF.<sup>156</sup> This problem is not new. Similar reports concerning the Hamlet Evaluation System in Vietnam questioned the reliability of the data collected there. The optimistic reporting was partially responsible for General William Westmoreland's 1967 declaration that there was "light at the end of the tunnel," just before the Tet Offensive exploded across Vietnam.<sup>157</sup>

The durability of this problem is reflected by the wide discrepancy between the generally optimistic reports from the Pentagon and the often pessimistic reports from GAO, CRS, and other independent organizations. Yet the fact remains that metrics have been a major factor in political and military decisions in wars such as these. It is critical that an effective method for determining, reporting, and interpreting metrics be developed. As always, the

most difficult metrics will be those involving intangibles such as quality of the force. In both theaters, the number of trained and fielded forces was closely monitored. In both, the commanders struggled with evaluating the quality of the forces and the quality of the interior and defense ministries.

## Conclusion

No serious plans for indigenous forces had been prepared for either Afghanistan or Iraq. The mission to create those forces was assigned to ad hoc organizations that, despite herculean efforts, were constantly behind the power curve. For the first few years, each plan was overcome by events before it was even approved and resourced. Even when the emphasis shifted to indigenous forces, the training commands and Embedded Training Teams remained well understrength. Furthermore, the personnel system never really adjusted to either place people with the right backgrounds into the commands or to provide time to assemble, properly train, and then deploy the Embedded Training Teams as units.

The primary highlight of the entire training effort was the ingenuity, adaptability, courage, and persistence of the personnel assigned. Working against incredible handicaps, not the least of which was trying to create forces that mirror-imaged those of the West, they succeeded in raising, training, equipping, and deploying major security forces. The relative success or failure of those forces rests with the political leadership of the host nations and the continued provision of resources for those forces to operate according to the organization and training they received.

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