THE MISSING LINK

CIVIL-MILITARY ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVENESS IN COMPLEX IRREGULAR WARFARE

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ABSTRACT

Traditional analyses of operational effectiveness and combat power often lack consideration of civil-military aspects. However, in operations with complex and ambitious political aims, such as democratization, economic development and respect for human rights, the co-ordination of military, diplomatic and economic means is essential. These are issues that have increasingly become obvious since the end of the Cold War, and even more so during the operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq in the new millennium.

The aim of the thesis is to increase the understanding of how different patterns of civil-military relations affect the way operations are conducted. In general terms the impact is twofold: a *direct impact* by providing the highest levels in the chain of command – the level where strategic aims are set and operational plans made, and an *indirect impact* by being the arena in which decisions regarding size, culture, equipment and doctrine of the armed forces are made. Without properly functioning civil-military relations, structurally as well as culturally, effectiveness in complex irregular warfare is therefore unlikely. More specifically, the thesis compares the divided, radical civil-military approach, as promoted by Samuel Huntington and his followers, and the integrated, pragmatic approach, as advocated by the Janowitzean, sociological school. In practical terms, this involves a comparative study of US and British patterns of civil-military relations, their strategic cultures, as well as their operations in Iraq.

The principal argument of the thesis is that the civil-military interface should ideally be integrated – within the interagency arena as well as within the defence ministry. Such integration has the potential to provide joint civil-military planning and comprehensive approaches to operations. It also creates mutual trust and understanding amongst officers and civil servants from different departments, agencies and units, and thereby, a co-operative interagency culture. For the civil-military interface to function effectively within the chain of command during operations, a co-operative culture of trust is essential. Finally, integrated civil-military structures are likely to provide a more balanced view of the functional imperative of the armed forces. The results are armed forces fit for whatever purpose the political leadership decides for them – such as complex irregular warfare.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

*Despite a massive effort, stability in Iraq remains elusive and the situation
is deteriorating. The Iraqi government cannot now govern, sustain, and
defend itself without the support of the United States…The ability of the
United States to shape outcomes is diminishing. Time is running out.*

- The Iraq Study Group, December 2006.[1]

The conclusion of the Iraq Study Group Report was published almost four years after
the invasion of Iraq. Despite the enormous efforts by the US and her main coalition
partner, the UK, the campaign in Iraq has constituted nothing less than a failure. The
campaign in Iraq is by no means an exception. The post-Cold War era has presented
the world's remaining great powers with a large number of internal and regional
conflicts, failing states, massive human rights violations, and global terrorism. The
results of the responses to these challenges have been mixed at best, and it is clear that
the failures in Somalia and Rwanda have made the more powerful and lasting
impressions. In the new millennium, the trend towards interventions in complex
emergencies has continued, and the security environment of the post-Cold War and
post-9/11 context makes complex irregular warfare, as currently witnessed in
Afghanistan and Iraq, the most likely and the most important military tasks. Therefore,
understanding why the intervening powers have operated in the way they have, and
why they have struggled to adjust to the changing strategic context, is of great
importance.

While a large number of factors can be mustered to explain the conduct and
effectiveness of the armed forces in military operations – the political nature of the
state, strategic doctrine, military culture and history, the nature of the enemy,
geography, training and equipment – this thesis studies the effect of the often
overlooked factor of civil-military relations. It should be noted that all factors in

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[1] James A. Baker, III, and Lee H. Hamilton, 'The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward – A New
Approach', United States Institute of Peace, 9 December 2006, p. 27.

determining the conduct of military operations are part of an intricate web of causality, working on different levels of overlapping causal chains. Interestingly, as this thesis argues, the patterns of civil-military relations in a state, although not the most obvious causal variable when explaining operational conduct, are more or less related to the majority of the factors mentioned above. Operating at an overarching level in the causal chain, this single variable therefore has the potential to relate and co-ordinate a large number of factors into a more comprehensive narrative, explaining effectiveness in complex operations. Thus, understanding the patterns of civil-military relations in states significantly helps increase the understanding of what causes military organizations to operate the way they do. Coupled with the nature of contemporary conflict, complex irregular warfare as well as strategic and tactical lessons learned from such warfare, the civil-military variable also helps explain the reasons why seemingly superior Western military organizations have struggled and even lost against guerrilla type asymmetric opponents. Problems in the civil-military interface have in past operations been obvious in the limited political understanding of how to use the military tool in operations short of war, as well as the limited military understanding of how to operate in order to achieve complex political aims rather than decisive victory. It has also been evident in the lack of civil-military planning and co-ordination of operations. Understanding and improving civil-military relations in the context of complex irregular warfare are therefore of great importance.

The number of studies on civil-military relations in different countries, especially the US, is vast. The most important contributions to this literature remain Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State*, Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier*, to which one can add, more recently, Peter Feaver's *Armed Servants*.[2] Of course, the studies of strategy and operational conduct in Iraq from 2003 and other complex operations, such as Vietnam, Malaya, Kosovo and Bosnia, are equally plentiful. The contribution of this thesis lies in the marriage of these two fields of enquiry. By explaining operational conduct using the patterns of civil-military relations as the explanatory variable, this thesis increases the understanding of both fields. The field of civil-military relations has a weakness in the analytical

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[2] Samuel Huntington*, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957); Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (NY: The Free Press, 1960); Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003).

overemphasis on civilian democratic control at the expense of military effectiveness.[3] Moreover, the direct impact of different patterns of civil-military relations during operations has not been explored. This is a serious gap in the literature on civil-military relations as well as in the field of strategy. Until important recent studies that have sought to explain why the seemingly more powerful actors sometimes lose against weaker enemies, the literature on strategy and military effectiveness has traditionally overemphasized the military and physical factors.[4] Using the factor of civil-military relations contributes to the existing literature by showing how the different factors used to explain military effectiveness are connected.

The aim of this thesis is therefore to increase the understanding of the civil-military dimension of operational conduct in the context of complex irregular warfare. The thesis seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. How do the patterns of civil-military relations affect the conduct of operations in the context of complex irregular warfare?
2. How could operational effectiveness be improved by changing the patterns of civil-military relations?

To address these research questions, the thesis involves an analysis in three parts. First, a review of the contemporary strategic context, existing theories of civil-military relations as well as the concepts of mission command, trust, and organizational culture, concluding with the construction of a theoretical framework for analysis of how civil-military relations affect the conduct of operations in complex irregular warfare. This framework is thereafter tested and refined through process tracing, defined as a method for identifying and testing causal mechanisms.[5] Beyond the general discussion regarding causality, the empirical analyses also seek to explain how specific patterns of civil-military relations affect operational conduct and effectiveness. To achieve that, the main section of the thesis involves the analyses of

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[3] Suzanne C. Nielsen, 'Civil-Military Relations Theory and Military Effectiveness', *Public Administration and Management*, 10:2 (2005), pp. 61-84
[4] See, for example, Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004); and Risa A. Brooks, 'Making Military Might: Why Do States Fail and Succeed?', *International Security*, 28:2 (Fall 2003), p. 151.
[5] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, 'Process Tracing in Case Study Research', paper presented at the MacArthur Foundation Workshop on Case Study Methods, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (BCSIA), Harvard University, 17–19 October 1997. <http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/bennetta/PROTCG.htm>

two cases: the United States and the United Kingdom. Each case involves the analyses of the patterns of civil-military relations, the way of war, as well as the conduct and effectiveness of operations in Iraq from 2003. The two cases are analysed separately, but in order to highlight the findings of the case studies, and to evaluate the assumptions of the theoretical framework, the thesis also includes a comparative analysis which compares and contrasts the findings of the cases.

The theoretical framework for the analysis argues that the organization of the civil-military interface affects the conduct of operations in two important ways: *directly*, by providing the highest levels in the chain of command – the level where strategic aims are set and operational plans made, and *indirectly* by being the arena in which decisions regarding size, culture, equipment and doctrine of the armed forces are made. Without properly functioning civil-military relations, structurally as well as culturally, effectiveness in complex irregular warfare is unlikely.

The case studies involve two different patterns of civil-military relations. First, the divided approach as advocated by Samuel Huntington is exemplified by the US case and involves limited interagency co-operation, a divided civil-military interface and military ownership of the functional imperative. Second, the integrated approach of Morris Janowitz, as exemplified by the British case, involves extensive interagency co-operation and civil-military integration, as well as civilian ownership of the functional imperative of the armed forces.

The main argument of the thesis is that, within the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare, the integrated approach to civil-military relations is more likely to produce armed forces fit for the purpose of complex irregular warfare, and, consequently, effective conduct during operations. There are two main reasons why integrated civil-military structures at the strategic level provide better results in complex PSOs. First, the indirect impact means that integrated structures provide more accurate and up-to-date interpretations and adjustment to the functional imperative of the armed forces. This means that the instruments of national power, not least the military, are better suited to the contemporary strategic context. Second, the direct impact of integrated structures is that they provide more inclusive command and control structures at the strategic level, which means that all relevant actors in complex operations are co-ordinated through integrated planning and execution of operations – providing what the British call the comprehensive approach.

The study of American and British operational conduct in complex irregular warfare is intrinsically interesting as the two countries, for different reasons, are likely to participate in, and lead such operations in the future. The US has a particular role as the sole remaining military superpower and will in that role, as well as to protect its own interests and security, continue to be engaged in complex irregular warfare. The UK has a unique experience and capability of complex operations, including counter-insurgency. That experience, in combination with a large international presence, makes them likely to continue to engage in and lead operations of that kind, not least within the EU and/or NATO frameworks.

The research design, involving two cases and a comparative analysis, creates the possibility to contrast and compare different structures and methods of command and their effectiveness in contexts that have important similarities and differences. Again, the US and the UK are of great interest. Despite many relative similarities in culture and background, including extensive experience in both conventional large-scale warfare and counter-insurgency operations, the two countries operate very differently. They also have very different patterns of civil-military relations. Essentially, the cases were chosen based on their relevance to the theory of the thesis. They contain similarities and contrasts that make them helpful in understanding the causal relationship of the thesis.[6]

The coalition's operations in Iraq have been chosen as the empirical testing ground of the thesis because it represents the latest and most interesting example of major powers conducting complex irregular warfare against an asymmetric enemy. It also represents the complex far-reaching political aims often sought in contemporary operations, as well as the characteristics of a truly modern insurgency. Although a number of historical counter-insurgency campaigns are interesting in terms of reference for this thesis, they would not have provided the same contextual accuracy concerning contemporary irregular warfare. The case of Iraq also allows for a comparative analysis of US and British operational conduct within the same context, allowing for a number of different contextual variables to be isolated. It should, nevertheless, be emphasized from the beginning that, although US and British troops were, and are, operating within Iraq at the same time, the two armed forces actually operated within very different contexts. The Shia-dominated South where the British

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[6] Martin Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide: For Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1998), pp. 33–34.

troops have operated is generally considered easier and less violent than the Sunni-dominated areas of the country where US troops are mainly operating. This problematic aspect of the empirical study is obviously further discussed in each of the case studies, as well as in the comparative chapter.

The choice of Iraq as the empirical testing ground has also presented a challenge regarding the collection of data. Primary sources from the conflict consist of lessons learned documents, newspaper coverage of events, and some interviews with returning officers. No research trip to Iraq has been made, and the author has not had access to classified documents. Secondary sources are plentiful, but have not yet sustained any form of collective knowledge. The literature is often argumentative and political in nature, meaning that a level of caution has been required in their interpretation. The nature of the research questions in this thesis means that data have been pulled from many different sources in all parts of the thesis. The examination of patterns of civil-military relations as well as military culture and approaches to complex irregular warfare has involved the experience and opinions of military officers, politicians and civil servants, observations of working methods and structures, official documents, newspaper articles, and secondary academic literature. The methods employed to gather the data have therefore been varied. Beyond the analysis of official documents like doctrines, unclassified operation directives, orders, and press releases, interviews have provided an important source of data. However, the originality and main contribution of this thesis lie in the theoretical perspective and interpretation of the material, rather than the empirical data itself.

Outline

The thesis is constructed in four parts. The first part serves to set the scene and to construct a theoretical framework for analysis. Following the introductory chapter, Chapter Two analyses the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare, and the problem of military effectiveness within this context. Chapter Three deals with the civil-military dimension of operational conduct by looking at the traditional theories of civil-military relations, as well as the concepts of mission command, trust, and organizational culture. This review is concluded with the formulation of the theoretical framework to be utilized and refined within this scope of the thesis. This is achieved through the marriage of the theoretical fields of civil-military relations, command and control, and organizational culture.

Part II of the thesis involves the case study of the United States. Chapter Four looks at the history, culture and structure of civil-military relations in the US. This chapter thereby defines the independent variable of the patterns of civil-military relations in the US case. Chapter Five examines the US way of war as well as its approach to complex irregular warfare. The aim of this chapter is to determine how the functional imperative is interpreted and if the US way of war is well adjusted to the contemporary strategic context. This involves the study of doctrinal content as well as reference to past operational experience. The final chapter in the US case study is an examination of its operations in Iraq. This analysis focuses on the planning process, the translation of political aims into military activity and the tactical behaviour of US troops. Have US troops conducted their operations in accordance with the US way of war? Have the operations been effective in relation to what is considered best practice in complex irregular warfare? Part III mirrors the US case study, but covers the British case in three chapters. Finally, part IV of the thesis puts the data from the two cases together and provides a comparative analysis of the cases. The purpose of the comparative study is to evaluate the theoretical framework, and to draw conclusions regarding the impact of the different patterns of civil-military relations analysed in the thesis. This is achieved by comparing and contrasting the observations and conclusion of the study in relation to theory. Finally, Chapter Ten concludes the thesis.

CHAPTER 1

MILITARY CONDUCT AND EFFECTIVENESS IN A CHANGING STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Long gone is the hostile but stable and easily comprehensible Cold War environment. The conflicts of the new millennium seem ever more bewildering, complex and asymmetric. Military conduct and competence can, of course, only be assessed with reference to the context in which it is applied, and this section therefore seeks to outline a number of salient features of contemporary and future operations in a changing strategic context. The literature review on the strategic context is followed by an analysis of a number of principles of 'best practice' within this context – methods, techniques and behaviour generally held to be more effective for certain outcomes. In other words, this chapter outlines what the current literature sees as the types of operations military organizations are likely to find themselves in, as well as how to effectively plan and execute them. The analysis mainly involves a review of the existing literature on the subject, but doctrine publications and interviews complement the section on principles of best practice in the contemporary strategic context.

The findings of this chapter also contribute to the construction of a framework for analysis of the empirical sections. First, they establish what conflicts are of importance today and in the future – thereby determining what cases are relevant and should be used in the study. Second, they provide a number of important themes to be studied in the empirical sections. In other words, the operational conduct of the US and British armed forces in Iraq is analysed in relation to what this chapter describes as best practice in contemporary operations.

Warfare is Changing

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been an intense scholarly debate regarding the nature of future war. The last decade and a half has certainly seen the development of a plethora of literature on the changing nature of warfare. Much of the literature announces either the coming of 'New War', the proclamation of a generational shift in warfare, or declares the end of traditional large-scale warfare. Clearly, the fall of the Berlin Wall challenged the traditional strategic focus on large-scale interstate warfare. The challenge involved a shift of focus from great power conflict to civil wars and the management of small-scale conflicts. This section serves to review this literature in order to set the scene for the analysis of this thesis.

While the scope of suggested future war scenarios is wide-ranging, the debate can be summarized into a number of threads, and points of tension. The categories of this section are informed by the work of Colin Gray who has provided a comprehensive study of the debate on future warfare.[7] The scope of this thesis, however, requires a more limited analysis of the debate on contemporary and future war, and involves four themes that are relevant to this thesis. The aim of the study is to review the more salient debates within the field in order to establish a number of common threads which provide a comprehensive image of the contemporary strategic context, as well as of the types of operations armed forces will find themselves involved in. The debates which serve to form that image involve:

1. the demise of large-scale conventional warfare;
2. New War and 4th generation warfare;
3. a revolution in military affairs (RMA);
4. a revolution in strategic affairs.

The Demise of Large-Scale Conventional Warfare

The first strand discussed in this section is a recurrent theme in much of the contemporary writing on strategy – the demise of large-scale conventional warfare.[8] 'War no longer exists' is the controversial opening statement of General Sir Rupert

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[7] Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare* (London: Phoenix, 2005), pp. 131–167.
[8] For this view see John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Knopf, 1993); Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: Free Press, 1991); Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2005).

Smith's seminal work *The Utility of Force*. What Smith means by this is that traditional large-scale warfare has been replaced by irregular forms of confrontations, or what he calls 'war amongst the people'. In the words of Smith: 'war, as cognitively known to most non-combatants, war as a battle in a field between men and machinery, war as a massive deciding event in a dispute in international affairs: such wars no longer exist'.[9] According to Smith, this paradigm shift has taken place over a long period of time, but began in earnest in 1945 with the introduction of nuclear weapons. However, it was the end of the Cold War that 'unmasked the new paradigm that had long been lurking'. Smith, nevertheless, notes that even after the end of the Cold War the paradigm shift has often not been comprehended as such, thereby leading to the continued development of forces within the old paradigm.[10]

Regarding this debate, Lawrence Freedman makes the sobering argument that while it is impossible to announce the end of major warfare, and the corresponding need to continue preparing for it, it remains clear that 'for the moment, the most perplexing problems of security policy surround irregular rather than regular war'.[11] Christopher Dandeker and James Gow similarly argued in 2000 that the most likely, if not also the most important, military operations in the near future will be different forms of peace operations.[12] The view that major warfare cannot be completely disregarded, but that different forms of conflict are the more important in the near future, is supported by this thesis. The following strands of the literature on future military operations therefore focus on what the more immediately relevant operations other than conventional warfare may look like.

New Wars and 4th Generation Warfare

General Smith is hardly the first one to acknowledge changes in the nature of warfare. The second strand of the debate on future warfare therefore deals with what has become known as 'New War', or fourth generation warfare (4GW). The basic argument within this line of thinking is that future war will be shaped by technology, as well as by post-modern changes in politics, culture and society – meaning the process of economic and political globalization and the erosion of the sovereignty of

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[9] Smith, *The Utility of Force,* p. 1.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Lawrence Freedman, 'The Transformation of Strategic Affairs', Adelphi Paper, No. 379 (March 2006), p. 7.
[12] Christopher Dandeker and James Gow, 'Military Culture and Strategic Peacekeeping', in Erwin A. Schmidl (ed.), *Peace Operations Between War and Peace* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 58.

nation states. Perhaps the earliest proponent of New War is Martin van Creveld who, in his 1991 book *The Transformation of War,* argues that large-scale conventional war is in decline, but that war itself is very much alive and about to enter a new epoch. The new epoch is predicted to involve extensive small-scale wars that will cause the existing Clausewitzian distinctions between government, armed forces, and people to break down. Instead of armies, there will be police-like security forces on one side and gangsters and warlords on the other.[13]

The concept of 'New War' was introduced by Mary Kaldor in her influential book, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. The concept is an attempt to capture the features of post-Cold War conflicts, as a new sort of organized violence, described as a mixture of war, organized crime and massive violations of human rights. The conflicts that involve several factions of fighters, such as regular troops, peacekeepers, warlords and gangs of criminals, are also more often intrastate than interstate in their nature.[14] Rupert Smith argues that in the contemporary and future war of Western states the aims of military operations are changing from pursuing concrete objectives and victory to establishing certain conditions from which political outcomes can be decided. This often means long, even unending, operations fighting guerrilla type warfare, which, in turn, means that fighting is conducted to preserve the force for a long period of time. To preserve materiel and personnel, as well as to maintain political support, operations are conducted without making sacrifices and incurring losses.[15]

As already noted, Smith also claims that fighting takes place amongst the people; it is not fought on a particular battlefield between armies representing states, but in the midst of the civilian population, involving non-state actors and irregular troops as well as traditional military organizations, fighting with the support of the people as the aim of operations, with the people as targets of both military and civilian operations. These conflicts most often involve non-state actors, such as multinational coalitions, international organizations like the UN or the EU, irregular troops, guerrillas, and terrorists. In short, conflict often involves sub- and supra-state actors rather than states.[16]

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[13] van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*.
[14] Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 7f.
[15] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 269
[16] Ibid., pp. 267–305.

Another version of future war comes from a number of thinkers within the US Marine Corps and is labelled Fourth Generation Warfare.[17] In sum, the argument is that warfare has gone through a number of generational shifts caused by changes in the societal, political, and economic structures of the time. The first generation reflected the tactics of the line and the column. Mass manpower was the main imperative and it was based on both technology in the development of the smooth bore musket, and the societal changes of the French Revolution. The second generation evolved through weapon improvements – especially breech-loaded rifles, machine guns, and artillery – during the industrial revolution, and therefore relied on massed firepower. The third generation saw the development of manoeuvre warfare as a tactical and operational innovation supported by motorized infantry, tanks, and radio communications. Finally, the fourth generation of warfare, in the words of Thomas Hammes,

> uses all available networks – political, economic, social, and military – to convince the enemy's political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is an evolved form of insurgency. Still rooted in the fundamental precept that superior political will, when properly employed, can defeat greater economic and military power, 4GW makes use of society's networks to carry on its fight. Unlike previous generations of warfare, it does not attempt to win by defeating the enemy's military forces. Instead, via the networks, it directly attacks the minds of enemy decision makers to destroy the enemy's political will. Fourth-generation wars are lengthy – measured in decades rather than in months or years.[18]

An important contribution to the literature on New War has recently been made by Martin Shaw who argues that all armed actors must reckon with comprehensive surveillance by global state institutions, law, markets, media, and civil society. In this context of global surveillance, conflicts are fought under the critical gaze not only of the local population, and the people in intervening nations, but of the world as a whole. Such surveillance means that some tactics of the past are not politically acceptable in today's context where conveying the right message and winning hearts and minds of the local and the global populations are key features. Casualties must be minimized, laws adhered to, and media managed. In particular, Western governments

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[17] The concept was developed in William S. Lind et al., 'The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation', *Marine Corps Gazette*, (October 1989), pp. 22–26.

[18] Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), pp. 1–2.

must pay constant attention to, and obviously also play by the rules of global surveillance, as these states generally make and enforce the rules.[19]

However, a number of scholars have convincingly argued that the announcement of New War, or a generational shift in the nature of war, is historically inaccurate and academically unfortunate. Paul Hirst contends that '[m]ost of Kaldor's new wars involve old problems, stemming from the colonial era, or from peace treaties after the First World War, or from the Cold War'. He emphasizes that most features of New War were abundantly present long before the end of the Cold War.[20] A similar assertion is made by Colin Gray regarding fourth generation warfare: '[T]here is no avoiding the judgement that 4GW is a rediscovery of the obvious and the familiar', and that 'on close examination the identification of four generations of war to date, though in the main accurate, is a gross over-simplification of historical reality'.[21] Mats Berdal also questions the novelty of New War. He argues that civil wars, involving warlords who operate for personal gain, have been common during previous eras, although the focus of analysts and media on these conflicts since the end of the Cold War has certainly drawn more attention to them. Berdal maintains that the idea of a 'new' era of warfare is unfortunate for analytical reasons, as it often excludes the insight and experience offered by historical experience and comparison.[22] Berdal's argument is important as it explains why there is a risk in announcing the new. If analysts focus too much on the novelty of contemporary and future operations, there is a risk that past experience and lessons learned are forgotten.

Yet, the critique against New War and 4GW is more about the appropriateness of the labels than about the contents of theory. Beyond the labels, there is some consensus regarding the features of New War and fourth generation warfare, as described by van Creveld, Kaldor, Münkler, Lind, Hammes and Smith. These theories are therefore important and highly relevant contributions in the analytical shift from large-scale interstate warfare to small, asymmetric and complex wars.

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[19] Martin Shaw, *The New Western Way of War: Risk Transfer War and its Crisis in Iraq* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), p. 75; The difficult choices faced by Western states in an era of increasing humanism, and humanity in warfare is also described by Christopher Coker in *Humane Warfare*, (London: Routledge, 2001).
[20] Paul Hirst, *War and Power in the 21st Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 83.
[21] Gray, *Another Bloody Century*, pp. 142 and 144.
[22] Mats Berdal, 'How "New" Are "New Wars"? Global Economic Changes and the Study of Civil War', *Global Governance*, 9:4 (October-December 2003), p. 493.

A Revolution in Military Affairs?

An ongoing debate regarding the existence and nature of a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) has been raging since the mid-1990s. An RMA, according to Keaney and Cohen, is created by a combination of technological breakthrough, institutional adaptation, and warfighting innovation.[23] An RMA is, thereby, a way of coming to terms with fundamental changes in the social, political and military spheres, and they are therefore often connected to periods of the more comprehensive military revolutions.[24] An influential idea within the military establishment is that the remarkable development in information and communication technologies (ICTs) is causing the latest, ongoing RMA. This line of thinking holds that the evolution of military and civilian technology has intensified to the extent that it causes a breakpoint in history, best described as an RMA. Much emphasis is placed on Information Technology, and the first Gulf War is supposed to have provided the first example of the integration of control, communications, reconnaissance, electronic combat and conventional fires into a single whole – creating a glimpse of the future network-based 'system of systems'.[25] Such a system would make possible a so-called 'dominant battlespace knowledge', meaning total control over the events taking place on the battlefield, and the combination of 'sensors, deciders and shooters' in long-range, precision guided and intelligent munitions.[26]

There is no denying the remarkable impact of the allied coalition's superior technology in the historically unprecedented one-sidedness of the first Gulf War. However, the subsequent proclamation of a Revolution in Military Affairs nevertheless quickly became a contested idea. Opposing the RMA enthusiasts, Williamson Murray argues from a historical perspective that technology has played only a small part in previous military revolutions, and that the only purely technological revolution was that of the nuclear bomb.[27] Keaney and Cohen add that revolutionary changes require a maturation of new military technologies, including

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[23] Thomas A. Keaney and Eliot A. Cohen, *Gulf War Air Power Survey Summary Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), pp. 235–251.

[24] Williamson Murray, 'Thinking about Revolutions in Warfare', *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 16 (1997), p. 73.

[25] Thomas A. Keaney and Eliot A. Cohen, *Revolution in Warfare? Air Power in the Persian Gulf* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), p. 199.

[26] Colin S. Gray, 'The Revolution in Military Affairs', in Brian Bond and Melvin Mungo (eds.), *The Nature of Future Conflict: Implications for Force Development* (Camberley, Surrey: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute, 1998), p. 58.

[27] Murray, 'Thinking about Revolutions', p. 70.

their integration into new military systems, the adoption of appropriate operational concepts, and finally, the necessary organizational adjustments.[28] The technology of the current RMA should, in other words, at least be accompanied by organizational, operational, and perhaps political changes in order to deserve the revolutionary label.

Thomas McCabe also raises the question of the utility of the RMA technologies, like laser guided missiles and satellite surveillance, in situations like Haiti, Somalia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.[29] The limited intended impact of RMA technology, in terms of improving combat power and effectiveness in the contemporary context, is currently seen in the war on terror, and in other contemporary conflicts involving small non-state actors with unconventional methods of warfare.

Revolution in Strategic Affairs

The changes in the strategic context have led Lawrence Freedman to argue that instead of a Revolution in *Military* Affairs, the more important changes take place within what he calls a Revolution in *Strategic* Affairs. The essence of this revolution, and of contemporary warfare, is asymmetry. The collapse of the Warsaw Pact, in combination with remarkable technological developments, has created a capability gap between the United States and all her potential enemies that is so overwhelming that all conflicts by definition are asymmetric.[30] Although asymmetries are usually defined in terms of size, strategies, and weaponry, the asymmetry that most affects the nature of the conflict is that of *will* and *means*. In most smaller conflicts, one side, the great power, may have great means but often limited will because it is engaged in far away conflicts that do not threaten its homeland. This is contrasted with the other side, the local power or perhaps insurgency, in whose backyard the conflict occurs and which has limited means but is perceived to have a great will. Asymmetric warfare therefore means that the enemy adjusts itself to asymmetries by employing unconventional strategies like insurgencies or terrorist attacks.

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[28] Keaney and Cohen*, Revolution in Warfare?*, pp. 200–201.
[29] Thomas R. McCabe, 'The Counterrevolution in Military Affairs', *Air & Space Power Chronicles*, (1999), accessed 20/11/02, <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/cc/McCabe2.html>, Section 2.
[30] Lawrence Freedman, 'A Revolution in Strategic Affairs', Adelphi Paper No. 319 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for IISS, 1998) p. 34.

Conclusion: Complex Irregular Warfare

The literature review in this section has revealed a number of strands in the debate regarding contemporary and future warfare. Some of these strands are clearly competing, but, for the most part, there are a number of aspects of future warfare that reoccur in different forms and concepts.

Much of the debate regarding future warfare involves creating a suitable label for contemporary types of conflict. The critique of New War or 4GW is not so much about the content of the arguments, but more about the appropriateness of the label 'new' or the historical accuracy of the different generations of warfare. Frank Hoffman, nevertheless, argues that whatever form future warfare takes, it will not involve enemies 'choosing discrete options among conventional, irregular, catastrophic, or disruptive strategies'. Instead, a more likely scenario is the blurring of warfare categories. Hoffman calls it hybrid warfare, which includes any adversary capabilities used in custom-designed strategies and tactics to frustrate and impede Western efforts.[31] Unnecessary categorisation and labelling of conflicts may therefore be counterproductive in the understanding of them, and even more importantly, in the practical application of force in contemporary and future operations. To provide some clarity and consistency for the reader, this thesis uses the concept of *complex irregular warfare* as introduced by the International Institute for Strategic Affairs, and also used by Frank Hoffman to describe the hybrid form of war.[32]

In this thesis, complex irregular warfare functions as an umbrella concept for the type of operations discussed above and in which Western armed forces are most likely to find themselves involved in the near future. The concept not only includes many of the features of future war discussed above, but also the traditional concepts referring to different forms of operations other than war: peace support operations, stability humanitarian interventions, small wars and low-intensity conflicts. The adjective *complex* refers to a number of different things: the plethora of different actors involved (civilian and military, state and non-state); the asymmetry of strategies and aims; the information environment in which these conflicts take place; as well as the nature of combat in cities against guerrilla groups. Meanwhile, the second adjective *irregular* creates an unfortunate contradiction in terms, as this thesis simultaneously

[31] Frank G. Hoffman, 'Complex Irregular Warfare: The Next Revolution in Military Affairs', *Orbis*, (Summer 2006), p. 398.
[32] IISS, 'Complex Irregular Warfare', in *The Military Balance 2005–2006* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 411–420; and ibid.

argues that this type of warfare is 'the regular' of the future. However, the term serves to differentiate these types of operations from conventional large-scale warfare between nation states. It also resonates well with the current strategic literature. The concept of complex irregular warfare, as applied within this thesis, captures the essential features of contemporary conflict without historically imprecise connotations or generational shifts.

In sum, complex irregular warfare takes place amongst the people and will involve both sub-state and supra-state actors in a struggle for legitimacy and far-reaching political changes. For the most part, it involves low-intensity, counter-insurgency type operations between the regular armed forces of the West and loosely formed networks of insurgents employing asymmetric tactics. Complex irregular operations are drawn out processes, often measured in decades rather than in months and years, involving a multitude of different actors, fighting for the hearts and minds of the local as well as the global population, whose perceptions of the conflict often determine the outcome.

2.2 Effectiveness and Best Practice in Complex Irregular Warfare

The traits of contemporary and future military operations, as described in the previous section, create substantive new challenges for military organizations as well as the defence establishment as a whole, including the civil-military interface at the strategic level. Military organizations have interpreted and responded to the challenges in various ways and with different levels of adaptation.

Rupert Smith argues that the features of contemporary and future wars mean that the strategies and tactics of traditional industrial warfare are obsolete. Applying traditional methods to new conflicts leads to protracted conflicts and failure to achieve the political aims.[33] By reviewing the scholarly literature, analysing doctrine publications, as well as discussing recent trends in strategic thinking, this section therefore seeks to establish a list of what is considered best practice in complex irregular warfare. The review is conducted at two levels – the strategic and the tactical – thereby including both the planning and execution of operations. The purpose of this literature review is not to construct a complete list of best practice principles, but to establish a number of factors which link different patterns of civil-military relations to

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[33] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, pp. 306–307.

military effectiveness, and that are relevant to analyse in the case studies of this thesis. However, before embarking on the search for principles of best practice in complex operations, a general discussion regarding military effectiveness in complex irregular warfare is provided.

Military Effectiveness

What constitutes effectiveness in military organizations? This seems at first to be a simple matter. The semantic definition clearly implies that effectiveness should be related to the capability to achieve the desired outcomes of conflict – victory.[34] However, Millett, Murray and Watman argue that 'victory is not a characteristic of an organization, but rather a result of organizational activity'. Therefore, outcome alone, or the more specific 'victory', is not a useful measure of effectiveness.[35] Outcomes in contemporary operations are also not about absolutes. As already noted, Rupert Smith argues that the aims of contemporary military operations are changing from pursuing concrete objectives and victory to establishing certain conditions from which political outcomes can be decided.[36] In this context, battles field victories, or other outcomes of military operations, are often only small parts of the comprehensive operations with far-reaching political aims. It is, therefore, more useful to speak in terms of success than of victory. A debate in the UK during the summer of 2007 has highlighted a more pragmatic approach to success amongst the military leadership. The British Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Richard Dannatt, spoke of the importance to achieve success in these theatres of Afghanistan and Iraq, interestingly adding: 'however you define success'.[37] This pragmatic and flexible view of success stands in stark contrast to the traditional, absolutist view that requires victory.

Christopher Coker has reminded us that how and when wars end is also a matter of historical and cultural perspective.[38] This is even more obvious when looking at the

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[34] Bengt Abrahamsson, 'Defeating David? Effects Based Operations: Challenges to Military Organization and Professionalism', in Bengt Abrahamsson, Robert Egnell and Karl Ydén, *Effects Based Operations, Military Organization and Professionalization* (Stockholm: Swedish National Defence College, 2006), pp. 15 and 19–20.
[35] Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H. Watman, 'The Effectiveness of Military Organizations', *International Security*, 11:1 (Summer 1986), p. 37.
[36] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 269
[37] General Sir Richard Dannatt, 'Address at the RUSI Future Land Warfare Conference on the subject of "Tomorrow's Army; Today's Challenges"', 5 June 2007, accessed 02/09/07 at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/DefencePolicyAndBusiness/>.
[38] Christopher Coker, 'How Wars End ', *Millennium,* 26:3 (1997), pp. 615-629.

concept of victory. An example is the Gulf War of 1991, which, with different historical perspectives, can be seen as either a success or a failure.

Millett, Murrey and Watman argue that instead of analyzing effectiveness in terms of outcomes, a more fruitful approach is to study the processes by which armed forces convert resources into fighting power: 'A fully effective military is one that derives maximum combat power from the resources physically and politically available'.[39] This means that effectiveness should also be related to the concept of *efficiency*. This concept is about the parsimony of resources, and is, according to Don Snider and Gayle Watkins, often the more important factor in the hierarchical bureaucracies of military organizations – 'doing more with less'.[40] Bengt Abrahamsson rightly claims that while efficiency is often a precondition for effectiveness, it is certainly not sufficient. Effectiveness or goal attainment may also be achieved with little efficiency, as in the German airborne attack on Crete in 1941. While the Germans achieved the objective of defeating the British-led CREFORCE, and occupying Crete, the operation entailed severe losses and was considered a 'catastrophic victory'.[41] Another problem with outcome as the measure of effectiveness is that contemporary operations often take place over a very long period of time. Waiting until the final verdict of history will thus deprive scholars of meaningful analysis until the very end of the campaign in question.

Effectiveness is, therefore, a combination of conduct and outcome. Outcome is evaluated through the course of history, but conduct can be measured on the spot by comparing it to what is considered best practice in operations. This thesis employs the concept of effectiveness as a measure of the quality of military conduct, and acknowledges that efficiency is an important part of this analysis, especially when the final outcome of operations is not applicable, as is the case in this thesis.

Risa Brooks and Stephen Biddle separately argue that traditional theories on military capability and effectiveness have over-focused on the physical military factor: numbers of troops and the quality of equipment, while paying less attention to the more intangible factors that influence state capacity to use its material resources

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[39] Millett, Murray, and Watman, 'The Effectiveness of Military Organizations', p. 37.
[40] Don Snider and Gayle Watkins, 'Introduction', in Lloyd J. Matthews (ed.), *The Future of the Army Profession* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), p. 9.
[41] Abrahamsson, 'Defeating David?', p. 15.

effectively.[42] Biddle, therefore, asserts that the cases, where the numerically and technologically weak win battles and campaigns, suggest that traditional explanations of military capability are misleading. Similarly, Brooks notes that if the explanations for military capability that emphasize non-material factors are right, they may warrant 'major corrections in how policy analysts measure military power'. The academic and practical stakes involved are therefore high.[43]

In adhering to this broader view of military effectiveness, or 'fighting power', military theorists often describe military capability as a combination of physical factors (the means – meaning the size and materiel of the organization), conceptual factors (doctrine or the way the means are employed), and moral factors (the will of the soldiers).[44] While most theorists agree upon the factors, they tend to emphasize them differently. As an example, General Sir Rupert Smith gives greater importance to the moral and conceptual factors by creating the following formula: Capability = Means x Way^2 x 3Will. The means available are multiplied by the way these means are used in relation to the opponent, again multiplied by the way, and finally multiplied by the morale or will times three. The way the means are used involves strategy, tactics and doctrine, and the will includes political will to employ force as much as the fighting morale of the forces.[45]

Within this broader way of thinking about military capability and effectiveness, a large number of scholars have sought to explain military capability in relation to the often paradoxical outcomes in small wars, counter-insurgency operations and different forms of peace operations – the fact that physically and materially weak forces in Vietnam in the 1960s, Afghanistan in the 1980s, and Somalia in the 1990s have been able to prevail and even achieve their objectives against substantially stronger opponents.[46] The paradoxical outcomes in such conflicts require deeper analysis of military capability and have produced a multitude of often competing theories. One group of explanations of paradoxical outcomes in small wars and counter-insurgency

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[42] Risa A. Brooks, 'Making Military Might: Why Do States Fail and Succeed?', *International Security*, 28:2 (Fall 2003), p. 151; Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004).

[43] Brooks, 'Making Military Might', p. 151.

[44] For a good summary, see Smith, *The Utility of Force*, pp. 240–243.

[45] Ibid., p. 242.

[46] Biddle, *Military Power*; Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam* (NY: Cambridge UP, 2003); Ivan Arreguin-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict* (NY: Cambridge UP, 2005); Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (eds.), *Understanding Victory and Defeat in Contemporary War* (London: Routledge, 2007).

operations focus on the nature of the actor. The most common problem discussed within this school of thought concerns the effectiveness of democracies in war. Gil Merom contends that modern democracies fail in small wars because of the inherent restrictions of the domestic structure. This means that democracies 'find it extremely difficult to escalate the level of violence and brutality to that which can secure victory'.[47] In other words, the nature of the democratic system weakens the moral and conceptual factors of military capability. This explanation of military capability nevertheless fails to explain why authoritarian states also fail in small wars, or why democracies sometimes have won.[48]

Another related explanation is that of interest asymmetry. According to this line of argument, motivation derives from what is at stake, and in expeditionary operations the insurgent, it is argued, has more at stake and therefore summons more motivation and readiness for sacrifice, while the soldiers of the intervening power have little at stake beyond their personal safety.[49] Yet, Merom's counterargument is that the historical record of motivated but weak forces is 'abysmal', and that their occasional victories, based on asymmetric interest, do not provide a sufficient explanation for military capability and effectiveness.[50] These explanations have the weakness that they emphasize only parts of the problem and therefore do not create a coherent and complete theory of military capability.

This weakness is somewhat alleviated by Stephen Biddle and Ivan Arreguin-Toft who separately seek to use the moral and conceptual factors of effectiveness together in more comprehensive theories. Based on Waltz's theory of socialisation and the idea that the weak in terms of traditional military power imitate the successful policies of the strong, while avoiding failed policies, Arreguin-Toft creates a theory of asymmetric conflict that underscores strategic interaction. His central thesis is that when actors employ opposite strategic approaches, weak actors are more likely to win.[51] Thus, not only does asymmetry strengthen the weak in moral terms, it also gives them a conceptual edge in learning and adjusting quicker the doctrine and tactics. Biddle argues that the non-material variable of force employment – the

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[47] Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars*, p. 15.
[48] Arreguin-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars*, pp. 8–9.
[49] See, for example, Andrew J. R. Mack, 'Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict', *World Politics*, 27:2 (1975), pp. 175–200; and Richard Betts, 'Comments on Mueller', *International Studies Quarterly*, 24:4 (1980), pp. 520–524.
[50] Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars*, pp. 11, 14.
[51] Arreguin-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars*, p. 18.

doctrine or tactics by which forces are actually used in combat – shapes the role of material factors and thus predetermines winners and losers.[52] Biddle's theory has the advantage of showing how the conceptual and moral factors of military capability are related to the physical factor, thus creating the most comprehensive theory of small-war military capability to date.

While the theories discussed above have all contributed to a better understanding of the factors that determine military capability and effectiveness in complex irregular warfare, they fail to acknowledge the fact that engaging in these activities is seldom a solely military endeavour. The previous section made it clear that contemporary operations are necessarily multifunctional and complex activities in which armed forces are but one tool in a toolbox also containing economic, social and political instruments of power. This means that a broader analytical perspective is necessary. Effectiveness in complex irregular warfare cannot be measured in military fighting power alone, but must also include traditionally civilian capabilities that also have an effect on the attainment of the political aims of operations. The sheer irrelevance of fighting power as a sole factor is perhaps best described by the infamous conversation between the American Colonel Summers and Colonel Tu of the North Vietnamese Army: '"You know, you never defeated us on the battlefield", said the American colonel. The North Vietnamese colonel pondered this remark a moment, "That may be so," he replied, "but it is also irrelevant"'.[53] The remarks show the relevance of General Sir Richard Dannatt's pragmatic approach to 'some form of success' instead of the absolutist view of victory as the only measure of success.[54]

Relating military effectiveness to that of the other instruments of power is one of the important contributions of this thesis as it uses civil-military relations as the point of departure in the study of operational conduct and effectiveness. However, effectiveness is complex in that it involves both the outcome and conduct of operations. While outcome is difficult to measure in an ongoing conflict, conduct can be evaluated against what is considered best practice in certain contexts. Therefore, before looking at the specific civil-military aspects of effectiveness, which is the aim of the following chapter, the sections below leave the conceptual discussion on effectiveness and seek to establish a list of best practices in complex irregular warfare.

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[52] Biddle, *Military Power*, p. ix.
[53] Cited in Harry G. Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1982), p. 1.
[54] Richard Dannatt, 'Address at the RUSI Future Land Warfare Conference'.

This is done by reviewing some strategic thinkers as well as the latest doctrinal developments within the field.

Principles of Best Practice at the Strategic Level of Complex Irregular Warfare

To overcome what Smith calls 'the endemic flaws in the current approach',[55] the following sections develop a list of principles of best practices in complex irregular warfare at the strategic and tactical levels. The list serves as a check list**,** against which the conduct and effectiveness of US and British operations in Iraq can be evaluated. The emphasis of this section is placed on counter-insurgency doctrine, as that is often considered the actual nature of contemporary conflict.[56] The strategic- level factors discussed within the section are:

1. a clear and achievable political aim;
2. civil-military co-operation and co-ordination: a Comprehensive Approach;
3. the importance of the strategic narrative.

A Clear and Achievable Political Aim

The starting point for successful complex operations is that of a clear political aim and purpose that can guide the actions of all involved actors. 'Without a clear political purpose it is not possible to have a military strategic objective'.[57] Carl von Clausewitz famously argued that:

> No one starts a war — or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so — without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it. The former is its political purpose; the latter its operational objective. This is the governing principle which will set its course, prescribe the scale of means and effort which is required, and make its influence felt throughout down to the smallest operational detail.[58]

A clear aim creates a common point of departure in the planning of operations and helps to drive the different involved actors towards a common purpose. This is also

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[55] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 307.
[56] For a useful argument of the counter-insurgency nature of contemporary peace operations, see Thomas R. Mockaitis, 'From Counter-Insurgency to Peace Enforcement: New Names for Old Games?', in Schmidl (ed.), *Peace Operations Between War and Peace*, pp. 40–57.
[57] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 291.
[58] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1989), p. 579.

the first of Robert Thompson's five principles of counter-insurgency.[59] However, a number of scholars importantly argue that in the contemporary context of complex irregular warfare the aims are changing. In industrial warfare the political objectives were achieved by applying military force of such significance that the enemy conformed to our will. However, in the contemporary strategic context Western forces 'intervene in, or even decide to escalate to, a conflict in order to establish a condition in which the political objectives can be achieved by other means and in other ways'.[60] In other words, the military operation merely sets the stage for the diplomatic, political and economic activity that will lead to such far-reaching aims as democracy, economic development, and respect for human rights. Dandeker and Gow accurately claim that in order to create legitimacy for operations, the end state should be determined by the conflicting parties, or the host government itself – although under pressure from the intervening forces.[61]

The objective to create an acceptable condition in which the outcome can be decided changes the nature of the relationship between political aims and strategic activity. An end state determined by the conflicting parties themselves cannot be clearly defined at the onset of operations, and the military activity generally takes place at the sub-strategic level. Although new thinking is clearly needed regarding the political direction of military and civilian activity in the field, it does not take away the importance of a clear political purpose to which the military as well as the other involved agencies and organizations may relate to in the planning of operations.

The importance of clear aims is, moreover, a basic tenet in mission command theory, as well as in effects-based thinking. Mission command is very briefly a command technique that involves telling subordinates *what* should be achieved, but not *how* that aim should be reached, thereby constituting a decentralized form of leadership. Without a clear aim or commander's intent mission command cannot be effective. The relevance of mission command in the civil-military interface is further discussed in Chapter Two.

Effects-based operations (EBO) is a strategic concept that was originally developed to adapt the armed forces to an increasingly complex operational environment that requires jointness of the different components of the armed forces.

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[59] Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966), p. 50.
[60] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 270; see also Dandeker and Gow, 'Military Culture', pp. 65–67.
[61] Dandeker and Gow, 'Military Culture', p. 67.

The US Joint Forces Command describes EBO as: 'designed to bring about a desired result by integrating military actions with those of other instruments of national power'. Moreover, EBO is supposed to expand the planning and conduct of operations from a predominantly force-oriented, military-on-military approach to one that includes all elements of national power – diplomatic, information, military and economic.[62] Again, without a clear political purpose or desired effect, it is difficult to translate the purpose into relevant and effective activity of the different instruments of power.

The literature is explicit regarding the fact that a clear and common aim must be informed by a joint civil-military, in-depth analysis of the conflict situation. Rupert Smith notes that without sound understanding of all aspects of the conflict – such as the actors involved, the political climate, the local culture, the financial situation on the ground, etc. – it is most difficult to establish what objectives the military and civilian organizations should pursue in the quest for the political aim.[63]

Clear political purpose must also be accompanied by the principle of political primacy. Clausewitz, again, argued that war should never be thought of as something autonomous, but always as an instrument of policy. This implies that policy must always have primacy and Clausewitz goes on to claim that interpreting war as an instrument of policy is the only way of understanding how 'wars must vary with the nature of their motives and the situations which give rise to them'. He continues: 'The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish... the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature'.[64]

Andrew Garfield argues that, wherever possible, civilian authorities must take the lead in counter-insurgency operations. The reason is that the most important tools of national power that are used in these types of operations are indeed civilian – political, economic, diplomatic, and informational – not military. 'There is no purely military solution to defeating an insurgency, and giving overarching authority to a military commander runs the risk that he will seek exclusively military solutions to the

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[62] US Joint Forces Command, 'Effects-Based Approach to Operations', accessed 12/03/07 at <http://www.jfcom.mil/about/fact_ebo.htm>
[63] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, pp. 374–375.
[64] Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 88.

challenges that will be encountered'.[65] Cohen, Crane, Horvath and Nagl similarly contend that 'all actions, kinetic and non-kinetic, must be planned and executed with the consideration of their contribution toward strengthening the host government's legitimacy and achieving the U.S. Government's political goals'. Therefore, the political objectives must be the dominant.[66]

Civil-Military Co-operation and Co-ordination – A Comprehensive Approach
One of the undisputed lessons of past irregular operations is the need for comprehensive approaches that include all instruments of national power in the pursuit of political aims. This means comprehensive and inclusive planning as well as execution. As an example, General Anthony Zinni draws upon the lessons from Somalia and argues that all aspects of operations have to be co-ordinated. 'I've seen the disasters in Somalia and elsewhere when coordination mechanisms fail. Those mechanisms for coordination have to be solid; they have to be established from the lowest remote points on the ground to the highest decisions that may be made'.[67] Equally, Rupert Smith stresses the importance of harnessing the efforts of all agencies involved in operations to a single purpose. There is a need to analyse, plan and direct operations as a whole, fusing political, economic and military actions into one concerted effort at all levels of command, from the political strategic level, through the theatre headquarters, to the lowest levels of administration and tactical operations.[68]

Co-operation and co-ordination between the involved actors in complex irregular warfare are the only way to achieve the principle of 'unity of effort'. This strategic principle is stressed by all analysts and defence professionals – yet, to somewhat different degrees. On the one hand, commentators argue that the ideal would be the principle of 'unity of command' – placing all civilian and military actors within one chain of command, led by a single operational commander. However, the sheer number and cultural divergence of actors involved in complex, multinational operations generally make that impossible and many analysts instead advocate the

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[65] Andrew Garfield, *Succeeding in Phase IV: British Perspectives on the U.S. to Stabilize and Reconstruct Iraq* (Philadelphia, Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2006), p. 21.
[66] Eliot Cohen, Conrad Crane, Jan Horvath and John Nagl, 'Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counter-Insurgency', *Military Review*, (March/April 2006), p. 50.
[67] Anthony Zinni, 'The Future of Iraq', Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, February 11 2003, accessed 08/08/05,
<http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/US/HearingsPreparedstatements/sfrc-021103.htm#JB>
[68] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, pp. 287, 197, 402.

creation of structures for co-ordination and co-operation to achieve unity of effort.[69] On the other hand, classical counter-insurgency thinker David Galula suggests that the stricter unity of command principle is even more important in counter-insurgency operations than in conventional warfare.[70] Based on Galula's principle, Ollivant and Chewning maintain that '[o]ne single headquarters must, within an area, synchronize security, physical and institutional reconstruction, and the information environment'.[71]

A strategic concept that emphasizes the importance of civil-military integration for a successful operation is that of the 'comprehensive approach' (CA). The concept is under development in the UK in the light of experience in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the realisation that the effects-based approach was too 'military' to sell among the civilian agencies. This was not, however, merely a change of labels, but also involved an increased analytical focus on the importance of integrating the different actors involved in complex operations. Apart from effects-based thinking and civil-military co-operation towards common goals, the comprehensive approach also stresses the need for integrated structures for planning and execution of operations. 'The CA should be reinforced by institutional familiarity, trust and transparency between Government Departments and through frequent personal contact, human networks and information sharing'…. providing horizontal, vertical and diagonal collaboration between communities of interest at all levels, within and between departments.[72]

The British identify four guiding principles of the comprehensive approach. First, a proactive cross-government approach should allow for co-ordination of Whitehall activity at both official and ministerial levels within the framework of a shared strategic objective. Second, shared understanding and analysis must be achieved of both the nature of the conflict and of the response. To achieve shared understanding, staff drawn from the different departments and agencies should provide for 'breadth, depth and resilience to analysis, planning, execution and assessment and contribute to a common baseline of understanding on which risk

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[69] See Cohen et al., 'Principles', p. 50.
[70] David Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1964, reprint 2005), p. 87.
[71] Douglas A. Ollivant and Eric D. Chewning, 'Producing Victory: Rethinking Conventional Forces in COIN Operations', *Military Review*, (July-August 2006), p. 52.
[72] UK Ministry of Defence, *The Comprehensive Approach*, Joint Discussion Note, 4/05, (2006), pp. 1–7.

assessments, judgements and decisions can be made'.[73] Third, planning and activity by all departments should be outcome based and therefore judged on the achievement of progress towards the cross-government strategic objective. This implies consideration and constant review of all likely effects and outcomes in both the short, medium and longer terms. Fourth, the principle of collaborative working means that the comprehensive approach should be reinforced by institutional familiarity, trust and transparency between the involved departments and agencies, through frequent personal contact, networks and information sharing, meaning an integrated interdepartmental and civil-military structure.[74]

Another aspect of the comprehensive approach highlights the importance of planning that not only includes all the relevant instruments of power, but also all the different phases of operations. Complex irregular warfare can no longer be planned in sequential phases. Instead, a comprehensive plan that includes stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction at the outset must be produced. Rupert Smith describes a useful approach to planning in asking a series of questions about the context of the operation as a whole, involving the political and strategic levels, as well as about the context of the conduct of operations at the operational level.[75] Although the questions are many, as well as difficult to answer, Smith argues that the biggest challenge is actually bringing the different involved agencies together to answer the questions in joint fashion – to achieve a comprehensive planning team for comprehensive planning.[76]

In sum, identifying the solid mechanisms for civil-military co-operation and co-ordination that General Zinni advocates is an important task of this thesis.

The Strategic Narrative

The importance of the strategic narrative is the third and final principle in this discussion. Lawrence Freedman maintains that narratives are 'compelling story lines which can explain events', and that they are intentionally designed to structure 'responses of others to developing events'. The strategic feature of narratives lies in the fact that they are not spontaneous, but 'deliberately constructed or reinforced out of the ideas and thoughts that are already current'.[77] Rupert Smith argues that in the struggle for the hearts and minds of the local population, the number of battlefield

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[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 383.
[76] Ibid., p. 386.
[77] Freedman, 'The Transformation', p. 22.

victories or reconstruction projects completed matter little if the local population and the wider audiences of international opinion think you are not winning, or visibly improving people's situation. Instead, the success is achieved by communicating with the people through the media and other outlets, getting the right narrative out there and changing perceptions.[78]

However, in the global surveillance age of instant media coverage, the Internet and mobile phones, as described by Martin Shaw, controlling a story or a narrative is not easy.[79] Insurgents have the inherent advantages of better cultural understanding and closer contacts with the local population. They are therefore in a strong position to present alternative narratives to events, and even turning tactical losses into victories of perception. Turning a counter-insurgency bombing or attack against an insurgent stronghold into an ungodly attack on a local school, killing women and children, has the potential of turning tactical losses into strategic victories for insurgents. David Kilcullen convincingly argues that 'in modern counter-insurgency, the side may win which best mobilizes and energizes its global, regional and local support base – and prevents its adversaries doing likewise'.[80]

Freedman argues that the idea of the narrative opens up the possibility that military operations might need to be focused on undermining the narratives on which the insurgent bases its appeal and which guides its activists towards actions. He notes that 'success will depend on how a particular irregular war's purpose, course and conduct is viewed by the public opinion at home as well as within the theatre of operations'. However, Freedman also argues that developing a narrative is not a strategy in itself, as a convincing narrative is normally based on a sound underlying strategy.[81] Constructing a strategic narrative is, therefore, never an alternative to appropriate actions, but should be seen as a necessary supplement to sound strategies and tactical activities.

Best Practice at the Tactical Level

At the tactical level of complex irregular warfare the nature of field activities merges into relatively similar activity regardless of operational type. In contemporary peace support operations, stability and reconstruction operations, small wars, humanitarian

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[78] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 391.
[79] Shaw, *The New Western Way of War*, pp. 47 and 56.
[80] David Kilcullen, 'Counter-Insurgency Redux', *Survival*, 48:4 (Winter 2006-2007), p. 121.
[81] Freedman, 'The Transformation', p. 93.

interventions and counter-insurgency operations, the work of a soldier is more or less the same, although, in some cases, with increased legal constraints. As previously noted, scholars have come to describe the practical application of military force in complex operations as counter-insurgency type operations.[82] The theory and practice of counter-insurgency are, therefore, where this section has its emphasis.

The recent renaissance of counter-insurgency theory is, to a large extent, a rereading of old masters within a new context. Key theorists within the classical school of counter-insurgency include Rupert Thompson, David Galula, Mao Zedong, Frank Kitson and Thomas Edward Lawrence. David Kilcullen nevertheless warns that a simple relearning of traditional theory may not be enough in a context which contains essentially different types of insurgencies than the wars of national liberation after the Second World War.[83] Any application of traditional theory must, therefore, take place within the context of full appreciation of contemporary strategic challenges. This section covers the following principles of complex irregular warfare at the tactical level:

1. Civil-military co-operation – unity of command and effort;
2. The hearts and minds approach – force protection and minimum use of force;
3. Cultural understanding of the local environment;
4. Adaptability and learning.

Civil-Military Co-operation: Unity of Command and Effort
The tactical-level application of this principle is of such importance that it merits a closer analysis despite its coverage in the discussion regarding the strategic level. Traditional theory stresses the importance of this principle, and Robert Thompson, a British counter-insurgency expert and Permanent Secretary of Defence for Malaya in the 1950s, advocated the committee structure and suggested structures, incorporating all relevant actors, to be used at the national and local levels to ensure co-ordination. At the national level, the committee should have the responsibility to develop clear operational plans and policies. Thompson also emphasized that military plans must be devised in co-ordination with civilian counterparts and activities in order to achieve lasting success. The policies and operational plans created should then be

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[82] Mockaitis, 'From Counter-Insurgency'.
[83] Kilcullen, 'Counter-Insurgency Redux', p. 111.

implemented by the various departments and headquarters involved, with regular committee meetings at the local level of colonial administration to ensure co-ordination amongst the local actors.[84] The weaker modern day application of this principle is in Europe called CIMIC (Civil-Military Co-ordination), and in the US, Civil Affairs. Unfortunately, CIMIC and Civil-Affairs units are military-led forms of co-operation, with the purpose of achieving military objectives in the field. Not only does this fail to adhere to the principle of political primacy, it also deters civil and humanitarian organizations from co-operating. The humanitarian ideals which govern the activities of most civilian organizations also make co-operation with the military difficult.

As noted in the previous section, unity of command is the ideal in counter-insurgency. However, this ideal is seldom achieved and the weaker principle of unity of effort often becomes the more practicable solution. To achieve unity of effort despite lacking unity of command, an important principle is the co-location of the military and civilian headquarters in the field. The co-location of the different actors allows for at least some level of joint analysis and planning.

The Hearts and Minds Approach

Directly related to the strategic-level principle of political primacy is the idea of winning 'hearts and minds'. Robert Thompson explains this view by arguing that counter-insurgency forces and agencies must give priority to defeating the political subversion, not the guerrillas. Therefore they achieve the most meaningful success by gaining popular support and legitimacy for the host government – winning hearts and minds – not by killing insurgents. While security is important, the lasting victory is likely to come from a vibrant economy, political participation, and restored hope.[85] In Clausewitzean terminology, the centre of gravity in any complex operation is the people. Garfield claims that the bulk of the indigenous population 'is only ever likely to be, at best, ambivalent towards the intervening force'. The most important component of counter-insurgency operations is therefore weaning the population away from the insurgents.[86] Garfield continues by arguing that defeating the political subversion conducted by insurgents requires making a difference in the lives of the local population as early as possible. This means 'significant efforts to ensure fair

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[84] Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, pp. 52, 55, 83.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Garfield, *Succeeding in Phase IV*, p. 16.

treatment, the creation of jobs, improvements in education and medical services (in the short term, getting an education and being treated is far more important than the construction of new schools and hospitals), providing a bearable standard of living, basic personal security, and some form of legitimate representative governance'. Military presence and activity are vital to establish the necessary level of security and for coercive purposes. However, military activity can only work in a support function to the civilian activities of political and economic reform.[87]

Translated into specific tactics, the hearts and minds approach involves two interrelated principles: the minimum use of force, and what this thesis calls 'soft force protection'. The lessons from the colonial era in general, and Malaya in particular, led Frank Kitson to stress the importance of using minimum force.[88] In the wider goal of winning hearts and minds, he noted the negative impact of excessive force, and argued that such force tends to drive the population away from the administration and towards extremist positions. Kitson, nevertheless, maintained that some level of force is necessary to restore order and achieve a breathing space where positive inducements can have effect, as well as to act as a deterrent.[89] Significantly, the principle of minimum use of force should be based on an understanding of the overall political objectives with the operation and how they relate to the actions of soldiers at all levels of command. It goes back to the importance of political understanding and sensitivity.

Rupert Smith argues that the strategic aim of counter-insurgency operations always involves establishing some form of rule of law, and that tactical operations must consequently be conducted within the framework of the law in order not to attack one's own strategic interests.[90] Equally, Cohen et al. assert that to establish legitimacy, all security operations must be treated as law enforcement rather than combat operations.[91] This view has been more elaborately discussed by Lawrence Freedman who suggests that the political context of irregular wars, coupled with the fact that combat is integrated with civil society, means that both the purpose and the

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[87] Ibid.
[88] Christopher Dandeker has argued that the concept of 'measured use of force' is more accurately what the principle is all about. While this is an important point, this thesis continues to use minimum force in order to resonate with previous literature and current doctrine on the topic. See Dandeker and Gow, 'Peace Operations', p. 77.
[89] Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-Keeping* (London: Frank Cass, 1971), pp. 84–85, 87.
[90] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 379.
[91] Cohen et al., 'Principles', p. 51.

practice of all operations should be governed by liberal values. Freedman calls this 'liberal warfare'.[92]

Force protection in operations 'amongst the people' is difficult, but can essentially be achieved in two different ways. Units can distance themselves from the local population by living in fortified camps, wearing full combat gear, and patrolling in armoured vehicles with guns pointed at all potential targets. However, force protection can also be achieved through 'soft effects', meaning the conduct of hearts and minds operations and reconstruction efforts rather than the application of force.[93] The idea is that small units patrolling and continuous contact with the local population will not only establish legitimacy for the operation, but also increase intelligence on insurgent activity. Cohen et al. present force protection as a paradox of counter-insurgency. 'The more you protect your force, the less secure you are'. Since the ultimate aim of operations is to win the hearts and minds of the local population and establish legitimacy for the local government, the counter-insurgent achieves success by protecting the population and not himself.[94]

Force protection measures, such as living in remote fortified camps and limiting patrolling to armoured vehicles at high speed, or always wearing full combat gear when interacting with the local population, are therefore likely to be counterproductive. Instead, Kilcullen argues that the most fundamental rule of counter-insurgency is to 'be there'. Presence should be established by living in close proximity to the population, through frequent patrolling on foot, night patrolling and sleeping in local villages. This type of activity, though seemingly dangerous, will establish links with locals and increase human intelligence – thereby increasing the security of the counter-insurgents.[95]

Understanding the Local Environment and Culture

Counter-insurgency operations are about winning hearts and minds in the pursuit of legitimacy. To do so, every soldier must have an understanding of the demographics, history and culture of the local population, as well as the aims, ideologies, capabilities and approaches of all organizations and parties in the conflict. In the words of Cohen et al.: 'The interconnected politico-military nature of insurgency requires the counter-

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[92] Freedman, 'The Transformation', p. 8.
[93] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', p. 25.
[94] Cohen et al., 'Principles', p. 52.
[95] David Kilcullen, 'Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counter-Insurgency', *Military Review*, (May-June 2006), p. 105.

insurgent to immerse himself in the lives of the people in order to achieve victory'.[96] The importance of cultural understanding is well highlighted by the concept of the strategic corporal, a concept developed by US Marine Corps General Charles Krulak to emphasize the dispersion of military authority towards the lower levels of command. The idea is that, in the age of global surveillance, actions and choices of corporals and soldiers may have strategic consequences.[97] Thus, understanding local culture and having at least a very basic understanding of the language radically reduces the risk of making tactical-level mistakes that could have strategic consequences.

Adaptation and Innovation

David Galula argues that no one approach can defeat an insurgency.[98] Equally, Cohen et al. state that '[i]f a tactic works this week, it will not work next week; if it worked in this province, it will not work in the next'.[99] Each insurgency is different and presents a unique set of challenges for the counter-insurgents. The complexities involved, as well as the adaptive nature of the insurgent, mean that the counter-insurgent must be equally adaptable and innovative. This problem is best described by General Krulak's concept of 'Three Block War'. Within a very limited area, and within a few hours' work, troops can be involved in high-intensity combat, low-intensity peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.[100] Garfield, therefore, claims that the unique challenge of counter-insurgency operations should place premium on 'the selection, training, and empowerment of personnel at all levels who can "adapt and overcome"'.[101] In a useful analysis of the counter-insurgency campaigns in Malaya and Vietnam, John Nagl concludes that one of the most important factors of success in Malaya and failure in Vietnam was the ability to learn and adapt. According to Nagl, this ability stems from an organizational culture that allows armed forces such learning and adaptation.[102]

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[96] Cohen et al., 'Principles', p. 50.
[97] Charles C. Krulak, 'The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War', *Marines Magazine*, 28:1 (January 1999).
[98] Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, p. 87.
[99] Cohen et al., 'Principles', p. 52.
[100] Krulak, 'The Strategic Corporal'
[101] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', p. 30.
[102] John Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), pp. 191–208.

Conclusion

Different forms of complex irregular warfare will be the most common and important types of military operations of the near future. To conduct such operations effectively, a number of principles will need to be applied to overcome what General Smith calls 'the endemic flaws in the current approach'.[103] At the strategic level a clear and achievable political aim is necessary as well as the principles of political primacy, close civil-military co-operation and co-ordination, and comprehensive planning. Controlling the strategic narrative, or the perceptions of the events in the field, is of great importance to achieve legitimacy for the aims and conduct of operations. At the tactical level, the principle of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination is also of importance. While the aim should be unity of command, the realistic goal is often unity of effort through co-location of headquarters and close co-operation and communication. To win the hearts and minds of the local population – the centre of gravity in counter-insurgency operations – forces need good cultural understanding in order to apply minimum use of force that effectively links tactical activity with the strategic-level political aims. The hearts and minds approach should also be applied to force protection, which should be conducted softly by engaging with the local community, thereby winning consent and security. Finally, the diverse nature of complex irregular warfare means that all soldiers at all levels will have to display unprecedented flexibility and adaptability to different situations and levels of threat.

A significant, final conclusion is that many of these principles are related to civil-military relations – both at the strategic level and in the field of operations. The following chapter, therefore, focuses on the link between certain patterns of civil-military relations and operational conduct and effectiveness.

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[103] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 307

CHAPTER 2

THE CIVIL-MILITARY DIMENSION OF EFFECTIVENESS

A significant number of the reviewed principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare are related problems and possibilities in the civil-military interface at all levels of operations. This chapter, therefore, discusses the civil-military dimensions of operational conduct and effectiveness. How are certain patterns of civil-military relations related to the conduct of operations in the contemporary context? To address this question, the aim of this chapter is to construct a theoretical framework for analysis that describes the causal relationships between the patterns of civil-military relations and operational conduct. The second aim of the chapter is to outline a methodology for the analyses of the empirical chapters.

To achieve these aims, the chapter is introduced by a review of civil-military relations theory. After outlining the most relevant debates for this thesis, the link between the civil-military dimension of operational conduct is further discussed by studying the concepts of command and control, trust, and culture. The review of civil-military relations theory, and related concepts, ends in the construction of the framework for analysis. Finally, the best practices of the previous chapter, the review of theory and concepts as well as the theoretical framework form the basis of the methodology of the following empirical studies.

Civil-Military Relations Theory

A central concern of democracy is how people organize themselves politically to preserve their liberties and advance their interests. Civil-military relations are at the heart of this concern. Peter Feaver has restated what has long been described as the paradox of civil-military relations: 'because we fear others we create an institution of violence to protect us, but then we fear the very institution we created for

protection'.[104] Therefore, the central problem discussed in civil-military relations theory is the need to maximize the protective value that the armed forces can provide, and the need to minimize the domestic coercive powers that the same forces will inevitably possess, thus creating *effective armed forces under democratic civilian control*.[105] The review of civil-military relations theory not only seeks to establish a link between civil-military relations and operational conduct and effectiveness. It also covers a number of concepts and thoughts that are necessary for the following case studies.

Military organizations as well as the entire body of literature on civil-military relations have come to view the position of the military officer as that of a profession. While the literature is essentially divided regarding the nature of military professionalism, Samuel Huntington's seminal work, *The Soldier and the State*, still provides the most useful starting point for discussion. For Huntington, professional armed forces are a precondition for military effectiveness. The 'military professional' includes a professional ethic that can be described as an ideal set of universal values and capabilities that are 'pessimistic, collectivist, historically inclined, power oriented, nationalistic, militaristic, pacifist, and instrumentalist in its view of the military profession'. However, the most important feature of the military professional is that he or she is an objective and apolitical servant of the state, and therefore by definition subordinate to the political leadership.[106]

Huntington's conception of military professionalism assumes that it is possible to segregate an autonomous area of military science from political purpose. The foundation of his analysis of civil-military relations is the assumption that the military institutions of any society are shaped by two forces: a functional imperative stemming from the threats to a society's security, and a societal imperative based on the ideologies, social forces and institutions that are dominant within the society.[107] The autonomous military science, contrasted with the view of politics as art, is based on the functional imperative – to fight and win the nation's wars – as a structural given.

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[104] Peter D. Feaver, 'The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control', *Armed Forces & Society*, 23:2 (1996), p. 150; see also Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (London: Pall Mall, 1962).
[105] Michael Quinlan, in a lecture to NATO in 1993, cited in Christopher Dandeker, 'Military and Society: The Problem, Challenges and Possible Answers', paper presented at the 5th International Security Forum, 14–16 October 2002, available at
<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/5isf/5/Papers/Dandeker_paper_V-2.pdf>
[106] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 79.
[107] Ibid., p. 2.

The quality of the military can, therefore, according to Huntington, only be evaluated in terms of independent military standards, defined by the functional imperative, and should not be related to the political end for which it fights.[108] As Huntington separates military means from political ends, the ideal purpose and identity of all armed forces become universal. The purpose of the military is national defence and its identity will, without interference from the political leadership or other societal imperatives, automatically be adjusted to fit this purpose through the development of military professionalism. Huntington advocates what Arthur Larson calls the radical tradition of professionalism, which emphasizes the isolation and autonomy of the military. It requires military obedience to civil authorities but, at the same time, allows complete military control over internal organizational matters.[109]

The armed forces' functional imperative in fighting wars and the resulting requirements this has placed upon the military have meant that, most often, a distinct military culture is formed. This professional culture is often perceived as threatening to civil society. Thus, an often-discussed problem is the extent to which the armed forces can be allowed to differ from the surrounding society.[110] Deliberate attempts by the political leadership to incorporate the values of civil society into the armed forces in order to control them are what Huntington called 'subjective control'. This form of political meddling in military affairs would, according to Huntington, not only engage the armed forces in politics and thereby affect civilian control, but also decrease its fighting capabilities.[111] Huntington argued that the military values feared by civil society are the very values that ensure civilian control and create military effectiveness. This is because the professional warrior values of conservative realism, self-sacrifice, and being apolitical come from civilian non-interference in military affairs. If these values of military professionals are reduced, military effectiveness will also decrease.[112]

Huntington's suggestion of how to achieve civilian control of the armed forces in democracies is therefore, unsurprisingly, through civilian recognition and support of military professionalism and expertise, meaning no political interference in the

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[108] Ibid., p. 56.
[109] Arthur D. Larson, ' Military Professionalism and Civil Control: A Comparative Analysis of Two Interpretations', *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Vol. 2 (Spring 1974), pp. 57–72.
[110] See, for example, Dandeker and Gow, 'Military Culture'.
[111] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, pp. 80–85.
[112] Ibid., pp. 465–466.

military sphere.[113] Huntington calls this 'objective civilian control', which, in practice, means a sharp division of labour between political ends and military means, as well as the idea that the military should be physically and ideologically separated from political institutions.[114] Peter Feaver summarizes Huntington's argument as 'autonomy leads to professionalization, which leads to political neutrality and voluntary subordination, which leads to secure civilian control'.[115] A military organization well separated from the political leadership in a conservative civilian society will, therefore, according to Huntington, both be well adjusted for its purpose and under democratic civilian control. In paraphrasing Feaver, Huntington's causal chain regarding effectiveness would be: autonomy leads to professionalisation, which leads to structural and cultural adjustment to the functional imperative, which means military effectiveness.

However, Feaver has effectively challenged Huntington's theory on an empirical ground – noting that the US prevailed in the Cold War despite failing to adopt many of the principles Huntington cited as critical – such as the objective control mechanism, and a civilian shift from liberalism to the conservatism of West Point.[116] As Huntington's theory fails in the light of empirical evidence, Feaver provides an alternative theoretical model of civil-military relations rooted in principal-agency theory, which is an approach originally developed by economists to analyse the relations between principals and the agents to whom they delegate authority. The approach has already been successfully applied in political science to analyse relations of control between Congress and the President and various civilian bureaucracies. The problem that principal-agency theory seeks to answer is how a principal can ensure that the agent is implementing the orders in the manner that the principal intended, given that they have different incentives. In Feaver's language: is the agent working or shirking? Feaver argues that the level of obedience is a direct function of the level of monitoring, which in turn depends on the perceived cost of such monitoring. The agent's incentives are determined by the probability that the shirking will be detected, and the likelihood of being punished for it.[117]

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[113] Ibid., p. 83.
[114] Rebecca Schiff, 'Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance', *Armed Forces & Society*, 22:1 (1995), p. 7.
[115] Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003), p. 18.
[116] Ibid., pp. 37–38.
[117] Ibid.

Using this basic logic, Feaver identifies six possible outcomes based on civilian decisions on how to monitor the military, military decisions to work or shirk, and finally civilian decisions again to either punish the military or not when shirking occurs.[118] The outcome of this 'ongoing game of strategic interaction' is determined by a number of factors, including varying costs of civilian monitoring, the extent of the differences in policy preferences between civilians and the military, and the military perception of the probability of punishment in case of shirking.[119] A few examples of monitoring and control mechanisms of the civilian leadership are 'fire alarms', involving defence think tanks, the media and inter-service rivalry, screening and selection through loyalty oaths, professionalism and skill requirements for joining the military; 'police patrols', meaning restrictive rules of engagement and standing mission orders, inspector generals and budgetary control, and, finally, intervening in military affairs.[120]

James Burk calls Feaver's agency theory 'a surprisingly powerful interpretive tool for explaining changing patterns of civilian control over the military from the Cold War to the present'.[121] Feaver argues that, while the gap between civilian and military preferences was high throughout this period, the cost of monitoring declined and the cost of shirking increased. This, as agency theory predicts, led to intrusive civilian monitoring of the armed forces and military compliance with civilian preferences. Agency theory, therefore, helps explain why the US prevailed during the Cold War despite the failure to follow Huntington's prescriptions for success, based on objective civilian control and a conservative ideological change in society to better match the preferences of the military.[122] Beyond providing more accurate explanations of civil-military relations, the agency theory of civil-military relations increases our understanding of how the different actors in this interface interact. As such, the theory as well as the terminology it has created for describing different patterns of civil-military relations constitute an important contribution to previous theory, as well as a useful point of reference throughout this thesis.

Another empirically based critique comes from Eliot Cohen who criticizes Huntington's conclusion to avoid political interference in military affairs by making

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[118] Ibid., pp. 103–104.
[119] Ibid., p. 282.
[120] Ibid., p. 86.
[121] James Burk, 'Book Review: Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations', *Armed Forces & Society*, 30:3 (2004), p. 486.
[122] Ibid.

the empirically based argument that the truly victorious wartime leaders have all interfered in the military sphere to a very large extent. Lincoln, Clemenceau, Churchill, and Ben-Gurion are used as examples of leaders who during wartime have continued to control their generals in a way that Huntington and others would find most damaging. They questioned, opposed and fired generals, engaged personally in military strategy, and even let the political imperative determine how to fight the war.[123] Cohen's conclusion is that political leaders should become more involved and exercise more control over the military in war.[124] However, after studying only four rather specific cases in history, the strong causal link made by Cohen between civilian intervention and military success and effective civilian control is not entirely convincing.[125] Cohen's analysis is useful as an empirical corrective of Huntington, but should not be seen as an alternative theory. Lawrence Freedman has elegantly commented that the true lesson of Cohen's analysis was that 'war's fundamentally political character requires meddling even though its quality and impact cannot be guaranteed. As useful as professional wisdom may be, it can never answer the most important questions or supply a reliable shortcut to success'.[126] The obvious counterargument involves highlighting any occasions when political meddling has produced negative results.[127]

A theoretical problem in Huntington's analysis is his treatment of the concept of the military professional. By arguing that non-interference in political affairs is an innate feature of military professionalism, Huntington practically explained away the key civil-military problems.[128] Empirically, it is clear that the concept of military professionalism is neither universal nor constant. The professional requirements differ from time to time, from service to service, and from context to context. Eliot Cohen notes that the professional requirements of the officers on the opposing sides of the Vietnam War were very different. The Vietnamese officer needed a ruthless disregard

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[123] Cohen, *Supreme Command*, pp. 5–10.

[124] Ibid., p. 209.

[125] It should be noted that Cohen only used wars of survival as his empirical objects of study. These are special cases that should certainly be compared and contrasted with small wars and operations other than war in order to paint a full picture.

[126] Lawrence Freedman, 'Calling the Shots: Should Politicians or Generals Run Our Wars?', *Foreign Affairs*, 81:5 (2002), p. 191.

[127] An example is Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's involvement in the planning of the war in Iraq as well as the order to take Fallujah with full force despite concerns expressed by the Marine commanders on the ground in the same war. See Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), pp. 42–43, 332.

[128] For examples of this critique see Finer, *The Man on Horseback*, and Bengt Abrahamsson, *Military Professionalism and Political Power* (Beverley Hills, CA: Sage, 1972).

for his own men's suffering and casualties that would have rendered him morally unfit to command American troops.[129] Moreover, Cohen maintains that the failure in Vietnam stemmed from the American officers' stubborn resistance to adapt their conception of professionalism to the new strategic context of Vietnam.[130] If there are so many dynamic features of military professionalism, why should the apolitical feature be a given?

A contrasting view of military professionalism has been presented by the sociological school of civil-military relations, created by Morris Janowitz. By acknowledging important technological and strategic changes – not least the possibilities and limitations of the nuclear bomb – Janowitz emphasized the need for a redefinition of the professional requirements of the military.[131] Instead of the warrior ideals of the radical approach, Janowitz advocated a pragmatic view of military professionalism, based on constabulary forces grounded in pragmatic doctrine of the nuclear era. The constabulary force should be 'continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of force, and seeks viable international relations rather than victory'. The concept was farsighted enough to include flexible and specialized capabilities like 'specialists in military aid programs, in paramilitary operations, in guerrilla and counter-guerrilla warfare'. Moreover, he argued that the constabulary concept also eliminated the double standard of 'peacetime' and 'wartime' premises.[132]

Janowitz also added a political dimension to the military profession. He suggested that the military professional must be 'sensitive to the political and social impact of the military establishment on international security affairs'. Civilian control cannot be achieved solely through the rule of law and a professional tradition not to intervene in politics, but must also come from 'self-imposed professional standards and meaningful integration with civilian values'.[133] The practical solution to creating a professional military organization fit for purpose is thus the opposite to that of Huntington; the military should be integrated with the political leadership in order to develop increased political understanding and sensitivity. Importantly, Janowitz maintained that the political leadership must control both the criteria and information for judging the effectiveness of the military establishment. 'The formulation of the

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[129] Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), p. 243.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, p. 418.
[132] Ibid., pp. 418–419.
[133] Ibid., p. 420.

standards of performance the military are expected to achieve are civilian responsibilities, although these standards cannot be evolved independent of professional military judgement'.[134] In other words, the interpretation of the functional imperative and the consequent military adjustment should be controlled by the political leadership rather than by objective external factors, or by the military itself.

In Huntington and Janowitz's theories, we find two completely different views of ideal civil-military relations, and two diametric views of military professionalism. Where does this discrepancy come from? It is clear that the main concern of civil-military relations theory – maximizing the protective value that the armed forces can provide, while, at the same time, minimizing the domestic coercive powers that the same forces will inevitably possess – is at the heart of the link between civil-military relations and operational conduct and effectiveness. However, the emphasis that theorists place on the two concerns differs greatly. Christopher Dandeker argues that the divergence is partly the result of a 'zero-sum' view of the civil-military problematique – thinking that it is only possible to maximize either military strength or civilian control.[135] An obvious example is provided by John Hillen while writing about the cultural gap between civilians and the military:

> If the purpose of having a military establishment in the first place is to promote cozy
> civil-military relations, then military culture should be forcibly brought into line with
> civilian culture. If, however, the purpose of having a military is to provide for the
> common defense, then the military must nurture the unique culture developed for that
> purpose.[136]

Equally, Huntington wrote in *The Soldier and the State* that in order to increase the professionalism and effectiveness of the US military, the American civil society had to adopt the more conservative and military values of West Point, which he describes as the military ideal at its best – 'a bit of Sparta in the midst of Babylon'.[137] The military should, in other words, only obey the functional and not the societal imperative.

However, the very foundation of democratic societies lies in the notion that the political and military leaderships are not equals, and on the other side of the aisle are

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[134] Ibid.
[135] Dandeker, 'Military and Society', pp. 2–3.
[136] John Hillen, 'Must U.S. Military Culture Reform?', in John Lehman and Harvey Sicherman (eds.), *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems and How To Fix Them* (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2002), pp. 168–169.
[137] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 466.

the theorists who tend to emphasize democratic civilian control more than military effectiveness – the societal imperative takes precedence.[138] An example is provided by Sarkesian et al., who argue that, unless the military is sensitive to domestic social issues and prepared to change its culture to conform to societal norms, it may lose its legitimacy in the eyes of civil society.[139] As argued by Dandeker, 'those of a liberal persuasion tend to expect the armed services to conform to civilian values and, in so doing, underestimate the unique character and demands of military life'.[140] Dandeker, therefore, argues that a pragmatic approach that falls midway between the different positions is more useful:

> The challenge for civilian political and military leaders is to ensure that a balance is struck between these, sometimes competing, imperatives. Furthermore, in adjusting to changes in society and international security, they have to take into account the history and traditions of the individual armed services, which are normally critical factors in sustaining their identity, sense of shared purpose and morale.[141]

Moreover, Dandeker claims that the conceptualization of the relations between functional and societal imperatives in zero-sum terms is misleading, as it assumes that military adjustments to civilian values necessarily undermine military effectiveness, and that the focus on military effectiveness must certainly mean decreased civilian control or non-adherence to the values of civil society.[142] The aim should, thereby, not be striking a balance between the imperatives, but in seeking *synergies* between the imperatives. One such example is provided by Janowitz, who sought military professionalism and effectiveness, as well as civilian control through the integration of the military and political leaderships, and the creation of officers who are aware of the military's political and social impact.[143]

Apart from the zero-sum view of international relations, an important explanation for the diverging views of theorists is found in the interpretation of the functional imperative to which the armed forces should be adjusted. As noted, Huntington sees the functional imperative as an external given, which can only be

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[138] For a useful discussion see Bernard Boëne, 'How Unique Should the Military Be? A Review of Representative Literature and Outline of a Synthetic Formulation', *European Journal of Sociology*, 31:1 (1990), pp. 3–59.
[139] Sam C. Sarkesian et al., *Soldiers, Society and National Security* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), pp. 140–142.
[140] Dandeker, 'Military and Society', p. 3.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, p. 420.

interpreted and adjusted to by military professionals, without interference from the political leadership. At the same time, Anthony Forster makes the obvious but often overlooked argument that the purpose of military professionalism is the creation of a military 'fit for purpose'. Professional, and thus effective, military organizations are, according to Forster, characterized by four factors, of which two constitute roles clearly defined by a government and widely accepted by the armed forces, as well as the development of military expertise necessary to fulfil these functions effectively and efficiently.[144] Forster clearly draws on constructivism within the field of international relations for his interesting contribution. The 'constructivist view' of civil-military relations, according to Dandeker, sees the functional imperative as an objective constraint on decision makers, constructivists view them as 'being, in part, constituted by the values and aspirations of decision makers as they respond actively to their perceptions of both the external environment and the perceived "needs" of their own societies'.[145] The functional imperative, thereby, takes on a subjective characteristic.

The important difference between Huntington and Forster is that Forster would argue that the functional imperative is something that changes with variations in the strategic context. Whatever the political leadership defines as the important tasks of the day is the functional imperative to which the armed forces must be adjusted. As already noted, Janowitz maintains that the political leadership should 'own' the functional imperative and the criteria for judging military effectiveness.

It should, of course, be noted that the nature and number of factors that shape the structure and ethos of the armed forces are really only limited by how imaginative we are, and that the functional and societal imperatives are but theoretical categories. Dandeker presents an alternative by suggesting that it is useful to consider the armed forces as operating in three contexts. The first context is the international environment of political, social and cultural relations. The second context, or imperative, is the domestic societal context, while the 'historical context' – or 'weight of history' – that each country inherits from the past and that influences the ways in which it seeks (and is able to respond to) the constraints and opportunities of the present constitutes the third. Dandeker, importantly, cautions us by stating that the distinction between the

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[144] Anthony Forster, *Armed Forces in Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 43.
[145] Dandeker, 'Military and Society', p. 3.

international and the societal contexts is becoming increasingly artificial.[146] This is an important argument that deserves further deliberation.

The international environment can be seen as both a functional and societal imperative. Within the realist framework the international environment is an anarchical structure in which all states compete for relative security and power. This anarchical structure means that the external threat that leads to the functional imperative of war is a given of the international environment. However, the realist paradigm is increasingly questioned by alternative theories of international relations. We do not need to go as far as critical theory or institutionalist ideas about world governance to illustrate this point, but only need to look at the English school of international relations, here represented by Hedley Bull, who describes the international environment as a society of states 'bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another'.[147] In other words, the world order that the international society creates is also a provider of security. As such, it should also be acknowledged that international society's rules, institutions and public pressures could be very influential as a societal imperative.[148]

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above: first, a theoretical conclusion in that the functional imperative can never be treated as an objective given. The constructivist view highlights the fact that the functional imperative also involves the subjective perceptions of threat as well as societal needs. Another argument is that the functional imperative alters with changes in the strategic context. While defending the state is still the armed forces' main task, the type of operations this task involves is changing. Thus, the structure and culture of the armed forces must, in order to remain effective, constantly be adjusted to these fluctuations in the functional imperative.

The civil-military relationship should also not be treated as one between equals. Instead, Feaver's agency theory provides a useful point of departure. By describing the civil-military relationship as one between the civilian principal and the military agent, a distinct hierarchy is created. Civilian as well as democratic control of the armed forces, thereby, functions as a normative precondition for civil-military

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[146] Christopher Dandeker, *Facing Uncertainty: Flexible Forces for the Twenty-First Century, Report No. 1* (Karlstad: Försvarshögskolan Acta D5, Ledarskapsinstitutionen, 1999), p. 7.

[147] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1977), p. 13.

[148] Robert Egnell, 'The Soldier of the State: Rethinking the Imperatives of Civil-Military Relations', unpublished Masters Thesis at the Department of War Studies, King's College London, August 2003.

relations in democracies, and constitutes the normative theoretical framework within which military effectiveness should be discussed. Within this framework, the main concern is military effectiveness, which is also the central focus of this thesis. This means, in practical terms, that the political leadership should control the interpretation and definition of the functional imperative to which the armed forces have to adjust. Thus, as already mentioned, instead of political and military leaders finding a balance between the societal and functional imperatives, the challenge of civil-military relations should be expressed as finding synergies between the two imperatives: military effectiveness and democratic civilian control.[149]

As an example, the previous chapter expressed a need for increased civil-military co-operation and integration at the strategic and tactical levels in order to operate effectively in complex irregular warfare. Within theory, this need is supported by Janowitz and Cohen in order to achieve military effectiveness as well as civilian control. A similar argument is made by Douglas Bland, who emphasizes the importance of civil-military integration. He argues that a formal government and/or ministerial committee system should be used to support consensus-building procedures among the civil authorities, military leaders, and senior public servants, which he describes as the main mechanism by which complex defence decisions are made. This interagency system should ideally permit military and civilian leaders to develop co-ordinated advice for ministers. In the end, such co-ordinated advice produces policies that better command military support and loyalty, and thus simplify policy implementation.[150] Bland's view resonates well with what is now referred to as the comprehensive approach to operations and with the principles of unity of command and effort.

Conclusion

The review of civil-military relations theory has highlighted two main schools of thought exemplified by the work of Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz. The two schools advocate very different structures and culture of civil-military relations in order to provide not only civilian control, but also military organizations 'fit for purpose' and thus capable of performing effectively in complex irregular warfare.

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[149] This view has been most persuasively expressed by Janowitz, 'The Professional Soldier', pp. 426–430.
[150] Douglas L. Bland, 'Patterns in Liberal Democratic Civil-Military Relations', *Armed Forces & Society*, 27:4 (2001), pp. 535–536.

Within the Huntingtonian tradition, civil-military relations should include a clear divide between the political and military leaderships in order to allow for objective control of the armed forces and military professionalism. Such professionalism will, according to this tradition, inevitably lead to military effectiveness by allowing the military to define and adjust to its own functional imperative. This view of civil-military relations and effectiveness is in this dissertation referred to as the *divided approach*. The Janowitzean tradition instead proposes a civil-military approach to effectiveness that involves civil-military integration that creates mutual trust and understanding in the civil-military interface. Military effectiveness should be based on an understanding of the political aims rather than a given functional imperative. Within this school, the functional imperative should be defined and controlled by the political leadership. This is hereafter referred to as the *integrated approach* to civil-military relations. While both approaches constitute ideal forms, they provide us with a highly useful foundation for the analysis of civil-military relations in the two case studies.

The review of civil-military relations theory has also highlighted that a main concern of the analysis should be the functional imperative of the armed forces. How is it interpreted, and by whom is it decided? The answers to these questions are likely to reveal much about the patterns of civil-military relations – such as the strength and nature of civilian control. This thesis, therefore, treats the functional imperative as the outcome of certain patterns of civil-military relations. The functional imperative, in turn, provides an important intervening variable related to the nature of the armed forces. In other words, how the functional imperative is interpreted, is likely to determine not only the size, structure, culture and equipment of the armed forces, but with reference to this thesis, perhaps even more importantly, the ethos and culture of military organizations.

A methodological conclusion is that history should be included in any analysis of civil-military relations as an important contextual factor. It has the potential to affect both the functional and the societal imperatives. The societal aspect of history affects the culture and ethos of civil society, the political institutions and the armed forces, while functional aspects come in when assessing threats or risks. An example of the historical effect can currently be seen in East European states, which, due to the historical heritage of Russian/Soviet invasions, regard Russia as a greater military

threat than do most other states in Europe. Therefore, the case studies of this thesis are introduced by historical sections.

In sum, civil-military relations theory helps explain military conduct and effectiveness through the interpretation of the functional imperative and the consequent adjustment of the armed forces to that imperative. There should, in other words, be a causal link between certain patterns of civil-military relations and the nature and effectiveness as they determine the structure and culture of the armed forces, which in turn affect operational conduct. We can call this the *indirect effect* on operational conduct, as it does not explain how different patterns of civil-military relations function during operations. It is clear that the causal link between different patterns of civil-military relations and operational conduct and effectiveness is weak in theory. To fill that gap constitutes an important contribution of this thesis. However, to paint a complete picture of the causal relationship between different patterns of civil-military relations and the conduct of operations, there is a need for further theoretical and conceptual inputs. The following sections, therefore, cover the concepts of mission command, trust, and culture.

Reinforcing Theory: Mission Command, Trust, and Culture

The previous section concluded that, while the theories of civil-military relations provide useful information about the relationships between the political and military leaderships, they often fail to deal with the functional and practical aspects of civil-military relations during operations, as well as how certain patterns of civil-military relations affect military conduct and effectiveness in operations. This section, therefore, seeks to reinforce existing theory on civil-military relations by discussing and analysing a number of concepts that help fill the gaps in the literature. During the planning and execution of operations, the civil-military interface is an important part of the chain of command, and its structure and culture are therefore likely to have an effect on the conduct of operations. This causal link between civil-military relations and operational conduct is in this thesis referred to as the *direct effect*, as it influences the conduct of operations without the intervening variables of the indirect effect. First, this section seeks to establish what constitutes effective leadership structures and culture in complex operations. This requires an analysis of command and control. Special emphasis is placed on mission command. The analysis of mission command

shows the importance of trust within organizations, which calls for a closer look at this concept as well. The section also places the concepts of mission command and trust within a larger context by discussing the concept of culture, as well as the more narrowly defined concepts of military and strategic culture. This section thereby provides us with the final theoretical tools that allow us to construct a comprehensive theoretical framework for analysis of the causal relationship between different patterns of civil-military relations and the conduct and effectiveness of operations.

Mission Command

US Army doctrine defines command and control as 'the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Commanders perform command and control functions through a command and control system'.[151] While command resides with commanders and consists of authority, decision-making and leadership, control is how commanders execute command.[152] Good command and control structures thus comprise a leadership structure that effectively leads to mission accomplishment.

Pigeau and McCann, however, contend that these traditional definitions lack conceptual guidance and have therefore convincingly redefined command as 'the creative expression of human will necessary to accomplish a mission', and control as 'those structures and processes devised by Command to manage risk'.[153] These definitions include two important elements of command and control theory, namely the human nature of command, and the element of risk and responsibility involved in command. Pigeau and McCann make a further conceptual contribution by arguing that there are three dimensions of command: competency, authority and responsibility.[154] Competency, according to them, means not only physical and intellectual competency, but also, and especially in peace support operations, emotional and interpersonal competency. A significant argument is that peace operations require more empathy, moral judgement, negotiating skills and media training than traditional war fighting. Authority is best perceived as a combination of legal authority and personal authority,

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[151] US Department of the Army, FM 6-0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces* (2003), accessed 06/03/2005, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/6-0/>, p. 1-1.
[152] Ibid., p. 1-3.
[153] Carol McCann and Ross Pigeau, 'Clarifying the Concepts of Control and of Command', Command and Control Research and Technical Symposium, Newport, RI, (June 1999), p. 1.
[154] Ibid., p. 7.

meaning natural authority and respect developed through competency and good leadership. Finally, responsibility should include both extrinsic responsibility, which means accountability related to legal authority, and intrinsic responsibility, which is the self-generated sense of obligation that one feels about a mission.[155] These factors are essential when trying to understand why commanders chose their methods of command.

There are different methods of exercising command that are often placed on a continuous line between the extremes of direct (also detailed or centralized) command on the one side, and mission command on the other. Direct command involves the complete control of events from the commander by issuing detailed orders. Until the 19th century, this was the normal form of command in the European armed forces. However, as combat and warfare grew more complex and chaotic during the 19th century, the German General von Moltke developed the idea of *mission command*, a philosophy of decentralized command based on trust and initiative. In essence, mission command involves giving orders about what to do and what the aims are, but not how to do it. It was later used and refined by the German Wehrmacht in the two world wars where it proved highly effective. Mission command was therefore included in American and British defence doctrines during the Cold War and can now be considered a formal bedrock principle of most armed forces' command and control doctrines.[156]

According to British Army doctrine, the key elements of mission command are those of timely decision-making, the importance of understanding the superior commander's intent and a fundamental responsibility to act within the framework of the commander's intent.[157] Mission command was specifically developed to deal with increased complexity in the operational environment. The starting point is to accept the turbulence and uncertainty of war. Rather than increasing the level of certainty that we seek, mission command and control reduces the degree of certainty needed. In other words, 'by decentralizing decision-making authority, mission command and control seeks to increase tempo and improve the ability to deal with fluid and

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[155] Ibid.

[156] It is worth noting that the US Army doctrine on command and control from 2003 has the title 'Mission Command'.

[157] British Army Doctrine Publication (ADP), Volume 2, *Command,* Army Code 71564, (April 1995), Paragraph 0210.

disorderly situations'.[158] Commanders can hold a 'loose rein', allowing subordinates freedom of action, while at the same time requiring them to exercise initiative and adjust actions according to new input of information. This means that commanders make fewer decisions, but it allows them to focus on the most important ones.[159]

Lieutenant Oliveiro argues that, in its simplest and most elementary form, mission command refers to the mutual trust between superiors and subordinates, where a superior sets a goal and gives the subordinate freedom of action to achieve that goal. Mission command thereby involves a tacit trust up and down the chain of command; subordinates are even allowed the extreme action of disobedience, if it will result in the ultimate aim of the superior commander.[160] Trust, however, also involves the willingness to take risks, and there is always an element of increased risk involved in mission command – the risk that the subordinates have not really understood the intent, or the risk that the commander has made a bad decision or provided too few resources. Mission command theory, therefore, always involves a trade-off between ineffective but safe command and effective but risky command.

Mission command has proved difficult to practice in complex operations with much at stake. The concept was developed in large-scale, high-intensity warfare, which leads Jim Storr to discuss to what extent it is still relevant or appropriate to emphasize decentralized decision-making, trust, responsibility and shared intent in the post-Cold War environment.[161] Perhaps the most important challenge to mission command is the idea that complex irregular warfare is too important and politically charged to be left to the military and especially to officers and soldiers at the lower levels of command. An argument in support of centralized command is the idea that peace operations involve fewer crises and more time available to make decisions and take action, and that the information available appears more consistent and clear, if not better, than that received during combat operations.[162] That the everyday work in complex irregular warfare is generally less chaotic than during high-intensity combat

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[158] US Department of the Navy, MCDP 6, *Command & Control*, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., (1996), accessed 04/05/2005, <www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/mcdp6/toc.htm>, p. 79.

[159] US Department of the Army, *Mission Command,* § 1-74.

[160] Chuck S. Oliviero, 'Trust, Manoeuvre Warfare, Mission Command and Canada's Army', *The Army Doctrine and Training Bulletin,* (August 1998) accessed 14/04/07 at <http://armyapp.dnd.ca/ael/ADTB/Vol_1/August_98/english/Trust_maoeuvre.htm>

[161] Jim Storr, 'A Command Philosophy for the Information Age: The Continuing Relevance of Mission Command', *Defence Studies*, 3:3 (Autumn 2003), p. 119.

[162] US Department of the Army, *Mission Command*, §1-76.

cannot be disputed. However, politically charged situations, with the global media scrutinising every action, multifunctional operations involving both military and civilian components from most parts of the world, as well as the lack of a tangible enemy, are all factors that contribute to an environment of immense complexity in the context of complex irregular warfare.

The increased political sensitivity of operations has given the political leadership an incentive to increase the political control exercised, and to centralize the command and control of military operations in politically sensitive contexts. This tendency is exacerbated by new information technology that increases the possibility to micro-manage operations from the very top. Satellite surveillance and communication equipment have reached a stage where it is fully possible for political and military leaders to follow the activities and communicate with lower level commanders in real time. Christopher Dandeker has added valuable insight to this problem by applying Anthony Giddens' concept 'dialectic of control' to military transformation. Dandeker describes the dialectic of military control as consisting of two conflicting trends in dispersion and centralization. Dispersion of military authority to lower levels of the command chain on the one hand, and centralization of control, or what has been termed micro-management of military operations on the other. This means that the traditional military chain of command as well as the ideal of mission command are crumbling. Dandeker calls this the compression of the tactical, operational and strategic levels of war.[163]

The dispersion of military authority can be problematic as lower level officers, NCOs and soldiers traditionally have little training in how to handle politically sensitive situations, to deal with media, and to estimate the political consequences of their own actions. A peek into the coming case studies provides an example, namely an event which took place on 10 April 2003 in Baghdad which saw Cpl. Edward Chin of the US Marines cover the face of the Saddam Hussein statue with an American flag to celebrate the fall of the regime.[164] The event was broadcast by global media and completely contradicted the coalition's insistence on describing the invasion as a liberation, and not an occupation. This also highlights the previously discussed need

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[163] Christopher Dandeker, 'Surveillance and Military Transformation: Organizational Trends in Twenty First Century Armed Services', in Kevin Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson (eds.), *The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), pp. 239–240.
[164] 'American Flag Flap: Stars and Stripes on Saddam's Doomed Statue Strikes a Sensitive Chord', *ABCNews*, accessed 24 May 2004,
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/GMA/Primetime/Iraq030410USFlagStatue.html>

for increased political and cultural understanding at the lowest levels of command. Dandeker maintains that soldiers need to be aware of the broader framework in which their actions occur – especially the ability 'to place objectives of an operation in the context of the contingencies of the situations they confront'. He quotes a former NATO commander who accurately points out that 'the ordinary soldier has to be educated to understand that his actions can have as large an impact on events as Madeleine Albright'.[165] Charles Krulak's concept of the 'strategic corporal' highlights precisely this fact.[166]

Despite the fact that increased operational complexity and pace of events indicate a need for the decentralization of command, a common solution to the problem of the strategic corporal has been to micro-manage events from political and military leaders' headquarters.[167] However, centralized or direct command is for several reasons not an effective solution to the problems of politically sensitive operations. Firstly, micro situations on the ground are very hard to interpret if you are not actually on the spot yourself. Wrong or insensitive decisions may be the outcome. Secondly, micro-management often means that people with little understanding of soldiering will make the decisions, be it politicians with none or little experience, or high-ranking officers who have not been in these situations for decades. Thirdly, centralized command is time consuming. The reason is that when using centralized or detailed command, subordinates must refer to their headquarters when they encounter situations not covered by the commander's original orders.[168] In the short-term, this means a loss of operational speed and missed opportunities while waiting for new orders. In the long-term, it leads to a loss of quality and initiative of junior commanders and soldiers who are never forced to make decisions and to learn from their own actions. Instead, Dandeker argues that 'the inherent tensions within the dialectic of control can only be mitigated satisfactorily by trust- and confidence-building measures being installed at the political-military interface'.[169]

Mission command is, thereby, the preferable form of leadership at all levels of command in complex irregular warfare, not least at the strategic level of the civil-military interface. Interestingly, a marriage between mission command theory and the

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[165] In Dandeker, 'Surveillance', p. 241.
[166] Krulak, 'The Strategic Corporal'.
[167] Dandeker, 'Surveillance', p. 240.
[168] US Department of the Army, *Mission Command*, §1-80.
[169] Dandeker, 'Surveillance', p. 241.

debate on civil-military relations provides us with a number of useful points. First, the traditional notion of civil-military relations is very similar to that of mission command in its need for a clear dividing line between political decisions and military implementation. Operations are delegated to the military in a way that clearly resembles the ideal of mission command, stating what to do, but not how to carry out the task. However, as observed above, the successful implementation of mission command requires the components of mutual trust, understanding and responsibility. Theoretically, these components in the civil-military interface are not supported by the divided approach to civil-military relations. The integrated approach, however, adheres to both the structural and cultural aspects of mission command in the emphasis on integration and mutual understanding.

In conclusion, understanding and showing what patterns of civil-military relations are likely to produce an environment conducive to a strategic-level mission command type leadership are an important task of this thesis. The importance of mission command as well as the suggested solution to the problem of the dialectic of command, nevertheless, warrants a closer look at the concept of trust.

Trust

Trust is generally acknowledged to smooth relations between actors by engendering a wide variety of positive attitudes and behaviours towards others who are trusted. But, what is trust and how can it be attained? Katinka Bijlsma-Frankema and Ana Cristina Costa define trust as a psychological state that presupposes the intention to accept vulnerability as well as positive expectations based on personal similarities in characteristics, positive exchange relations or institutional arrangements that evoke trustworthy behaviour.[170] They list a number of consequences of trust in 'open communication and information exchange, psychological safety, commitment, belief in information and acceptance of influence, mutual learning, attribution of positive motives, and positive outcomes such as high levels of cooperation and performance'.[171]

The literature distinguishes different forms of trust. First, *interpersonal trust* refers to trust between people. In a literature review, Dmitry Khodyakov makes a

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[170] Katinka Bijlsma-Frankema and Ana Cristina Costa, 'Understanding the Trust-Control Nexus', *International Sociology*, 20:3 (September 2005), pp. 266–267.
[171] Ibid., p. 263.

useful distinction between thick and thin interpersonal trust. 'Thick interpersonal trust originates in relationships with strong ties and depends on the personalities of both the trustee and the trustor'. This form of trust involves personal familiarity with the counterpart as well as strong emotional commitment to the relationship.[172] Lynn Zucker calls this character-based trust, because it is based on social similarities and shared moral codes – personal characteristics like gender, ethnicity and cultural background.[173] This form of trust thereby depends on similarity and strong emotional relationships between people. Anthony Giddens refers to 'confidence in the reliability of persons' as the basis for creating a sense of social reality.[174]

Because of the social diversity of modern society, interactions and trust between people who do not often meet are of great importance. This is what Khodyakov calls thin trust, which is created through interactions of people who do not know each other well. 'It represents reliance on weak ties and is based on the assumption that another person would reciprocate and comply with our expectations of his or her behaviour, as well as with existing formal and ethical rules'.[175] Zucker similarly refers to process-based trust, built on experiences of reciprocity.[176] Thin interpersonal trust can also be facilitated through confirmation of a potential trustee's trustworthiness from a well-known and trustworthy intermediary for information about the trustee. Having a positive image of the intermediary directly influences the trustee's trustworthiness. Another form of intermediary may be the institution that the trustee is representing. An example is an aeroplane passenger who tends to trust the unknown pilot because of the former's familiarity with the airline and its reliable reputation.[177]

However, social reality is not only dependent on persons and their activities, but there are also institutions and abstract systems. Other ways to build trust than through personal relations are therefore necessary. This is where confidence or trust in systems or institutions becomes important. *System* or *institutional trust* refers to trust in the functioning of organizational, institutional and social systems. It flows from institutional arrangements that create and sustain trustworthy behaviours, such as

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[172] Dmitry Khodyakov, 'Trust as a Process: A Three-Dimensional Approach', *Sociology,* 41:1 (2007), pp. 115–132, 121.
[173] Lynn G. Zucker, 'Production of Trust: Institutional Sources of Economic Structure', in Barry Staw and Larry Cummings (eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 8 (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1986), pp. 53–112.
[174] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 38.
[175] Khodyakov, 'Trust as a Process', pp. 122–123.
[176] Zucker, 'Production of Trust'.
[177] Khodyakov, 'Trust as a Process', p. 122; see also ibid.

broad societal norms, guarding institutional arrangements and organizational governance systems. These abstract principles can bring about varying degrees of embedded trust, of shared norms and expectations, and of reciprocity.[178] Khodyakov argues that trust in institutions depends on their 'perceived legitimacy, technical competence, and ability to perform assigned duties efficiently'.[179] Giddens notes that because trust in institutions often assumes no 'encounters at all with the individuals or groups who are in some way "responsible" for them', trust in institutions is essentially different from trust in people.[180] This is also what makes institutional trust so difficult to achieve. It is more problematic to trust abstract principles or anonymous people than those we recognize by previous interaction or by reputation.[181]

There is no doubt that trust is an important aspect of organizational effectiveness and well functioning command and control structures. As noted, the civil-military interface must not only make decisions that lead to effective armed forces, it must also be effective in itself as an important component in the chain of command. Mission command as well as successful civil-military co-operation and interagency co-ordination rely on trust to function well. Applying the knowledge about trust to the previous discussion regarding trust and effective command and control in the civil-military interface leads to a number of interesting observations. First, the knowledge that interpersonal trust is based on social similarities and shared moral codes, and/or experiences of reciprocity, means that trust within the civil-military interface can be achieved by recruiting people with similar social backgrounds and moral codes on both sides of the divide, or to promote a common civil-military culture of shared moral values within the interface. It also means that the civil-military organizations should strive to integrate staff from both sides of the civil-military divide in order to create interpersonal trust and mutual understanding through personal experience of reciprocity.

Second, understanding that different institutional arrangements may evoke and sustain trustworthy behaviour means that the structures of the civil-military interface must be carefully constructed to promote co-operation and trust. If interpersonal trust is lacking within the organization, there can at least be a level of belief in the structure

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[178] Bijlsma-Frankema and Costa, 'Understanding the Trust-Control Nexus', pp. 261–262.
[179] Khodyakov, 'Trust as a Process', p. 123.
[180] Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 83.
[181] Khodyakov, 'Trust as a Process', p. 123.

or culture of the organization to provide a basic level of trust. Competition between the different agencies of the civil-military interface may evoke distrustful behaviour. As an example, an operational planner may not know their counterpart from the other side of the civil-military divide, and the planner also feels that they share a few values with the counterpart. Instead of instinctively distrusting the counterpart, the planner may instead fall back on institutional trust based on the fact that the different agencies have always co-operated well towards common goals, as well as the knowledge of a recruitment and promotion system within the other agencies that makes it highly unlikely that the counterpart is anything but competent and trustworthy. Finally, the planner may also fall back on previous personal experiences of working with people from other agencies with good results.

While much of the civil-military interface is about finding useful structural solutions, the cultural aspects are equally important. This review of theory has already covered concepts, such as mutual trust and understanding, co-operation and co-ordination, which are claimed to affect military effectiveness. However, these concepts are more of a cultural nature than a structural, and a basic level of understanding regarding the cultural aspects of organizations is therefore essential.

The Cultural Variable

Carnes Lord argues that a bureaucracy is 'not merely a formal set of relationships between organizational subunits, but a complex web of formal and informal operating procedures and personnel management practices'.[182] A RAND report emphasizes the importance of the concept of culture in understanding military organizations by arguing that 'the beliefs and attitudes that comprise organizational culture can block change and cause organizations to fail'.[183] Similarly, Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff contend that cultural norms define the very purpose and possibilities of military change.[184] Most importantly, cultural values influence behaviour and, thereby, the conduct and effectiveness of operations. The purpose of this section is to operationalize it as a variable in the analysis of civil-military relations and operational conduct and effectiveness. A comprehensive review of the concept, the debate

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[182] Carnes Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), p. 10.
[183] James Dewar et al., *Army Culture and Planning in a Time of Great Change* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996), pp. 2–3.
[184] Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), p. 7.

regarding what culture is and how it influences behaviour is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the contested nature of culture makes it essential to clarify some underlying conceptual and theoretical assumptions of this thesis.

There is a plethora of concepts related to culture and the first step is to establish how these concepts are related to each other and how they are useful in the analysis of civil-military relations. Edgar Schein has provided a general definition of culture as 'the whole range of human activities which are learned and not instinctive, and which are transmitted from generation to generation through various learning processes'.[185] The sociological literature on the subject of culture often describes it as having several layers. An example is provided by Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner, who argue that culture has three layers: an outer layer of artefacts and products, that is, tangible observable aspects, such as language and behaviour; a middle layer consisting of the norms and values of the members of the culture; finally, the inner layer of basic assumptions, the basic givens of life that cannot be easily challenged.[186] The theory is that the deeper the layer, the more difficult it is to observe and articulate, as well as to change. One of the important uses of the multi-layered model is to understand the possibilities of, and the constraints on, change. To impose change on an organization, it is not enough to simply order change of behaviour or language. If the changes are perceived to be against the deeper norms, values and assumptions of the culture, the organization is likely to resist.

Culture applied within the boundaries of a specific organization like a company or the armed forces is referred to as *organizational culture*. Schein defines organizational culture as 'what a group learns over a period of time as that group solves its problems of survival in an external environment and its problems of internal integration. Such learning is simultaneously a behavioural, cognitive, and emotional process'.[187] He further describes culture as a pattern of invented or discovered basic assumptions by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration. These assumptions are deemed to have worked well enough to be considered valid, and are therefore to be taught to new members as

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[185] John Beattie, *Other Cultures: Aims, Methods and Achievements in Social Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 1966), p. 20.
[186] Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner, *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business* (London: Nicholas Brealey, 1997), pp. 20–27.
[187] Edgar Schein, 'Organizational Culture', *American Psychologist*, Vol. 45 (February 1990), p. 110.

'the correct way to perceive, think, or feel in relation to these problems'.[188] It is worth emphasizing that culture, therefore, always seems to entail a normative aspect. Organizational culture is what is *considered* the right way of doing things within the organization. It is, nevertheless, not just a theoretical construction, according to Schein, who argues that the norms and values of the culture have to have worked well enough in the past to have an empirical aspect as well.[189] However, within military organizations this is a problematic aspect, as they typically do not have the chance to perform their main tasks very often, and therefore have little empirical material from which to form the organizational culture.

Donna Winslow has provided some interesting aspects on this topic by studying the Canadian Airborne Regiment's behaviour in Somalia (1992–1994) with reference to its organizational culture. She noted the serious consequences of using units with an exaggerated warfighting ethos in peace enforcement operations.[190] Winslow also argued that the Airborne Regiment's warrior ethos was not the result of lessons learned from frequent contacts with the realities of war, but from a stereotypical concept of war, developed in peacetime and derived from popular films, such as *Rambo*.[191] However, the reality on the ground in Somalia was a complex peace operation with confusing rules of engagement in a terrifying context of warlords and crimes against humanity – for this, the warrior ethos of Rambo was not sufficient. The same argument is made by Thomas Ricks regarding the US 4th Infantry Division in Iraq. He notes that its unusually aggressive stance, judged so by other US units in Iraq, was created out of a lack of operational experience as the unit missed out on the operations of the Gulf War, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, as well as the invasion of Iraq. When it relieved the 1st Division of the Marine Corps in mid-April 2003, the Army Division referred to its road march to Tikrit as an 'attack'.[192] Without actual operational experience, the military emphasizes the radical professional culture of traditional warfare.

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[188] Ibid.

[189] Ibid.

[190] This refers to the Somalia Affair which was a Canadian military scandal in the mid-1990s. It began with the brutal 1993 beating to death of a Somali teenager, Shidane Arone, at the hands of two Canadian soldiers participating in the United Nations humanitarian efforts in Somalia. The crime, documented by photos, shocked the Canadian public and brought to light internal problems in the Canadian Airborne Regiment that went beyond the two soldiers directly involved. Perhaps most damaging to the Canadian military was how it reacted after the events became public, as accusations of covering up the event surfaced.

[191] Donna Winslow cited in Dandeker and Gow, 'Military Culture', p. 76, footnote 23.

[192] Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 142–144.

Theories of organizational culture often focus on the functional imperative of the organization – what are the tasks the organization is seeking to perform?[193] It is clear that the organizational culture is an important factor in determining not only what the functional imperative is, but also in what manner the organization should address it. Thus, military organizations are likely to form norms and values that are adjusted to what is considered the functional imperative of the organization. In other words, what makes military culture unique is that its norms and values originate from the attempt to deal with the uncertainties and horrors of war.[194]

Lord argues that for reasons of bureaucratic self-defence, every bureaucracy has an organizational essence, a set of functions or activities that most clearly define it and justify its existence. Left to themselves, bureaucracies therefore tend to undertake projects and pursue goals that reinforce this organizational essence. The problem is that such goals are often at odds with the larger goals that bureaucracies are expected to pursue on behalf of the government and the nation.[195] Another interesting factor is, according to Lord, that bureaucracies tend to value clarity of mission and autonomy even more than expansion. Expansion into areas that are only peripherally related to their organizational essence is therefore often viewed as potentially harmful, as it can increase demands for co-ordination of the bureaucracy's operations with other agencies and for oversight from above.[196] This is essential in relation to the debate regarding the armed forces' functional imperative, and helps us understand many armed forces' reluctance to accept 'new' roles such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. Defining the 'organizational essence' or the organization's view of the functional imperative is therefore an important task of the case studies.

Military, political and societal cultures merge in the concept of strategic culture. Strategic culture, therefore, deals with the entire security establishment's values, assumptions, and patterns of behaviour, regarding the use of force – or a nation's 'way of war'.[197] Kerry Longhurst has provided a definition that avoids the often state-

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[193] Schein, 'Organizational Culture', p. 110.
[194] James Burk, 'Military Culture', in Lester Kurtz and Jennifer E. Turpin (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1999).
[195] Carnes Lord, 'American Strategic Culture', *Comparative Strategy*, 5:3 (1985), pp. 17–18.
[196] Ibid., p. 18.
[197] For a taster of this rich literature see Alistair Iain Johnston, 'Thinking about Strategic Culture', *International Security*, 19:4 (Spring 1995); Colin Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and National Style* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Press, 1986); Lord, 'American Strategic Culture'; Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1979); Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996).

centric view of strategic culture. Longhurst sees strategic culture as 'a distinctive body of beliefs, attitudes and practices regarding the use of force, which are held by a collective and arise gradually over time, through a unique protracted historical process'.[198] Lord has a similar view and creates a definition of strategic culture not just in terms of military practice, but also in terms of the social, political and ideological characteristics 'centrally constitutive of a state'. For Lord, strategic culture is the 'traditional practices and habits of thought by which military force is organized and employed by a society in the service of its political goals'. He identifies six factors which create a strategic culture: the geopolitical setting, military history, international relationships, political culture and ideology, the nature of civil-military relations and military technology.[199] Let us, thereby, take a closer look at the relationship between culture and effectiveness.

A firm believer in this relationship is Allan English who argues: 'History shows that social organization, politics, and culture have a direct influence on how a society wages war', and different civil-military relationships create various military cultures.[200] English also adds valuable insights to the relationship between military culture and performance by describing two important perspectives on this link. He notes that a particular culture is only appropriate if it fits the organization's strategy. English calls this the 'fit' perspective. Both the functional and the societal perspectives are, in English's view, factors that help explain whether or not a culture is appropriate. However, a different approach to culture and performance is the adaptation perspective, which holds that only cultures that help organizations adapt to environmental change are appropriate. 'An adaptive culture encourages risk-taking among members and focuses on the changing needs of its stakeholders'. The opposite non-adaptive cultures are characterized by cautious leaders who protect their own interests by acting bureaucratically and tend to value orderly risk-reducing management rather than leadership initiatives.[201]

This thesis argues that the functional imperative of armed forces is not fixed, but instead a function of the objective demands of the strategic context, as well as the outcome of strategic negotiation between political and military leaders, each with

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[198] Kerry Longhurst, 'The Concept of Strategic Culture', in Gerhard Kümmel and Andreas D. Prufert (eds.), *Military Sociology* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), p. 200.
[199] Lord cited in ibid., p. 303.
[200] Allan English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2004), p. 68.
[201] Ibid., p. 30.

subjective perceptions of the strategic demands and the nation's needs. Therefore, the extent to which the armed forces are adjusted to the strategic context should be a significant part of the empirical analyses of this thesis.

Alistair Iain Johnston and Colin Gray have together provided an important insight into the relationship between culture and effectiveness by debating the use of culture as a variable for explaining behaviour.[202] Johnston argues that the traditional use of culture, as conducted by Gray, is tautological in that it includes past behaviour as a factor determining the nature of strategic culture. Johnston argues that 'the dominant approach to strategic culture… has so far been unable to offer a convincing research design for isolating the effects of strategic culture'. Johnston has therefore tried to establish some methodological rigour by separating the cultural variable from behaviour in operations. He assumes that 'culture', identified in conceptual artefacts, such as texts and symbols, can be distinguished from behaviour for the purposes of analysis. Following this logic, Johnston then argues that if culture is an independent variable that can be distinguished from the dependent variable of behaviour, then it ought to be possible to isolate the effect of culture on behaviour by comparing the importance of the cultural variable with other independent variables like the structure of the international system.[203]

However, Clifford Geertz argues that although cultural form finds articulation in different conceptual artefacts, these artefacts draw their meaning from the role they play in everyday life. In other words, behaviour must be attended to 'because it is through the flow of behaviour… that cultural forms find articulation'.[204] In a defence against Johnston's critique, Gray also makes this point: 'Everything a security community does, if not a manifestation of strategic culture, is at least an example of behaviour effected by culturally shaped, or encultured, people, organisations, procedures, and weapons'.[205] Gray, therefore, argues that culture is not an independent variable that can be distinguished from other explanatory factors. Instead, culture is

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[202] For a useful and more extensive review of the debate regarding use of culture as a variable, see Benjamin Buley, *Immaculate Destruction: War as an Instrument in American Military Culture*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, February 2006, pp. 49-70.
[203] Alistair Iain Johnston, 'Thinking about Strategic Culture', *International Security*, 19:4 (Spring 1995), p. 33.
[204] Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture', in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 17.
[205] Colin S. Gray, 'Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back', *Review of International Studies,* Vol. 25 (1999), pp. 49–69.

the context that permeates all explanatory factors, as well as the dependent variable of behaviour. A convincing argument against Johnston's positivist methodological project is the result: 'Let us state the methodologically appalling truth that there can be no such conceptual space [beyond culture], because all strategic behaviour is effected by human beings who cannot help but be cultural agents'. Gray's conclusion is that behaviour must be included in any adequate definition of culture.[206] Although culture does not, in Gray's view, dictate a particular course of action, as many other variables will prohibit or shape such behaviour, the cultural variable is still always there, both as a 'shaping context for behaviour and a constituent of that behaviour'.[207]

Pierre Bourdieu sheds further light on this issue by arguing that practice, or behaviour, is never merely a mechanical reaction to roles or other mechanisms. Nor can we perceive the behaviour of individuals as fully creative or as acts of full free will. Cultural dispositions affect action, and they are durable.[208] In Bourdieu's view it is also a mistake to see classificatory systems, or what Johnston calls conceptual artefacts, of observed practice as just having cognitive functions. They have practical functions as well, serving to reproduce in practice 'the objective structures of which they are the product'.[209] As an example, classificatory systems of researchers, or cultural artefact, such as the language of doctrine, have a reflexive nature in that they describe past behaviour, as well as reproduce themselves in future behaviour and culture.

The result of the discussion above means this thesis treats culture as the context which conditions and constrains the behaviour of nations and organizations, rather than as one independent variable among others. Culture as a context is better used to interpret the meaning of particular practice than to predict future behaviour. However, by understanding the nature of cultural conditions and constraints, predictions about future behaviour are likely to be more accurate. In terms of methodology, the concepts of military and strategic culture are in this thesis operationalized within the more generic term 'way of war' – a concept that includes past behaviour in the form of historical analysis, cultural expressions or artefacts in the form of texts and language, such as doctrines and statements, as well as 'classificatory systems' in the form of secondary sources about military and strategic culture in the particular cases. The

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[206] Gray, 'Strategic Culture as Context', pp. 58–59.
[207] Ibid., p. 50.
[208] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977), pp. 74–75.
[209] Ibid., p. 97.

analyses of US and British ways of war thereby involve US and British preferences in war – cultural and structural – interpreted as the outcome of past operational experience, certain patterns of civil-military relations, and different interpretations of the functional imperative, all within the constraining and enabling contexts of military and strategic culture. In the search for the US and British ways of war, descriptions of strategic and military culture are of importance, as they provide the context in which the practice or ways of war are formed.

This means that the analyses conducted later in this thesis should involve two important causal processes: (*a*) how different patterns of civil-military relations shape a nation's way of war, and; (*b*) how a nation's way of war, in turn, influences the conduct and effectiveness of operations in complex irregular warfare. However, the concepts of military and strategic culture are also relevant when describing cultural preferences of certain institutions of the civil-military interface, and are in this function useful in their own right. While strategic culture is more suitable at the strategic-level analysis of the civil-military interface, military culture is more useful in relation to training, doctrine, and tactical operations in the field.

Conclusion

The review of traditional theories of civil-military relations provided a useful starting point in the creation of the theoretical framework of this thesis. It increases the understanding of civil-military relations as an arena in which funding, doctrine and the mindset of military organizations are decided. In that sense, the field of civil-military relations helps explain an indirect relationship between the nature of civil-military relations and the conduct of operations. However, a number of intervening variables in the causal chain between civil-military relations and operational conduct have been missing and this section has sought to fill some gaps in the literature by adding a number of related concepts to the theoretical discussion. Moreover, the previous chapter noted a need for civil-military co-operation and co-ordination during operations: an aspect that is not covered in the literature on civil-military relations. The discussion of the concepts of mission command, trust and culture has thereby increased the understanding of what this thesis calls the indirect effects on operational behaviour, as well as defined the direct effects within command and control theory and the discussion on mission command.

The civil-military interface is an important part of the operational chain of command, especially at the strategic-level interface of policy-makers and military implementers. This is the level where strategic aims are created and translated into operational plans and activities, thereby affecting the planning and implementation of operations. This section also noted that the type of leadership exercised at this level of command is similar to what the military calls mission command – expressing what to do, but not how to do it. It was observed that mission command requires mutual trust and understanding in order to function well – something that is often missing in the civil-military interface. Increasing trust within the civil-military interface and the interagency arena requires high-levels of both interpersonal and institutional trust – stemming from close working relationships and experiences of reciprocity. Finally, the section on culture as a variable was helpful in operationalizing culture as a variable in the causal chain between certain patterns of civil-military relations and effectiveness. It also increased the understanding of how difficult it is to achieve change within the constraints of organizational and strategic culture. To achieve effectiveness in complex irregular warfare, the civil-military interface must therefore not only serve as an effective level in the chain of command, but also provide the funds as well as the physical and conceptual directions that are necessary to create an organization ready to implement the decisions of the political leadership – an organization with a strategic culture 'fit for purpose'.

Together, the direct and indirect effects of civil-military relations on the conduct and effectiveness of operations, as covered by this chapter's literature review, constitute a useful theoretical foundation for the development of a theoretical framework for analysis of how the nature of civil-military relations affects the conduct of operations. The following section will not only create such a framework, but will also outline a methodology for applying this framework empirically, and for testing the impact of the divided and integrated approaches to civil-military relations.

The Civil-Military Dimension of Effectiveness: A Framework for Analysis

As stated in the introduction, the aim of this dissertation is to increase the understanding of the civil-military dimension of effectiveness in complex irregular warfare. The thesis consequently asks two main research questions. First, how do the

patterns of civil-military relations affect the conduct of operations in the context of complex irregular warfare? The second question is how operational effectiveness be improved by changing the patterns of civil-military relations? To address the research questions, this thesis is designed in two parts. The first has involved reviewing existing theory in order to create a theoretical framework for analysis. After the formulation of this framework, the second part of the study involves testing and, if necessary, refining the framework by analysing two cases through the method of process tracing, followed by a comparative study. The comparative study also serves to draw conclusions regarding the impact of the divided and integrated approaches to civil-military relations, as described in this chapter. The cases, which are further discussed below, involve the United States and the United Kingdom – their patterns of civil-military relations, their approaches to complex irregular warfare, as well as their conduct of operations in Iraq from the planning stages of the war to March 2007.

King, Keohane and Verba, nevertheless, argue that before designing empirical tests it is useful to specify causal mechanisms, entailing a linked series of causal hypotheses that indicate how connections among variables are made. 'Defining and then searching for these different causal mechanisms may lead us to find a plethora of new observable implications for a theory'.[210] While the discussions of the past two chapters have provided us with the theoretical foundation, this section, finally, brings the different threads together into the analytical framework of the thesis. Further aspects of the research design are therefore discussed after the formulation of the framework.

As previously mentioned, the theoretical framework involves dual causal links between different patterns of civil-military relations and the conduct of operations – one direct and one indirect.

1. Direct impact

The structure and culture of a state's civil-military interface have a *direct impact* on the conduct and effectiveness of operations by affecting the quality of command at the strategic and operational levels. Effectiveness in the contemporary strategic context requires the involvement and co-ordination of all instruments of national power in the planning and execution of operations. The nature of the civil-military interface

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[210] Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994), p. 225.

determines the command and control structures of the strategic and operational levels of command, as well as the level of interagency co-operation and civil-military co-ordination of planning and execution of operations. In other words, the patterns of civil-military relations determine whether experts from all relevant departments and agencies are brought into the planning process, and whether a comprehensive approach to operations is applied.

The command and control structures of the civil-military interface also determine the effectiveness of the execution of tactical operations through the facilitation of the necessary co-ordination and co-operation between the civilian and military components of operations. The patterns of civil-military relations further determine the level of mutual trust and understanding within the chain of command. The section on command and control theory highlighted the importance of mission command in complex irregular warfare. The effective use of mission command within the civil-military interface as well as in the field, nevertheless, requires clear aims and high levels of trust within the entire chain of command. To co-ordinate the actors towards the common aim of the operations without micro-management, the political leadership must therefore trust the structures of the interagency system as well as the actors within it in order to give these structures the authority they need for effective planning and execution of comprehensive approaches to operations in the pursuit of the political aims.

2. Indirect impact

Beyond the direct impact of civil-military relations on the conduct and effectiveness in complex irregular warfare, there is also an important *indirect impact*. This is the type of influence on military effectiveness normally discussed within civil-military relations theory. It explains how the size, structure, training, culture, doctrine, and equipment are affected by different patterns of civil-military relations. The indirect impact asserts peacetime influence over the armed forces and determines whether they are 'fit for purpose' at the onset of operations. The civil-military interface must therefore be constructed in a way that is likely to produce an organization well adjusted to the demands of the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare. This involves both the structure and the organizational culture of the armed forces as well as of the other instruments of power.

The literature review has identified two typical patterns of civil-military relations – the divided and the integrated patterns, as advocated by Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz. These patterns impact operational conduct and effectiveness by interpreting the functional imperative differently, which produces armed forces of different levels of adjustment for the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare. While the main conclusions regarding the outcome of different patterns of civil-military relations are discussed in the final two chapters, a hypothesis is here derived from the theoretical framework and the literature review.

The complex nature of contemporary peace support operations means that integrated civil-military approaches are necessary for effectiveness in achieving the often far-reaching political aims of democratization and economic development. Such integrated, or comprehensive, approaches to operations also require integrated institutions at the national strategic level, and at the international organizational level in cases of multinational operations within different organizational frameworks. There are two main reasons why integrated civil-military structures at the strategic level would provide better results in complex PSOs:

1. The indirect impact means that integrated structures provide more accurate and up to date interpretations and adjustment to the functional imperative of the armed forces. This means that the instruments of national power, not least the military, are better suited for the contemporary strategic context.

2. The direct impact of integrated structures is that they provide more inclusive command and control structures at the strategic level, which means that all relevant actors in complex operations are co-ordinated through integrated planning and execution of operations – providing what the British call the comprehensive approach.

Together, the direct and indirect impacts on the conduct and effectiveness of operations in complex irregular warfare are of great importance. The effectiveness of the command and control structures in the civil-military interface and the quality of strategic and operational-level planning are of little value without a security organization with the capability of effectively achieving the political aims of operations.

Research Methodology

King, Keohane and Verba assert that 'the development of a new theory or hypothesis, different from but entailed by the original theory, often involves moving to a lower level of aggregation and a new type of unit'.[211] This thesis certainly applies a new explanatory variable – the patterns of civil-military relations – to the existing theoretical explanations for military conduct and effectiveness. This explanatory variable is, as King, Keohane and Verba suggest, on a different level of aggregation. However, rather than functioning at a lower level of aggregation, the patterns of civil-military relations, as a variable, have the benefit of encapsulating a number of previously discussed factors. Therefore, it increases the understanding of how the different variables that determine the conduct and effectiveness of operations interact with one another. After constructing the theoretical framework for analysis, the next step of this thesis involves testing and refining this framework empirically, as well as to draw conclusions regarding the impact of the two approaches to civil-military relations on effectiveness, as reviewed in this chapter. This section, therefore, outlines the methodology for these tasks.

While causality itself concerns the effects or outcomes of different variables, causal mechanisms describe the processes of how these effects are exerted. In the words of King, Keohane and Verba: 'If we posit that an explanatory variable causes a dependent variable, a "causal mechanisms" approach would require us to identify a list of causal links between the two variables'.[212] This thesis is interested in both causality and causal mechanisms. The causality aspect involves the effects of different patterns of civil-military relations, whilst the causal mechanisms deal with the important 'how question' and seek to explain the causal links between the explanatory and the dependent variables. In other words, through what processes do different patterns of civil-military relations affect operational conduct and effectiveness? To address these two concerns, the thesis employs a combination of two different methods – process tracing, and, what George and Bennett call, 'structured, focused comparison'.[213]

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[211] King, Keohane and Verba, .*Designing Social Enquiry*, p. 255.
[212] Ibid., p. 86.
[213] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), p. 67.

The comparative method is useful for the question of causality, while process tracing is particularly useful for analysing causal mechanisms. George and Bennett identify four strong reasons for employing the method of structured, focused comparison. First, 'case studies allow researchers to achieve high levels of conceptual validity, or to identify and measure the indicators that best represent the theoretical concepts the researcher intends to measure'. The variables in social sciences are many, complex, interacting, and therefore notoriously difficult to measure. Understanding the impact of different variables thus requires profound understanding of the theoretical and empirical context in which observations are made – understanding which is often best achieved through in-depth case studies.[214] Another reason for choosing comparative case studies as a method is its suitability for deriving new hypotheses and theories. The comparative case study of this thesis is employed both in a theory *testing* function – evaluating the theoretical framework for analysis – and in a theory developing function by producing conclusions regarding the effects of the two different patterns of civil-military relations on operational effectiveness. In that dual role, case studies have the potential to add or remove variables and thereby improve or change theory.

The final, and most important, reason why a comparative case study constitutes the heart of this thesis is its suitability for exploring causal mechanisms. Case studies have the benefit of examining the operation of causal mechanisms in individual cases in detail. The level of detail allows this method to look at a 'large number of intervening variables and to observe unexpected aspects of operations of a particular causal mechanism or help identify what conditions present in the case activate the causal mechanism'.[215] This is important, as correlation is very different from causation. Simply showing that there is a correlation between certain patterns of civil-military relations and a way of conducting operations would not be enough. The method of structured, focused case comparison of two cases allows this thesis to test the causal mechanisms as established theoretically in the two first chapters.[216] The theoretical discussions of the previous two chapters have provided the theoretical framework for analysis, which together determine the different variables to be studied,

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[214] Ibid., p. 19.
[215] Ibid., p. 21.
[216] Ibid.

as well as the questions to be asked, of the cases, and thereby standardizes the data collection and presentation.[217]

Process tracing involves generating and examining data on the causal mechanisms, or processes, events, and other intervening variables that link putative causes to observed effects. George and Bennett argue that 'of the two kinds of evidence on the theoretical causal notions of causal effect and causal mechanisms, tests of co-variation attempt to address the former, and process tracing assesses the latter'. Within the general method of process tracing, this thesis employs what George and Bennett have termed 'process verification' – a method which involves 'testing whether the observed processes among variables in a case match those predicted by previously designated theories'.[218] This method involves uncovering and tracing the intervening variables along the causal chain between the explanatory and dependant variables.

George and Bennett argue that process tracing is useful as a method of making a causal inference when it is not possible to do so through the method of controlled comparison alone. They argue that 'an ideal case comparison based on the method of difference requires identification of two cases that are similar in all but one independent variable and that differ in the outcome'. This is called 'controlled' comparison and permits the researcher to employ experimental logic in making a causal inference regarding the impact variance in that variable has on the outcome (dependent variable). However, process tracing is helpful when the requirement needed for a perfectly controlled comparison is not met, which is most often the case in the social sciences. By tracing the processes of causal mechanisms, or intervening variables, this method has the potential of strengthening the position of certain explanatory variables, or ruling them out, depending on the outcome of the research. Moreover, comparing cases, which allows for following two or more processes, provides a stronger basis for inference than either of the cases alone.[219]

Research Design and Case Selection

The practical implementation of the methodological discussion above involves a multi-level study. To successfully test the theoretical framework, and to draw

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[217] Ibid., p. 67.
[218] George and Bennett, 'Process Tracing in Case Study Research'.
[219] Ibid.

conclusions regarding the effects of different patterns of civil-military relations, the case studies need to provide several levels of evidence. First, the patterns of civil-military relations must be established in each case as the explanatory variables of both the direct and indirect causal chains, and as the starting points for process tracing. Second, the causal mechanisms in the intervening variables of the direct and indirect causal links between different patterns of civil-military relations and operational behaviour must be established. The causal mechanisms and the intervening variables then provide further causal evidence in the final analysis of the dependent variable of operational conduct and effectiveness in complex irregular warfare.

As mentioned, the thesis involves two cases to achieve the above. These case studies are designed to test both the direct and the indirect influence on operational conduct and therefore involve multi-level analyses. The starting point of the case studies is to examine the independent variable of each case – the patterns of civil-military relations. However, as Christopher Dandeker has importantly argued, the historical context of the armed forces has an effect on defence roles and mission, organizational structure, military culture, as well as the patterns of civil-military relations.[220] To place the pattern of civil-military relations within a historical context, a review of the historical background of the respective armed forces therefore precedes the analysis of civil-military relations in each case. Following the historical section, the patterns of civil-military relations are analysed by breaking down this variable into two parts: (*a*) interagency co-operation and co-ordination at the strategic level; (*b*) civil-military integration within the defence ministry. Finally, these analyses are discussed in relation to the two theoretical approaches to civil-military relations, as discussed in the section on civil-military relations theory – the divided and the integrated approaches.

Each case study contains an analysis of the indirect variables caused by the patterns of civil-military relations, and that in turn influences the armed forces' operational conduct. The intervening variables of this analysis involve the armed forces' structure, culture, and doctrine. To perform that task, these sections discuss whether the structure, culture and doctrine of the armed forces in the US and the UK are suitable for complex irregular warfare. This is done with reference to the principles of best practice, as reviewed in the previous chapter. The main questions of

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[220] Dandeker, *Facing Uncertainty*, p. 7.

these chapters are: how is the functional imperative of the armed forces interpreted and by whom? What are the structural and cultural consequences of this interpretation?

The answers to these questions not only reveal the extent to which the armed forces are fit for complex irregular warfare, they also create a number of expectations regarding the armed forces' conduct of operations in the field. Finally, to test these expectations, the two cases involve empirical studies of the two armed forces' respective operations in Iraq from 2003. This is the analysis of the dependant variable of operational conduct and effectiveness in complex irregular warfare. As previously discussed, the dependant variable of operational conduct or effectiveness does not involve neat dichotomies in victory or loss. Instead, it is measured in relation to a number of factors derived from the theoretical section on principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare. At the strategic level these factors involve the approaches to operations, the political and military aims, and the level of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination in the planning process. At the tactical level emphasis is placed on unity of command and effort, the use of hearts and minds approaches to operations, the level of cultural understanding, and finally, adaptability. Outcomes of operations are nevertheless also briefly discussed regarding the effectiveness of operational conduct.

The two case studies are followed by the comparative study, in which the cases are compared and contrasted. This chapter seeks to make inferences by further relating the empirical observations to the theoretical discussions of the first two chapters. The chapter thereby evaluates the hypothesis and the theoretical framework for analysis and discusses necessary refinements.

One of the main challenges when conducting case studies is the selection of cases. The cases analysed in the thesis are, as previously mentioned, the British and American civil-military relations, their approaches to complex irregular operations, and finally their operations in Iraq from 2003. The cases chosen are justified for several reasons. First, in terms of relevance, the study of American and British complex irregular warfare is intrinsically interesting as the two countries, for different reasons, are likely to be leading these types of operations in the future. The US has a particular role as the sole remaining military superpower and will in that role, as well as protect its own interests and security, continue to engage itself in different complex expeditionary operations. The UK has a unique experience and capability of

expeditionary operations, including counter-insurgency. That experience, in combination with a large international presence, makes the UK likely to continue to engage in and lead operations of that kind, not least within the EU and/or NATO frameworks. Methodologically, the comparison of the US and the UK is also relevant. Despite many relative similarities in culture and background, including extensive experience in both conventional large-scale warfare and counter-insurgency operations, the two countries have essentially different approaches to complex irregular warfare, despite a long history of co-operation in military, intelligence and other activities. Tracing the causes of that disparity is thus of great interest. The two cases are therefore chosen as contrasting instances of the same phenomenon.[221]

The choice of the operations in Iraq as the empirical testing ground for the thesis has been made because they represent the latest, and most interesting, example of major powers involved in complex irregular warfare against an asymmetric insurgent. A number of scholars stress the fact that contemporary insurgencies are quite different from yesterday's communist insurgencies – both in terms of aims and tactics.[222] Although a number of historical counter-insurgency campaigns are of interest for this thesis, they would not have provided the same empirical strengths as a contemporary case of complex irregular warfare. Studying today's Iraq, which certainly involves a complex, networked, and, in some aspects, global insurgency, therefore limits the risk of producing lessons for past operations.

The empirical case of Iraq also allows for a comparative analysis of US and UK operational conduct within the same context, allowing for a number of different contextual variables to be isolated. It should, nevertheless, be emphasized from the beginning that although US and British troops were and are operating within Iraq at the same time, the two armed forces actually operated within very different contexts. This problematic aspect of the case selection is obviously further discussed in each of the cases as well as in the comparative analysis of the concluding chapters.

Another problematic aspect of US and British operations in Iraq as a case study is the fact that the operations are by no means concluded, and predicting an outcome is still, in the spring of 2007, not easily done. The outcome of the operations is therefore impossible as a variable when evaluating operational conduct within the scope of this thesis. However, as noted in the previous chapter, in the discussion regarding military

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[221] Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide*, p. 33.
[222] See as an example, Mockaitis, 'From Counter-Insurgency'.

effectiveness, outcome is not the only variable of effectiveness, and the design of the case studies makes up for this problem by evaluating the independent variable of operational conduct and effectiveness in relation to what is considered best practice in complex irregular warfare. Outcome would also not have been useful as a variable of comparison as the outcome of British and American operations is inherently linked in Iraq.

Collection and Use of Data

This study employs qualitative research methods because of the limited number of cases and respondents as well as the type of data, which are, in some instances, based on subjective opinions and emotions and therefore less suitable for quantitative analysis.[223] The diverse nature of the research questions means that the data is pulled from many different sources. The first part of the thesis, involving the theoretical discussion and construction of a framework for analysis, has mainly involved the analysis of secondary sources. However, to establish a set of best practices in complex irregular warfare, primary sources in the form of doctrine and a few interviews have also been employed. The studies of different patterns of civil-military relations have involved a similar mix of sources, with more emphasis on interviews. The data necessary for these analyses includes the experience and opinions of military officers, politicians and civil servants, as well as observations of working methods and structures, for which interviewing was the best form of data collection. Again, the study of organizational culture and the approaches to irregular warfare has involved the same mix of sources, this time emphasizing historical writing and official doctrine publications.

Finally, gathering data from the operations in Iraq has produced a challenge. Initial hopes of research visits to Iraq were quickly abandoned due to security reasons. Instead, this thesis has relied on newspaper coverage, lessons learned documents, official reports, academic books and articles, and some interviews with returned military officers in Washington and London. The data collected in this manner is not ideal, but certainly sufficient for the purpose of this thesis.

As the interviews deal with highly complex and political issues, as well as with opinions and emotions, the choice of interview method was that of semi-structured in-

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[223] David Marsh and Gerry Stoker, *Theory and Methods in Social Science* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995), p. 38.

depth interviews.[224] The semi-structured format involves a number of predetermined questions and topics discussed in a systematic and consistent order. However, the answers are open-ended, and the interviewer as well as the interviewee are allowed to digress and probe beyond the questions and topics of the standardized questions. The flexibility of the semi-structured format allows for different focus depending on the interviewee's experience and background, while the structured questions have the benefit of allowing for some interesting comparisons of reactions and answers from different respondent groups, i.e., the military and civilians, as well as British and US officers and officials.[225]

The selection of interviewees for the theoretical sections was made through personal contacts at the defence ministries and the method of 'snowballing'. When conducting research on contemporary operations there will always be a problem of availability of respondents that limits the method of sampling among military commanders, civil servants, humanitarian workers, and political leaders who were involved in the two cases. First-hand observations in the field would therefore have been an advantage.

As a reserve officer the author of this thesis has the benefit of speaking both the military and civilian languages. However, when making contact with potential respondents the author has chosen to present himself in slightly different ways in order to make the respondents feel comfortable. To present oneself as an officer when trying to gain access to military personnel is very useful, but can possibly be a negative factor when making contact with civilian interviewees. As the information gathered in the interviews is often opinions and feelings, creating the impression that the respondent can speak freely has been of greater importance than appearing completely neutral. The author has nevertheless been very careful not to ask leading questions or increase bias. The privacy and integrity of respondents have been protected by contacting the respondent for information regarding use of the date, for possible clarifications, and for the approval of interpretations.[226]

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[224] Ibid., pp. 137–138.
[225] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), p. 70; and Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide*, p. 113.
[226] Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 87.

CHAPTER 3

PATTERNS OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

The theory chapter advocated a broad view of civil-military relations, in which the study of history, in combination with cultural and structural factors, helps us to form a deeper understanding of how the civil-military relationship is rooted in societies' structures, and how they may affect the conduct of operational planning and execution. The analysis of US civil-military relations, therefore, starts with an analysis of US military history, before looking at the specific patterns of civil-military relations. The section on civil-military relations draws on the theoretical section of this thesis and seeks to relate the US patterns of civil-military relations to the previous discussion on divided versus integrated structures as advocated by Huntington and Janowitz respectively. Peter Feaver's agency theory informs the analysis of civilian monitoring of the armed forces. The section on civil-military relations focuses on interagency co-operation, civil-military relations within the Department of Defense, and the cost of civilian monitoring of the armed forces.

US Military History

A comprehensive study of US military history is not feasible within the scope of this section, which, instead, highlights a number of events and currents in US military history that are likely to have had a major impact on the culture of the armed forces and its relationship with the political leadership. In practice, that means a closer look at the birth of the US armed forces, the era of professional development in the wake of the Civil War, as well as the Vietnam War and the lessons that came out of it. Finally, the section studies the latest developments within the changing security context of the post-Cold War world.

The Early Years

The American political and civil-military structures are as old as the nation itself, and the sentiments from the early years of the republic still form the relationship between the US and its military. Richard Kohn argues that few political principles were more widely known or more universally accepted in America during the 1780s than the danger of standing armies in peacetime.[227] This fear was expressed by Samuel Adams with excellent precision:

> A Standing Army, however necessary it may be at some times, is always dangerous to the Liberties of the People. Soldiers are apt to consider themselves as a Body distinct from the rest of the citizens. They have arms always in their hands. Their Rules and Discipline is severe… Such a power should be watched with a jealous Eye.[228]

Thus, the framers of the US Constitution feared that the military might try to take power, or that a government facing electoral defeat might use the military to hold onto power by force. Not only did the framers therefore seek to control the powers of the military, but also to limit political leaders' capability to exploit its powers. The solution was a system of checks and balances which institutionalized divisions among the civilian leadership and induced the executive and the legislature to monitoring one another as well as the military.[229]

The basic elements of the new political system that were also used to control the military were the diffusion of power and shared responsibility. The American Constitution assigned the President the role of Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. But it also reserved for Congress the power to declare war and the power to raise and equip armed forces. Appropriations for the army were limited to two years. Finally, the Constitution mandated state militias that were to provide an insurance against the power of the standing army.[230] From the very birth of the nation, the armed forces were thus distrusted and alienated from society, something that would have a large impact on the nature of its development into a professional corps.

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[227] Richard H. Kohn, 'The Constitution and National Security: The Intent of the Framers', in Richard H. Kohn (ed.), *The United States Military under the Constitution of the United States, 1789–1989* (NY: New York UP, 1991), pp. 81–82.
[228] Samuel Adams quoted in Allan Millet, *The American Political System and Civilian Control of the Military: A Historical Perspective* (Columbus: Mershon Center, Ohio State University, 1979), p. 1.
[229] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 21.
[230] Douglas Johnson and Steven Metz, 'American Civil-Military Relations: New Issues, Enduring Problems', Strategic Studies Institute Report, (1995), accessed 21/02/05, <www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/research_pubs/amcivil.pdf>, p. 3.

The Professionalisation of the US Military

After the relative peace of the early national period, mostly involving small wars along the Western frontier, the Civil War of 1861–1865 caught both sides unprepared, as they virtually had to build their armies from scratch. The Civil War is sometimes referred to as the first modern or total war, as it involved the entire societies, as well as introduced mass conscription, trench warfare, military railroads, as well as technological innovations, such as machine guns, submarines, and rifles. However, while the Civil War had a profound impact on the US, it was not until the war was over and the military went back to fight the indigenous people along the Western frontier that the US military went through what Samuel Huntington called the 'golden ages of professionalism'.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the broad participation of America's male youth in the Civil War, the hostility of American society towards the military institutions came back in peacetime and led to an isolation and rejection of the armed services after the war. This led the military to 'withdraw into its own hard shell' and develop a distinctively military character. No other period has, according to Huntington, been such a 'decisive influence in shaping the course of American military professionalism and the nature of the American military mind'. The size of the armed forces was kept small and as long as they did not ask for an increased budget, Congress left the armed forces relatively free to set its own training, promotion and evaluation standards. Moreover, the presidents, who at this time were free from any pressing external threats, left the armed forces to develop its professional standards free from civilian influence.[231]

One of the few post-Civil War political suggestions on the future of the US Army was the idea to change it into a police force. The army, not surprisingly, objected strongly to the use of the armed forces as a police force, since it was considered 'beneath the soldier's vocation'.[232] Bernard Boëne has argued that fighting other militaries and states is generally considered more charismatic than domestic policing. Defending the sovereignty of the nation state gave the military a unique role within the international arena as the most important security actor – a role worth

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[231] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 229.
[232] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 26–27.

preserving for the sake of status.[233] In the US case the military was allowed to define its own functional imperative, and, as noted, the professional standards necessary to effectively address that imperative. Thus, the US military developed a doctrine of war based on the underlying principles of strategy. The inspiration for these developments came from an admiration and misreading of the Prussian military theorists of the nineteenth century, and relied heavily on the 'science of war'. Huntington writes: 'the German lessons were frequently misinterpreted and misapplied, but the desire to imitate German institutions was an important force in furthering American professionalism'.[234] Closely associated with the idea that war existed as an independent science was the notion that the practice of that science was the only purpose of military forces. The argument was therefore that the army and navy solely existed to fight wars, not for any other reason, and that the training and organization must be directed to the sole end of efficiency in combat.[235]

Huntington argues that the American military profession differed from those of most other countries in that it was almost entirely the product of the officers themselves. In Europe, professionalism was normally the outcome of social-political currents at work in society at large. In the US, 'civilian contribution was virtually nil'.[236] Thus, although Huntington and most other theorists in the field of civil-military relations claim that the culture and organization are a product of functional and societal imperatives, in the US case the societal imperative was of little importance, and the functional imperative, which was left to be interpreted by the US military itself, was based on a misreading of European history and military theory.

The Cold War and the Development of a Standing Army

The World Wars made sure that most military forces were adjusted for large-scale, conventional warfare. For the US military, this was nevertheless already the case and the World Wars simply confirmed and cemented its emphasis on large-scale offensive and decisive warfare. However, the military's role in policy-making had during the Second World War increased to the level where it essentially ran both the war and the

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[233] Bernard Boëne, 'How Unique is the Military Today? How Unique Should it Be?', in Bernard Boëne, Christopher Dandeker, Jurgen Kuhlmann, and Jan van der Meulen, *Facing Uncertainty*, *Report No. 2: The Swedish Military in International Perspective* (Karlstad: Försvarshögskolan Acta D5, Ledarskapsinstitutionen, 2000), pp. 7–9.
[234] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 235.
[235] Ibid., p. 256.
[236] Ibid., p. 233.

country using the political leadership as political advisors. The military influence on decision-making did not prove easy to limit after the war.[237] Traditionally, the dislike for standing armed forces meant that the US military had been scaled back between wars. With the Soviet threat the US nevertheless for the first time since independence needed to maintain a large-scale peacetime military. This unbalanced the civil-military relationship by increasing the military's peacetime presence and influence in society and in security policy-making.

Strategically, the post-war era came to focus on a possible Third World War. To avoid the expansion of Communism, the US developed the grand strategy of containment, of which the first priority was the containment of Communism in Europe. The focus on Europe is important as it reinforced the US military's embedded bias towards large-scale warfare. The military's reward system, therefore, came to emphasize service in Europe and the continued focus on traditional principles of conventional war.[238] The focus of the services in the early Cold War era was to demonstrate their necessity in a possible Third World War in order to secure congressional budgets, something that was demonstrated by the behaviour of the military services in the first containment war in Korea. In fact, none of the services saw Korea as the kind of war they existed for, and no lessons were learned in relation to limited warfare.[239]

Korea, instead, provided the political and military leadership with almost opposing lessons learned. While the political leadership saw the benefits of the 'graduated response' and the possibility of limited political aims in wars to support the containment doctrine, the lesson learned by generals was that 'the only proper end of war was military victory', and they therefore found it hard to understand why this should ever be denied them.[240] As argued above, the political leadership that was in many ways relinquished to the military during the Second World War, and which allowed the military to define the aims of operations, was not easily regained in the post-war period. The Korean War, therefore, also provided a battleground over the control of strategic aims. General MacArthur, who was in charge of the operations in Korea, made his disgust with the limited aims clear as he, famously, argued that 'there

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[237] Ibid., p. 315.
[238] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 34.
[239] Ibid., p. 35.
[240] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 389.

is no substitute for victory'.[241] The civil-military conflict culminated in President Truman's firing of General MacArthur in 1951. This event, however, turned out to be somewhat of a pyrrhic victory as it proved politically costly, despite the fact that Truman in this matter had the support of the majority in Congress. The event made clear that the President's most important tool for controlling the military and generating change – control over personnel – was to be considered politically risky for the President. This risk was further exacerbated in the wake of the Second World War, as the heightened general interest in security policy also increased competition among the civilian branches of the government.[242]

The military's historically successful resistance to innovation, caused by the high costs of presidential monitoring and incentives in forms of funding from Congress that rewarded doctrinal focus on large-scale warfare in the European theatre, nevertheless had consequences. Avant argues that one such consequence was that the US never developed the type of military doctrine that is required for effective counter-insurgency operations.[243] However, perhaps more importantly, it also lacked a military culture flexible enough to adapt to irregular operations. The cost of this deficiency became obvious as the US administration increasingly became involved in Vietnam.

The Legacy of the Vietnam War

The Vietnam War is worth dwelling on, not only because it is arguably the most formative event for the US military in modern history, but also because it is a monumental example of a civil-military failure, and therefore highly interesting in relation to the later analyses of Iraq and Afghanistan. As part of the grand strategy of containment it is debatable whether the war was successful or not, as it was successful in limiting communist expansion in South East Asia. However, in operational and tactical terms it is clear that the Vietnam War was a significant failure.

More than three million Americans were sent to Vietnam between the early 1960s until the main US withdrawal in 1973. About 58,000 were killed, and around 300,000 were wounded. A conservative estimate of civilian casualties in South Vietnam is the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees' estimates of 400,000 killed, 900,000 wounded, and 6.4 million turned into refugees. The total number of people

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[241] Ibid., p. 390.
[242] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 35.
[243] Ibid., p. 36.

who were killed during the American-Vietnam War has been estimated between one and three million people. Despite an enormous military and financial effort, the Americans never achieved the decisive victory they had always been seeking throughout their military history.

The mistakes and lessons of the Vietnam War have been thoroughly debated since, and the sheer diversity of lessons makes the issue very complicated. In a civil-military analysis of the Vietnam War it is obvious that the absence of clear objectives was very serious. Fromkin and Chace show how on 19 May 1967, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara drafted a memorandum redefining the goals worth fighting for in Vietnam. Since he argued that the goal of containing Chinese expansionism already had been attained, he no longer believed it vital that South Vietnam should remain independent or that it should remain non-Communist. The only American goal left was therefore to give 'the people of the South (Vietnam) the ability to determine their own future'.[244] Fromkin and Chace point out that it is difficult to read McNamara's memorandum without feeling that he did not actually have a compelling reason to go on fighting. In 1984, McNamara broke his long silence about Indochina policy, and confirmed that this was the case.[245]

However, equally weak as political strategy were military strategy and doctrine in Vietnam. The military strategy employed by General Westmoreland was one of a 'war of attrition', in which he sought to kill infiltrated and indigenous Vietnamese Communist soldiers more rapidly than they could be replaced. The infamous 'crossover point' was the point when the US would start winning as it killed more insurgents than were recruited. Counting bodies therefore became exceedingly important. During Westmoreland's four years in command of the US-led forces in Vietnam, and despite major setbacks and limited accomplishments, he remained faithful to his strategy and constantly asked for reinforcements to execute it. The lack of success was, according to Westmoreland, because of the effort's political limitations imposed on the military leadership. Tactically, the search-and-destroy mission provided the basis for American military doctrine in Vietnam. This was an offensive attempt to bring as much firepower as possible to the engagements with the

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[244] David Fromkin and James Chace, 'Vietnam: The Retrospect: What Are the Lessons of Vietnam?', *Foreign Affairs*, 63:4 (1985), accessed 12/04/05, <www.foreignaffairs.org/1984/4.html>
[245] Ibid.

Communist forces.[246] Eliot Cohen argues that the US Army doctrine was not in line with US grand strategy, which clearly required capabilities for limited and unconventional warfare. There was also an absence of institutional learning, as the army's offensive doctrine did not appreciate the constraints of counter-insurgency warfare.[247]

During the early years of the campaign, as the US military implemented its programme to train the South Vietnamese Army, its bias towards large conventional wars led the military to restructure the South Vietnamese Army from internal security, or counter-insurgency, to a defence against North Vietnamese invasion. The idea was that units trained to meet external aggression would also be able to handle the internal security.[248] However, when President Kennedy took office, he sought to get the army interested in counter-insurgency. He asserted, in a message to Congress, that the nation needed a greater capability to handle guerrilla forces, and in 1961 he directed the army to examine its force structure in light of a possible commitment to South-East Asia.[249] However, the army's response was minimal. General Lemnitzer, Chairman of the JCS (1960–1962), argued that the administration overemphasized the importance of guerrilla warfare. Then Army Chief of Staff General Decker dismissed the idea of increased counter-insurgency competence by arguing that 'any good soldier can handle guerrillas'.[250]

In a comprehensive analysis of US operations in Vietnam, John Nagl has argued that the main cause of failure was the inability to adapt to irregular warfare, caused by an inflexible military culture focused on conventional warfare.[251] Avant, similarly, argues that there are two reasons why the US Army failed to adapt in Vietnam. First, the incoherent civilian control of the armed forces in that the presidents were urging the army to adopt a counter-insurgency capability, while Congress, which controls the budgetary process, maintained a strong focus on Europe. The political leadership was, in other words, not in a strong enough position to enforce change. Second, the army

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[246] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 69.
[247] Eliot Cohen, 'Constraints on America's Conduct of Small Wars', in Stephen E. Miller (ed.), *Conventional Forces and American Defence Policy* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1986), pp. 296–297.
[248] Ibid., pp. 53–54.
[249] Ibid., pp. 56–57.
[250] Lemnitzer and Decker cited in Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 57.
[251] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 217.

was structured in a way that led to a doctrinal bias towards large-scale warfare, further institutionalized by rewarding those officers who focused on such warfare.[252]

So what did the US military learn from Vietnam? Interestingly, in 1974 the Army War College commissioned a review of army strategy in Vietnam. The scope of the study nevertheless overwhelmed the War College and was turned over to the BDM Corporation, which published its findings in 1980. One of the major conclusions was that massive military power was not the best or the only weapon in low-intensity conflicts like Vietnam. In such cases, political aspects were more important than winning conventional military battles.[253] However, the findings of the BDM study disappointed the Army War College, which quickly published an alternative study, authored by Colonel Harry Summers. The main thrust of what was to become the US Army's approved version was that the 'lack of appreciation of military theory and military strategy…led to the exhaustion of the army against a secondary guerrilla force'.[254] Summers contended that the problem in Vietnam was not that the army had failed to become unconventional, but that it was not conventional enough. The war was lost because the army was not allowed to use its firepower as widely and liberally as it would have liked.[255] The Army War College report, in other words, confirmed the conventional war bias of the US military.

According to Robert Cassidy, Summers' lessons have become the predominant school of thought and went on to perpetuate what he calls the 'Never Again School', within the US military. It was later articulated in the Weinberger Doctrine in the middle of the 1980s.[256] It is clear that many important lessons that could have been learned in relation to counter-insurgency and peace operations in general were lost in a military culture biased towards conventional warfare. Richard Downie argues that the army failed to learn from the mistakes in the Vietnam War, and made 'no significant conceptual change to the Army's counter-insurgency doctrine in the post Vietnam War era'.[257] Nagl maintains that, instead of facing up to the fact that army counter-insurgency doctrine had failed in Vietnam, the army decided that the US should no

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[252] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 49.
[253] Richard D. Downie, *Learning from Conflict: The US Military in Vietnam, El Salvador, and the Drug War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998).
[254] Major General Jack Merrit's foreword in Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, p. xiii.
[255] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 207.
[256] Robert M. Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss: British and American Peacekeeping Doctrine and Practice after the Cold War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), p. 119.
[257] Downie, *Learning from Conflict*, p. 109.

longer involve itself in operations of this type. The prevailing lesson of Vietnam was therefore printed in 1984, with the Weinberger Doctrine that allowed for the army to return to its organizational roots of conventional warfare for the purpose of decisive victory.[258] Thus, the radical approach to military professionalism prevailed despite the failures of the Vietnam War.

The Weinberger Doctrine and the Changing Security Context

The Weinberger Doctrine was created in the wake of the military disasters in Lebanon and Grenada, as the then US Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger proposed six major tests to be applied before deploying US combat forces abroad: is a vital US interest at stake? Will we commit sufficient resources to win? Are the objectives clearly defined? Will we sustain the commitment? Is there reasonable expectation that the public and Congress will support the operation? Have we exhausted our other options?[259]

The supposed soundness of the doctrine seemed to be confirmed in 1991 with what was then considered to be a tremendous success of military operations in the Gulf War. The criteria were in the wake of this success developed and amended by the then Chairman of the JCS Colin Powell, who made the addition that once Weinberger's conditions were met, the application of force should be overwhelming, swift and with a clear exit strategy.[260] The Gulf War, therefore, confirmed and strengthened the army's concept of purely conventional military battles with high-technology weaponry and overwhelming firepower. However, as John Nagl rightly argues, 'by refusing to acknowledge that most wars, unlike the Gulf, are and will be fought on battlefields populated by people who may support one side or the other (or one of many), the army continued to prepare itself to fight wars as it wants to fight them'.[261]

Because of the military success in the Gulf, the innovation that took place during the 1990s was completely in line with the military bias towards conventional warfare. The Gulf War was said to have started a revolution in military affairs, which with superior information and weapons technology would give the US a further advantage

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[258] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 207.
[259] Caspar W. Weinberger, *Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* (New York: Warner Books, 1990), pp. 453–454.
[260] Colin Powell, 'US Forces: Challenges Ahead', *Foreign Affairs*, (Winter 1992), accessed 12/04/05, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military/force/powell.html>
[261] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 207.

on the battlefield. However, in the meantime, the security context changed to place more emphasis on smaller, more complex conflicts as described in the first chapter of this thesis. Finally, with the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, the luxury to choose suitable conflicts was lost. The strategy of containment had failed and even the most powerful nation in the world was incapable of protecting itself from unconventional attacks. Therefore, dealing with terrorist breeding grounds in failing states suddenly became a priority.

However, during the subsequent military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US military has proved itself incapable of creating stability during the post-conflict phases of operations. As claimed by Nagl, 'by failing to learn the lessons of Vietnam, the US Army continues to prepare itself to fight the wrong war'.[262] It should nevertheless be noted that more recent developments point in a more positive direction. The Quadrennial Defense Review of 2006 acknowledges the importance of irregular warfare.[263] However, critics have noted that this acknowledgement of a new reality is in no way matched by programmes for transformation in order to face the new challenges. Instead, the QDR calls for more conventional capabilities.[264] A clearer break with past thinking is the new counter-insurgency doctrine, also published in 2006.[265] The doctrine involves an accurate and frank discussion regarding the difficulties for conventional forces to perform well in counter-insurgency operations, and produces a series of discussions and suggestions in an impressive attempt to catch up on lessons lost in the past. To a large extent, the doctrine involves a reappraisal of the counter-insurgency experiences from Vietnam. However, the extent to which the contents of the new documents will have an impact on the US military's training and culture remains to be seen.

After this historical introduction, let us examine the specifics of US patterns of civil-military relations.

The Patterns of Civil-Military Relations in the US

When studying the civil-military interface it is of importance to acknowledge the fact that the national security apparatus is more than the organizational structures of

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[262] Ibid., p. 208.
[263] US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (6 February 2006).
[264] William S. Lind, 'The Long War', Defense and the National Interest post from 2 February 2006, accessed 21/02/2007, <http://www.d-n-i.net/lind/lind_2_08_06.htm>
[265] US Department of the Army, FM 3-24, *Counter-Insurgency* (December 2006).

civilian and military agencies; it is also the meeting of different organizational cultures. This section seeks to increase the understanding of the specifics of US civil-military relations by first discussing US civil-military relations in general, and thereafter studying the structural and cultural features of the interagency apparatus as well as the makeup of the US Department of Defense. The results of the analysis of this section define the explanatory variable of the US case. A summary of features concludes the chapter, referring back to the theoretical discussion on divided versus integrated forms of civil-military relations.

The birth of the modern US national security establishment came at the end of the Second World War, as the strategic context created a sudden requirement for standing armed forces. This led to a complete reorganization of the defence machinery with the National Security Act of 1947, which created what we now call the DoD, with the Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force all under the authority of a Secretary of Defense with Cabinet rank. The legislation also provided a legal identity for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and created the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council (NSC) and many other agencies.[266] The National Security Act of 1947 also created a clear division of responsibilities between the civilian and military leaderships. While the civilian leadership creates policy and objectives, the military commanders are supposed to use their professional judgment 'to execute the policy through the most effective and efficient means possible'.[267] This divide between political decision-making and military implementation, developed out of fear of military politicization and intervention in politics, has also in practical terms created a divide between the civilian and military sides of the Department of Defense, as well as in the interagency process.

The historical section revealed how the founding fathers' fear of centralized power led them to control the powers of the military, but also to limit political leaders' capability to exploit their powers. The basic elements of the new political system were the diffusion of power and shared responsibility. The diffusion, or the division, of power has taken the form of a federal system that guarantees a decentralization of power and a division of power between the central and non-central governments. It

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[266] Douglas T. Stuart, *Organizing for National Security* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2000), p. 5.
[267] Lewis Libby, 'American Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations and Democracy', *Heritage Lecture*, No. 433 (1993), accessed 17/02/05, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/HL433.cfm>

has also created the separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the government.[268]

One of the main features of American democracy is the political system of checks and balances. The separation of powers and the system of checks and balances have led to a political culture that is marked by competitive, conflicting mindsets, rather than the consensual form of politics seen in other political systems. Not only do the branches of government check on each other, but also so do the different departments within the executive branch. The nature of the US political system, therefore, affects US civil-military relations in two distinct ways. First, Avant argues that the system of checks and balances has made the civilian leadership weak in relation to a comparatively unified military. The political system creates tensions and conflict between the different branches of government and, as a result, gives the military a chance to play them against each other on different policy issues. The US administration, thereby, has an incoherent and weak political side against the four coherent services of the armed forces.[269] As noted in the historical section, the competition between Congress and the President has moreover resulted in the problem that the President's most important tool for controlling the military and generating change – control over personnel – is politically very risky. In Feaver's terms, the cost of political monitoring of the armed forces is high, and creates possibilities for military shirking without risks of punishment. This tendency was further exacerbated with the introduction of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act, which gave the Joint Chiefs a stronger and more unified voice in national policy-making.

Second, the system of checks and balances has created a political culture in which co-operation, consensus seeking and mutual trust are not very commonplace. In a system of checks and balances, distrust and competition are virtues in the protection of the democratic order. While this system is effective in certain respects, it is certainly not a tool for co-operation and co-ordination between different governmental agencies.

Although the US has never come close to a military coup, Russell Weigley suggests that misunderstanding and distrust have underlain American civil-military relations from the very beginning, and have further deteriorated since the end of the

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[268] Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 186.

[269] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 134–135.

Cold War.[270] Peter Feaver, similarly, argues that despite the relatively harmonious civil-military relations America enjoys compared with many other countries, the most dominant theme in the literature on US civil-military relations is the presence of conflict.[271] To illustrate the ebbs and flows of conflict in US civil-military relations, we can refer to the debate regarding the civil-military cultural gap and the extent to which civilian, societal values should be allowed to influence military culture. This debate was revived under the Clinton administration with the controversy over gays in the military and President Clinton's lack of military experience. Conflict was again spurred by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's technocratic ideas of military transformation against the wishes of the military leadership, as well as the tensions during the build-up to the war in Iraq, as described in Chapter Five.[272]

Interagency Co-operation in the US

US doctrine on interagency co-operation states that such co-operation forges a vital link between the military instrument of power and the economic, political and/or diplomatic, and informational entities of the US Government as well as non-governmental agencies. It also states that 'obtaining coordinated and integrated effort in an interagency operation is critical to success'.[273] This view is supported by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report on defence reform in the new strategic era. The CSIS report argued that the current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq show that success in 'major combat operations' must be followed by success in post-conflict 'stability operations'. In many instances DoD success, therefore, hinges on how well it integrates with other government agencies and coalition partners.[274] The structure and culture of US interagency co-operation are therefore well worth studying further.

Despite the promising words of interagency doctrine documents, Martin Gorman and Alexander Krongard assert that while the US government often confronts problems that are beyond the capacity of any single department or agency to deal with,

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[270] Russell F. Weigley, 'The American Civil-Military Cultural Gap: A Historical Perspective, Colonial Times to the Present', in Feaver and Kohn, *The Civil-Military Gap*, p. 246.
[271] Feaver, *Armed Servants*, p. 12.
[272] See Michael C. Desch, 'Explaining the Gap: Vietnam, the Republicanization of the South, and the End of the Mass Army', in Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn (eds.), *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), p. 317.
[273] Department of Defense, Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations Vol. I*, (1996), p. v.
[274] Clark A. Murdock, (Chair), *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 1 Report* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2004), p. 22.

it rarely develops comprehensive policies that span across the whole spectrum of government.[275] Instead, the US government is structured to divide knowledge and expertise into component parts by disaggregating national security issues and then parcelling the parts to different departments and agencies. They call this 'stove piped decision-making' and argue that it results in piecemeal US responses to most international issues. The independent solutions of the different departments and agencies vary greatly, and sometimes even conflict. Nevertheless, after going through the intra-departmental process, the separate solutions enter the interagency process and eventually end up at the highest levels of government. This means that only at the very highest echelons of government do integration, co-ordination and synchronization take place.[276]

This view is supported by Matthew Bogdanos who notes that task forces and working groups designed to facilitate interagency co-operation and co-ordination have existed for years. However, as Bogdanos argues, 'they were usually ad hoc, limited in authority, narrow in scope, and viewed with suspicion by most government departments'.[277] The lack of authority and meaningful mandates to create co-ordinated advice and policy means that meetings are not taken very seriously and primarily function as information sharing tools. Each agency informs the other of its stand on an issue, and then parts with little co-ordination or adjustment.[278] Lord calls this an 'astrategic orientation of the US government', which is further reinforced by a political culture that lacks centralized direction and control. This is because most organizational incentives of the US government work against an integrative interagency approach that is seen as providing unwelcome control over agency operations to other agencies or to a central planning staff.[279]

Central to all interagency co-operation on matters regarding US security is the NSC, which advises and assists the President in integrating all aspects of national security policy. Doctrine argues that 'together with supporting interagency working groups, high-level steering groups, executive committees, and task forces, the

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[275] Martin J. Gorman and Alexander Krongard, 'A Goldwater-Nichols Act for the U.S. Government: Institutionalizing the Interagency Process', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 39 (4th Quarter, 2005), p. 52.
[276] Ibid., pp. 53–54.
[277] Matthew F. Bogdanos, 'Joint Interagency Cooperation: The First Step', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 37 (2nd Quarter, 2005), p. 11.
[278] Interviews with Col. Jim Harris, Michael Parmly, and Dr. Charles Stevenson
[279] Carnes Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security*, (New York: Free Press, 1988), p. 11.

National Security Council System provides the foundation for interagency coordination in the development and implementation of national security policy'.[280] The NSC is, in other words, supposed to track and direct the development, execution, and implementation of all national security policies for the President.[281]

Gabriel Marcella contends that the US interagency system lacks a decisive authority – a central body in charge of the process.[282] As already noted, the NSC, under the leadership of the national security advisor, is often highlighted as the bearer of this mantle, but although the NSC was created to integrate diplomatic, military, financial, and other factors into a unified national security policy, it is, in practice, solely an advisory organ to the President, and therefore has little executive function.[283] It is not a planning of operations or co-ordination headquarters, and currently has neither the authority, nor the capacity to fulfil such a function. The CSIS study points out that despite the importance of integrating agency strategies and plans, as well as monitoring their execution, for the achievement of unity of effort and success in operations, there is actually very little capacity on the NSC staff dedicated to these functions.[284]

Limited interagency co-operation means few opportunities for staff from different departments and agencies to interact and develop interpersonal trust. As noted in the theoretical chapter, interpersonal trust comes either from similar backgrounds and values, or from personal experiences of reciprocity. Not only do the US institutional set-up and political culture promote competition and distrust, they also limit the possibilities to develop interpersonal trust as an alternative. While the interagency *structure* is limited in the US case, the *cultural factor* is perhaps even more important as a determinant of interagency co-operation. Gorman and Krongard also argue that the stovepipe culture leads to increased parochialism, and that career development is focused on intradepartmental proficiency rather than a more comprehensive expertise in dealing with national security threats. This leads to unnecessary interagency conflicts within the national security apparatus, which

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[280] DoD, 'Joint Pub 3-08', pp. vi–vii.
[281] Ibid.
[282] Gabriel Marcella, 'National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21st Century', in Stuart, *Organizing for National Security*, p. 184.
[283] Cecil V. Crabb and Pat M. Holt, *Invitation to Struggle: Congress, the President, and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1989), p. 9.
[284] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 61.

consequently focuses more on bureaucratic self-interest and resource allocation than on actual strategies to deal with threats.[285]

A more practical problem in relation to interagency co-operation in complex irregular warfare is that, unlike the military, which has doctrines and standard approaches to operational planning, the US government in general and the Department of State in particular lack established procedures for developing integrated strategies and plans. Although the civilian agencies may theoretically have valuable inputs in operational plans, there are, except for the US Agency for International Development (US AID), no dedicated planning staffs, expertise, or planning culture outside the DoD.[286] In essence, the State Department is not an operative or 'doing' organization.

A similar problem is the lack of rapidly deployable experts and capabilities in most civilian agencies. Again the US AID provides an exception by way of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance which rapidly deploys Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DART).[287] In other words, even if all agencies were involved in the strategic and operational planning there would essentially only be the military to turn to for implementation of operations other than war. In the words of a CSIS report, 'the weaknesses of other U.S. federal government agencies have forced DoD to bear the main burden of nation-building'.[288] This problem is also discussed by Robert Perito, who advocates the need for a US stability force of constabulary troops, civilian police, and judicial teams of lawyers, judges, and correction officers. This would, according to Perito, provide an effective partner for the US military forces in complex irregular warfare.[289] Robert Steele argues that the lack of civilian personnel for international operations is cultural, as the bulk of money in security policy is still invested in Cold War type standing armies of relatively little use in these types of operations.[290] The cultural bias towards conventional war and the conceptual war leads to skewed funding of different agencies involved in complex irregular warfare.

The limited interagency structures as well as the limited civilian resources for the planning and execution of international operations mean that, in the near future, the bulk of operational planning and implementation will continue to be the task of the

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[285] Gorman and Krongard, 'A Goldwater-Nichols Act', p. 54.
[286] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 61.
[287] Ibid., p. 62.
[288] Ibid., p. 18.
[289] Perito, *Lone Ranger*.
[290] Robert D. Steele, 'Presidential Leadership and National Security Policy Making', in Stuart (ed.), *Organizing for National Security*, p. 253.

Department of Defense. Therefore, the extent to which the policy and military sections and units co-operate, and its staffs are receptive of input from other government agencies is important. The next section therefore takes a closer look at the US Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense

As earlier mentioned, the DoD, as we recognize it today, was created in the wake of the Second World War. Since the late 1950s the Department of Defense has remained remarkably similar, but the debacles in Grenada and Lebanon during the early 1980s led to some major reforms in the Goldwater-Nichols Act, passed in 1986. The first explicit objective of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was to increase civilian authority. Therefore, the legislation strengthened the Secretary of Defense's overall control over the Department of Defense. The second objective was to improve military advice, which by design gave the military a new power base for military impact on civilians by centralizing the military leadership. This was done by making the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the head of an expanded and strengthened Joint Staff, and by making him the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman of the JCS was also assigned to developing joint doctrine.[291] Douglas Stuart nevertheless maintains that despite the Goldwater-Nichols legislation and several other attempts to reform the national security since it came into place in the late 1950s, 'what is most striking about the existing system is not how much it has changed, but how little'.[292]

US civil-military relations consist of a clear divide between the political and military leaderships. This divide forms the basic structure of the Pentagon as well. Commentators speak of a military and a civilian side of the building, and a demarcation line that goes between the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).[293] As the normal theory of civil-military relations is clearly the most prevalent within the US administration, this is considered a strength that ensures that political advice stays political, and that military advice stays purely military. The idea is also to limit the politicization of the armed forces by keeping the

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[291] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 15.
[292] Stuart, *Organizing for National Security*, p. 2.
[293] Interview with Colonel Guy White.

senior military leadership out of politics, as well as keeping politicians from meddling in military affairs.

The structural divide between the military and the policy sides of the Pentagon, although unmistakeable, is nevertheless not as clear as one might expect. The OSD employs roughly 30% military officers, including military advisors to every civilian at Assistant Secretary level and above, and the Joint Staff employs roughly 10% civilian civil servants.[294] Former department officials moreover argue that there is daily formal and informal interaction between the two sides of the Pentagon.[295] However, a closer look at the Joint Staff reveals that although there are many civilians working on the staff they are not evenly spread out in the office. While the J5 (Strategic Plans and Policies) understandably has a large number of civilians and frequent communication with OSD staff, there are also almost purely military sections in the J2 (intelligence) and J3 (operations).[296] Where it really matters, in military terms, civilians are not a common feature. Even more importantly, it also makes a difference who the civilians on the staff are, and what type of function they perform. Many civilians within the Joint Staff are contractors and even former officers performing military staff functions. They are not there to provide a political perspective on military planning and operations, but to fulfil staff functions that military officers could just as well perform. There are not many professional civil servants on the Joint Staff.[297]

As was the case in the analysis of US interagency co-operation, a closer look at the working culture between the different offices of the department reveals that, although the formal structures for co-operation are in place, the outcomes of interoffice meetings are often relatively limited and disappointing. Former DoD officials reveal that the meetings are often a show for the gallery. The joint staff representatives will argue that 'we give you best military advice'. The OSD staffers say 'thank you very much but we have a much larger plate of consideration to add into the equation'.[298] There is, in other words, a very limited amount of give and take during these meetings, and, as previously noted, this format is also common in the interagency process. Although there is sometimes a structure for civil-military co-

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[294] Email correspondence with Adam Grissom, RAND Corporation, 2 March 2005.
[295] Interview with Colonel Jim Harris.
[296] Interview with Colonel Guy White.
[297] Interview with Colonel Jim Harris.
[298] Interview with Colonel Guy White, and confirmed during round table discussion at RAND.

operation within the department, the culture of the department and the political system simply does not support it.

It is clear that the US DoD works in at least two different channels for policy and military affairs. An interesting question is, therefore, where does the necessary civil-military interaction take place? Johnson and Metz argue that the interface between the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the single most important one in American civil-military relations. The Secretary of Defense personally provides the interface between civilians and military. 'Whether he is seen as pro- or anti-military sets the tenor for all of civil-military relations'.[299] This view is, to an extent, confirmed by a former joint staff officer who claims that the most important relationship is between the Secretary of Defense and the combatant commanders.[300] Clearly the civil-military interface within the Pentagon is limited, which is, as previously argued, a recommendation of the divided approach to civil-military relations.

An explicit and successful goal of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was to attract the 'best and the brightest' to seek joint service in order to solve the problem of jointness between the different services in the armed forces. There has, nevertheless, been no parallel set of incentives or requirements to encourage professional development for civilians in the DoD or to broaden their experience base and skill set through training or interdepartmental and interagency rotations. According to the CSIS, this reflects a general lack of appreciation of the critical roles that civilian professionals play in the Department of Defense and the national security agencies more broadly. The CSIS report argued that there is currently too little civilian expertise in the US government generally and the Department of Defense specifically. This means that there is a serious imbalance between military and civilian expertise at the Pentagon. Civilian advice often cannot compete with that offered by their counterparts on the Joint Staff.[301] This leads to another interesting aspect of the US case – the limited role of the professional civil servant. All of the senior management positions in the DoD at the Assistant Secretary level are occupied by political appointees, limiting the opportunities for advancement available to even the most capable and experienced career professionals. The CSIS contends that not only is this glass ceiling real – it is

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[299] Johnson and Metz, 'American Civil-Military Relations', p. 18.
[300] Interview with Colonel Jim Harris.
[301] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 20.

virtually impenetrable. It is also somewhat unique within the US government as both the State Department and the CIA, for example, have career professionals serving at the Under Secretary level. However, within the Pentagon, political appointees are also common at even lower levels, such as Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Under Secretaries, Office Directors and even action officers.[302]

Conclusions

American civil-military relations are, and always have been, marked by ebbs and flows of conflict. The US has, nevertheless, never been close to a military coup and the ideal of political primacy is strong within the military. However, in practice, the political control of the US armed forces is weak. A divided political leadership of checks and balances faces high costs of monitoring and controlling the relatively unified military leadership. Thus, the military can shirk political decisions without great risks of punishment. The development of military professionalism in isolation from the political leadership has, in combination with the high costs of civilian monitoring and control of the armed forces, meant that the US military's functional imperative has been interpreted and defined by the military itself.

The competitive political culture of checks and balances means that the US has poorly developed structures for interagency co-operation and co-ordination. Power is decentralized and national security issues therefore tend to be dealt with in departmental stovepipes. Where different forms of interagency structures exist, the culture of competition and distrust means that interagency working groups and committees lack the authority to conduct meaningful work.

Within the Department of Defense, the civilian and military sections are not well integrated. Instead, the department is purposefully divided to ensure the purification of military and political affairs. Pure military advice is highly valued and the Huntingtonian principle of objective civilian control, by ensuring that politicians stay out of military affairs and vice versa, remains strong. However, this divide between the policy and military sides of the building has led to another stovepipe structure in which civilian and military expertise is not co-ordinated until the very top levels of the department. The US administration contains a relatively politicized civil service,

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[302] Ibid., p. 54.

which, through regular replacements, limits the institutional memory of the different departments.

These findings are interesting with reference to the theoretical discussion on trust. The limited interagency structures as well as the divided civil-military structures within the Pentagon mean that there are few opportunities for civil servants and officers from different departments and agencies to meet face-to-face and thereby develop interpersonal trust that comes from previous positive experiences, mutual respect and at least some level of mutual understanding. The different backgrounds of military officers and civil servants also mean that no thick interpersonal relationships exist from common schooling or background. Moreover, there is little institutional trust as there are few positive experiences of working together. The interagency system is simply not trusted.

In conclusion, the US patterns of civil-military relations are of the divided tradition, as developed by Samuel Huntington. It is a structure in which political decision-making and military implementation are divided, and in which the cost of civilian monitoring of the armed forces is generally high. The theoretical framework of this thesis predicts that the patterns of a state's civil-military relations will affect its conduct of operations in two ways: indirectly as the arena in which decisions regarding the size, structure, equipment, and doctrine of the armed forces are made; and directly by being an important level in the chain of command during operations, in which strategic aims are created and translated into operational objectives and activities. The following chapters follow these causal chains in order to trace the causal mechanisms of the theoretical framework. First, the American way of war is analysed.

CHAPTER 4

THE AMERICAN WAY OF WAR

The US patterns of civil-military relations, according to the theoretical framework of this thesis, will influence the conduct and effectiveness of operations by affecting the organization, culture, and doctrine of the armed forces. This chapter, therefore, examines these features, grouped into the concept of the 'American way of war'. Emphasis is placed on the cultural aspects of the US defence establishment. The relatively extensive inclusion of doctrine in this chapter denotes the importance that some scholars attach to this variable when explaining operational conduct. The central questions of this chapter concern the functional imperative of the US defence establishment: what is considered to be the main role of the armed forces, and the preferred way of fighting wars? To what extent have the armed forces adjusted to that imperative? Finally, in relation to the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare, are the US armed forces prepared for the type of conflicts they are likely to find themselves involved in?

'We fight the wars but we don't do peacekeeping', is a comment from President George W. Bush that has bewildered scholars around the world. It is moreover commonly supported and expressed within the US military which has been notorious for its dislike of operations other than war.[303] Regarding the tasks of nation building, Bush argued during the 2000 presidential campaign: 'I would be very careful about using our troops as nation builders. I believe the role of the military is to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place'.[304] Moreover, the then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice declared that the US military, as the world's stabilizing force, was meant only for war-fighting: it is 'lethal', she said, 'it is

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[303] The author acknowledges that speaking in terms of 'the US military' implies great generalizations. There is, in other words, a need to continue this research by breaking down the US armed forces into smaller units of observation.

[304] Bush cited in Douglas Holt, 'Army institute to be shut down: Critics hit loss of training center for peacekeeping', *Chicago Tribune*, (15 April 2003), accessed 14/02/05, <www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi0304150249apr15,1,533388.story?ctrack=2&cset=true>

not a civilian police force. It is not a political referee. And it is most certainly not designed to build a civilian society'.[305] At first glance, the US approach to complex irregular warfare seems to be, 'we don't do it'. This is obviously perplexing since these forms of operations are precisely what the US armed forces have increasingly been doing since the fall of the Berlin Wall, an argument well made by Max Boot.[306]

As already mentioned, this remarkable position of the US government and defence establishment has changed somewhat after the terror attacks of 11 September 2001, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The changes are reflected in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review and the National Security Directive, as well as in the new counter-insurgency doctrine. The scope and effect of the changes remain to be seen however, and, as Benjamin Schreer argues in the *RUSI Journal,* the QDR is a change in degree rather than nature.[307] Before looking closer at the US approaches to complex irregular warfare, it is important to understand the US military and strategic culture, and what the US military thinks it *should* be doing.

The Functional Imperative and US Strategic Culture

As discussed in the section on US military history, US military professionalism was developed in a state of isolation after the Civil War. The small size of the army, in combination with a lack of external threat, allowed the US military to professionalise without interference from either the President or Congress. As noted in the theoretical chapter, for reasons of bureaucratic self-defence, every bureaucracy has an organizational essence, a set of functions or activities that most clearly define it and justify its existence. Left to themselves, bureaucracies therefore tend to undertake projects and pursue goals that reinforce this organizational essence.[308] The emphasis on principles of war, European continental warfare, and a misreading of Prussian theorists defined the US military's functional imperative and the resulting professional ethos became biased towards large-scale conventional warfare. A trait that is still very

[305] Condoleezza Rice quoted in Michael Hirsh, 'Our New Civil War: Freeing a Nation Is One Thing; Resurrecting It Another', *Newsweek*, 12 May 2003 edition, accessed 15/02/05, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3068556/>
[306] Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (NY: Basic Books, 2002); see also Brian M. Linn, 'The American Way of War Revisited', *Journal of Military History*, 66:2 (2002), pp. 501–533.
[307] See, for a useful discussion, Benjamin Schreer, 'Dead Upon Arrival? The Quadrennial Defense Review Report 2006', *RUSI Journal*, 151:2 (April 2006), pp. 34–37.
[308] Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security,* pp. 17–18.

much alive. In contrast, complex irregular warfare has a low status and has despite extensive experience of such operations not been a large part of the US military ethos or training.

The US has always considered war an alternative to bargaining or politics, instead of as an ongoing bargaining process as described by Clausewitz's famous dictum about war as the continuation of politics by other means. In the US, politics ceases when war begins. This dualistic view of conflict means that the US either considers itself at war or at peace.[309] There is, in other words, a grey area of operations other than war that the US military has never liked to tread, as well as a gap between military operations and political aims. As an example, Anthony Cordesman argues that the current US military transformation of technological innovation and network-based solutions fails to prepare for low-intensity combat and post-conflict reconstruction, and only creates possibilities to win 'half the war: winning the combat but not the peace'.[310] This argument is further developed by Antulio Echevarria, who maintains that the American concept of war rarely extends beyond the winning of battles and campaigns and tends to avoid thinking about the complicated process of turning military victories into strategic success.[311] US military professionals instead concentrate on winning battles and campaigns while policy-makers focus on the diplomatic struggles that precede and influence the actual fighting. The US has therefore developed more of a way of battle than a way of war.[312]

In a similar vein, Carnes Lord suggests that American strategic culture views problems in isolation, as well as being oriented towards the present and immediate future. It thereby lacks both historical and long-term future horizons and sees peace as the normal state of things and war or conflict as unnatural or wrong.[313] Lord notes that the US, therefore, tends to be poor at strategy, which is a field that requires holistic thinking and attention to the consequences of action over time. US security policy is as a consequence most often the outcome of considerations on specific issues as they

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[309] Antulio J. Echevarria, 'Towards an American Way of War', A Strategic Studies Institute Report, (2004), p. v; Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 43.
[310] Anthony H. Cordesman, 'Iraq: Too Uncertain To Call', CSIS paper, (2003), accessed 15/01/05, <www.csis.org/features/031114toouncertain.pdf>, p. 12.
[311] Echevarria, 'Towards', p. 1.
[312] Ibid., p. v.
[313] Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security*, p. 10.

arise, rather than 'an overall analysis of the current international situation and a comprehensive strategy for dealing with it'.[314]

When at war, the preferred way of fighting is described by Russell Weigley as large wars of annihilation with a reliance on firepower, a quest for decisive battles, a desire to employ maximum effort and aggressiveness at all levels.[315] The American way of war also involves an over-reliance on technology and firepower, as well as a strong preference for air power over troops on the ground. Another tendency is the reluctance to incur casualties.[316] There is also a presumption that the United States must end military conflicts quickly and at minimum cost. Andrew Erdmann argues that this is not a presumption that has come out of 'the broad contours of American history', but of the specific context of the Vietnam War. The idea is that in order to maintain the support of the American public, military operations must be brief and efficient in terms of the human and economic price paid.[317]

Miriam Becker claims that the US military often appears to fight for 'ideological' principles, such as democratic values, based on the belief that most countries want to be like the US and that the international community accepts its international leadership role.[318] Nagl, similarly, stresses the American faith in its liberal uniqueness and its moral mission.[319] Rather than operating as a dispassionate professional, the US military personnel therefore act with a highly political and ideological motivation.[320] Related to the idea of ideological righteousness is Colin Gray's assertion that the US has a continuing faith in progress: that somehow international politics could evolve towards a condition of greater security, and that US strategic culture is, therefore, oriented towards problem solving and does not accept readily the idea of continuing conflict. The idea that certain parties may not even want

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[314] Ibid., p. 11.
[315] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1973).
[316] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons,* pp. 43–44; Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, pp. 111–113; Colin S. Gray, 'National Style in Strategy: The American Example', *International Security*, Vol. 6 (Fall 1981), pp. 28–29, 38; Thomas G. Mahnken, 'The American Way of War in the Twenty-First Century', in Efraim Inbar (ed.), *Democracies and Small Wars* (Portland: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 78–81.
[317] Andrew P. N. Erdmann, 'The U.S. Presumption of Quick, Costless Wars', in John F. Lehman and Harvey Sicherman (eds.), *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems And How To Fix Them* (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2002), p. 48.
[318] Miriam D. Becker, 'Strategic Culture and Ballistic Missile Defense: Russia and the United States', *Aerospace Power Journal, Special Edition,* (1994), accessed 03/02/05, <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/sum97/spe94/becker.html>
[319] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons,* pp. 43–44.
[320] Nigel Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', *Military Review*, (November-December 2005), p. 6.

to agree on an issue, which is a main feature of contemporary conflict, is antithetical to the American assumption that issues must be resolved in order for commerce to prosper. American strategic thinking has therefore tended to be based on quick fix problem solving.[321]

Avant argues that American officers' training has emphasized military history in order to teach the principles of war and to create uniformity of both thought and procedure. This led to a rigid and inflexible understanding of the conduct of warfare. The idea was that through a uniform application of the principles of war, the army would make the individual qualities in leaders relatively unimportant, and would regardless of intellectual capabilities respond the right way to military uncertainties. The emphasis on the science of war also led to a strong bias against individual initiative. By rewarding and promoting officers who always adhered to regulations and the principles of war, the idea of 'safe leadership' took hold.[322] This tradition is the root of what is often called the zero-defect culture of the US military. The zero-defect mentality is intolerant of mistakes by officers. The result is that military leaders become more concerned with 'making sure nothing goes wrong on their watch' than with achieving the aims of the operation.[323] The US approach to force protection in peacekeeping is an example discussed below.

Since the end of the Cold War the US military has undergone a defence transformation within the scope of the so-called revolution in military affairs, involving reliance on technology, firepower, and air power. The hallmarks of defence transformation are speed, manoeuvre, flexibility, surprise, being heavily reliant on precision firepower, Special Forces, and psychological operations. The goal is to increase the lethality of the US military forces by 'harnessing technological advances of the information age to gain a qualitative advantage over any potential foe'.[324] However, Echevarria notes that the force transformation is primarily focused on conventional warfare and the problem of defeating a regular enemy in battle. Its underlying concepts of information-centric theories such as network centric warfare, rapid decisive operations, and shock and awe, all focus on '"taking down" an

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[321] Colin S. Gray, 'Comparative Strategic Culture', *Parameters*, (Winter 1984), pp. 26–33.
[322] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 26–28; see also Tony Corn, 'Clausewitz in Wonderland', *Policy Review*, (September 2006), accessed September 2006, <http://www.policyreview.org/000/corn2.html>,
[323] Claire E. Steele, 'Zero-Defect Leaders: No Second Chance?', *Military Review*, (September-October 2004), pp. 66–70.
[324] Max Boot, 'The New American Way of War', *Foreign Affairs*, (July-August 2003).

opponent quickly, rather than finding ways to apply military force in the pursuit of broader political aims'.[325] It can be noted that even the concept of Effects-Based Operations, which by definition is constructed to better co-ordinate economic, diplomatic and military resources in order to achieve political aims, has also been high-jacked by the military and made into a new matrix for target value calculation for the air force, and for winning battles more efficiently.[326]

Despite the fact that the US military has mainly been involved in irregular warfare since the end of the Second World War, US military and strategic culture is firmly fixed on what it sees as its core task – defeating conventional enemies that threaten the freedom of the American people. This unshakable belief in the essence of the organization has, according to Nagl, precluded any organizational learning and adjustment to unconventional wars or operations other than war.[327] It has also led to what Nagl describes as 'a remarkable aversion to the use of unconventional tactics'.[328] This view is also expressed by Andrew Birtle, who in a study of US counter-insurgency operations and doctrines, comes to the conclusion that US military leaders, since its infancy, have made little effort to capture lessons learned or to develop effective doctrine on counter-insurgency operations; the latter have instead been treated as mere diversions from the more important study of conventional warfare. Birtle further argues that the US military has during its history viewed counter-insurgency warfare as unglamorous, unwanted, and diverting. It is a type of activity that detracts attention and focus from the military's primary role of fighting conventional wars.[329]

Despite its many successes and evident professionalism and effectiveness in a number of military operations, the US military has been criticized for its conduct in recent peace operations, such as Bosnia, Somalia and Kosovo. Inflexibility, overemphasis on force protection and an indifference to mission success are commonly stated complaints. In the words of Thomas Mockaitis: 'Nothing underscores American discomfort with peace operations more than the emphasis on

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[325] Echevarria, 'Towards', p. 16.
[326] Robert Egnell, 'Achieving Effect in Contemporary Operation: Network Enabled Capabilities in a Changing Strategic Context', in Karl Ydén (ed.), *Directions in Military Organizing* (Stockholm: Försvarshögskolan, 2006).
[327] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons,* p. 205.
[328] Ibid., pp. 43–44.
[329] Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counter-Insurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860–1941* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History US Army, 2001), pp. 10–11.

force protection at the expense even of mission success'.[330] Cassidy notes that the US military often resorts to conventional tactics. He argues that US operations in Somalia were characterised by a propensity for maximum use of force. The US military also relied heavily on technology, resulting in a lack of tactical flexibility, as well as highlighted the averseness to casualties with which the US military has conducted expeditionary operations in the post-Cold War era. Cassidy summarizes the US role in Somalia by arguing that 'maximalist and conventional attitudes about the use of force led the U.S. military to abandon the OOTW principle of restraint, and thus legitimacy'.[331]

In an interesting study of US military experiences in Bosnia-Herzegovina, John Garofano paints a similar picture of US behaviour in complex irregular warfare. First, US force protection policies generated tension both within the US military and between US and other militaries. At the tactical level during IFOR, force protection was, according to Garofano, the highest priority. Force protection was even part of the Operational Plan mission statement listed second on the 'Mission Essential Task List' after the mission to sustain trained and ready forces. Interestingly, although many officers felt that the force protection policy was politically motivated rather than a result of actual threat assessment, and that any fatality would be considered a failure for which they would be held personally accountable, no officers felt that the force protection policies caused great damage to the mission. Instead, the force protection policy was seen as a wise approach given the nature of the mission.[332]

Second, US troops, although well prepared for their specific functions within their units, received minimal amounts and limited quality of cultural training. Platitudes, such as 'ethnic problems do not have solutions; thus, conflict must be managed', '[the local population] only respect strength of force', were common. Moreover, the depth of cultural and political training was very limited. Some units received less than one hour of cultural training before deployment in Bosnia.[333] Finally, the limited civil-military co-ordination is presented as another problem in the

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[330] Thomas R. Mockaitis, 'Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Operation: The Case of Kosovo', a Strategic Studies Institute Report, (2004), accessed 15/01/05, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pubs/display.cfm/hurl/PubID=583>, p. 14.
[331] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping,* pp. 155, 162–165.
[332] Ibid., pp. 245–246.
[333] John Garofano, 'The United States in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Points of Tension and Learning for the U.S. Military', in Jean Callaghan and Mathias Schönborn (eds.), *Warriors in Peacekeeping: Points of Tension in Complex Cultural Encounters* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004), pp. 243–244.

Bosnian case. The US did not initially integrate plans with NATO or international partners and instead concentrated on military enforcement issues. The US, therefore, failed to plan for the more difficult political and civil tasks, and also failed to integrate military support with civil implementation.[334]

James Jay Carafano argues that the US military rarely performs well in post-conflict operations because of its approach to these types of missions, which have always been 'ad hoc and haphazard'. Carafano suggests that this deficiency is as much cultural as it is material. He further notes that one of the most powerful factors shaping the armed forces' conduct of post-conflict operations is a 'tradition of forgetting…The services, particularly the Army, have a long record of conducting various kinds of peace missions. Traditionally, however, the armed forces concentrate on warfighting and eschew the challenges of dealing with the battlefield after the battle'. When American forces do undertake such missions, they try, as much as possible, to make them mirror traditional military warfighting.[335]

An explanation for the US reluctance to adjust its way of war to different types of operations and contexts is presented by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies that has conducted extensive surveys for a study on the cultural gap in civil-military relations. These surveys reveal a distinct US military dislike for operations other than war. In 1998–1999 only one percent of US military leaders saw military interventions like the ones in Bosnia and Somalia as 'very important' roles for the military. This can be contrasted with 99 percent support for the role 'to fight and win our country's wars'.[336] Thus, the US military seems to foster the cultural bias towards conventional warfare during military training. Moreover, Volker Franke's survey of West Point cadets demonstrates that they show less positive attitudes towards peace operations the longer they had been at West Point.[337] Military training thus seems to increase the gap between the civilian and military institutions and creates a military mind that thinks less of peace operations in relation to traditional war.

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[334] Ibid., pp. 254–255.
[335] James Jay Carafano, 'Post-Conflict and Culture: Changing America's Military for 21st Century Missions', *Heritage Lecture*, No. 810 (22 October 2003) accessed 18/05/04, <www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/HL810.cfm>, pp. 2–3.
[336] Ole R. Holsti, 'Of Chasms and Convergences: Attitudes and Beliefs of Civilian and Military Elites at the Start of a New Millennium', in Feaver and Kohn (eds.), *Soldiers and Civilians*, p. 46.
[337] Volker C. Franke, *Preparing for Peace: Military Identity, Value Orientations and Professional Military Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), p. 111.

The cultural aspects of the American way of war are adjusted to the functional imperative of conventional warfare in the defence of the nation. Structurally, the same pattern appears. Recent changes in the way US troops are indicate some alterations, but the US approach to war still remains industrial in scale and relies on mass and the use of decisive force.[338] Cassidy argues that in contemporary US thinking 'the division is still the dominant organization that trains and fights as a team', and the division combined with armed teams is still the centrepiece of both the structure and doctrine of UA Army warfighting. Suggestions to move away from the division to the smaller regimental sized combined battle groups have faced very strong resistance within the US Army.[339] The equipment is largely adjusted for conventional warfare on the plains of Europe, or the deserts of Iraq. Heavy tanks and armoured vehicles and massive firepower in the forms of air power and artillery still remain the main investments in US military materiel.

In summary, the American way of war is focused on conventional warfare, which is also considered the functional imperative of the armed forces. The US military emphasizes massive firepower, high technology, a moral motive and quick fix solutions. In the specific context of complex irregular warfare, US troops often add a strong emphasis on force protection and a reluctance to incur casualties. Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster claims that rather than describing the US Army as 'simply inflexible and incompetent', a better explanation for US tardiness in adapting to post-conflict type operations is that it is the victim of its own successful development into 'the ultimate warfighting machine'. However, the fact that the US military sees itself as an instrument of national survival has created an uncompromising focus on conventional warfighting that has left it ill prepared for post-conflict type operations, and discouraged a quick adaptation to these types of operations.[340]

US Doctrine before Operation Iraqi Freedom

Before studying a selection of US doctrine concerning complex irregular warfare, a conceptual discussion regarding the impact of doctrine is necessary. What is doctrine and why does it matter? This discussions means that the debate regarding culture as a variable will be revisited. The modern definitions of doctrine vary slightly, but the US

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[338] John Mackinlay, 'Casualties of the US-UK Military Alliance', *World Today*, (December 2004).
[339] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping*, p. 250.
[340] Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', p. 14.

DoD defines it as 'fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application'.[341] Doctrine is thus the officially sanctioned and written approach to military activity that describes the best way to go about things. Doctrines, moreover, provide educational documents and are thus meant to form the behaviour of armies in battle.[342]

Robert Cassidy maintains that doctrine is salient because 'it is central to how militaries execute their missions – it is how we operate'. In Cassidy's view, doctrine mirrors actual behaviour, and is, therefore, an important independent variable that affects the operational behaviour of the armed forces. Consequently, operational mistakes or successes can be explained by the quality of the doctrine.[343] However, according to Gavin Bulloch, doctrine often lags behind events, and is therefore not always beneficial in conflicts.[344] Doctrine, thereby, has a tendency to describe best practices in the last war, and may fail to attend to contextual changes and specifics between different conflicts. Colin McInnes further argues that doctrine is wholeheartedly and unashamedly positivist. It is presented as being founded in history and derives its authority from experience. Although reference is often made to the capacity of doctrine to evolve, McInnes contends that doctrine has an enduring nature, and that the 'fundamental principles' of war receive much more attention than adaptation.[345] This is problematic in relation to the fact that doctrine is inherently political, and often reflects service interests and political demands. The potential weaknesses of doctrine are notable in the case of Vietnam, where doctrine not only failed to prepare troops properly, but also prevented tactical adjustments. Sir Michael Howard, therefore, presents a rather bleak view of doctrine:

> I am tempted to declare that whatever doctrine the Armed Forces are working on, they have got it wrong. I am also tempted to declare that it does not matter that they have got it wrong. What does matter is their capacity to get it right quickly when the moment arrives.

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[341] US DoD, Joint Pub 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (April 2001).
[342] Paul Johnston, 'Doctrine is Not Enough: The Effect of Doctrine on the Behavior of Armies', *Parameters*, (Autumn 2000), p. 30.
[343] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping*, pp. 3–4.
[344] Gavin Bulloch, 'Military Doctrine and Counter-Insurgency: A British Perspective', *Parameters*, 26:2 (1996), pp. 4–16.
[345] Colin McInnes, 'So who needs doctrine anyway?', paper presented at the BISA Annual Conference, Edinburgh (2001).

> It is the task of military science in an age of peace to prevent the doctrine being too badly wrong.[346]

This view is derived from a historical perspective that correctly emphasizes the uniqueness of each conflict and its context.

Another critique of doctrine is presented by Paul Johnston who raises the important question of cause and effect: to what extent does doctrine actually affect behaviour in battle? Johnston argues that a survey of the history of armies and their doctrines suggests that doctrine has a weak, or at best indirect, effect on the actual behaviour of armies in battle. Instead, how armies fight is, in Johnston's view, more a function of their culture than of their doctrine.[347] Cassidy asserts that doctrine reflects behaviour, which is in turn determined by the contents of doctrine. This reflexive view of doctrine makes it interesting in relation to culture.

Doctrinal publications are in this thesis treated as conceptual artefacts of a nation's strategic and military culture. Therefore, the language and content of doctrine help us understand a nation's way of war. Doctrine describes past behaviour of military organizations, and also serves to reproduce certain practices. If as influential as Cassidy argues, doctrine should function as an important intervening variable that helps explain operational conduct and effectiveness. Even if doctrine does not have quite the causal effect as some commentators maintain it does, it is still an interesting artefact that helps us understand its function in relation to other explanatory variables, such as training and equipment, or in relation to the cultural context. Therefore, a highly relevant question for the following sections is: to what extent does doctrine reflect the US way of war?

US Doctrine

Eliot Cohen argues that the US has a fascination with doctrine, which means that in theory as well as in practice doctrine runs the training of especially the US Army.[348] The fact that doctrine is taken very seriously in the US becomes clear in the preface to the Doctrine for Joint Operations, which states that 'the guidance in this publication is authoritative; as such, this doctrine will be followed except when, in the judgment of

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[346] UK Army Publication 3000, *The Nature of Doctrine*, p. 3.11.1.
[347] Johnston, 'Doctrine', p. 30.
[348] Eliot A. Cohen, 'Doctrine', in Geoffrey Parker and Robert Cowley (eds.), *Reader's Companion to Military History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), p. 139.

the commander, exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise'.[349] Most nations' doctrines include a similar statement, but the US case is certainly more authoritative, especially when considered in the light of the concepts of safe leadership and zero-defects culture. One of the arguments was that US military culture does not reward those who are innovative and flexible beyond the content of doctrine. Instead, for successful careers, officers are best advised to follow doctrine.

Strategic- and Operational-Level Doctrines

The *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* from 2000 declares that 'defending our Nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the Federal Government'. However, the doctrine acknowledges that this task has changed dramatically. 'Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadowy networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank'. The doctrine also acknowledges that the nation is now threatened less by conquering states than by terrorism and failing states. 'We are menaced less by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few'.[350] An introductory observation is, in other words, that a new security context is clearly identified and acknowledged in strategic-level doctrine.

To effectively achieve the national goals, doctrine also identifies the need for the transformation of the national security institutions.[351] *Joint Vision 2020,* a document that outlines a long-term vision of the US military, therefore develops a core concept in 'full spectrum dominance'. This means that the US armed forces should have the capability to defeat any opponent in a confrontation at any point on the conflict scale. 'The threats and enemies we must confront have changed, and so must our forces. A military structured to deter massive Cold War-era armies must be transformed to focus more on how an adversary might fight rather than where and when a war might occur'.[352]

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[349] US Department of Defense, *Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Publication 3-0* (2001), p. i.
[350] US White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (2002), introduction and p. 1.
[351] Ibid., pp. 1–2.
[352] Ibid., p. 29.

The way to achieve this goal is a steady infusion of new technology as well as the modernization and replacement of equipment.[353] Innovation is supposed to be based on 'experimentation with new approaches to warfare, strengthening joint operations, exploiting U.S. intelligence advantages, and taking full advantage of science and technology'.[354] The second observation is that, while a new and more complex context is acknowledged, the proposed changes are mostly reinforcements of the traditional US way of war, with a heavy reliance on technology and firepower. The traditional functional imperative of the US armed forces is clearly confirmed in the *National Military Strategy*:

> Our Armed Forces' foremost task is to fight and win our Nation's wars. Consequently, America's Armed Forces are organized, trained, equipped, maintained, and deployed primarily to ensure that our Nation is able to defeat aggression against our country and to protect our national interests.[355]

Operational-level doctrine describes wartime campaigns as the synchronization and integration of any necessary air, land, sea, space, and special operations in harmony with diplomatic, economic, and informational efforts to attain national and multinational objectives.[356] Combatant commanders and subordinate joint force commanders (JFCs) are therefore, according to the doctrine, likely to operate together with other government agencies representing the other instruments of national power, as well as with foreign forces, NGOs, and international organizations. The doctrine further argues that the interagency nature of operations means that commanders and planners have to consider all instruments of national power when creating strategies for achieving policy objectives.[357]

Significantly, the operational-level doctrine on joint operations emphasizes the division of military operations into two distinct categories – war and military operations other than war (MOOTW). Military operations other than war are described as encompassing a wide range of activities where the military instrument of national power is used for purposes other than the large-scale combat operations

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[353] US Department of Defense, *Joint Vision 2020*, (2000), p. 3.
[354] US White House, *National Security Strategy*, p. 30.
[355] US Department of Defense, *National Military Strategy*, Executive Summary, (1997).
[356] Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, (2001), pp. xi–xii.
[357] Ibid., pp. viii–ix.

usually associated with war.[358] The document notes that the military is often not the primary player in MOOTW, and that these operations are more sensitive to political considerations. Therefore, more restrictive rules of engagement often apply. The doctrine further acknowledges the importance of all military personnel understanding the political objective and the potential impact of inappropriate actions. Moreover, commanders must be aware of changes in the operational situation, as well as changes in political objectives that may warrant a change in military operations.[359]

Interestingly, the joint doctrine on MOOTW includes the traditionally un-American operational principles of restraint, perseverance and legitimacy. Another significant feature is the emphasis on campaign plans that include a transition from wartime operations to MOOTW to ensure the achievement of the political objectives.[360] The joint doctrine even identifies a number of special planning considerations for MOOTW, which include interagency coordination, post-conflict operations, command and control, intelligence and information collection, constraints and restraints, training and education.[361]

One month before the invasion of Iraq the US Army also published a field manual on 'stability and support operations'. The manual sees the concept of MOOTW replaced by 'Stability Operations' and 'Support Operations'. Stability operations are supposed to promote and protect US national interests by influencing the threat, the political and information dimensions of the operational environment through a combination of peacetime developmental, co-operative activities and coercive actions in response to a crisis. Included in the concept of stability operations are different forms of peace operations, support to insurgencies, combating terrorism, counter-drug operations, arms control, etc. Support operations include domestic support and humanitarian operations.[362]

The doctrine on stability operations comments on suitable tactics by arguing that the centre of gravity in counter-insurgency operations is public support, and that in order to defeat an insurgent force, US forces must therefore be able to separate

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[358] DoD, *Joint Operations*, pp. vii–viii and xiv: MOOTW includes arms control; combating terrorism; support to counter-drug operations; enforcement of sanctions/maritime intercept operations; enforcing exclusion zones; humanitarian assistance; military support to civil authorities; nation assistance/ support to counter-insurgency; non-combatant evacuation operations; peace operations; protection of shipping; recovery operations; show of force operations; strikes and raids; and support to insurgency.
[359] Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-07, *Military Operations Other Than War*, (1995), p. vii.
[360] Ibid., pp. viii and x.
[361] DoD, *Joint Operations*, p. xiv.
[362] US Department of Defense, *Stability Operations and Support Operations 3-07*, (2003), p. 1-2-4.

insurgents from the population. The problem, as expressed in doctrine, is that at the same time, US forces must act in a manner that enables them to maintain popular domestic support. In the more recent counter-insurgency doctrine this is presented as a paradox in that excessive or indiscriminate use of force is likely to alienate the local populace, thereby increasing support for insurgent forces, while insufficient use of force is likely to result in increased risks to US and multinational forces and perceived weaknesses that can jeopardize the mission. To achieve the appropriate balance in the use of force, the doctrine seeks a thorough understanding of the nature and causes of the insurgency, the end state, and the military's role in a counter-insurgency operation.[363]

The doctrine on stability operations further stresses the importance of adjusting the conduct of military operations for counter-insurgency to avoid alienating the population with excessive violence. 'Collateral damage destroys government legitimacy'.[364] In the process of planning counter-insurgency operations, 'it is imperative that leaders and soldiers understand that military force is not an end in itself, but is just one of the instruments of national power employed by the political leadership to achieve its broader objectives'. It also stresses that military action and the use of force are limited by 'a variety of political and practical considerations, some of which may not seem sensible at the tactical level'. All personnel involved in the operations must therefore understand the nature of such limitations and the rationale behind them in order to make sound decisions regarding the application of or restraint in the use of force.[365]

Operational-level doctrine leads to two important observations: first, the division between war and operations other than war, which also reflects the US conceptualization of war in dualistic terms. Second, doctrines on operations other than war, and stabilization operations are, in several aspects, well up to date with the principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare.

Tactical-Level Doctrine

Tactical-level doctrine essentially leaves the concept of operations other than war or stability and support operations behind. Tactics are, according to the US Army

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[363] US Army, 'FMI 3-07.22 Counter-Insurgency Operations', (2004), p. 2-13.
[364] DoD, *Stability Operations*, p. 3-6.
[365] Ibid., p. 2-14.

doctrine, the employment of units in combat. 'It includes the ordered arrangement and maneuver of units in relation to each other, the terrain and the enemy to translate potential combat power into victorious battles and engagements'.[366] However, this narrow definition of tactics should be understood in relation to the higher-level doctrines on operations. In other words, to employ the tactics as described in doctrine, one must, according to the doctrine, 'understand how the activities described in FM 3-07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations*, carry over and affect offensive and defensive operations and vice versa'.[367] The theory is that with an understanding of the type of conflict and context the unit is operating in, the tactical concepts of offensive, defensive and security operations can be appropriately adjusted for each context and situation. What this means for the individual soldier is unclear.

In the US Army doctrine *Tactics*, conventional warfare is clearly emphasized. As an example, it argues that success in tactical problem-solving results from the 'aggressive, intelligent, and decisive use of combat power in an environment of uncertainty, disorder, violence, and danger'. Moreover, tactical-level commanders 'win decisively through the rapid application of available combat power'.[368] Another example is the emphasis on offensive action, which is considered key to achieving decisive results. 'Tactical commanders are instructed to conduct offensive operations to achieve their assigned missions and objectives – destroying enemy forces or seizing terrain – that cumulatively produce the theater-level effects required by the operational commander'.[369] How such tactical operations relate to strategic-level political aims is not discussed – especially not in the context of complex irregular warfare. Except for civilians in the area of operations possibly restricting the use of force, there are no other pointers within the entire doctrine on how to adjust tactics with reference to the type of operation one is part of, or the different aims of operations.

In sum, there seems to be a mismatch between the operational-level doctrine on stability and support operations on the one hand, and tactical-level doctrine on the other.

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[366] US Department of the Army, FM 3-90, *Tactics*, (2001), p. 1-1.
[367] Ibid.
[368] US Department of the Army, *Tactics*, p. 1-13.
[369] Ibid.

Conclusions

Four significant observations have been made in the analysis of US doctrine. First, strategic- and operational-level doctrine before the operations in Iraq clearly recognized a new strategic context. Second, major reforms of the national security apparatus were considered necessary in order to adjust to the new context. However, the suggested reforms are essentially based on the traditional American way of war, and involve technological improvements to increase the lethality and precision of weapons systems to deliver massive firepower. The functional imperative of conventional warfare in defence of the nation still dominates US doctrine, despite the recognition of contextual changes. A third observation is that the operational-level doctrine on operations other than war, such as stability operations, is well up to date with the principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare. However, the principles of complex irregular warfare are nowhere to be found within tactical-level doctrine, which strongly emphasizes the American way of war by promoting massive use of force and offensive operations. The observations are contradictory in relation to the above discussion on the American way of war.

Finally, an important feature of US doctrine is that the dual view of war and peace is reflected in doctrine as a divide between doctrines on warfare and doctrines on operations other than war. The doctrines on warfare treat war in its traditional form where political influence is limited, and where the principles of overwhelming force, firepower, technology, and manoeuvre are emphasized. Doctrines on operations other than war underscore a rather different set of principles and define other important imperatives for success, such as interagency co-operation and political understanding at all levels. However, let us put culture and doctrine together in some concluding thoughts regarding the American way of war and the US approach to complex irregular warfare.

The US Approach to Complex Irregular Warfare

The American way of war begins with a conceptual division between war and peace, which means that there is really no conceptual space for 'grey area' operations between war and peace – such as most complex irregular wars. The isolation of the armed forces during the professionalisation meant that the officer corps was allowed to define the functional imperative of the armed forces. The cost of civilian

monitoring of the armed forces means that despite variations in civil-military conflicts and contextual changes, the military ownership of the functional imperative prevails. The resulting military culture's preferred way of war is large-scale conventional wars fought quickly at minimum cost. It also involves the maximum use of force, and the application of high technology to maximize firepower. US troops are therefore organized around the division as the defining organization and the warrior ethos as the foundation of military culture is emphasized. The American way of war is moreover fought based on ideological principles.

However, the uncompromising focus on conventional warfighting has left the US military ill prepared for complex irregular warfare and post-conflict type operations. Yet the realities of the contemporary strategic context put US troops in precisely the types of operations they do not prepare for – sometimes with abysmal results, as displayed in Somalia. Within such contexts the US military still seeks to apply the traditional American way of war. However, the limited and complex political aims of such operations mean that a low tolerance for casualties is added to the list as an 'American way of peacekeeping'.

Beyond the doctrines on traditional warfare, the US doctrinal library also contains a number of operational-level doctrines that are well up to date with the principles of complex irregular warfare. In other words, US doctrine is not simply a mirror of US military culture and the US way of war. As noted above, the diversity of doctrine is also not mirrored by US troops in the field. Thus, US doctrine is clearly more than simply 'how we operate'. Rather it should be seen as the outcome of what Peter Feaver describes as a game of strategic interaction in the civil-military interface.[370] The diversity of doctrine reveals a debate regarding the functional imperative of the armed forces, with increasing emphasis placed on non-traditional tasks, such as stability operations. However, US doctrine has not had a large impact on the military culture, or the US way of war, which means that culture is currently the stronger variable when determining US conduct in operations. In the specific context of complex irregular warfare, there is, in other words, a gap between the contents of doctrine and actual behaviour on the ground – where the cultural emphasis on traditional war generally prevails.

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[370] Feaver, *Armed Servants*, p. 282

Another significant aspect of US political and military culture is the dualistic view of war and peace and the corresponding divide between warfare and operations other than war in US doctrine. Since the US military is uncomfortable conducting operation other than war, an operation of strategic importance is likely to be interpreted as war. This means that regardless of the reality on the ground, which, in most cases, involves operations between the extremes of war and peace, the US military is likely to invoke conventional doctrine within the cultural comfort zone. As the following chapter will show, the campaign in Iraq is an obvious case in point.

In terms of theory, the patterns of civil-military relations have, in the US case, led to a conventional definition of the functional imperative and the creation of a corresponding structure and culture of the US armed forces. The resulting American way of war is not well adjusted to the contemporary strategic context. In the words of Andrew Garfield: 'The U.S. military appears to have the wrong organizational culture to fight the war in which it is currently engaged, [Iraq], which is the most likely type of warfare it will face over the next twenty years'.[371] The US armed forces are not 'fit for purpose'. The effect of the divided patterns of civil-military relations and the high costs of civilian monitoring of the armed forces have failed to achieve the necessary adjustments of the armed forces, something that is likely to have consequences in the conduct and effectiveness of operations in complex irregular warfare. To test this notion, the following chapter conducts an empirical study of US operations in Iraq from 2003.

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[371] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', p. 29.

CHAPTER 5

CIVIL-MILITARY ASPECTS OF US OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

The analysis of US operations in Iraq serves as an empirical test of the hypothesis of this thesis, and, thereby, adds some insights to the growing literature on the Iraq war by adding the civil-military perspective to the analysis. The chapter examines the total outcome of the US patterns of civil-military relations by tracing the causal chain to the dependent variable of operational conduct in complex irregular warfare. Both the direct and indirect effects of civil-military relations are thereby taken into account. However, this chapter does not provide a comprehensive analysis of US operations in Iraq. Instead, this analysis focuses on a number of thematic discussions that are relevant to the hypothesis of the thesis. The themes have been provided by the theoretical review of best practice in complex irregular warfare. They involve: (*a*) the US approach to operations in Iraq; (*b*) civil-military co-operation and co-ordination, and (*c*) tactical behaviour. The first thematic discussion seeks to answer how the operation was interpreted and conceptualized by the military and civilian leadership in the US, as well as how this was translated into political aims and operational plans. The discussion on civil-military co-operation and co-ordination involves two sub-categories in the civil-military aspects of the planning process and of the command and control structures. Finally, the discussion on tactical behaviour analyses the conduct of tactical operations with reference to the hearts and minds approach, minimum use of force, cultural understanding, and, finally, adaptability and quick learning.

As noted in the theory chapter, the conduct and effectiveness of operations are in this thesis less concerned with the outcome of operations than conduct in relation to the principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare. By comparing US conduct to the principles of best practice, a number of inferences regarding US effectiveness

can be made. However, to set the stage for the thematic discussions, the chapter is introduced by a brief overview of the invasion phase.

The Invasion of Iraq

The military campaign to liberate Iraq was a four-phase operation, including the entire spectrum of conflict, from combat to peace support to humanitarian and security assistance. Phases I and II involved setting the conditions for neutralizing the Iraqi defence forces, by deploying forces, securing regional and international support, as well as by 'shaping the battlespace'. Phase III involved the decisive offensive operations, which marked the beginning of the conventional combat operations. Phase IV involved post-conflict operations, such as the transition from combat to stability and support operations, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction.[372] The strategic goal of the campaign in Iraq included establishing a stable, secure, prosperous, peaceful, and democratic Iraqi nation that is a fully functioning member of the community of nations.[373] Therefore, strategic success would require success in each phase, inextricably linking all actions into a campaign that is truly an extension of politics by other means.

The invasion phase of the campaign in Iraq not only displayed a known technological superiority of the American military, but also an operational and tactical flexibility that took the world by surprise. Instead of the expected 'shock and awe' involving heavy bombardment and a massive frontal attack, the US troops displayed a shock in its surprise tactics, and awe in its speed and effectiveness. The advance on Baghdad displayed a logistics operation that is unprecedented in military history and the fall of Baghdad was forced with speed and accuracy. Boot rightly argues that 'U.S. troops as a whole displayed remarkable skills in Iraq. They were able to fight effectively for long stretches at a time, react quickly to events, and avoid most of the traps the Iraqis had laid for them'.[374]

Although some preliminary operations were conducted on 19 March 2003, including a decapitation attempt on Saddam Hussein, the main coalition attacks began early on 20 March. Already on 9 April the regime in Baghdad effectively ceased to

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[372] Center for Army Lessons Learned, 'On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom', accessed 24/08/05, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2004/onpoint/intro.htm>
[373] President George W. Bush, 'Address to the American Enterprise Institute', 26 February 2003, accessed 24/08/05, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/iraq/20030226-11.html>
[374] Boot, 'The New American Way of War'.

function, the Iraqi defence, including the Republican Guard, was beaten and scattered around the city sometimes creating pockets of resistance throughout the city and many parts of the country. However, by 13 April the organized resistance by major Iraqi units faded and the invasion phase of the war was won. On 14 April, the Pentagon stated that the Iraqi regime was at its end and that its leaders were dead, had surrendered or were on the run. The regime of Saddam Hussein was removed, terrorists were driven out with the fall of Saddam, intelligence was being collected on terrorist networks and weapons of mass destruction, Iraqi oilfields were secure, and UN sanctions against Iraq were already under negotiation to be lifted.[375] The final objective to establish a representative democratic government in Iraq was not yet accomplished although negotiations were said to be ongoing with clerics and tribal leaders.[376]

On 1 May 2003, President Bush declared the end of major combat operations. This was a piece of theatre that highlighted the US emphasis on the major combat phase as opposed to the following Phase IV. However, at this stage no senior Iraqi government official had surrendered, and several pockets of resistance still existed – most notably in Fallujah. Most importantly, an embryo of a serious insurgency had started revealing itself. Like in Afghanistan the war therefore had no 'clean ending'.[377] It would quickly show that declaring an end to the war was wishful thinking. In many parts of the country the insurgency was growing and the number of attacks against coalition troops steadily grew. The insurgency has subsequently evolved into a complex mixture of Shia militias, former Baath party members and former army members supporting Saddam Hussein's regime, Iraqi Sunni Islamists, and foreign Islamist volunteers, often linked to al Qaeda.[378] A British battalion commander even argued that the very day President Bush declared the end of major combat operations, was the day the real war started.[379]

Insurgency type operations were, according to some commentators, the intention of Saddam Hussein from the beginning. However, as claimed by Thomas Ricks, the

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[375] The sanctions were lifted by the UN Security Council on 22 May 2003.
[376] Victoria Clarke, 'DoD News Briefing – ASD PA Clarke and Maj. Gen. McChrystal', 14 April 2003, accessed 30/08/05, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20030414-0105.html>
[377] Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Iraq War: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Lessons* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), pp. 144–145.
[378] Amatzia Baram, *Who Are the Insurgents? Sunni Arab Rebels in Iraq,* United States Institute of Peace, Special Report No. 134, April 2005, accessed 03/04/07, <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr134.html>
[379] Interview with Lt. Col. Matthew Lowe (2004).

US approach to operations in Iraq, both in terms of general strategy and occupation policy, and in terms of military tactical execution, 'helped spur the insurgency and made it broader than it might have been'.[380] Ricks has provided the most comprehensive critique of the campaign in Iraq. The thesis of his work, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, is summarized by the subtitle, as he argues that 'the US effort in Iraq was launched recklessly, with a flawed plan for war and a worse approach to occupation'. The planning and execution of operations in Iraq have, according to Ricks, helped to create the 'fiasco' – involving increasing sectarian violence and continually high levels of civilian and military casualties. Ricks' work is thorough and of great scope, but suffers from a journalistic perspective that often relies on single sources as proof of rather general points. O'Hanlon also notes in a review that 'Ricks deliberately dwells on the negative'.[381] That said, and until the academic books reach the same quality and scope of Ricks' analysis, the book is a useful source of information, as well as an interesting argument regarding the failures in Iraq. Let us, thereby, start the thematic discussion of US operations in Iraq.

The US Approach to Operations in Iraq

In his seminal work, *The Utility of Force*, General Sir Rupert Smith underscores the importance of analysing and understanding the nature of conflict, and of having a clear political purpose, from which military strategic objectives can be derived.[382] This section studies these aspects of the US campaign in Iraq. After a quick look at the political objectives of the campaign, the analysis and interpretation of the campaign are discussed in relation to the previous chapter on US military culture.

A clear list of aims and objectives was provided as early as August 2002 when the National Security Council drafted a Presidential Directive entitled 'Iraq: Goals, Objectives and Strategy'. The secret Directive that the NSC also agreed on stated:

> U.S. goal: Free Iraq in order to eliminate Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, […] to prevent Iraq from breaking out of containment and becoming a more dangerous threat to the region and beyond. End Iraqi threats to its neighbours, to stop the Iraqi government's tyrannizing of its own population, to cut Iraqi links to and sponsorship of terrorism, to

[380] Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 190–191.
[381] Michael O'Hanlon, 'Taking it to the Streets: In Fiasco, Thomas Ricks Criticizes the Military's Performance in Iraq', *Slate*, 28 July 2006, accessed 13/05/07, http://www.brookings.edu/views/articles/ohanlon/20060728.htm
[382] Smith, *The Utility of Force*, pp. 291 and 373.

maintain Iraq's unity and territorial integrity. And liberate the Iraqi people from tyranny, and assist them in creating a society based on moderation, pluralism and democracy.[383]

Among the objectives stated in the document were a few imperatives regarding the conduct of operations, such as minimizing the risk of a WMD attack, to reduce the danger of regional instability and disruption to the international oil market. Elements of the strategy included employing all instruments of national power to work with the Iraqi opposition in order to demonstrate that the US was liberating and not invading Iraq, and to establish a broad-based democratic government, respecting the basic rights of all Iraqis and adhering to the rule of law.[384] The goals were confirmed by President George Bush on the eve of battle: 'My fellow citizens, at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger'.[385]

The translation of US policy into a military campaign in Iraq was carefully planned. Planning for what would become 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' started on 27 November 2001, as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and General Tommy Franks, the commander of United States Central Command (CENTCOM), started examining the assumptions and requirements of the old war plan, at the request of President Bush.[386] The outcome of this process was presented by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in a number of specific objectives of the military operations of the campaign. The coalition's military operations were said to be focused on achieving eight specific objectives:

- To end the regime of Saddam Hussein by striking with force on a scope and scale that makes clear to Iraqis that he and his regime are finished.

- Next, to identify, isolate and eventually eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, production capabilities, and distribution networks.

- Third, to search for, capture, drive out terrorists who have found safe harbour in Iraq.

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[383] The National Security Presidential Directive is cited in Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), pp. 154–155.
[384] Ibid.
[385] President Bush in 'President Bush Addresses the Nation', White House Press Release, 19 March 2003, accessed 22/04/06, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030319-17.html>
[386] Tommy Franks, *American Soldier* (NY: Regan Books, 2004), pp. 315 and 329; Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp. 36–38.

- Fourth, to collect such intelligence as we can find related to terrorist networks in Iraq and beyond.

- Fifth, to collect such intelligence as we can find related to the global network of illicit weapons of mass destruction activity.

- Sixth, to end sanctions and to immediately deliver humanitarian relief, food and medicine to the displaced and to the many needy Iraqi citizens.

- Seventh, to secure Iraq's oil fields and resources, which belong to the Iraqi people, and which they will need to develop their country after decades of neglect by the Iraqi regime.

- And last, to help the Iraqi people create the conditions for a rapid transition to a representative self-government that is not a threat to its neighbours and is committed to ensuring the territorial integrity of that country.[387]

The main problem was that the political aims included far more than what could be translated into *military* objectives and activities. Nora Bensahel notes that while the general contours of the war plan were finished and mostly agreed upon in August 2002, civilian planning had barely begun.[388] Furthermore, the post-conflict planning process was, according to Bensahel, limited by a number of false assumptions. Among them was the belief that coalition troops would be greeted as liberators by the bulk of the population, and the assumption that the government would continue to function after the ministers and their closest advisors were removed from power. The only serious post-conflict planning that took place, therefore, dealt with an anticipated humanitarian crisis.[389] Thus, the civilian objectives were, at the beginning of the campaign, vague at best and non-existent at worst.

A congressional hearing was held on 11 February 2003 because of concerns regarding the planning process of Phase IV operations – concerns that were not eased afterwards. A number of vague objectives were presented without any specifics on how to achieve them, although Douglas Feith, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, argued that administration officials were thinking through the lessons of Afghanistan

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[387] Rumsfeld, 'DoD News Briefing'.
[388] Nora Bensahel, 'Mission Not Accomplished: What Went Wrong with Iraqi Reconstruction', *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 29:3 (June 2006), p. 455.
[389] Ibid., pp. 455–458.

and other recent history. 'We have learned that post-conflict reconstruction requires a balance of efforts in the military sphere and the civil sphere'.[390]

A number of other institutions also expressed concern early in 2003. The January 2003 CSIS report argued that recent experience in Haiti, the Balkans, East Timor, and Afghanistan has demonstrated that 'winning the peace is often harder than fighting the war', and that it would be important to step up preparations for addressing post-conflict needs as the United States and its allies intensified military preparations for a war with Iraq. The report's verdict on the post-war planning was severe:

> So far, however, signs of military build-up and humanitarian contingency planning have not been matched by visible, concrete actions by the United States, the United Nations, or others to position civilian and military resources to handle the myriad reconstruction challenges that will be faced in post-conflict Iraq. This situation gravely threatens the interests of the United States, Iraqis, the region, and the international community as a whole.[391]

That the CSIS felt that the US administration was running late on these issues was obvious: 'To win the peace and secure their interests, the United States and the international community must commit the resources, military might, personnel, and time that successful post-conflict reconstruction will require in Iraq—and they must start doing so *now*'. Concerns were also expressed by the closest coalition partner. The British complained internally about the planning of the nation building process in a memo written in advance of a Downing Street meeting on Iraq held on 23 July 2002.[392]

An important aspect of the failure to provide comprehensive plans for the campaign lies in the military and political leadership's failure to analyse and interpret the conflict. Unwillingness to accept the cautionary advice of allies was part of the same syndrome that led the highest levels of the Bush administration to dismiss the concerns of generals, the caveats of intelligence analysts and the counsel of the State Department. Ricks quotes an American four-star general who described the syndrome in these terms: 'There was a conscious cutting off of advice and concerns, so that the

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[390] Douglas J. Feith, 'Post-War Planning', Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, (11 February 2003), accessed 08/08/05, <http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/US/HearingsPreparedstatements/sfrc-feith-021103.htm>
[391] Frederick D. Barton and Bathsheba Crocker, 'Winning the Peace in Iraq', *The Washington Quarterly*, 26:2 (Spring 2003), p. 7.
[392] Walter Pincus, 'Memo: U.S. Lacked Full Postwar Iraq Plan', *The Washington Post*, 12 June 2005.

guy who ultimately had to make the decision, the president, didn't get the advice'. All post-Saddam concerns were blown off or disregarded. 'They were making simplistic assumptions and refused to put them to the test'.[393] This can also be attributed to a structural problem of the interagency process, which failed to force alternative input and buffer zones against the false assumptions of the mighty few. Bensahel is correct in noting that 'the fundamental problem was not the content of these particular assumptions, but the fact that a *single* set of assumptions drove US government planning efforts, and no contingency plans were developed in case that one scenario did not occur'.[394]

Ricks places the work of General Tommy Franks, Chief of US Central Command and the head of US military planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom, under particular scrutiny. Ricks argues that Franks had little understanding of strategy – seeing the bigger picture. Instead, Franks expressed himself in tactical terms and based his planning on technological and mechanical advantages and speed as a substitute for feet on the ground.[395] Clearly, Franks thought that planning for phase IV operations was not his job. The purpose of the campaign, according to Franks' plan was to force the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime and deny him the use of WMD. The endstate of operations was identified as 'regime change'. Accordingly, Franks' plan only won the Battle for Baghdad and failed to address the political aims of the campaign and the aftermath of major combat operations. Maj. Gen. Jonathan Bailey went as far as arguing that the short and decisive campaign plan was even counterproductive with the political aims in mind.[396]

The false assumptions about post-Saddam Iraq and the consequential emphasis on the invasion phase created a number of blind spots in phase IV operations. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld was at first dismissive of the looting that followed the US arrival in Baghdad and then for months refused to recognize that an insurgency was taking place and growing. Ricks cites a meeting between Rumsfeld and a reporter who in the summer of 2003 asked Rumsfeld if he was facing a guerrilla war: 'I guess the reason I don't use the phrase "guerrilla war" is because there isn't one', Rumsfeld

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[393] Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 99.
[394] Bensahel, 'Mission not Accomplished', p. 458.
[395] Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 127–128.
[396] Jonathan Bailey Cited in Ibid., p. 116.

responded.[397] It took a long time, and many failed opportunities to seize the initiative in Iraq before the political and military leadership acknowledged the fact that it was involved in a complex counter-insurgency operation, involving an inherently irregular and asymmetric enemy. Another consequence is noted in the US 3rd Infantry Division's after-action report: 'Because of the refusal to acknowledge occupier status, commanders did not initially take measures available to occupying powers, such as imposing curfews, directing civilians to work and controlling the local governments and populace. The failure to act after we displaced the regime created a power vacuum, which others immediately tried to fill'.[398]

Moreover, whatever the contents of the phase IV plan, it was not transferred effectively down through the chain of command, before the invasion, or even before the transition. The Third Infantry Division's after-action report reads: 'Higher headquarters did not provide the Third Infantry Division (Mechanized) with a plan for Phase IV. As a result, Third Infantry Division transitioned into Phase IV in the absence of guidance'.[399] Jonathan Graff cites an interview with an American officer who argued that 'a plan for phase four was never passed from CFLCC [Combined Forces Land Component Commander] to V Corps and on the 3ID [3rd Infantry Division]. There was no guidance on which targets we needed to protect once we got into Baghdad. We weren't told to protect museums or banks and we didn't expect the scale of the looting [we saw]'.[400]

A campaign with such complex political aims for a large and oppressed country containing several ethnic minorities should, in hindsight, or even in good foresight given what was known before the invasion and what we have learned from previous complex operations, have led to a humble approach and comprehensive plans for a complex stabilization and reconstruction phase – a long-term occupation. Instead, it was interpreted and approached as a conventional war that would essentially end with the fall of Saddam Hussein. The invasion phase was therefore well planned and executed, while, at the same time, post-conflict issues, such as security and

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[397] Thomas E. Ricks, 'In Iraq, Military Forgot Lessons of Vietnam', *The Washington Post*, 23 July 2006.
[398] Quote from John J. Lumpkin and Dafna Linzer, 'Army Says Policy Choice Led to Chaos in Iraq', *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 November 2003.
[399] Cited in Michael E. O'Hanlon, 'Iraq Without a Plan', *Policy Review*, No. 128 (December 2004), accessed 22/01/05, <www.policyreview.org/dec04/ohanlon.html>
[400] Major Hylton, G5, 3ID, 2003, cited in Jonathan K. Graff, Jr., 'United States Counter-Insurgency Doctrine and Implementation in Iraq', MA thesis, Fort Leavenworth, (2004), p. 62.

reconstruction, were treated as less important. The strategic culture and the American way of war contributed to the failure to grasp that this was a different kind of conflict. John Nagl has argued that due to the military culture of the US military, it does not adapt well to changed situations unless they are 'within the parameters of the kind of war it has defined as its primary mission' – conventional warfare.[401] The same can be said about US strategic culture and the conceptual definition of conflicts. The result was also that the US military invoked conventional doctrine rather than doctrine on operations other than war, which, in hindsight, would have been more useful.

Civil-Military Co-ordination and Co-operation: A Comprehensive Approach?

The comprehensive and effects-based approaches to operations involve planning that not only covers the entire continuum of conflict, but also includes and co-ordinates all relevant actors towards a mutual political aim in the planning and execution of operations. This section, therefore, examines the civil-military aspects of US operations in Iraq by studying US post-conflict planning as well as the command and control structures. Were all relevant actors included? Were civilian and military contributions to the operation well integrated?

Post-Conflict Planning

Planning for a post-Saddam Iraq commenced within the Department of State in April 2002, and the launch of the 'Future of Iraq' project. The project developed a large number of working groups with the purpose to begin practical planning for Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.[402] Each of the working groups brought together about 10–20 Iraqi experts to discuss the Iraqis' thoughts and plans for what could be done to improve the lives of the Iraqi people.[403] The project produced an extensive report, which was nevertheless later completely neglected by the Pentagon, as they took over the planning process. However, Ambassador Paul Bremer, head of the

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[401] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 218.
[402] There were 16 working groups covering issues, such as Transitional Justice, Public Finance, Democratic Principles, Public Health, Water, Agriculture & the Environment, Economy and Infrastructure, Defense Policy, Oil & Energy, Education, Anti-Corruption Issues, Civil Society-Capacity Building, and Foreign Policy.
[403] Marc I. Grossman, 'The Future of Iraq', Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 11 February 2003, accessed 08/08/05, <http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/US/HearingsPreparedstatements/sfrc-grossman-021103.htm>

Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), argues that the purpose of the Future of Iraq project was to engage Iraqi-Americans thinking about their country's future, and that it was never intended as a post-conflict plan.[404] Notwithstanding its initial purpose, the 15-volume document included some important information about the terrible state of the Iraqi infrastructure and the high risk of post-conflict looting and disorder.

During the summer of 2002 the Pentagon started planning the post-conflict phase within the newly established Office of Special Plans, created out of the expanded Iraq desk of the Near East South Asia (NESA) of the Directorate of the Office of the Secretary of Defense.[405] However, the limited planning within the Pentagon was not formalized until 20 January 2003, when Bush ordered the creation of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), appointed retired General Jay Garner as its director, and released $15 million to fund its efforts.[406] Although Secretary Rumsfeld argued that this was the first time, to his knowledge, that the US had created an office for post-war administration before a conflict had even started, this was a very late start for serious planning of post-conflict reconstruction and security.[407] Another planning process for the civilian aspects of operations took place within the National Security Council, which established an interagency Executive Steering Group (ESG) for that purpose. The ESG included representatives from the State Department, Defense Department, the CIA, and the Office of the Vice President, and could thereby have provided the ideal set-up for interagency planning.[408] However, as already noted, this planning was seriously hampered by false assumptions about post-war Iraq and the competitive interagency culture.

Although post-conflict planning involved several problematic aspects, arguably the most serious problem in the planning process was the lack of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination. The failure of the interagency system in the specific case of Iraq is discussed by a special task force report on the improvement of US post-conflict capabilities, sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations. The report argues

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[404] L. Paul Bremer and Malcolm McConnell, *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), p. 25.
[405] Karen Kwiatkovski, 'The New Pentagon Papers', *Salon.com*, (10 March 2004), accessed 15/09/05, <http://www.salon.com/opinion/feature/2004/03/10/osp_moveon/>
[406] Richard Lugar and Joseph Biden, 'The Future of Iraq', Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, 108th Cong., 1st sess., 11 February 2003, p. 10.
[407] Paul Wolfowitz, 'Testimony on Iraq Reconstruction', Deputy Secretary of Defense Testimony for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 22 May 2003.
[408] Bensahel, 'Mission Not Accomplished', p. 455.

that the lack of a body or an arm within the US government formally responsible for post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations is a major reason for poor post-conflict planning. 'Policy and implementation are divided among several agencies, with poor interagency coordination, misalignment of resources and authorities, and inadequate accountability and duplicative efforts'.[409] Cordesman has a similar explanation but points more specifically at the National Security Council, which failed to perform its task of interagency co-ordination. Instead of forcing effective interagency co-operation where formal and informal structures had failed, it acted in a largely advisory role and therefore had little influence.[410] An interesting observation that confirms the analysis of US civil-military relations is that interagency structures for post-conflict planning were, in fact, in place within the NSC, but that the competitive and distrustful cultural climate of the US political system hindered these structures from being effective.

There were deep divisions between the State Department and the Department of Defense over how to plan for conflict stabilization and nation building. The rift began at the top with personal problems between Secretary of State Powell and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and extended down to the 'working levels' of the departments. President Bush's National Security Directive 24 on 20 January 2003 put the Office of the Secretary of Defense in charge of the nation building efforts, and effectively led to the efforts of the State Department and other agencies being 'dropped, ignored, or given low priority'.[411] The background material and human expertise from the Future of Iraq project were all dismissed, and when appointing the ORHA staff for General Garner, who was supposed to be in charge of the post-conflict phase, the Pentagon removed a number of highly qualified experts from the State Department.[412] Having a lead agency in charge of planning and operations is something that is generally done to create unity of command and effort. However, the Pentagon lacked the expertise to plan and lead a post-conflict operation in Iraq, and the competitive culture of the system led to the opposite effect. The campaign in Iraq was stovepiped.

There was also a rift between the civilian and military sides within the Pentagon, with the military leadership feeling steamrollered by Rumsfeld's OSD in the planning

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[409] William L. Nash, (Chair), 'In the Wake of War: Improving U.S. Post-Conflict Capabilities', Report of an Independent Task Force Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, (2005), accessed 15/09/05, <www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Post-Conflict_Capabilities.pdf>, p. 7.
[410] Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, p. 498.
[411] Ibid.
[412] Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 109.

process. One concern was the number of soldiers needed for post-conflict stabilization. General Shinseki broke ranks when he confessed in a congressional hearing that an occupation of Iraq would require several hundred thousand troops – a figure he came to by comparing Iraq to historical occupations of Japan and Germany. The general was publicly reprimanded for these estimates by the Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. However, General Shinseki was not the only one on the military side of the Pentagon to be unhappy. Inside the military, officers kept publicly quiet. But, according to Ricks, privately their unhappiness ran deep.[413]

Michael O'Hanlon argues that going to war without a complete Phase IV plan was the biggest mistake of the whole campaign. 'Invading another country with the intention of destroying its existing government yet without a serious strategy for providing security thereafter defies logic and falls short of proper professional military standards of competence'.[414] The US military was therefore not trained for dealing with looting or the difficult task of distinguishing hostile and non-violent civilians and irregular forces and enemies. As Cordesman states, 'troops were trained to fight asymmetric warfare up to the point of dealing with the consequences of victory'. This resonated well with the US military tradition to avoid deep involvement in the complex political issues of nation building and to avoid prolonged military commitment to missions other than direct warfighting.[415] Steven Metz asserts that 'an insurgency is born when a governing power fails to address social or regional polarization, sectarianism, endemic corruption, crime, various forms of radicalism, or rising expectations'. The early mistakes of the stabilization and reconstruction phase, in combination with the fact that an outside power has a smaller margin of error than an inept or repressive national regime would have in dealing with popular discontent, have, in Metz's view, meant that the insurgency gained popular support and developed a recruiting base among the Iraqi youth.[416] The failure of the interagency system and of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination may therefore have had greater strategic consequences than any tactical adjustment in the field of operations could have had.

[413] Ibid., pp. 96–98.
[414] O'Hanlon, 'Iraq Without a Plan'.
[415] Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, p. 499.
[416] Steven Metz, 'Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq', *The Washington Quarterly*, 27:1 (2003), pp. 26–28.

The politically imposed limit, i.e., Secretary Rumsfeld's intervention in the planning process, regarding the number of troops sent to Iraq, meant that, as the regime of Saddam Hussein fell, there were simply not enough soldiers on the ground to provide security and stability during phase IV of the campaign. Another consequence was that the borders with Syria and Iran were never secured, thereby failing to block important supply routes for the insurgency groups.[417] An important observation is that the false assumptions of the political and military leadership were allowed to influence the entire planning process, which, as noted, had dire consequences. There were, in other words, no safety nets for flawed assumptions present in the US system. A well-established interagency structure, in which experts from all relevant departments would have participated, as well as a better established civil-military co-operation within the DoD could have provided such safety nets. Without that web of co-ordination and co-operation, a few misinformed people had too much influence, and alternative interpretations were kept out of the planning process.

The fault of failing to create appropriate plans for the campaign in Iraq is shared by the political and military leaders. The flawed assumptions about Iraq must be attributed to the political leadership that effectively cut out dissenting voices from the planning process. However, US Central Command under General Franks created a half-baked plan based on these assumptions. Planning for only part of the campaign and basing that planning on best-case assumptions is a gross military mistake. The fact that so few officers in the military leadership did not raise their voices against the planning of Operation Iraqi Freedom is significant.

US Command and Control of the Post-Conflict Phase

As already noted, the DoD and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) were put in charge of the planning and execution of post-conflict operations in Iraq. Unfortunately the divisions between the State Department and the Pentagon meant that rather than achieving unity of command, this decision cut all non-military agencies out of the planning process. In other words, from the beginning of the campaign, and at the top levels, the US command and control structure failed to achieve co-operation and co-ordination between the different actors involved. A decision that was hoped to achieve

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[417] Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 41–43 and 147–148.

unity of command instead created fragmentation and lack of co-ordination. The command and control structures at all levels later came to reflect this initial set-up.

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith said in the congressional hearings before the war that the coalition officials responsible for the post-conflict administration of Iraq – whether military or civilian, from the various agencies of the governments – would report to the President through General Tommy Franks and the Secretary of Defense.[418] However, after the initial invasion phase, the chain of command was far from clear. The relationship between the civilian and military sides of the occupation, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the military headquarters, was inherently stormy. The Combined Joint Task Force Commander, the US military commander in Iraq, General Sanchez, reported to General Abizaid, commander of US Central Command, who reported to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. On the civilian side, Ambassador Paul Bremer, head of the CPA, reported directly to Secretary Rumsfeld. Further complicating matters is the fact that Ambassador Bremer often gave the impression that he believed he reported directly to the President. Ricks cites a general who was clearly puzzled by the command and control structures: 'If you held a gun to my head and told me "Tell me what the chain of command is for your people in Baghdad!" – well, I'd just be babbling'.[419]

At the tactical level, Christopher Varhola has observed that the chain of command was not geared towards co-ordinated civil-military operations. Civil affairs units were divided among the combat units, and their actions were not synchronized nation-wide. Not only did civil-military operations as a consequence have little effect, but also structurally, these arrangements subordinated civil-military operations to ground combat operations, and the task of targeting insurgents took precedence over working with the people.[420] Jonathan Graff notes that during the first year of the occupation there appeared to be no effort at co-ordinating the reconstruction and reform processes necessary to eliminate the root causes of unrest. Instead, the ninety-day rotations of Coalition Provisional Authority advisors and personnel, in combination with limited security, restricted their work to the 'Green Zone'. The

[418] Feith, 'Post-War Planning'.
[419] Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 179.
[420] Christopher H. Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq', Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Notes, 27 May 2004, accessed 12/8/2005,
http://www.fpri.org/enotes/20040527.americawar.varhola.iraqchallenges.html.

CPA, therefore, gained little respect amongst the Iraqi population and the military units in the country.[421]

Not only was there confusion about the chain of command, there was also friction between the military and civilian sides of the operation. Different views about how to stabilize, reconstruct and democratize the country led to frequent conflicts between the military and civilian leaders in the field.[422] Confusion and friction, combined with ORHA's refusal to co-locate headquarters with the military from the start of operations, also limited civil-military co-operation and co-ordination. In other words, the failure to achieve unity of command was reinforced by the even more serious failure to achieve unity of effort.[423] The fact that General Garner refused to co-locate ORHA with the military command meant that ORHA and later the CPA remained out of touch with the conditions in the field, adding to the lack of expertise or experience with peacemaking and nation building.[424] Key issues like jobs and economic security were as a consequence addressed much later than should have been the case in a campaign for the hearts and minds of the Iraqi population.[425]

Another important aspect of command and control, discussed in the theory chapter of this thesis, is the importance of mission command and decentralized command structures that rely on the initiative of subordinates at the scene of action. However, according to British Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, whilst the US military champions mission command, in Iraq it did not practice it. He notes that commanders and staff at all levels rarely, if ever, questioned authority, and were reluctant to deviate from the precise instructions which were often preferred by commanders rather than mission type orders. A common trend of US command was that of micro-management, with many hours devoted to daily briefings and updates. The result was, according to Aylwin-Foster, highly centralized decision-making, which tended to discourage initiative and adaptability at a lower level of command, even when commanders consciously encouraged both.[426]

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[421] Graff, 'United States Counter-Insurgency Doctrine', pp. 68–69.
[422] See, for example, Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 180–181; Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, pp. 316–317; and Larry Diamond, *Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2005), p. 299.
[423] Diamond, *Squandered Victory*, p. 299.
[424] Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, pp. 499–500.
[425] Ibid., pp. 500, 502.
[426] Aylwin Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', p. 7.

In sum, the level of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination was seriously inadequate from the initial strategic and operational planning processes to the planning and conduct of tactical operations in the field. The interagency structures completely failed the planning process in Washington, which, in combination with a lack of constructive dialogue between the civilian and military sides of the Pentagon, failed to provide comprehensive analyses and plans for the occupation of Iraq.

Post-Conflict Operations in Iraq

With the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, a power vacuum of anarchic disorder, involving widespread looting and the first signs of a growing insurgency, took its place. Thus, as the combat phase ended, it quickly became clear that the US military forces were not manned, equipped, trained nor mentally prepared to occupy urban areas, or to secure the country. Moreover, the impressive jointness displayed between the military forces during the war certainly did not translate into jointness between the military and the civilian components in the work to secure and rebuild the country.[427] Before looking at the conduct of military operations at the tactical level, the civilian activities are quickly analysed.

The civilian administration in charge of the stabilization and reconstruction phase was initially ORHA, with retired General Jay Garner as its director. However, ORHA had not been created until two months before the invasion and was not ready to perform its duties as Baghdad fell. Garner and ORHA did not arrive in Baghdad until 21 April 2003, almost two weeks after the Iraqi regime fell.[428] Once ORHA arrived on the scene it made the cardinal mistake of moving into Saddam Hussein's Republican Palace, a place of symbolic value for all the wrong reasons, and, in practical terms, nothing more than a shelter. The palace was without telephones or working showers, and situated far from the military headquarters where knowledge of the situation on the ground existed. The situation led to what commentators called 'a complete mess'.[429] Not only was the palace symbolically and practically a grave mistake, but by refusing to collocate with General Franks and the military command centre in Baghdad, ORHA missed most of the military intelligence and they

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[427] Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, p. 145.
[428] 'Jay Garner tours Baghdad', *Guardian Unlimited*, 21 April 2003, accessed 30/08/05, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,2763,940683,00.html>
[429] Alan Philps, 'Aid Officials Overwhelmed by Chaos and Violence', *The Telegraph*, 12 May 2003, accessed 30/08/05, <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines03/0512-06.htm>

themselves lacked escorts to get out of the palace to get an idea of what happened in the city.[430] ORHA therefore had little idea of the situation in Baghdad, and few resources to do anything about the situation had they known.[431]

On 7 May 2003, the President attempted to reverse the deteriorating situation by appointing former Ambassador Paul Bremer to replace General Garner. Unlike Garner, Bremer and the CPA reported directly to Secretary Rumsfeld and also enjoyed the support of Secretary Powell.[432] However, the CPA's first decisions were very controversial. Among Bremer's first acts was to ban those who had held one of the top four ranks in the Baath Party from holding government jobs. This reversed ORHA's policy that banned only the most senior Baathists and effectively removed about 30,000 senior bureaucrats, the entire leadership from government ministries, including the police. Although this decision answered previous criticism from some Iraqi groups, it also created great bitterness, mistrust and confusion, thereby slowing down the reconstruction of government services.[433] The CPA also decided to disband the entire Iraqi Army and ordered the few soldiers who had returned to the barracks to go home without any promise of pay, or of a future in the new Iraq. This decision increased the number of disillusioned, 'angry young men' on the streets. The decision was also culturally insensitive as honour is a major value in Iraqi society, and the decision to disband the army dishonoured the entire military profession by making them unemployed and thereby losing their status in society. Ricks argues that these decisions helped spur the insurgency by providing almost unlimited sources for recruitment in the shape of disenfranchised former Baath party members as well as unemployed and armed former soldiers.[434]

A June 2003 report on the conditions in Baghdad argued that the capital was in 'distress, chaos, and ferment'. Two months after the termination of major combat operations, the CPA had failed to provide security and to restore essential services, such as water and electricity. According to the report, it was conventional wisdom that the Americans had blundered by failing to protect vital institutions and impose public order from the outset. They had, in other words, abdicated the occupying power's

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[430] Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, p. 501.
[431] Michael Hirsh, 'Our New Civil War: Freeing a Nation Is One Thing; Resurrecting It Another', *Newsweek*, 12 May 2003 edition, accessed 15/02/05, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3068556/>
[432] Robert M. Perito, 'Nation Building: Biting the Bullet in Afghanistan and Iraq', in Perito, *Where is The Lone Ranger When We Need Him*, p. 317.
[433] Ibid., p. 316.
[434] Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 190–191.

moral and legal obligation to protect the local population.[435] The occupying forces thereby seriously undermined the political aims of the operation, as well as giving early impetus to the insurgency.[436]

Tactical Behaviour of the US Military

Notwithstanding initial interpretations of the campaign in Iraq, the reality on the ground quickly proved to involve a complex irregular war and counter-insurgency type operations for the coalition. This section, therefore, studies US military tactics, discussed in relation to the principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare, as reviewed in the first chapter of this thesis. The main argument is that heavy-handed tactics and limited cultural understanding, made explicit by local media coverage, worsened relations with the local Iraqi community and thereby destroyed the legitimacy of the occupation. This boosted the insurgency that won easy propaganda victories by provoking disproportionate responses from the US military.

Failure to Apply the Hearts and Minds Approach to Operations
The hearts and minds approach requires restraint in the use of force, accurately applied force protection policies and good understanding of the local culture and context. Little of this is seen in Iraq. An important example of US military tactics took place in Fallujah during Operation Vigilant Resolve in April 2004. Alice Hills maintains that the Americans were initially welcomed in Fallujah – a town that had never really been a Baath party stronghold, but that was known for its religious and social conservatism, and its nationalist fervour. However, early clashes that, in Hills' view, often involved insensitive or heavy-handed US tactics quickly alienated Fallujah's inhabitants.[437] The security situation deteriorated gradually in Fallujah during 2003 as the city developed into a stronghold of anti-coalition elements. At the end of 2003 two US helicopters were shot down, killing 25 Americans, and in March 2004 four American security guards were killed by a mob as they drove through the city. Both the local commanders on the ground at the time, and subsequent analysts, have argued that these killings were classic examples of insurgency doctrine,

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[435] International Crisis Group Report, cited in Perito, 'Nation Building', p. 316.
[436] Nash, 'In the Wake of War', p. 4.
[437] Alice Hills, 'Something Old, Something New: Security Governance in Iraq', *Conflict, Security and Development*, 5:2 (2005), p. 192.

conducted as a 'come-on' designed to evoke a disproportionate response.[438] If that was the intention it worked perfectly.

Despite concerns of the local marine commanders, orders to launch a full-scale attack on Fallujah came from the Pentagon. The US command simply could not allow the city to develop into a no-go zone for the American troops and a precedent needed to be set. On 5 April 2004, the city was cordoned off and heavy fighting began almost immediately.[439] Fighting was intense, involving both artillery and close air support. Thus there was large-scale damage to civilian lives and property in the city. As one marine inside Fallujah put it: 'We will win the hearts and minds of Fallujah by ridding the city of insurgents. We're doing that by patrolling the streets and killing the enemy'.[440]

The siege and battles for Fallujah were concluded by a final heavy US assault on the city. Amid reports of hundreds of civilian deaths the fighting ended in a 'truce'. The agreement turned over security to the 'Fallujah Brigade', a force led by former officers of Iraq's demobilized army. However, this entity quickly collapsed, and control of the city passed into the hands of insurgents. The operations in Fallujah therefore not only failed to achieve the objective of increased security. The Americans also lost control of the city, reinforcing it as an insurgent stronghold, and certainly did not win any hearts and minds in the process. Instead, the US-appointed Iraqi governor of Fallujah's city council resigned, claiming that 'American behaviour is increasing the size of the resistance… [making] everyone seek revenge'. A US senior officer argued that as a result, as many as 25 percent of the new Iraqi security forces 'quit, changed sides, or otherwise failed to perform their duties'.[441] Aylwin Foster goes as far as to argue that in the case of Fallujah, the sense of moral righteousness combined with a strong emotionality 'served to distort collective military judgement'. Aylwin-Foster notes that even those US commanders and staff who 'generally took the broader view of the campaign were so deeply affronted on this occasion that they became set on the total destruction of the enemy. Under emotional duress even the most broad-minded and pragmatic reverted to type: kinetic'.[442]

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[438] See General Mattis cited in Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 332; and Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', p. 6.
[439] Hills, 'Something Old', p. 192.
[440] Madeleine Bunting, 'Screams will not be heard', *The Guardian*, 8 April 2004, accessed 30/06/2006, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1345833,00.html>
[441] Both cited in Hills, 'Something Old', p. 193.
[442] Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', p. 6.

Cordesman suggests that US military commanders do not seem to have fully understood the importance of peacemaking and nation-building missions in Iraq. They often did not provide the proper support for civilian activity, or did so with extensive delays and little real commitment. Even where military resources were clearly available, too little emphasis was placed on immediately securing key urban areas and government buildings. The initial security efforts in Baghdad were, moreover, generally reactive rather than part of a cohesive or coherent effort to provide security for the entire area. This meant constant security gaps that allowed looting, firefights, and ambushes to occur before an effort was made to act. The emphasis on force protection, especially within the US Army, moreover meant that the political impact on the Iraqi population was ignored, and the security enforcement mission often proved more provocative than helpful to already frustrated Iraqis.[443] Varhola notes that despite the talk of hearts and minds approaches, a brigade commander argued that his forces were in Iraq to 'kill the enemy, not win their hearts or minds'. Varhola concludes that it should therefore come as no surprise that Iraqi acceptance of the coalition has not been widespread.[444]

Speaking on the transition from combat operations to post-conflict operations a company commander reveals the limited change in attitude and posture: 'When we do operations, like when we do patrols…they are organized from combat patrols, they move like combat patrols, and they have objectives like combat patrols. So, we really didn't change anything, we just can't shoot everybody'.[445] Another interesting observation is a contradiction within the Army Lessons Learned Reports from December 2003. The report maintains that the greatest intelligence assets were soldiers on foot patrol, who were able to quickly establish 'ground truth'. However, the same report claims that the number of patrols is limited by the number of *vehicles* available in a task force.[446] Force protection clearly took priority over effectiveness in tactical behaviour.

US preoccupation with force protection meant that they quickly moved into large camps outside the cities, thereby alienating themselves from the local

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[443] Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, p. 502.
[444] Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq'.
[445] William Jacobs, Commander C Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry, 2003. Transcription of interview by Peter A. Kilner on 28 May at Kirkuk, Iraq. OIFSG Collection, Fort Leavenworth, KS, cited in Graff, 'United States Counter-Insurgency Doctrine and Implementation in Iraq', pp. 66–67.
[446] Center for Army Lessons Learned, *Operation Iraqi Freedom Initial Assessment, December* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: 2003), pp. 35–36, A-103, cited in ibid., p. 61.

population.[447] The civilian administration of the CPA resided in the so-called Green Zone in the centre of Baghdad, which was completely isolated and disconnected from the harsh realities outside the zone. People seldom left the zone and had little understanding of the situation in the country.[448] The military alienation from the local population was exacerbated by the conduct of patrols, which were most often done in armed vehicles, with the usual offensive posture of pointing guns at those who happened to pass by. The US military further instinctively turned to technology to solve problems. The instinct was 'to seek means, including technology, to minimize frequent close contact with the local population, in order to enhance force protection, but this served further to alienate the troops from the population'.[449] By citing a Center for Army Lessons Learned Report, Graff argues that 'American soldiers wear full body armour and carry loaded weapons everywhere, muzzles invariably pointed at the Iraqis, an insult in their culture'.[450] In Graff's words: 'Every layer of armour is another layer of isolation from the population with which the security force needs to interact'.[451] The lack of cultural understanding is discussed further below. There are certainly situations in which a posture of complete combat readiness should be maintained, but when it is maintained indefinitely, regardless of current events and surroundings, Graff contends that it 'implies a lack of situational understanding, a lack of trust, and a lack of general security… If security forces do not feel secure, should the population have reason to fear?'[452]

It should be underscored that there are a number of important exceptions in terms of tactical behaviour and leadership. As an example, Major General Peter Chiarelli, commander of the 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad between March 2004 and March 2005, immediately noted an almost perfect correlation between the areas with high insurgent activity and the areas lacking electricity, water, functional sewer systems and that had high unemployment rates. When faced with the insurgency statistics and a first-hand look at the miserable living conditions in Sadr City, where the electricity and sewage did not work, where running water was unavailable and where unemployment in April 2004 was 61 percent, he revisited his campaign plan

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[447] Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', p. 6; see also ibid., p. 59.
[448] Ricks, *Fiasco*, pp. 206–208.
[449] Aylwin-Foster, 'Changing the Army for Counter-Insurgency Operations', p. 6.
[450] Center for Army Lessons Learned, *Operation Iraqi Freedom Initial Assessment*, cited in Graff, 'United States Counter-Insurgency Doctrine and Implementation in Iraq', p. 59.
[451] Ibid., pp. 59–60.
[452] Ibid., p. 60.

and started concentrating on a combination of lethal and non-lethal effects.[453] Thus, water, rubbish collection and unemployment became key components of the First Cavalry Division's counter-insurgency strategy. Although combat operations were frequent throughout the division's deployment in Iraq, Chiarelli argued that 'we also tried to concentrate on the other operations that were just as important, sometimes, more important'. Besides the reconstruction tasks, Chiarelli also pointed out the importance of training the Iraqi Army and police, as well as 'helping the people learn about the democratic process… to teach people what it was like to live in a democratic society….When we went in and started reconstruction projects, things got better', he said.[454]

The last two years have also seen a distinct improvement in tactical behaviour. The previous chapter noted that a new counter-insurgency doctrine has been published. This doctrine, as well as a number of changes in pre-deployment training, are starting to reflect the needs of complex irregular warfare to a larger extent. This is beginning to have effects on the ground in Iraq. However, this development is currently displayed by a few exceptional officers. An example is the 3rd Armoured Cavalry Regiment's attack on Tal Afar led by Col. Herbert R. McMaster in the spring of 2005. Instead of staging a major raid into the city for suspects and then moving back to operating bases, McMaster said he took a sharply different tack, spending months making preparatory moves before attacking the entrenched insurgents in Tal Afar. That indirect approach demonstrated tactical patience. The attack followed most of the classic counter-insurgency principles, including the clear and hold approaches used by the British in Malaya.[455]

Moreover, in 2007, the US began the so-called surge in Baghdad, or *Operation Fardh al-Qanoon* (imposing the law). The operation to root out the insurgents from large parts of Baghdad is made with reinforcements of about 21,500 troops and is described as a complete reversal of the US approach to operations in Iraq. Essentially, the tactics applied by Colonel McMaster in Tal Afar are being implemented on a larger scale in the context of Baghdad. US forces are being moved from the large heavily fortified military bases on the edge of the city to be stationed amongst the

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[453] Major General Peter W. Chiarelli cited in Chris Hoffpauir, 'First Cavalry's Chiarelli Shares Iraq Experiences with NDIA Symposium', (April 2005), accessed 03/08/05, <http://www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2005/pa040705.htm>
[454] General Chiarelli cited in ibid.
[455] See Thomas E. Ricks, 'The Lessons of Counter-Insurgency: U.S. Unit Praised for Tactics Against Iraqi Fighters, Treatment of Detainees', *The Washington Post*, 16 February 2006, p. A14.

population. American troops are embedded in 27 Joint Security Stations or mini-bases spread out across the city. They share these bases with members of the Iraqi Army and police force. The co-operation with Iraqi forces puts a 'local face' on the operation, providing both language skills and an attempt to reduce friction between the population and the new security stations. Selected areas are first cleared of insurgents and militias. They are then 'gated', or cordoned off with roadblocks and security checks. Residents are issued with security passes, and movement in and out of the area is monitored. Finally, once order has been imposed, reconstruction money is to be channelled in. Earlier heavy-handed tactics are sought to be replaced by activity more in line with the hearts and minds approach.[456]

The long-term effects of the changed tactics and the surge in Baghdad are still contested. Initially, civilian deaths and insurgent attacks decreased substantially in Baghdad. However, a UN report from June 2007 notes that the violence has spread to other parts of the country and that the total number of civilian casualties continues to mount.[457] Moreover, May proved to be the third deadliest month for US troops in Iraq since the invasion. This shows that not only is the insurgency not weakened by the surge, but the changed tactics may also make US troops more vulnerable to insurgent attacks.[458] At the cut-off date in June 2007, the verdict of this thesis is that these changes came too late to make a sustainable impact on the security situation in Baghdad and Iraq in general.

Lack of Political and Cultural Understanding
The US joint doctrine on military operations other than war (MOOTW) comes to the conclusion that 'all military personnel should understand the political objective and the potential impact of inappropriate actions'.[459] In complex irregular warfare, involving politically charged situations and global media following every step, the smallest event may have strategic consequences. The US military's institutional mechanism for advising on cultural considerations, and for establishing guidelines for

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[456] 'Iraq under the surge: Implementing Plan B', *IISS Strategic Comments*, 13:2 (March 2007), accessed 03/03/07 <http://www.iiss.org/publications/strategic-comments/past-issues/volume-13---2007/volume-13--issue-2>

[457] Colum Lynch and Joshua Partlow, 'Civilian Toll in Iraq At "Higher Levels"', *The Washington Post*, 12 June 2007, accessed 03/06/07, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/11/AR2007061100336.html?referrer=email>

[458] Joshua Partlow, 'Attacks Kill 17 U.S. Soldiers in Iraq', *The Washington Post*, 4 June 2007, accessed 06/06/07, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/04/AR2007060400360.html>

[459] US JCS, 'JP3.07 Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War', (1995), p. vii.

interaction with the civil population, rested with US civil affairs forces. However, due to, what Varhola describes as 'the overwhelming requirements of the invasion', civil affairs forces were deployed with no training in the Middle Eastern culture or introduction to Arabic. In other words, the task of advising ground commanders on how to deal with the local community fell on the shoulders of people with no such training in the Middle East.[460]

Thus, on numerous occasions, US troops displayed that this part of doctrine has not been a priority during pre-deployment training. One example took place on 10 April 2003 in Baghdad when Cpl. Edward Chin of the US Marines covered the face of the Saddam Hussein statue with an American flag to celebrate the fall of the regime.[461] The event was broadcast by global media and completely contradicted President Bush's insistence on describing the invasion as 'a liberation, not an occupation'. Second, the US forces did not even understand that the very reason they were in Iraq was to create a political transition. A remarkable display of bad leadership and lack of understanding was displayed by Captain Dave Gray of the US Fourth Infantry Division, who complained about the post-war transition job. 'I don't like it, but I'll do it. There is no NATO, so we're doing the NATO thing now. But it's kinda f-ked: to take a bunch of infantry who're trained to kill, not mediate who ran over somebody's dog'.[462]

Varhola has noted that it is not uncommon to hear American soldiers explain that the only thing the Iraqis understand is 'force'. At the same time 'these soldiers do not speak Arabic and have had little or no interaction with Iraqis'. While force as a means of communication is certainly understood in Iraq, as in most places, these tactics may also undermine the political aims of the operations, and certainly do not help when it comes to the struggle for hearts and minds.[463] While the highly publicized criminal behaviour and inhumane treatment of prisoners by US forces are an extreme example of US military conduct that serves to alienate the local as well as global population, Varhola argues that many of the daily and less publicized activities are perhaps more alarming. The reason is that these are activities condoned by the

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[460] Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq'.
[461] ABCNews, 'American Flag Flap: Stars and Stripes on Saddam's Doomed Statue Strikes a Sensitive Chord', accessed 24 May 2004,
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/GMA/Primetime/Iraq030410USFlagStatue.html>
[462] Hirsh, 'Our New Civil War'.
[463] Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq'.

chain of command, and have direct effects on the lives of ordinary Iraqis. A number of examples are:

> …'test firing' weapons from moving vehicles in urban areas, shooting at Iraqi vehicles on major highways, destroying walls that have anti-American graffiti painted on them, collectively detaining all males in a given area or village for up to several weeks or months, and detaining preadolescent family members of suspects in an effort to force suspects to turn themselves in.[464]

The most abhorrent example of failing to connect the political purpose of operations with tactical behaviour on the ground was the systematic abuse of prisoners contained in the Abu Ghraib prison. The abuse, and the slow response to the reports from the prison displayed a complete lack of understanding of the political role that the US armed forces are playing in Iraq. The cases of prisoner abuse in Iraq as well as the treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay mean an immeasurable loss of credibility for the US as a force for good, and as a promoter of democracy and respect for human rights. It should also be noted that the cases of abuse have a domestic dimension in both the US and British cases. The cases of abuse and other immoral acts may decrease the respect which the domestic population has for the military and what it does – thereby breaking the Military Covenant between the nation, the military and each individual soldier.

There is also a number of disturbing cases of illegal behaviour of US troops in Iraq. During 2006 a story of mass killings in the village of Haditha has come to public attention. On the morning of 19 November 2005, a roadside bomb struck a Humvee carrying Marines from 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, on a road near Haditha. The bomb killed a Lance Corporal in the unit.[465] The marines responded by going on a rampage in the town. The rampage killed 24 civilians, among them women and children. The killings were 'methodical in nature' and occurred over a period of three to five hours.[466] The incident also involved the attempt of a major cover-up at several levels of command before the story broke. It is also notable that it was not an issue of bad training as the unit was well prepared for their duty in Iraq. Several members of the

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[464] Ibid.

[465] Michael Duffy, 'The Shame Of Kilo Company', *Time*, 167:23 (May 2006), accessed 12/06/06, <http://www.time.com/time/archive/printout/0,23657,1198892,00.html>

[466] Oliver Poole, 'Worst war crime committed by US in Iraq', *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 May 2006, accessed 12/06/06, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/05/27/wus27.xml&sSheet-=/news/2006/05/27/ixnews.html>

unit were on their second tour; one was on his third. They were, moreover, veterans of the house-to-house fighting in Fallujah during previous tours, and should have been well prepared for the conditions in Iraq.[467]

Following the high-profile Haditha allegations, pressure from the Iraqi government on military commanders to curtail excessive force by soldiers, and an initiative to cut down on civilian casualties by Lt. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, commander of the multinational forces in Iraq during 2006, caused an intensification of investigations into US troop behaviour in Iraq. This has led to a number of disturbing incidents being revealed. Among the cases are rapes of minors, killings of unarmed civilians, including a crippled man. In most of the cases there are also cover-ups involved.[468] *The Washington Post* noted in August 2006 that, although countless civilians have died at the hands of US soldiers, only 39 service members have been formally accused in connection with the deaths of twenty Iraqis from 2003 to early 2006. Twenty-six of the 39 troops were initially charged with murder, negligent homicide or manslaughter. In the end, twelve of them served prison time for any offence.[469]

However, the basic training and values of the US soldiers in general do not seem to have been questioned. After the Haditha incident became public, Lt. Gen. Chiarelli ordered a 'core warrior-values training' – a four-hour refresher course and an information packet reminding soldiers of the values with which they were trained.[470] Rather than rethinking the values of the military, they were further reinforced. The criminal activities in themselves, the failure to react quickly and harshly in condemnation of the activities, and especially the institutional cover-up attempts, point towards a systemic failure to understand the importance of the strategic corporal and strategic consequences of such behaviour. The strategic narrative is therefore beyond the control of the coalition, creating further dissent by the day.

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[467] Duffy, The Shame'.

[468] Jonathan Finer, 'Troops Facing Murder Probe', *The Washington Post*, 1 July 2006, p. A01 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/30/AR2006063000495_pf.html>

[469] Josh White, Charles Lane and Julie Tate, 'Homicide Charges Rare in Iraq War', *The Washington Post,* 28 August 2006, p. A01.

[470] Ellen Knickmeyer and Nelson Hernandez, 'Iraq Plans Probes; Ethics Training Set for Troops', *The Washington Post*, 2 June 2006, p. A16.

Outcome of US Conduct of Operations in Iraq

While the military campaign in Iraq has been described as a success by quickly outmanoeuvring the Iraqi forces and toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein, the post-conflict period has been largely unsuccessful. A dramatic military victory has therefore been overshadowed by chaos and bloodshed on the streets of Baghdad, difficulty and delay in establishing security or providing essential services, and a deadly insurgency. Human, military and economic costs are high and continue to rise. Michael O'Hanlon writes that 'one of the most brilliant invasion successes in modern military history was followed almost immediately by one of the most incompetently planned occupations'.[471]

The final verdict regarding the outcome of US operations in Iraq remains for history to decide, but a number of conclusions can be made at this stage. Most importantly, the security situation is far from under control, which inhibits progress in the political and economic areas. The Iraq Study Group notes that attacks against the US coalition and Iraqi security forces are persistent and growing. 'October 2006 was the deadliest month for US forces since January 2005, with 102 Americans killed. Total attacks in October 2006 averaged 180 per day, up from 70 per day in January 2006…Some 3,000 Iraqi civilians are killed every month'.[472] Politically, some important steps towards democracy have been achieved. 'Iraq has a democratically elected Council of Representatives, and a government was formed in May 2006 that is broadly representative of the Iraqi people'. Iraq has also ratified a constitution. However, the composition of the Iraqi government is basically sectarian, and key players within the government too often act in their sectarian interest.[473] However, in June 2007 it seems the US surge as well as tactical innovations have failed to improve the situation in Iraq. Toby Dodge argues that Iraq is a collapsed state in which a resultant security vacuum has driven the country into sectarian civil war.[474] While the Iraqi economy shows some encouraging signs, it is still weak. Instead of meeting the target of 10 percent, growth in Iraq was at 4 percent in 2006. Inflation is above 50 percent, and unemployment between 30–50 percent. [475]

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[471] Michael O'Hanlon, 'Iraq Without a Plan'.
[472] Baker and Hamilton, 'The Iraq Study Group Report', p. 10.
[473] Ibid., p. 15.
[474] Toby Dodge, 'The Causes of Failures in Iraq', *Survival*, 49:1 (Spring 2007), pp. 89–90.
[475] Baker and Hamilton, 'The Iraq Study Group', p. 21.

The Iraq Study Group Report further observes that the US has made 'a massive commitment to the future of Iraq in both blood and treasure'. By April 2007, over 3,200 American soldiers had lost their lives serving in Iraq. Another 21,000 have been wounded. To date, the United States has spent roughly $400 billion on the Iraq War, and costs are running at about $8 billion per month. The Iraq Study Group's concluding assessment reads:

> Despite a massive effort, stability in Iraq remains elusive and the situation is deteriorating. The Iraqi government cannot now govern, sustain, and defend itself without the support of the United States....The ability of the United States to shape outcomes is diminishing. Time is running out. [476]

With reference to the operation's political aims, the Saddam Hussein regime is clearly overthrown and disarmed. However, has it made America and the rest of the world a safer place? Dana Allin has argued that the Iraq War 'has been a counter-strategic diversion that has weakened America, strengthened global jihadist terrorism and has arguably failed, so far at least, to bring humanitarian betterment to the Iraqi people'.[477] Similarly, Francis Fukuyama contends that a result of the Iraq War is that the US has squandered the overwhelming public mandate it had received after 11 September, and instead, alienated most of its allies, 'many of whom have since engaged in "soft balancing" against American influence, and stirred up anti-Americanism in the Middle East'.[478] Toby Dodge's final verdict could not be sharper: 'This clearly is a defeat of historic proportions for US foreign policy'.[479] Interestingly, while seven of eight military objectives were said to have been achieved in May 2003, the failure to achieve the last objective of reconstruction and democratization has therefore led to the failure of the campaign in relation to the political aims of the operation.

The US troops in Iraq have conducted their operations in accordance with the American way of war and their doctrine on traditional operations throughout the campaign, including the post-conflict phase. The campaign was interpreted as an essentially conventional war, which is also what the US military planned and trained for. The invasion was an overwhelming display of superiority in terms of technology and organization on the conventional battlefield. However, when Saddam Hussein's

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[476] Ibid., p. 27.
[477] Dana Allin, 'American Power and Allied Restraint: Lessons of Iraq', *Survival*, 49:1 (Spring 2007), p. 128.
[478] Francis Fukuyama, 'Invasion of the Isolationists', *The New York Times*, 31 August 2005.
[479] Dodge, 'The Causes of Failure', p. 87.

regime fell, it quickly became clear that the US leadership had failed to create a serious strategy for the post-conflict phase. Interagency co-operation failed in the planning process and did not produce a comprehensive approach. Civil-military co-operation within the Pentagon also failed to produce plans that effectively connected operational and tactical activity to the strategic aims. The limited interaction over departmental boundaries, with the subsequent limitation in expertise in the planning process, allowed a small number of people to plan operations on a number of flawed assumptions about Iraq.

In the field, the civilian and military components failed to create unity of command, which made co-operation difficult. Confusion about the chain of command, in combination with different views on how to get the task done across the civil-military divide, meant that the activities of the different instruments of power were not co-ordinated, thereby violating the principle of unity of effort.

The tactical behaviour of US troops in Iraq, especially the first three years of the campaign, revealed that they have neither been trained, nor mentally prepared for post-conflict type operations, or complex irregular warfare. Instead, the US military resorted to conventional tactics based on firepower and technology, with the addition of an overemphasis on aggressive force protection policies, which separated and alienated the US troops from the local population. US forces also lacked cultural sensitivity and understanding of how the political aims of the operation must be reflected in their behaviour on the ground. This is noted in the heavy-handed day-to-day work of US troops. The tactical principles of complex irregular warfare, as discussed in the theory chapters, were therefore also violated. Instead of hearts and minds operations, involving minimum use of force, force protection through closer connections with the local communities, and an understanding of the political primacy and consequences of operations, the strategic narrative has been lost in heavy-handed tactics and a failure to understand local culture as well as the nature of the enemy and the strategic aims. The incidents of abuse at Abu Ghraib, in combination with the criminal investigations of serious crimes committed by US troops in Iraq, thereby raise questions regarding the warrior values which are the foundation of US military training.

The previous chapter suggested that the functional imperative of US forces – defined too narrowly by the military leadership – has left the US armed forces

inadequately prepared for complex irregular warfare – structurally and culturally. This has been confirmed by the analysis of US operations in Iraq.

CHAPTER 6

PATTERNS OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN THE UK

The theoretical chapter advocated a broad view of civil-military relations in which the study of history, in combination with cultural and structural factors, forms a deeper understanding of how the civil-military relationship is rooted in societies' structures and how they may affect the conduct of operational planning and execution. This chapter, therefore, starts with an analysis of some important aspects of British military history. The historical section is followed by the analysis of British civil-military relations. This section uses the discussion from the theoretical chapter and focuses on the interagency structures and the patterns of civil-military relations within the Ministry of Defence. The central question is whether the civil-military structures are integrated or divided with reference to the normative theories of Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz. Another central problem is the level of civilian control, expressed in terms of Peter Feaver's agency theory.

Historical Background of the British Armed Forces

This section is designed to illustrate a number of themes in British military history that are likely to have had a major impact on the culture of the armed forces and its relationship with the British political leadership. The themes studied are the development of professionalism in the British armed forces, Victorian values and lessons from colonial policing and the counter-insurgency operations of the Cold War era, and finally, the operations in Northern Ireland and the Cold War era.

The Early Years

In 1688, King James II was expelled and William III installed during the so-called Glorious Revolution. Before the revolution, England had experienced a dual system

consisting of the New Model Army under the authority of Parliament, and the Army of James II, of course, controlled by the Crown.[480] The new system, created in the wake of the revolution, was based on having just one army managed in a system of dual control. This meant that control of the armed forces was shared by the Crown and Parliament – a form of checks and balances that provided the military with the opportunity to play its masters against each other. However, at the same time, Parliament successfully kept the British Army disorganized in order to ensure control. To play one civilian branch off against the other the military needed some form of integrity, which it lacked. The army was thereby prevented from being able to take advantage of the divided civilian rule in the 18th century. However, the disorganization, with a lack of structured education and the system of purchased commissions, also hindered the professionalisation and effectiveness of the British armed forces.[481]

Empire and Professionalism

With the defeat of Napoleon on the European continent, and peace restored in Europe for the British, the British Army's focus turned to the colonies. Hew Strachan notes that since 1815 the British have only fought three wars on the European continent: the Crimean War and the two World Wars. Most often, British military campaigns have taken place on the fringes of the Empire, and, as Strachan puts it: 'Extra-European warfare has been the army's dominant experience'.[482] The Empire has, therefore, been the most consistent and most continuous influence in shaping the British military, and the most important variable in the process of military professionalisation.[483] The British development of military professionalism took place in an era when the functional imperative consisted of colonial policing and administration, and with a very large influence of what Huntington calls the 'societal imperatives'.[484]

In the 1870s, three major reforms of the military establishment took place that would open the way for a more professional army. These reforms removed any royal authority over the military outside of parliamentary action, created a new system of

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[480] Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 44.
[481] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 36.
[482] Strachan, *Politics of the British Army*, p. 74.
[483] Strachan, *Politics of the British Army*, p. 74.
[484] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 2

service and reserves, and abolished the purchase of commissions.[485] At the same time, the political institutions had by this time been changed to centralize authority over policy to the Cabinet, which made political monitoring and control of the military less costly. Therefore, Avant argues that 'the ease with which the Cabinet could intervene in military policy affected the development of military professionalism in Britain'.[486] The Cabinet exercised control over the military personnel by replacing officers who did not produce the desired results. In this way the military leadership and the officer corps in general became closely attuned to the preferences of the political leadership.[487] Moreover, since the British Army became professionalised under conditions of easy civilian intervention, the military purists were not able to set the agenda as to what counted as the military's functional imperative or proper warfare. The training and promotion of the British military came to reflect civilian concerns of solving immediate threats and problems in the Empire. The functional need to face all kinds of immediate threats within the Empire as well as the political or careerist need to pay close attention to the civilian leadership in order to be promoted developed a military culture that emphasized adaptability, and political understanding.

The types of operations the British Army conducted during this period caused a further politicization as well as political awareness of the military. The soldier in the colonies was more than a soldier. He was also part of the administration of the colony and therefore a civiliser and settler. The soldier's role was not simply to win wars and conquer territory, it was also to administer and police the land he had conquered.[488] Military responsibilities and civil administration were closely linked, and the most obvious manifestation of this fact was in the common combination of the jobs of commander-in-chief and governor.[489] This was moreover a pattern that continued into the 20th century and even its second half with the appointment of General Sir Gerald Templer as High Commissioner *and* director of operations in Malaya, as an example.[490]

The British military went through the process of professionalisation in an era when the functional as well as the societal imperatives created close links with the political leadership and what Huntington would call politicization of the armed forces.

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[485] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 38.
[486] Ibid.
[487] Ibid., p. 40.
[488] Strachan, *Politics of the British Army*, p. 75.
[489] Ibid., p. 76.
[490] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 104.

The political interventions led the armed forces to become closely attuned to the wishes of the political leadership. Moreover, the imperial policing and administration conducted in the colonies also politicized the armed forces by giving it tasks that are normally executed by civilian administrations. Although the normal theory of civil-military relations would argue that this is a prime example of subjective civilian control that should lead to the decrease in military effectiveness, the British armed forces were successful in their tasks of colonial policing within the Empire. We shall also later come back to the importance of the politicized professional mindset in the development of effective counter-insurgency doctrine.

Victorian Values and Counter-Insurgency Operations

The British way of war, as described in the following chapter, can be traced well into the 19th century and the combination of pragmatic lessons from colonial policing and counter-insurgency operations, as well as the societal influence of Victorian values.[491] The Victorian values of British society are based on Christian protestant sentiment and the values of individual liberty and responsibility that are inherent in both Protestantism and the basis of British liberalism. Built into the British view of the law was the belief that individuals must take responsibility for their own lives and suffer the consequences of their actions. The purpose of the law was not to coerce citizens into the right actions, but to free them from the state and leave them to mind their own business as well as to attend their duties. The most important of these duties was the chivalric 'to do what you ought… [in relation] to the duty of care which each person owes the innocent stranger'.[492]

It was certainly expected of the British gentlemen officers and soldiers to act within these sentiments. Thornton goes on to argue that the concept of minimum force was also supported by another derivation of Victorian values in the idea of the British gentleman. The 19th century saw a revival of the idea of medieval chivalry and the ideals of bravery, loyalty, courtesy, modesty and honour. The gentleman was the front figure of this movement and, of course, the imperial officer was part of it. The reason why the concepts of chivalry and humanitarianism were so successfully ingrained in British society was, according to Thornton, thanks to the British public school system

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[491] Rod Thornton, 'The British Army and the Origins of its Minimum Force Philosophy', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 15:1 (2004), p. 85.
[492] Roger Scruton, *England: An Elegy* (London: Chatto, 2000), pp. 57 and 121.

and the popular literature of the time.[493] The public schools in Britain were established with the sole purpose of creating a future upper class and governing elite of the British Empire. They would produce men of character who would 'provide the benefits of Christian civilization to the heathen peoples of the Empire, without cruelty and excess'. Through the public school system, the Christian or Victorian values were moreover embedded in society long after Queen Victoria. The same values have been taught by the public schools to this day as 'British' values and thus still inform the British officer corps.[494]

The Victorian values that were taught to the young elites were moreover strengthened by the popular culture of the Victorian period. The juvenile literature of the period was often centred on military figures who filled with patriotism and courage, and fuelled by a strong sense of duty and honour, imposed the British ideals throughout the Empire. This juvenile literature also had the effect of spreading the Victorian values beyond the upper class as it had the capability of reaching a far wider audience than the public school system.[495] The British male youth, even if he did not attend a public school, was thus socialized into knowing the standards of behaviour for a British gentleman and officer. These values have, to a large extent, survived until today within the British armed forces. One reason for this can be ascribed to the conservative nature of the public school system and the military recruiting and education system. While the traditional Victorian values have been maintained within the public school system, the British armed forces, to a disproportionately large extent in relation to the rest of society, still recruits mainly from these institutions.[496]

Plenty of research has been conducted concerning the link between public school education and commissions in high status regiments and career success in the British armed forces.[497] Most recently, Keith Macdonald has provided data that supports the notion that there is still a strong link between commissioned officers and 'top' public schools.

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[493] Thornton, 'The British Army', p. 89.
[494] Corelli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (New York: William Morrow, 1972), pp. 27–28.
[495] Thornton, 'The British Army', p. 90.
[496] Ibid., p. 94.
[497] See Christopher Otley, 'Educational Background of British Army Officers', *Sociology*, 7:2 (May 1973), pp. 191–209; Maurice Garnier, 'Technology, Organizational Culture and Recruitment in the British Military Academy', *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Vol. 3 (Fall 1975), pp. 141–151; Keith Macdonald, '"Vitai Lampada": Preserving the Elite', *Armed Forces and Society*, 14:2 (Winter 1988), pp. 233–245; Keith Macdonald, 'Black Mafia, Loggies and Going for the Stars: The Military Elite Revisited', *The Sociological Review*, 52:1 (2004), pp. 106–135.

> The proportion of public school cadets reached a high point of 91% in 1910, remained around 80% until World War II, and fell to two-thirds in the nineteen-fifties and sixties. It has declined by 15 percentage points since then and now seems to have fallen below 50%.[498]

The statistics become even more striking when looking at the 'elite regiments', the Guards Regiments (Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots, Irish and Welsh), as well as the Royal Green Jackets. The recruitment to these regiments in the period between 1999 and 2000, involved fifty-seven entrants of which fifty-one came from public schools.[499] Equally, when studying the continued importance of public school education in the military career the same pattern continues, as most positions of senior officers have been, and continue to be, filled by ex-public schoolboys. 'In 2000 89% of senior generals and field marshals had been to public school, as compared with 63% of cadets in 1967, which is the period when these men would have been at the RMA [Royal Military Academy Sandhurst]'. This is despite the fact that public school recruits do not stand out in terms of merit during military training.[500]

The Boer War, World Wars, Cold War, and the Return to Old Principles

The Boer War, or the South African War of 1899–1902, was a watershed event for the British armed forces, and showed that all was not well. After the Crimean War between 1853 and 1856, the British Army had enjoyed 40 years of fighting ill-equipped and ill-organized forces in the colonies. This legacy made for an over-confidence that was quickly shattered by the opening battles in South Africa. The British generals had a difficult time adjusting to the different tactics of the Boer Army. The Boers constituted a fast and highly mobile guerrilla force, employing hit-and-run tactics that caused severe losses to the British forces, and that frustrated the British officers' view of a 'fair fight'. Jan Morris asserts that the South African War was a pyrrhic victory, not only because it cost the British society many lives and £217 million (compared to the £68 million for the Crimean war and £1 million for the Zulu war), but also because it broke the imperial spirit of British society.[501] Not only was public support quickly lost as the war dragged on and even caused some spectacular defeats. There was also public outrage due to the brutal tactics used to try and subdue

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[498] Macdonald, 'Black Mafia', p. 111.
[499] Ibid., p. 112.
[500] Ibid., p. 119.
[501] Jan Morris, 'The War That Broke the Imperial Spirit', *Horizon*, Vol. 18 (Spring 1976), pp. 49–63.

the Boers' guerrillas in the latter part of the war. An example was Lord Kitchener's scorched earth tactics. This took the form of the destruction of farms in order to prevent the guerrillas from obtaining food and supplies, and to demoralize them by leaving their women and children homeless and starving in the open. When these tactics also proved unsuccessful, the Boer women and children were instead herded into concentration camps where as many as 30,000, or about 25 percent, of the inmates died due to appalling conditions.[502] Thus began the long, slow decline of support for the imperial idea in Britain.

Despite the treatment of the Boer War as a dark moment in British history, it can be argued that it was also a case of relatively quick and successful adaptation to guerrilla tactics after initial losses. 'For all its barbarism, however, the policy worked…Kitchener instituted a plan that was not quick or easy, or even popular; but it was effective and, ultimately, successful'.[503] The changes instituted by the British were not the result of orders from civilian leaders in London, but were initiated by the army itself. Interestingly, within six months of the start of the war, all high-ranking commanders had adjusted their tactics in their own personal way. As noted, Avant argues that this adaptability was due to the nature of civil-military relations which allowed for strong civilian control over army personnel. The civilian leaders at the time had favoured flexible and adaptable military leaders in the years before the Boer War. Civilian control over personnel had affected the bias of British military professionalism to be more concerned with adaptation and flexibility than with standard manners of strategic and tactical thinking.[504]

When the First World War broke out, the British were, despite the hard-won lessons of the Boer War, used to small and relatively cheap wars and therefore had little appreciation of the nature of warfare against industrialized powers. However, in the wake of the Boer War a royal commission was set up to investigate the military problems in South Africa and to suggest reforms. Radical technological changes were made to naval vessels and rapid-firing guns, and the institutional integrity of the defence establishment was strengthened and included an institutionalized system of military advice to civilian leaders. Another result was increased civilian appointments of the offensive minded 'continentalist' officers of the British Army, who had until

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[502] Andrew Porter, 'The South African War and its Historians', *African Affairs*, Vol. 99 (2000), p. 635.
[503] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 113–114.
[504] Ibid., p. 115.

then been out of fashion within the British defence establishment. These officers were more interested in continental defence than in colonial warfare and favoured the scientific and Prussian view of war, shared by their continental and American counterparts.[505] The war caused enormous casualties on the European continent, and Robert Cassidy notes that one of the most salient British lessons of the Great War was that the cost of victory had been too high. Thus, the Great War created strong reactions and developed an essentially anti-military environment in Britain during the interwar period.[506]

Against this background, Basil Henry Liddell Hart developed what seemed like an attractive alternative to the mass killings of the Great War in the 'traditional British way in warfare', involving the indirect approach. The British approach to complex irregular warfare is further discussed in the next chapter, but, in essence, the indirect approach was a return to old principles of imperial policing, and Hart sought to return wars to the periphery and 'on the cheap'. As a consequence, after the war the army was again dismantled and as the interwar governments treated another continental war as an unlikely contingency, the army returned to its duties in the colonies.[507]

The anti-military climate of the interwar period, in combination with Liddell Hart's indirect approach, led the British Government to a number of defence reviews that in essence stated that Britain would not commit an army on the continent under any circumstances.[508] Harold Winton argues that this political environment of 'the imperial defence mission', together with the historical organizational focus on colonial policing, impeded the important development of armoured warfare in Britain before the Second World War.[509] This is confirmed by Brian Bond who sought to explain the fact that the British military failed to prepare for the continental threat in the interwar period. Bond argues that, although many officers saw the need for armoured mechanization, the way the army should be equipped depended on what the purpose of the army was supposed to be – the functional imperative. Therefore the colonial commitments in India especially complicated the process of mechanization; militated against the creation of an Expeditionary Force in peacetime, and prevented a radical redistribution of imperial garrisons in response to changing strategic conditions'.

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[505] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 46 and 115–116.
[506] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, p. 49.
[507] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 40.
[508] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, p. 49.
[509] Harold Winton, *To Change an Army* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988), pp. 9, 225–230.

Ultimately, the creation of armoured divisions was considered too costly when infantry resources were needed for the continued policing of the Empire.[510]

At the onset of the Second World War, the UK was therefore ill prepared to face the reformed German forces, including armoured formations and blitzkrieg strategy. The war obviously led to another vast expansion of the British military establishment. The lessons of the Second World War were mixed because of the wide variety of experiences in different theatres, but it is clear that the emphasis on conventional war changed the training and mindset of the British Army. However, Cassidy states that the two world wars precipitated three new strategic realities for the British: the loss of great power status; divestment of the Empire; and a larger role for the British Army in Europe. Britain therefore faced the challenge to balance reduced economic resources with both the security requirements in Europe, and maintaining the remaining colonies.[511] The post-war period was therefore transitional, whereby the army lost its overseas role and gained one in Europe. It fought small wars but became more focused on defence of continental Europe.[512] In 1966, Baron Alun Jones, then minister in the Foreign Office, argued that:

> The training and doctrine of the British Army in 1955 were still essentially that of a nation in arms, dedicated to the principle of unlimited war fought by massive forces and only reluctantly discarding the organization and tactics of El Alamein and the Normandy beaches.[513]

However, by the early 1960s the British armed forces were once again absorbing the traditional values and tactics of its colonial history. To an even greater extent than before the Second World War the British emphasized civilian leadership in the execution of counter-insurgency operations. A comprehensive package of economic, political, social and military measures was wanted.[514] To emphasize the transition from the continental operations of the Second World War with the relearning of counter-insurgency principles, this following section takes a closer look at the British operations in Malaya. It is also an interesting example of quick learning and adaptation after initial failures.

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[510] Brian Bond, *British Military Policy between the Two World Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).
[511] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, p. 41.
[512] Ibid., p. 52.
[513] Alun Jones, 'Training and Doctrine in the British Army Since 1945', in Michael Howard, *The Theory and Practice of War* (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 315–316.
[514] Rod Thornton, 'The Role of Peace Support Operations Doctrine in the British Army', *International Peacekeeping*, 7:2 (Summer 2000), p. 44.

Malaya

The post-Second World War British Army looked much more like a conventional army than during the pinnacle of the colonial period, and the problems faced by the British in Malaya were, therefore, somewhat similar to those faced by the US in Vietnam. Malaya was a British colony that was first lost during the Second World War during the Japanese invasion of South-East Asia. However, long before that, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was created out of a very active anti-colonial movement, especially among the Chinese community, during the 1930s. During the war, the MCP organized a guerrilla army that fought the Japanese with the support of the British who provided them with weapons. After the Japanese capitulation in 1945, the MCP resisted the return of the British-supported government of Malaya. After negotiation had failed the MCP turned to insurgency. The counter-insurgency campaign in Malaya started on 19 June 1948 when the British High Commissioner declared a state of emergency.[515]

Initially, the British were struggling due to a weak command and control structure. However, in 1950, due to the rising number of terrorist incidents, the British Government was convinced of the need for drastic changes. Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs was placed in a new position as director of operations, directly under the High Commissioner, and in charge of planning, co-ordinating and directing the operations of the police and the military. Moreover, the government was reformed into a structure of executive committees which connected the central government to the states and districts for more effective co-ordination of the counter-insurgency campaign. At the state and district levels the state and district war executive committees (SWECs and DWECs) were implementing policy with local knowledge and sensitivity. This was the start of a solution to overcome the operation's ineffective civil-military relationship.[516] Another innovation by Briggs was the 'New Village' system, which was a scheme to resettle the Chinese population that was thought to provide the insurgents with supplies. By moving them and improving their standard of living, three aims were achieved: the insurgents were starved out, the support for the

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[515] Anthony Farrar-Hockley, 'The Post-War Army 1945–1963', in Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, p. 330.
[516] Joel E. Hamby, 'Civil-Military Operations: Joint Doctrine and the Malayan Emergency', *Joint Force Quarterly*, (Autumn 2002), p. 55; and Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 120–121.

government was strengthened, and the flow of information from the local population increased.[517]

However, even with the committee system and the New Villages in effect, Briggs found difficulties in directing and co-ordinating the efforts of the police and the military. Briggs felt that this was because of too limited powers invested in the director of operations and therefore suggested increasing the powers of his successor. Finally, the assassination of the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney, led the British Government to respond to Briggs' request. The solution was the merger of the posts of High Commissioner and director of operations with General Sir Gerald Templer in charge.[518] The exceptional powers invested in Templer created a highly effective command and control structure and a close co-ordination of the operation's civil and military aspects. The Briggs plan could be effectively implemented.

The smoothly running command and control structure also led to good civil-military co-operation at the tactical level. Most units formed their headquarters in a joint operations room usually run by the police. Moreover, there was no separate military intelligence chain created, and the police special branch was instead used. Although the policing measures were sometimes very harsh they were often done with restraint and under the established rules. Those who violated the regulations of the troops were moreover severely punished.[519] The legitimacy and coercive power of the campaign was moreover strengthened through a well-executed information campaign that was waged from centralized headquarters, and implemented by the SWEC-DWEC system. Also the security problem, for both the local population and the counter-insurgency troops, was established by making the local population responsible for their own security.

With the Briggs plan, as implemented by Templer, the government continually increased its legitimacy while the insurgents were further isolated from the population.[520] Initial difficulties at the operational and tactical levels were dealt with in a highly flexible manner. It was the flexibility and innovation of the civil-military relations and the command and control structures that created a campaign of flexibility, sound civil-military relations, and the minimum use of force.

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[517] Anthony Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948–1960* (Plymouth: Frederick Muller, 1975), pp. 295, 302; Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, p. 75.
[518] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency*, p. 104.
[519] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 58.
[520] Ibid.

Northern Ireland and the Post-Cold War Era

With the exception of a few diversions of more traditional warfare in the Falklands campaign and the Gulf War, the British military experience has continued to be filled by different forms of complex irregular warfare, such as counter-insurgency warfare and peace support operations.

In Northern Ireland, the British military was reluctantly called in to give military aid to the civil power in August 1969. With experience limited to counter-insurgency operations in the colonies, the British Army used what was considered rather heavy-handed tactics at the start of the operations in Northern Ireland. Such tactics reached their nadir on the infamous 'Bloody Sunday' early in 1972, when soldiers from the Parachute Regiment killed thirteen men and wounded thirteen others. However, the British Army subsequently improved its tactics and training so that by 1975 it was relatively successfully managing the conflict with more sophisticated tactics and intelligence operations. As a result, the British military gained unique experience in urban patrolling, covert surveillance, and bomb disposal.[521]

Colin McInnes underlined a number of key features of the British Army's experience in Northern Ireland:

> The civil authorities remained in control; minimum force was generally used; new tactics were constantly developed and tactical control devolved; close relations were established with the police; and finally the Army recognized that it could not resolve the conflict on its own, but that a broader-based political strategy was required.[522]

Cassidy argues that it is significant how the operations in Northern Ireland perpetuated the British Army's experiences and attitudes about low-intensity conflict.[523] Equally, Strachan maintains that, despite the traditional operations in the Falklands and the Gulf War, the operations in Northern Ireland have greatly influenced the British Army's training, movement, deployment, logistics, and morale and shaped British

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[521] Michael Dewar, *Brushfire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army Since 1945* (London: Robert Hale, 1990), p. 15; John Strawson, 'The Thirty Years Peace', in Chandler and Beckett (eds.), *The Oxford History of the British Army*, pp. 350–352.

[522] Colin McInnes, *Hot War, Cold War: the British Army's Way in Warfare 1945–1995* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1996), p. 182.

[523] Robert M. Cassidy, 'The British Army and Counter-Insurgency: The Salience of Military Culture', *Military Review*, (May-June 2005), accessed 30/08/06 <http://www.army.mil/professionalwriting/volumes/volume3/november_2005/11_05_2.html#15>

soldiers' lives.[524] Not only have the British had the chance to perfect their urban patrolling, civil-military co-operation, and counter-terrorist techniques, they have been forced to do so under the close scrutiny of the British legal system as well as the media. Northern Ireland has, therefore, often been referred to as the perfect training ground for units bound for complex irregular warfare.

The British counter-insurgency experiences in Malaya and Northern Ireland also provided them with invaluable experience and training for the difficult peace operations of the 1990s. In a study of British operations in Bosnia, Robert Cassidy stresses the influence the Northern Ireland experience had on how the British military conducted its operations.[525]

Since the end of the Cold War the British armed forces have increasingly been used 'as a force for good' in Prime Minister Blair's terms, meaning state-building tasks, peace support and humanitarian operations. While the rhetoric surrounding these operations speaks of reconstruction and peacekeeping, the forces on the ground often experience fierce fighting and Anthony Forster notes that retired senior officers have increasingly criticized the political leadership for failing to give proper moral and financial support to the military in such contexts.[526] A further strain in the civil-military relationship has recently been made public by the fierce criticism of government policy by the current head of the Army, General Sir Richard Dannatt, as well as the former, General Sir Mike Jackson. The criticism is not limited to operational matters, but also covers the management of British forces in peacetime.[527] Forster also observes that in recent years the political leadership has been more inclined to micro-manage the armed forces. As noted, in contemporary operations, tactical operations may have unforeseen strategic consequences, thereby giving the political leadership an incentive to intervene at lower levels – an imperative that is

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[524] Hew Strachan, 'The British Way in Warfare', in Chandler and Beckett (eds.), *The Oxford History of the British Army*, pp. 408–409.
[525] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, p. 198.
[526] Anthony Forster, 'Breaking the Covenant: Governance of the British Army in the Twenty-First Century', *International Affairs*, 82:6 (2006), p. 1046.
[527] See Sarah Sands, 'Sir Richard Dannatt: A very honest General', *Daily Mail*, 12 October 2006, accessed 01/03/07
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=410175&in_page_id=17 70>; and 'Former Army chief criticises MoD', *BBC News*, 7 December 2006.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6215296.stm>

supported by technological advance that makes such micro-management of day-to-day operations possible.[528]

The perceived strain in the civil-military relationship is, to a large extent, based on a discussion regarding the Military Covenant in the UK. The Military Covenant is part of formal British doctrine, which states that, as soldiers are called upon to make great personal sacrifices in the service of the nation, and forgo some of the rights enjoyed by those outside the armed forces, 'the British soldiers must always be able to expect fair treatment, to be valued and respected as individuals, and that they (and their families) will be sustained and rewarded by commensurate terms and conditions of service'. The unique nature of military operations also means that the armed forces must be allowed to differ from all other institutions, and must be provided for accordingly by the nation. 'This mutual obligation forms the Military Covenant between the nation, the Army and each individual soldier; an unbreakable common bond of identity, loyalty and responsibility which has sustained the Army and its soldiers throughout its history'.[529]

The budgetary limits on personnel, housing, and equipment can be seen as a violation of the obligations on the part of the British Government. Apart from housing, equipment and pay issues, the military is feeling a considerable overstretch of the armed forces, which are required to do too many tasks with too few troops. This has serious consequences. Forster cites a study carried out by the Ministry of Defence in the last quarter of 2005, in which almost 25 per cent of members of the armed forces wanted to leave at the earliest opportunity. The Army also has trouble recruiting.[530] Moreover, there is a widespread sense among the lower military ranks that their interests are not well defended by the senior military leadership or by the civilian officials within the MoD.[531] As a consequence, calls are also being made for a unionization of the British military.[532]

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[528] Ibid., p. 1046.

[529] 'Soldiering, the military covenant', Army Doctrine Publication vol. 5, para 0103, GD&D/18/34/71 Army Code no. 71642, Feb. 2000, accessed 20/06/06, <http://www.army.mod.uk/servingsoldier/usefulinfo/valuesgeneral/adp5milcov/ss_hrpers_values_adp5_1_w.html#milcov>.

[530] Forster, 'Breaking the Covenant', p. 1047.

[531] Richard Holmes cited in Michael Smith, 'Army Officers set up Union to Vent War Anger', *The Sunday Times*, 21 May 2007.

[532] See Alex Alexandrou, 'Creating a Collective Representative Body for British Military Personnel through European Community Law', *Defence Studies*, 4:1, p. 115; Richard Bartle, 'The British Armed Forces: No Trust, No Representation, No Change', in Richard Bartle and Lindy Heinecken, *Military Unionism in the Post-Cold War Era: A Future Reality*, pp. 17–34.

At the same time, as noted in the US analysis of operations in Iraq, criminal behaviour, such as the cases of abuse in Iraq, can be seen as a violation of the moral obligations placed on all soldiers who bear arms in the service of the nation. In the end, popular support for the military and what it does may be decreased. The mutual obligations of the covenant are broken on all sides as the nation, or the people, fail to show support for the troops fighting abroad.[533] The Military Covenant between the British nation, her military and each individual soldier is certainly under some strain.

On that note, let us take a closer look at the pattern of civil-military relations in the UK.

Civil-Military Relations in the UK

As in the US, the presence of a large standing army has in Britain been considered a threat to civil liberties. The British Army's role in aid of civil authorities has, according to Cassidy, contributed to this fear.[534] After failing to control the highly organized army after the English Civil War, Parliament's strategy for civilian control was to 'staff it with leaders representative of Parliament, that is, gentlemen of the land'. During the 18th and part of the 19th century, officers were gentlemen first and officers when duty called, and the army was essentially dismantled after each war. Like most armies in Europe, social class was the most important qualification for both entry and advancement for army officers, and the level of military education was considered largely irrelevant. Therefore, effective action of the British military was at this time highly dependent on the personal qualities of individual officers. As officers' capabilities and strategic preferences varied greatly, so did the performance of the British armed forces. Parliament's strategies for civilian control of the armed forces created an unprofessional military with highly variable leadership and effectiveness.[535]

During the imperial period, civilian officials and military officers alike were allowed to rule the colonies and conduct counter-insurgency operations with relatively little interference or direction from London. There was a high-level of trust that both civilians and officers would run the colonies in a way that would not discredit the government.[536] During this period the British armed forces also inherited an

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[533] Ibid., pp. 1046–1047.
[534] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, pp. 73–74.
[535] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 36–37.
[536] Thornton, 'Historical Origins', p. 12.

understanding of the importance of close civil-military co-operation. Officers understood that because most insurgencies were caused by legitimate grievances that could only be dealt with by the civil authorities, political primacy was necessary. As an example, General Sir Charles Gwynn wrote in 1934 that while the army can deal with the symptoms of insurgencies, it is up to the civilians to deal with the causes.[537] Officers and civilian administrators, moreover, worked closely together, which meant that they developed mutual trust and understanding.

Apart from a historical tradition of close civil-military co-operation, an enabler of smooth civil-military relations is the fact that the civilian and military leaderships have historically been recruited from the same social group. The two groups received the same schooling and were taught the same values.[538] As noted in the previous section, although British officers as well as civil servants are today recruited from a slightly broader social background, the socialization into a common belief system among political and military leaders is a tradition that has largely been maintained until today.[539] The common background of officers and civil servants means that the problem of a civil-military cultural gap is more limited than in the US case. The following sections analyse the structure and culture of the interagency system as well as the civil-military relations within the MoD.

British Interagency Structures

In the British system, ultimate responsibility for policy lies in the Cabinet. As it is always necessary to bring together the different perspectives of the various government departments, this is centralized in the Cabinet Office, which is a government department that serves the government as a whole and not just the Prime Minister.[540] Crises are controlled and directed at the Cabinet level which directs all instruments of national power. Crises may more specifically be handled at the Cabinet level by a ministerial Committee on Defence and Overseas Policy, or by a special, ad hoc Cabinet committee set up specifically to co-ordinate the work of all the different

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[537] Charles W. Gwynn, *Imperial Policing* (London: MacMillan and Company, 1934).
[538] Rod Thornton, 'A Welcome "Revolution"? The British Army and the Changes of the Strategic Defence Review', *Defence Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Autumn 2003), pp. 54–55; and Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 13.
[539] Thornton, 'A Welcome "Revolution"?', pp. 54–55.
[540] William Hopkinson, *The Making of British Defence Policy* (Norwich: The Stationery Office, 2000), p. 24.

departments and agencies involved.[541] In principle, the Committee on Defence and Overseas Policy deals with defence policy. However, in practice, the more important defence policy issues are dealt with in trilateral correspondence between the Foreign Secretary, the Defence Secretary and the Prime Minister. How business is handled at this level is nevertheless much the responsibility of the Prime Minister.[542]

Underneath the Cabinet is a structure of ministerial and official committees and sub-committees that help achieve coherence across Government and to ensure that issues of interest to several departments are properly discussed, and that the views of all relevant ministers are considered. One of the key purposes of the Cabinet Committees is to support the principle of collective responsibility, meaning that Cabinet members make decisions collectively, and are therefore responsible for the consequences of these decisions collectively. This principle, in combination with the committee structure, ensures that, even though a question may never reach the Cabinet itself, Cabinet Committee issues will be fully considered by representatives from across the government and thereby essentially given the same authority as Cabinet decisions.[543]

The traditions of collective responsibility and interagency committee deliberation mean that Cabinet or Cabinet Committee decisions are, at best, more than the sum of their parts. The idea is that by bringing the different knowledge and perspectives of the different departments, as well as the varying judgement and experience of ministers and civil servants, ministers are able to arrive at a better outcome than would be possible for any one department head, or the Prime Minister for that matter. However, there are also problems with the committee system. One risk is that decisions become weak but acceptable compromises after being diluted within the interagency committee structure. The most pressing problem of the committee system is, nevertheless, that it does not seem to be quick or integrated enough for contemporary military operations. Interagency deliberation requires time. There is, in other words, a trade off between a subsequent delay in decision-making and the benefits of better decision-making. In practice, big decisions are therefore taken collectively, while many small decisions are taken within a single department, the

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[541] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JDP 01, *Joint Operations*, (2004), pp. 2–8.
[542] Hopkinson, *British Defence Policy,* p. 24.
[543] Cabinet and its Committees, accessed 25/11/05, <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>

Defence Ministry typically, often after consulting with other departments with a direct interest.[544]

The interagency deliberation process in the UK is also limited by departmental stovepipes and turf wars – something that was recently made evident during the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Therefore, defence ministry officials argue that new and more effective structures are needed for successful implementation of contemporary military operations. The argument is that firm structures would speed up the deliberation process, thus removing the process of setting up new ad hoc structures for each major contingency.[545] The deficiency of the British interagency system has therefore sparked the development of the Comprehensive Approach. This approach seeks to achieve proper integration of the different government agencies – structurally, as well as by making sure that professional education and career development match this imperative.[546]

During the Labour Government of Prime Minister Tony Blair there has been an intense debate regarding what is described as his presidential style of leadership.[547] Michael Foley describes a widely held conviction that Tony Blair had accumulated a level of personal influence that is at variance with the normal configuration of the office. 'Blair has developed a reputation not only for acquiring a pre-eminence in conventional prime ministerial power but also for drawing upon alternative resources of leadership in respect to organizational management, media cultivation, populist outreach, party cohesion and representational innovation'.[548] Jones and Kavanagh, similarly, argue that Prime Minister Blair had centralized the party as well as the working culture of the government. The influence of the Cabinet as a whole has declined and the Prime Minister instead relies on bilateral meetings with his ministers

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[544] Cabinet Office, 'A Guide to Cabinet Committee Business', <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/secretariats/cabinet_committee_business/general_guide/cabinet_committees.asp>
[545] Presentation on 'the Comprehensive Approach', by Edwin Samuels, Foreign and Commonwealth Office; and Lt. Col. Tim Russell, MoD, Swedish Ministry of Defence, 24 May 2006.
[546] UK Ministry of Defence, *The Comprehensive Approach*, Joint Discussion Note, 4/05, (2006).
[547] See, for example: Graham Allen, *The Last Prime Minister: Being Honest About the UK Presidency* (London: House of Commons, 2001); Michael Foley, *The British Presidency: Tony Blair and the Politics of Public Leadership* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Peter Hennessy, 'The Blair Style and the Requirements of Twenty-First Century Premiership', *Political Quarterly*, 71:4 (2000), pp. 386–395; Philip Norton, 'The Presidentialisation of British Politics', *Government and Opposition*, 38:2 (2003), pp. 274–278; Richard Heffernan, 'Exploring (and Explaining) the British Prime Minister', *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, Vol. 7 (2005), pp. 605–620.
[548] Michael Foley, 'Presidential Attribution as an Agency of Prime Ministerial Critique in a Parliamentary Democracy: The Case of Tony Blair', *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, Vol. 6 (2004), p. 295.

and his own, substantially increased, staff in Downing Street.[549] The presidential style of leadership was also confirmed by what is popularly known as the Butler Report – the review of the use of intelligence in the run-up to the War in Iraq. The report stated that 'we are concerned that the informality and circumscribed character of the Government's procedures which we saw in the context of policy-making towards Iraq risks reducing the scope for informed collective political judgement'.[550] The increased centralization of the British Government is further discussed in Chapter Eight with reference to British operations in Iraq.

Apart from including an intricate interagency committee structure below the Cabinet, the British political system is highly centralized in the Cabinet and the Prime Minister's office. Interestingly, while the British system of government is formally centralized, it is also known for its decentralization of responsibility. Thus, apart from the collective responsibility within the Cabinet, there is also a tradition of individual ministerial responsibility for all the actions within the ministry. In other words, there seems to be a form of mission command exercised within the British political system, giving ministers the authority and responsibility to act. This is combined with the committee system's tradition of interagency co-operation and collective responsibility, meaning that despite the authority to act alone, the actors with direct interest will at a minimum be consulted, if not involved in issues through an inter-departmental committee.

William Hopkinson argues in favour of the British system allowing the government departments to work together to create national policies and not simply for departmental advantage. There seems to be little of the inter-departmental friction which hampers the work in Washington.[551] However, while the British interagency co-operation is well developed in relative terms, it does include the same turf wars that all government bureaucracies experience. The relatively close interagency co-operation of the committee system is confirmed by defence ministry officials who assert that, in terms of defence policy, the co-operation and communication between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence are very close. This co-operative relationship does not extend to all departments and agencies, and the relations between

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[549] Bill Jones and Dennis Kavanagh, *British Politics Today*, 7th edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 181–183.
[550] *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction: Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors*, HC 898, HMSO, 14 July 2004, p. 160.
[551] Hopkinson, *British Defence Policy*, p. 25.

the military and development agencies have been described as problematic due to cultural diversities and the difference in the nature of the tasks of the agencies.[552]

The British administrative practice at its best is thus one of close informal relationships between officials regardless of which government is in power. The centralized political system, in combination with an intricate interagency system of permanent and ad hoc committees, provides for strong government control as well as a smoothly running civil-military interface. The committee system enables civil servants from the different relevant departments to have regular contact through which they develop mutual understanding for each other. The theoretical sections on trust and command and control taught us the importance of these informal relationships and their resulting interpersonal trust building as facilitators of effective command structures. Another positive aspect of a well-developed interagency structure and working culture is that personality problems are minimized. Instead of letting bad personal relations inhibit the co-operation between ministries, departments and agencies, a well-oiled interagency system finds alternative routes to useful discussions and common positions.[553] Being part of the interagency system also makes it easier for everyone involved to see themselves within a larger picture. How does my work relate to larger government aims?

Significantly, interagency co-operation – albeit far from perfect – is described as a cultural feature of the political system rather than something imposed from the political leadership. It is not something that is particular in the field of defence or foreign affairs. 'It is the way we do government in this country'.[554]

The Ministry of Defence

The role of the Ministry of Defence in crisis management situations is to function both as a Department of State and as a military headquarters. The dual function of the ministry is reflected in a unified and integrated civil-military structure, as these functions are not only considered complementary, but also cannot be carried out separately. The MoD's framework text states that 'experience has confirmed that this integrated approach is both more efficient and more effective than the previous

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[552] Interviews with Brig. Simon Mayall, (18 Nov. 2004), Lt. Col. Tim Russell and Ben Palmer (23 March 2005), all MoD; and Christopher Trott, Head of Policy and Strategy, Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit, DFID, London, 22 March 2005.
[553] This argument was developed during the interview with Lt. Col. Tim Russell, MoD, (23 March 2005).
[554] Interviews with Lt. Col. Tim Russell and Ben Palmer, both MoD, (23 March 2005).

approach of "parallel hierarchies"'.[555] One of the main features of the British Ministry of Defence is therefore the integration of military and civilian personnel. Ministers are supported by the top management of the MoD, headed jointly by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and the Permanent Under Secretary of State for Defence (PUS). They share responsibility for much of the Department's business and, in the words of the MoD, 'their roles reflect the importance of both military and civilian advice on political, financial, administrative and operational matters'.[556] The principal military advisor, the CDS, who, besides being the military adviser to both the Defence Secretary and the Government, is also the professional head of the armed forces. An interesting feature of the MoD is that everybody wears civilian clothing, and that the ministry is built as an office landscape, emphasizing openness and co-operation.

The management of defence is rightly described by the MoD as a 'complex business'. To effectively provide direction of this business, a number of senior committees underpin the management of defence. The four defence ministers and ten senior officials (six military and four civilian) provide, in different groupings, the membership of these committees. The Defence Council and the Defence Management Board are considered the most important committees within the ministry. The Defence Council is the senior departmental committee, chaired by the Secretary of State. It provides the formal legal basis for the conduct of defence. The Defence Management Board is the highest, non-ministerial committee, which is described as the MoD's 'corporate board'. It provides senior-level leadership and strategic management of defence to maximize the achievement of the UK's defence vision.[557]

The Chief of the Defence Staff plays the role of military adviser to the Government by attending Cabinet meetings or one of its relevant sub-committees. The CDS, in turn, draws on the advice provided by the single Service Chiefs of Staff and senior civil servants through the forum of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. These committee meetings are attended by the Permanent Under Secretary, as senior advisor on defence policy, as does a senior official from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to ensure proper co-ordination between these key ministries. Attending the meetings are also the policy director and a number of military men, such as the

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[555] Ministry of Defence, 'Framework', p. 4.
[556] 'About the MoD', MoD website, accessed 17/02/05, <www.mod.uk/aboutus/modorg/index.html>
[557] MoD, 'Key Facts about Defence', MoD Website, accessed 05/03/07, <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/Organisation/KeyFactsAboutDefence/>

Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, Chief Joint Op CJO, etc.[558] The Chiefs of Staff Committee is in itself not only inherently civil-military in its nature, it also provides the CDS with an interagency perspective on all matters. This means that the cabinet, the Defence Secretary, or committees that require the CDS's advice and input will get a very broad perspective from the top military adviser.

The functions of the MoD headquarters in London are carried out as one organization as opposed to the Pentagon which includes a sharp distinction between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the staff of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In the central areas of the ministry there is widespread civil-military mixed management of the different divisions. Where the head is a military officer the deputy is often civilian and vice versa.[559] Brigadier Simon Mayall argues that the integrated organization of the ministry leads to greater civilian advice on political matters, better civilian understanding of military matters, as well as a better understanding of political concerns within the military.[560] The close working relationships mean mutual trust and understanding, which is a precondition for effective civil-military leadership during operations. An important positive aspect of the British MoD, as well as of the government in general, is noted by Lt. Col. Tim Russell, namely the small size relative to the US counterparts. Within the ministry people develop personal relationships far beyond the limits of their own units and departments, and therefore develop mutual understanding as well as interpersonal trust. In terms of the interagency relationships the small physical and conceptual distances between the ministries and agencies of Whitehall mean that it is very easy to walk between the different ministries for a quick chat and discussions with different counterparts.[561]

Significantly, MoD respondents find it difficult to explain where the most important interaction between the political and military sections of the ministry takes place. The integrated structure of the ministry means that such interaction takes place at all levels and at all times. However, one respondent did highlight some problem areas in the civil-military interface. Ben Palmer claims that civil-military integration works very well within the MoD in London, but the further away from the headquarters you are the more problematic it becomes. An example is the Permanent

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[558] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 5-00, *Joint Operations Planning*, (2004), pp. 1–5.
[559] Ibid., p. 33.
[560] Interview with Brig. Simon Mayall, (November 2004).
[561] Interview with Lt. Col. Tim Russell, MoD, (April 2005).

Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), located at Northwood outside London, which is essentially a military headquarters between the operational and strategic levels. Both Palmer and Russell see room for improvement at this level and expressed worries regarding the civil-military integration within or around the PJHQ.[562]

Command of operations is provided by the Permanent Joint Headquarters and the MoD acting together within what is called the Defence Crisis Management Organization (DCMO). DCMO is a virtual organization, which combines the MoD departments, the PJHQ, as well as the single service commands. It exists in order to provide the Government with military advice and, in return, receive political direction as the basis for a military operation.[563] The MoD is supposed to provide policy guidance and strategic direction, while the PJHQ's function is to provide politically aware military advice, produce contingency plans and exercise operational command of forces committed to operations. During operations, all deployed UK personnel outside NATO are under the command of the Joint Commander at the PJHQ. This function is supposed to help bridge the gap between the operational and the strategic levels of command.[564] In sum, government policy is thus translated by the Ministry of Defence through the Permanent Joint Headquarters and the Joint Commander into the criteria for the Joint Task Force Commander (JTFC) to develop and execute a campaign plan in order to achieve the political aims.[565]

Another important aspect of the MoD structure is the strong and highly professional civil service which is based on the principle of impartiality, meaning that civil servants are servants of the Crown, and thus ideally responsible to a higher purpose than that reflected by the government of the day. The principle of impartiality also means that promotion is based on professional competence and not on political grounds. Although this remains disputed there is little influence of outsiders coming in at top levels.[566] The civilian elements of the ministry not only add a better grounding in public finance and diplomacy, but perhaps even more importantly, an ability to work closely with officials from the other government departments.[567] The civil service thereby provides a useful buffer between the political leadership and the military commanders within the MoD. Its political impartiality, coupled with

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[562] Interviews with Lt. Col. Tim Russell and Ben Palmer, both MoD (April 2005).
[563] JDCC, *Joint Operations Planning*, pp. 1–4.
[564] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 3-00, *Joint Operations Execution*, (2004), pp. 1–9.
[565] JDCC, *Joint Operations Planning*, pp. 1–2.
[566] Jones and Kavanagh, *British Politics Today*, pp. 186–187.
[567] Hopkinson, *British Defence Policy*, p. 37.

experience and understanding of military matters as well as policy imperatives, makes them the ideal mediators in the civil-military interface of the department.[568] The civil service also provides permanence and institutional memory within the government ministries. On average, ministers remain in their departments for about two years. The politicians therefore rely on the permanence and experience of the civil service for advice.[569]

Conclusions

British military professionalism and military culture were formed under close scrutiny of the British Government during the imperial era of colonial policing. This meant that the British military was forced to develop political sensitivity not only to handle the essentially civil-military operations in the colonies. The political leadership's effective control over military administration, promotions and appointments also forced the commanders in the field to be more sensitive to the Cabinet's preferences.

The British patterns of civil-military relations can be summarized as integrated, according to the model outlined in Chapter Two. Hopkinson argues that civilians and servicemen are deeply integrated both structurally and culturally within the MoD, just as the ministry is integrated into the government administration as a whole.[570] At the interagency level, there is an extensive and somewhat intricate web of committees, which aims to make government policy informed by all the relevant departments. It also means that there is a culture of co-operating and working towards common goals across Whitehall. However, despite the relatively extensive interagency structure, there are turf wars between the different departments and agencies, and much work is done in departmental stovepipes. The committee system as a form for interdepartmental integration is also problematic as it is sometimes considered too slow for the complexity and fast moving pace of contemporary military operations.

Within the MoD, the integrated structures are more noticeable. In the everyday workings of the ministry as well as in the command of operations, there is a joint civil-military structure that ensures military understanding of government policy as well as politically informed military advice. The ministry's integrated structure also leads to a common culture of mutual understanding and trust among military and civilian

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[568]Interview with Brig. Simon Mayall.
[569] Jones and Kavanagh, *British Politics Today*, p. 189
[570] William Hopkinson, 'The Making of British Defence Policy'*, RUSI Journal*, (October 2000), p. 22.

personnel. Another important aspect of the British system is the highly professional civil service. Its apolitical nature and the fact that it holds positions at the very top of the ministries provide for high levels of political and military understanding, as well as institutional memory of crisis management that the more fleeting political and military leaderships can never provide.

In recent years an increasing strain in the civil-military relationship is obvious as senior officers speak out against government policy regarding the operations in Iraq as well as concerning everyday management of the British armed forces. Increased political micro-management and operational stress are two causes of this strain. This has caused a debate regarding the Military Covenant in Britain, also fuelled by the fact that many among the lower ranks feel that their interests are not well defended by the senior military leadership or the civilian officials within the MoD.

With reference to the theoretical discussion on trust, the British case of integration provides interpersonal trust within the Ministry of Defence as well as, to a more limited extent, within the interagency structure. The common background and close working relationships even provide what sociologists call thick interpersonal trust. Zucker argues that this form of trust is based on social similarities and shared moral codes – personal characteristics like gender, ethnicity and cultural background.[571] Narrow social recruitment, close working relationships across the civil-military divide, and the small size of the ministry support this process. Frequent personal contact across some departmental and ministerial boundaries also develops thin interpersonal trust within the civil-military interface and the interagency structures. Although these contacts do not develop close personal relationships they provide familiarity and trust in other organizations through the process of reciprocity.

On the whole, the British structure and culture at the civil-military interface resemble the Janowitzean notion of civil-military relations of integration and mutual understanding. To use Bland's terminology, there is a high-level of shared responsibility in the British case. Avant notably argues that the British pattern of civil-military relations also involves low cost civilian monitoring of the armed forces, which in turn perceive shirking as being costly as it historically means sackings or replacing military dissidents. However, the recent criticism by the current and former head of the army may imply that the cost of monitoring is increasing. At any rate,

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[571] Zucker, 'Production of Trust', pp. 53–112.

British officers are relatively politically attuned and more easily adapted to different forms of conflict. Interestingly, in terms of Janowitz's view of integrated civil-military relations, the British armed forces also resemble the constabulary force concept that Janowitz introduced in the 1960s.

      While the US case presented an almost perfect real world example of the divided approach to civil-military relations as outlined in Chapter Two, the British case is slightly more ambiguous. It clearly leans in the direction of the integrated approach, but the culture and structure of the interagency structure would ideally be more integrated to provide a perfect case. Let us nevertheless take a closer look at the British way of war.

CHAPTER 7

THE BRITISH WAY OF WAR

The British patterns of civil-military relations involve relatively well integrated structures at the interagency level, and even more so in the civil-military interface at the Ministry of Defence. The political leadership has enjoyed low costs of civilian monitoring of the armed forces, which has meant civilian ownership of the military's functional imperative. The hypothesis of this thesis argues that these patterns of civil-military relations have an effect on the conduct of operations by affecting the organization, culture, and doctrine of the armed forces. This chapter, therefore, mirrors Chapter Four by analysing these features of the British case. An important aspect of the chapter is to investigate to which functional imperative the structure and culture of the armed forces are adjusted, and to relate that to the literature review on the nature of contemporary conflict. In other words, are the British armed forces fit for purpose in the contemporary strategic context? Emphasis is placed on the cultural and doctrinal aspects of the British armed forces.

In 1932, British strategist Basil Henry Liddell Hart described the British way of war as that of the indirect approach, which in its ideal form 'creates conditions in which the enemy is forced to the inescapable conclusion that defeat has become inevitable before battle has been joined'. He arrived at this conclusion or normative argument from a disdain for the massive and suicidal frontal attacks of the Great War, and a romantic view of Britain's businesslike colonial tradition of war, which had at its heart 'economic pressure exercised through sea-power'.[572] Robert Cassidy argues that the British Army's 19th century experience of colonial wars influenced British military culture into the 20th century. 'The British way of war, as embodied in the campaigns of Victorian heroes Garnet Wolseley, Frederick Roberts, and Horatio

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[572] Liddell Hart cited in Lawrence Freedman, 'The Gulf Conflict and the British Way in Warfare', Annual Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives Lecture, (January 2003), accessed 15/02/05, <www.kcl.ac.uk/lhcma/info/lec93.htm>

Kitchener, reflected essentially all the British people knew of war'.[573] Rod Thornton also confidently claims that the British Army is primarily a counter-insurgency army, and that 'since its very formation and for the greater part of its history, this army's principal mission was to acquire and then to police imperial possessions'.[574] Thus, in the search for a British way of war, this is where we shall place our focus.

The Functional Imperative and British Strategic Culture

While US military culture is a strong and inflexible feature that is maintained through doctrine and socialization at the military academies, British military culture is better described as an intuitive approach from past operations, an empirical, pragmatic military tradition, with a naval focus. While US professionalism and military culture were formed in relative isolation, their British counterparts were formed out of managing a complex range of issues in the vast territories of the British Empire. As noted in the previous chapter, Deborah Avant argues that the British political leadership closely supervised the military's professionalisation. The unified civilian control and oversight of the British military simply did not allow the military to define its own raison d'être. Instead, the military's tasks were defined by the political leadership and thus reflected political needs in the strategic context of imperial management. Thus, military leaders with interest in and capability of meeting the diverse nature of the British military tasks in the colonies were rewarded, which meant that adaptability and flexibility became central characteristics of the British military profession.[575] In essence, the context in which the British military operated came to form its organizational culture and structure.

British counter-insurgency doctrine is based on the three pillars of minimum force, flexibility and civil-military co-operation. As noted in the previous chapter, these principles can be traced well into the 19th century and the combination of pragmatic lessons from colonial policing and the societal influence of Victorian values.[576] Let us, nevertheless, take a closer look at the specific features of the British way of war.

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[573] Cassidy, 'The British Army'.
[574] Rod Thornton, 'Historical Origins of the British Army's Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorist Techniques', Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces Conference paper, (2004), accessed 14/11/04, <http://www.dcaf.ch/news/PfP_7thConf_Bucharest/Baxter.pdf>, p. 1.
[575] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, pp. 21–23, 39–41.
[576] Thornton, 'The British Army', p. 85.

The colonial experience meant that the British military came to emphasize small-scale instead of large-scale operations.[577] In the colonies, the British Army was forced to manage conflicts with limited resources. Moreover, the wide range of tasks in imperial policing as well as the many different geographical and cultural conditions encountered created a constant need to adapt responses to fit local circumstances.[578] It is notable that in the second half of the 19th century, the UK had a professional army of about 200,000 men that policed the enormous territories of the British Empire. Without at least some level of consent it would have been impossible to rule such vast numbers of people. As an example, the Army of British India had a huge span of control, operating in the current territories of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh with a relatively small number of British officers and soldiers.[579]

Thomas Mockaitis describes close civil-military co-operation as a broad principle of British counter-insurgency operations. He explains how the committee system of British political and administrative structures facilitates this co-operation from the local level to the national level. It is, according to Mockaitis, a 'bottom-up' approach that starts with co-operation at the very lowest levels, which means that soldiers are essentially forced to adapt to the need of the civilians on the ground.[580] Close co-operation between the military, the colonial administrators who implemented reform, and the police who maintained order was, according to Cassidy, essential to the British approach to counter-insurgency. Civilian officials most often remained in control of emergencies and were responsible for the broader political strategy. The military, therefore, operated under close civilian control and accepted the requirement of employing minimum force. Moreover, the British military became highly flexible, adapting to meet local circumstances and switching to small-unit operations with decentralized control when necessary.[581]

Sir Robert Thompson, a British counter-insurgency expert and Permanent Secretary of Defence for Malaya in the 1950s, argued that military plans must be devised in co-ordination with civilian counterparts and activities in order to achieve

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[577] Cassidy, 'The British Army'.
[578] John Pimlott, 'The British Army: The Dhofar Campaign, 1970–1975', in Ian F.W. Beckett and John Pimlott (eds.), *Armed Forces and Modern Counter-Insurgency* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1985), pp. 16–19.
[579] See Tony A. Heathcote, 'The Army of British India', in David Chandler and Ian Beckett, *Oxford History of the British Army* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), pp. 362–384.
[580] Thomas R. Mockaitis, *Peace Operations and Intrastate Conflict: The Sword or the Olive Branch* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), pp. 133–134, 136.
[581] Cassidy, 'The British Army'.

lasting success. The policies and operational plans created should then be implemented by the various departments and headquarters involved, with regular committee meetings at the local level of colonial administration to ensure co-ordination amongst the local actors.[582]

General Sir Gerald Templer, who was the High Commissioner and Director of Operations in Malaya at the height of the insurgency, was a strong advocate of hearts and minds policies. When he was asked if he had sufficient troops General Templer responded emphatically that he certainly had, and added: 'The answer lies not in pouring more soldiers into the jungle but rests in the hearts and minds of the Malayan people'.[583] However, it should also be noted that there will always be a breaking point where the appropriate behaviour is impossible because of limitations on the number of troops. The lessons from the colonial era in general, and Malaya in particular, led Frank Kitson to stress the importance of hearts and minds approaches and the principle of minimum use of force. In the wider goal of winning hearts and minds, Kitson noted the negative impact of excessive force. It tended to drive the population away from the administration and towards extremist positions.[584] Similarly, in the 1930s, Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn argued:

> Excessive severity may antagonize the neutral or loyal element, add to the number of rebels, and leave a lasting feeling of resentment and bitterness. On the other hand, the power and resolution of the government forces must be displayed. Not only did certain tribes or groups occasionally need to be cowed with force, but the peoples who had put their security into the hands of the British also had to be assured of British strength.[585]

Mockaitis argues that the principle of minimum use of force emerged as a result of the fact that British colonial administrators were bound by the common law principle of minimum force and the legal concept of military 'aid to the civil power' that governed the responses to unrest.[586] Using a quote from a 1923 British Army manual, *Duties in Aid of Civil Power*, Mockaitis points out that British soldiers have constantly been reminded that what is important is 'not the annihilation of an enemy but the suppression of a temporary disorder, and therefore the degree of force to be employed

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[582] Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 52, 55, 83.
[583] Bulloch, 'Military Doctrine and Counterinsurgency', pp. 4–16.
[584] Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, pp. 84–85, 87.
[585] Thornton, 'The British Army', p. 96.
[586] Mockaitis, 'Peace Operations', p. 133.

must be directed to that which is necessary to restore order and must never exceed it'.[587] The same restraints in the use of force had to be used regardless if the army was dealing with strikes in Britain or riots in the colonies. This tradition remains very much alive in the application of rules of engagement (ROE).[588] The simple, yet flexible, tradition has thus continued to this day. However, it should also be noted that each operation of the British armed forces is preceded by theatre relevant training involving cultural understanding, language, as well as specific tasks beyond basic training, such as riot control or peacekeeping. Although important lessons may be learned on the streets of Belfast there are clear limits to how applicable they are in other theatres. However, through theatre specific training, units have a chance to practice applying the appropriate lessons of past operations to new contexts.

Significantly, the principle of minimum use of force refers back to the imperative of political understanding and sensitivity. It is, therefore, based on an understanding of the overall political objectives with the operation and how they relate to the actions of soldiers at all levels of command. The minimum use of force principle, thereby, stems from a pragmatic belief in the importance of winning the hearts and minds of the local population, rather than defeating the enemy insurgents. The vast territories of the Empire and the limited resources of the colonial army forced the British to apply a softer approach. Thomas Mockaitis suggests that 'the British, like all successful imperialists, had long realized that the key to maintaining an empire lay in making the yoke of foreign rule as light as possible'.[589] Consent and legitimacy were as essential then as they are now and the 'carrot and stick' strategies had to be balanced with extreme caution and political finesse. Violence used too broadly could lead to the loss of consent and legitimacy which are moreover essential in the gathering of intelligence. The balance was achieved by the application of an offensive force posture, often achieved by having a presence and showing that force was there to be used if necessary. Or, as Richard Caniglia puts it: 'the British have long practised persuasion based on an iron fist in a velvet glove'.[590]

It should, nevertheless, be underscored that the British strategic and military culture has not been a guarantor for minimum use of force. There are numerous

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[587] Cited in Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency, 1919–1960*, p. 18.
[588] Interview with Lt. Col. Matthew Lowe.
[589] Mockaitis, *British Counter-Insurgency, 1919–1960* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), p. 64.
[590] Richard R. Caniglia, 'US and British Approaches to Force Protection', *Military Review*, (2001), p. 80.

examples in British colonial history of severe brutality in the application of tactics. The Boer War, the Amritsar massacre and the response to the Mau-Mau rebellion in Kenya are but a few examples. Interestingly though, these instances also caused great upset among the civilian population and the political leadership in Britain, as well as other parts of the army. It was clearly not considered acceptable behaviour in the pursuit of victory.

Another interesting feature of the British way of war is the informal and improvised approach to operations. Andrew Garfield maintains that the British tradition highlights the fact that all personnel engaged in counter-insurgency and S&R operations must be able to routinely adapt, improvise, and innovate in order to meet the unique challenges as well as the sheer complexity and unpredictability of such operations.[591] The improvised approach is, according to Nagl, derived from the idea that each operation and theatre is so different that it requires its own doctrine and policy. This creates greater flexibility and adaptability in the theatre.[592] The idea is that template solutions are usually inappropriate, not least because the enemy will quickly exploit weaknesses and adapt to previous behaviour and doctrine. Based on a study of British operations in Malaya, Nagl describes the British military as a 'learning organization'. He argues that when conventional methods and tactics failed in Malaya the British military had few problems in identifying the problems and changing its strategy to a more politically focused counter-insurgency campaign. In Nagl's view, the innovative and creative past had created an organizational culture that was open to changes in strategy as well as in organization.[593] Garfield contends that the British military culture values individuality and 'a healthy questioning of authority', which serves to strengthen the culture of flexibility and innovation. Another aspect that fosters innovation within the organizational culture of the British armed forces is an acceptance of error and even failure. Officers are supposed to think for themselves, to question their superiors and to try new and innovative ideas of solving problems – something which is emphasized in the recruitment and training of British officers.[594]

As argued in the previous chapter, the British emphasis on flexibility and adaptability is not just a tradition from colonial warfare, but also a result of the British

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[591] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', p. 30.
[592] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, pp. 192, 204.
[593] Ibid., p. 216.
[594] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', pp. 30–31.

pattern of civil-military relations. The low cost of monitoring the armed forces, and more precisely, the ease with which the political leadership has been able to replace officers, created an officer corps and a military culture that quickly adapted to the political leadership's wishes.

Significantly, the cultural features of flexibility and political sensitivity have been well maintained and further developed in the contemporary military culture. During thirty years of counter-insurgency in Northern Ireland, British troops have not only reinforced the understanding of minimum force, civil-military co-operation, and flexibility, they have also learned to work under the close scrutiny of the law and of the media. Working closely with the political leadership is also a tradition that remains in the British case and that is seen as a requirement in all operations. According to Brigadier Simon Mayall, former commander of the British lead Multinational Brigade in Kosovo, political oversight and leadership are not a problem within the British chain of command. There are political advisors for all commanders, normally down to brigade level, who keep a line open to London on the political-military side, and who ensure that the commanders understand the background of the operation. This is not perceived as political meddling as the advisors are considered a resource for the commanders and not as tools for control. The British commanders are normally left to do their job as they please and instead refer back to London if they feel the need for further political guidance.[595] Other commanders argue that the problem is often the reverse. There is too little political direction and clarity regarding the aims during operations, leaving commanders to make difficult political interpretations and decisions.[596] However, as noted in the previous chapter, the technological advancements, in combination with the political sensitivity of operations, have created an incentive for the political leadership to micro-manage operations. To a larger extent than before, responsible ministers are therefore seeking to influence the outcomes of day-to-day operations, for which they will be held accountable.[597]

The organizational culture that underscores flexibility, adaptability and an ad hoc approach to operations has also created a level of forgetfulness. While the flexible feature of British culture allows for early adjustment to operational specifics, lessons

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[595] Interview with Brig. Simon Mayall, (November 2004).
[596] Interview with Lt. Col. Matthew Lowe, (May 2004); General Sir Michael Rose also cites lack of political aims and directions as one of the main problems during his time in Bosnia. Michael Rose, *Fighting for Peace: Lessons from Bosnia* (London: Warner Books, 1998), p. 367.
[597] Forster, 'Breaking the Covenant', p. 1046.

from past operations have often been forgotten or ignored centrally in the organization. An example is provided by Bruce Hoffman who argues that the Second World War created a distinct bias towards conventional large-scale warfare, and that it took about a decade, a failure in Palestine, and a very shaky start to the counter-insurgency operations in Malaya before the British would readjust their strategic culture to effectively deal with counter-insurgency contexts.[598] Equally, Hew Strachan maintains that, in the wake of the World Wars, the operations in India in 1919 and again in Palestine in 1946 were failures because the army had been insufficiently politicized. It had lost its sense of understanding of the political objectives and the importance to work with civilian agencies. In the words of Avant, the army failed to recognize that 'as an agent of policy its tools were not necessarily restricted to force'.[599] It is, in other words, possible to see a trade-off between flexibility and forgetfulness. While the British military has often been able to adjust quickly to new contexts and problems, Avant notes that neither in the Boer War, nor in the Malayan emergency, did the British adapt before the operations began. Instead, after a rocky start, the British quickly adapted doctrine and tactics in the midst of war.[600] Adaptability and flexibility sometimes come at the expense of the failed institutionalization of successful behaviour, or of peacetime innovation to foresee problems. Therefore, the British way of war is often described as 'muddling through' as problems emerge.

The imperial experience of the British armed forces has also created a limited reliance on technology that stems from the hearts and minds approach and the fact that the British military has often been forced to make do with limited resources. Cassidy argues that the British seem to have struck a healthy balance between the human and material factors.[601] Another feature of the British way of war is that people were only somewhat adverse to the idea of casualties. The British approach to casualties is described as a 'stiff upper lip' attitude, created by a history of numerous, yet limited, casualties in remote places for reasons not directly related to national security. This

[598] Bruce Hoffman, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, RAND paper, (2004), accessed 03/01/05, <http://www.rand.org/publications/OP/OP127/>
[599] Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, p. 171.
[600] Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, p. 116.
[601] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, pp. 69, 76.

does not mean that the British are not trying to avoid casualties, only that they do not seem to be averse to them.[602]

An important organizational feature of the British armed forces is the regimental system, which is often contrasted with the continental system in which the division is the central unit around which the training and administration of soldiers revolve.[603] In a regimental system each regiment is responsible for recruitment, training and administration of its personnel, and units are maintained permanently. Therefore, the regiment will develop unique unit cohesion due to its history, traditions, and functions. An important aspect of the British regimental system is that the regiment or the battalion of about 500-1,000 men has been the key tactical building block, and not the division, as within the continental system. This is another heritage from the colonial period, when battalions were widely dispersed and virtually autonomous.

David French has in an important work created a more nuanced view of the British regimental system than the overly positive as well as critical voices have previously provided. He argues that while the system has certainly helped create good relations with the local community, and created unmatched loyalties between soldiers and towards the regiment, French notes that the regimental traditions have often changed, and also meant less to soldiers than generally thought. Officers came from certain elements of a national elite and soldiers were often recruited from large areas rather than from the local community. The more mythological descriptions of the system are thereby downgraded somewhat. Moreover, in times of war on the continent, the local regimental system virtually collapsed and proved incapable of adjusting to the increased need for soldier recruitment and training. Other weaknesses have been the failure to prepare properly for combined arms operations, as the regiments of different arms have generally trained separately.[604]

While there are both advantages and disadvantages to the regimental system, it is considered particularly useful in the context of complex irregular warfare. One positive aspect is that soldiers and officers tend to stay with their regiment for most of their military careers. This provides for good unit cohesion and trust among colleagues and subordinates. This trust and unit cohesion allow for the use of mission command

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[602] Ibid., p. 77.
[603] The term continental system stems from the fact that it was first adopted by the continental European armies.
[604] David French, *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People, c. 1870–2000* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).

tactics, the delegation of authority, and, consequently, the effective use of small units.[605] Although the turnover of soldiers is usually very high, the regimental system ensures the retention of experience thanks to its non-commissioned officers who usually serve together for up to 15 years. Through the NCOs both collective and personal experience is retained as well as interpersonal trust created. The regimental system therefore not only increases interpersonal trust through personal reciprocity and close friendship, but also institutional trust through the unique esprit de corps and traditions of the regiment.

The regimental emphasis on small units is also suitable for irregular warfare. Most tactical actions of counter-insurgency operations are inherently small-scale activities. They are conducted at the squad, platoon and company levels, which means that great trust and delegation of authority from higher command levels to junior officers and NCOs in the field. This is particularly salient with regard to the close media scrutiny and the political sensitivity of contemporary conflict. However, a negative aspect of the regimental system is that the familiar spirit can create a parochial system which perpetuates procedures and complicates organizational change.[606] It should be noted that in recent years the British regimental system has been reformed. Essentially, the reforms are organizing the British infantry in larger multi-battalion regiments, compared to the many single-battalion regiments of the past. While the effects of these reforms are yet to be seen, defence commentators argue that the reforms will cause a rift in the close relationships between the regiments and their local communities and that soldiers moved around or part of larger units will not know each other as well as they did when they go into combat – something that may influence the effectiveness of units.[607]

This section has made frequent references to the historical past of colonial policing and counter-insurgency operations, arguing that this is what has created the British way of war. But to what extent have the British armed forces managed to accommodate and adjust to the requirements of both conventional and unconventional warfare? British officers are, despite the obvious emphasis on expeditionary operations, keen to express the fact that conventional warfare is the foundation and core of British military training and culture. As an example, Brigadier Simon Mayall,

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[605] Mockaitis, *British Counter-Insurgency 1919–60*, p.189; Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', p. 32.
[606] Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss*, p. 70.
[607] 'Analysts warn of Army reform risk', *BBC News*, 16 December 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4102481.stm>

Director of Army Resources and Plans at the British MoD, contends that the British train for conventional war, while constantly staying ready for different forms of peace operations. Conventional warfare is thus the foundation of British military training and culture, but, on top of that foundation, much training goes into, and great pride is taken, in building a capacity for the wars that the armed forces are more likely to fight – peace support operations and counter-insurgencies.[608] This also means an acknowledgement of the fact that peace operations are no less important or less demanding than conventional warfare. As General Sir Charles Guthrie has put it: 'Being a "force for good" is not about helping little old ladies across the road. It is about maintaining international stability through a willingness to deploy rapidly, anywhere in the world, credible combat forces capable of making a real difference'.[609]

Doctrine in the UK

As argued in the corresponding chapter on the American way of war, doctrine constitutes a potentially important variable in the causal chain between certain patterns of civil-military relations and the conduct of operations in complex irregular warfare. It could be seen as an independent variable in its own right for explaining operational conduct. However, this thesis treats doctrine as an indicator of organizational and strategic culture, as well as of the weight of history and past operational experience. The purpose of this section is thereby to analyse doctrine in order to further trace and understand the British way of war. A second aim is to evaluate the importance of doctrine as a variable, thereby helping trace the causal mechanisms of the hypothesis.

Historically, the emphasis on flexibility has meant that doctrine never played a big role within the British armed forces. Instead, the tradition has involved informally developed doctrine that was spread by word of mouth and through the unofficial writings of the participants in different campaigns.[610] Thornton even argues that a long-held belief within the British Army is that doctrine is something to be treated with a degree of indifference that even borders on disdain.[611] Similarly, Brian Holden-Reid suggests that there is a 'fundamental and instinctive reality in the British Army –

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[608] Interview with Brig. Simon Mayall, (November 2004).

[609] Charles Guthrie, 'The New British Way in Warfare', Annual Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives Lecture, (2001), accessed 15/02/05, <www.kcl.ac.uk/lhcma/info/lec01.htm>

[610] John A. Nagl, 'Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife – Military Policy', *World Affairs*, (Spring 1999), accessed 23/01/05, <http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0PBZ/is_2004_May-June/ai_n6123976>

[611] Thornton, 'The Role of PSO', p. 41.

a widespread reluctance to formulate scientific, doctrinal statements; a preference upheld by the pragmatic and empirical tradition to review and resolve each problem as it occurs on its own terms free from any system'.[612]

The introduction to the British Defence Doctrine publication conveys a message about the tone and nature of the British approach to military activity at all levels. The doctrine argues that the British approach must be flexible and pragmatic, attributes that are considered essential for the effective application of the manoeuvrist approach to operations. Doctrine is not, therefore, mandatory dogma to be applied in all circumstances; 'that is simply not the British Armed Forces' way of doing business'. Instead, 'doctrine is the distilled experience of many years – indeed generations – of making strategy and of mounting and conducting military operations'.[613] However, the *British Defence Doctrine* further states that it should not merely be viewed as a record of past practice. Doctrine is instead the assessment of the best approach based on a sound understanding of current imperatives and lessons learned from past successes and failures. It is, however, dangerous, in the words of the *British Defence Doctrine*, 'to assume that past success necessarily provides the best route for the future. Indeed, successful past practice may contain the seeds of future disaster if applied too rigidly in different circumstances'. British commanders are therefore encouraged to remain flexible in their thinking.[614]

A reason for the wariness of doctrine has, according to Thornton, been the political skill of British commanders at all levels. The armed forces were comfortable with the political dictates and overall strategic aims and gave senior officers confidence to delegate responsibility to the very lowest levels of command, thereby encouraging displays of flexibility and initiative, and discouraging doctrinal solutions. British soldiers knew what was expected of them without the restricting framework of doctrine.[615] However, despite the weariness of doctrinal thinking, doctrines have been published with an increasing rate since the end of the Cold War. The section below reviews a number of doctrinal publications that are relevant to the British approach to expeditionary operations.

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[612] Brian Holden-Reid, 'A Doctrinal Perspective, 1988–98', *SCSI Occasional Paper 33*, (May 1998), p. 12.
[613] Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, JWP 0-01, *British Defence Doctrine*, (2001), p. iii.
[614] Ibid., p. 3-1.
[615] Thornton, 'The Role of PSO', pp. 44–45.

Contents of British Doctrine

The Defence Vision is the starting point for everything that the Ministry of Defence does. It states that the common purpose of all the military and civilians who work in defence is the defence of the United Kingdom and its interests, as well as strengthening international peace and stability, all under the catchphrase: 'A force for good in the world'.[616] The *British Defence Doctrine* firmly establishes the political nature of military operations. It argues that the key to successful conduct of external relations and the essence of grand strategy is the use of the most appropriate mix of the diplomatic, economic and military instruments of the state. For the military to be an effective instrument of grand strategy, it must be developed in a manner 'consistent with the demands that are likely to be placed upon it'. Thus, with the given strategic context, the doctrine argues that the British military will never operate in isolation but only as part of 'a fully co-ordinated grand strategy in which diplomatic and economic instruments will be as important in their ways as the military forces and the military strategy supporting them'.[617]

An important observation is that British doctrine argues that neither peace nor war exists in extreme form. 'Perfect peace is the stuff of utopian dreams; absolute war the unlimited thermonuclear construct of one's worst nightmares'.[618] Conflict is instead described as existing along a continuum between these extreme forms. According to doctrine: 'The spectrum of conflict provides an environment in which predominant campaign themes change over time, indicating priorities allocated to multiple types of operations that may be conducted simultaneously'.[619] British soldiers must, therefore, be able to conduct operations along the entire spectrum of conflict simultaneously. However, combat, which is defined as 'the application of armed violence against a responsive enemy' is considered the most demanding task. British troops must therefore primarily be prepared for high-intensity conflict. That ability then produces a wide variety of other activities, including humanitarian assistance, peace support, and assisting in the rebuilding of failed states.[620]

The significance attached to conventional warfare is exemplified by the doctrinal emphasis on six themes that represent the core of the British approach to

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[616] Ministry of Defence, *Departmental Framework*, accessed 09/06/06, www.mod.uk, p. 3.
[617] JDCC, *British Defence Doctrine*, p. 2-5.
[618] Ibid., p. 6-1.
[619] UK Army Doctrine Publication, *Land Operations*, (May 2005), p. 11.
[620] Ibid.

operations, and that are supposed to permeate down through the entire organization and 'be reflected in all aspects of training and preparation'. The principles include the warfighting ethos, the manoeuvrist approach, and the importance of the principles of war which, according to doctrine, are as applicable at the strategic level as they are at the tactical, and which are considered as relevant to PSOs as they are to warfighting.[621] Doctrine further argues that the fighting skills of the armed forces must remain the key to their credibility and effectiveness:

> By preparing for war and developing to the full all three components of fighting power – Conceptual, Moral and Physical – the Armed Forces will retain the physical and mental ability and agility to apply themselves to a wide range of challenges.[622]

Another observation, therefore, is that British doctrine stresses high-intensity conflict as the foundation for training and structuring the military organization. The emphasis on fighting skills, the warrior ethos and principles of war does not reflect the British way of war as described in the previous sections.

However, British doctrines on operations other than war paint a more familiar picture. Doctrine acknowledges that in counter-insurgency operations the strategic centre of gravity will be the support of the mass of the people, which means a struggle for the hearts and minds of the local population.[623] It also argues that the British armed forces should place due emphasis on the intellectual and psychological aspects of operations, not simply the material. It emphasises the focus on people and ideas, not only on ground taken. As in warfighting, force should be applied selectively, and 'its use is carefully measured and controlled: destruction is a means not an end... a subtle approach to a subtle problem'.[624] Significantly, with reference to peace support operations, the concept of sensitised action is developed.

> Military forces should understand the law, religion, customs and culture of the elements of the population with whom they deal. Such understanding is necessary to predict the psychological effect of physical action. It will determine the plans and responses of the peace support force. Intelligence, education, training and experience all contribute to the required sensitivity.[625]

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[621] JDCC, *British Defence Doctrine*, p. 3-9 and 3-10.
[622] Ibid.
[623] UK Army Field Manual, Volume 1, Part 10, *Counter Insurgency Operations*, (July 2001), p. B-2-4.
[624] Ibid.
[625] UK ADP, *Land Operations*, p. 21.

British doctrine is ambiguous, but this section has made a number of observations worth repeating. First, in general terms, doctrine is not very authoritative in the British armed forces. More emphasis is placed on flexibility than the ability to apply different doctrinal principles. As an example, Gavin Bulloch argues that 'despite long experience in counter-insurgency, the British have not developed any set methods of dealing with the problem of insurgency; indeed it is probably unwise to attempt this because every situation is different'.[626] Second, current counter-insurgency doctrine resonates well with the British way of war and past principles of colonial policing and counter-insurgency. However, the foundation of British doctrine is that of high-intensity combat. The stated raison d'être of the armed forces is 'to engage in combat of war in defence of the nation'. There is a distinct hierarchy of British doctrine which places high-intensity combat as the foundation of doctrine and training, with doctrines on operations other than war as add-ons. Third, instead of a divide between war and operations other than war, British doctrine describes conflict as existing along a continuum between the extremes of war and peace. It is expected of British soldiers to be able to conduct operations along the entire spectrum within the same operational arena and within a short period of time.

Conclusions

The British way of war is mainly informed by the historical legacy of the British Empire. Low costs of civilian monitoring during the process of professionalisation have led to a functional imperative essentially defined by the political leadership, informed by the strategic context of imperial policing and counter-insurgency operations. These tasks have defined the British way of war. Pragmatism and adaptability were necessary features in order to effectively adjust to the multitude of different tasks involved in policing the Empire as well as to perform effectively within essentially different contexts and cultures. Other features of the British way of war include the wholehearted acceptance of 'hearts and minds' approaches, cultural understanding, and restraint in its application of force. Close co-operation between the civilian and military aspects of national power is another feature inherited from past operations. These features of the British way of war have been effectively maintained to the present day through the operations in Northern Ireland as well as the peace

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[626] Bulloch, 'Military Doctrine and Counterinsurgency', p. 4.

operations of the 1990s. Thus, the British still have a cultural preference for counter-insurgency type operations.

A negative aspect of the British way of war is the failure to perpetuate past experiences and lessons learned. The counter-insurgency operations in the aftermath of the Second World War as well as in Malaya and Northern Ireland all began in a troubling manner because of lacking doctrine and procedures, which could have been established from passed lessons.

While the cultural and structural aspects of the British way of war emphasize small wars and counter-insurgency, British doctrine clearly stresses the warfighting ethos and high-intensity combat. This is interesting as conventional warfare has been a limited part of British military experience since the end of the Second World War. The emphasis on warfighting capabilities is nevertheless interesting and may imply that if given autonomy from the political leadership the British military would define its functional imperative more narrowly. However, political primacy prevails in the UK and the British way of war still reflects the needs of the political leadership and the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare.

Thus, in terms of theory, the patterns of civil-military relations have in the British case led to an untraditional definition of the functional imperative and the creation of a strategic culture that can be summarized as pragmatic and flexible, with emphasis on civil-military co-operation and the minimum use of force. The British way of war is theoretically well adjusted to the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare. As the Assistant Under Secretary (programs) said to the Defence Committee in the House of Commons in 1991: 'We have structured our forces precisely to deal with the unexpected'.[627] Phrasing it in the language of this thesis, the indirect effect of integrated civil-military relations and low costs of civilian monitoring of the armed forces has in the British case provided the flexibility and learning capability that keep the military well adjusted to changes in the functional imperative. The hypothesis argues that this is likely to have consequences in the conduct and effectiveness of operations in complex irregular warfare. The next chapter conducts the empirical study of British operations in Iraq from 2003.

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[627] House of Commons Session 1991–92, Third Report, question 1190, 16, quoted in Eric Grove, *The Army and British Security After the Cold War: Defence Planning for a New Era* (London: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute/HMSO, 1996), p. 10.

CHAPTER 8

CIVIL-MILITARY ASPECTS OF BRITISH OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

This chapter examines the total outcome of the British patterns of civil-military relations, as seen in the context of the war in Iraq from 2003. The analysis, thereby, functions as an empirical test of the hypothesis in relation to the British case, and also adds some insights to the literature on British operations in Iraq, mainly by adding the civil-military perspective to the analysis. The empirical test involves tracing the causal chain to the dependent variable of operational conduct in complex irregular warfare and includes both the direct and indirect effects of civil-military relations. The chapter, therefore, does not provide a comprehensive analysis of British operations in Iraq, but instead focuses on three thematic discussions that are relevant to the hypothesis of this thesis. They involve the British approach to operations in Iraq, the level of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination, and the tactical conduct of operations. The first thematic discussion seeks to answer how the operation was interpreted and conceptualized by the military and civilian leadership in the UK, as well as how this was translated into political aims and operational plans. The discussion of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination involves two sub-categories in the civil-military aspects of the planning process and of the command and control structures. Finally, the discussion on tactical behaviour studies the conduct of tactical operations with reference to the hearts and minds approach, minimum use of force, cultural understanding, and, finally, adaptability and quick learning.

The main research questions for the chapter are: how have the patterns of civil-military relations affected post-conflict planning, and how have they functioned as a link in the chain of command? To what extent is the British way of war reflected in their operations in Iraq? As argued in the corresponding chapter on US operations in Iraq, the conduct and effectiveness of operations are less concerned with the outcome of operations than conduct in relation to the principles of best practice in complex

irregular warfare. By comparing British conduct to the principles of best practice a number of inferences regarding British effectiveness can be made. Let us, however, first briefly follow the British troops during the invasion phase.

British Military Operations in Iraq

As the junior partner in the coalition that invaded Iraq, the British armed forces received the separate task of securing the south of Iraq, most importantly the city of Basra. The first test of the British troops was the early task to seize the Al Faw Peninsula and to secure southern Iraq's oil infrastructure. As the first conventional ground force action of the war, the Al Faw operation had great strategic significance. The operation was, moreover, necessary in order to open the sea route to Umm Qasr, which needed to be seized simultaneously. As Iraq's only deep-water port, Umm Qasr was planned to be the essential hub for delivery of humanitarian aid. The objective to seize the oil infrastructure on Iraq's Al Faw Peninsula was also crucial to the coalition's overall campaign plan. Failure could have enabled Iraqis to carry out sabotage, leading rapidly to a major environmental disaster in the northern Gulf. Moreover, the oilfields were also considered crucial to the subsequent reconstruction of the Iraqi economy.[628]

The British Commando Brigade's operation was completely successful. The level of resistance put up by the Iraqi defence proved to be less than expected, to a large extent because of the surprise caused by the speed and force of the initial assault on the peninsula. The Iraqi forces were thereby unable to put together a co-ordinated defence although they attempted a number of counterattacks. The result of the operation was that four days into the campaign the Iraqi 51st Division had been removed from its defence of the oilfields, and 3 Commando Brigade held the critical oil infrastructure at Al Faw and the port of Umm Qasr.[629]

The more difficult test of British strength did not come until Basra, a city with a population of about 1.25 million. The British faced heavy resistance from the city and the advance came to a halt. According to the British command, an immediate attack on the city was likely to result in unnecessary military and civilian casualties as well

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[628] MoD, *Operations in Iraq: Lessons for the Future*, Chapter 3 – Lessons from the Operation, accessed 23/11/05, <http://www.mod.uk/publications/iraq_futurelessons/chap3.htm>
[629] Ibid.

as considerable material damage.[630] Therefore, the British forces did not hasten to crack the nut, and instead commenced a siege of the city by creating a loosely formed cordon around it.[631] Between 23 and 31 March, the siege of Basra almost took the form of a stand-off. The British waited and watched, gathered information and infiltrated the city with small units of Special Forces.[632] It was the Iraqi troops, led by Ali Hassan al-Majid, 'Chemical Ali', who lost their patience first and sought to provoke a British attack by launching completely unsuccessful sorties out of the city with tanks and armed vehicles, as well as by mortaring the British positions. After 31 March, the British commander nevertheless thought he had a clear enough intelligence picture to start infiltrating larger units into Basra. During the first few days of April the British raided Basra with Warrior fighting vehicles, very much like the Americans were doing in Baghdad with tanks. They destroyed Baathist positions, added to the division's stock of intelligence, and managed to infiltrate more sniper teams into the city.[633]

Finally, on 6 April, after 15 days of siege and information gathering, the British launched a full-scale assault on Basra from essentially every direction. By utilizing 'battle groups', smaller improvised formations of troops suited for the particular task, the British made their presence known all over the city. By the evening of 6 April, the British were largely in control of the city. The following day the remnants of the Baathist regime in Basra as well as the remaining Fedayeen fighters were chased out of the area by a battalion from the Parachute Regiment.[634] During this day, an interesting and indicative episode took place. As the Parachute Regiment withdrew from the city, Shia crowds began throwing rocks at British tanks and armoured personnel carriers. Instead of withdrawing to safety or firing warning shots, a British battle group commander ordered the armoured personnel carrier crews as well as the infantry to 'get out of the vehicles, take off their helmets, stow most of their weapons on their vehicles and walk out into the agitated crowd'.[635] This first 'social patrol' was conducted in a firm but friendly manner that clearly signalled to the people of Basra

[630] MoD, *Operations in Iraq*, Chapter 5 – The Land Environment.
[631] Williamson Murray and Robert H. Scales, *The Iraq War: A Military History* (London: Belknap Press, 2003), p. 147.
[632] John Keegan, *The Iraq War* (London: Hutchinson, 2004), p. 178.
[633] Murray and Scales, *The Iraq War*, p. 149.
[634] Keegan, *The Iraq War*, pp. 180–182.
[635] Murray and Scales, *The Iraq War*, p. 152.

that the British were there to stay, and that the Shiite population would not be abandoned like in 1991.

The British commanders' cautious approach in Basra was criticized by US officers at the time, as quicker results were sought after during the final push to Baghdad. The patience nevertheless allowed the British troops to eventually enter a city that was relatively intact and where there had been few casualties.[636] According to Rod Thornton, this led to less local hostility and more consent once troops moved into Basra. It was this level of consent that allowed the British troops to conduct foot patrolling without the use of body armour and helmets. Theoretically, such behaviour creates the impression of normality and a diminished threat for the local population. It also reduces the sense of distance between soldier and civilian by making the soldiers seem more accessible and less threatening to the local population – something which is of great importance when soldiers have to take on the job of policing, as they did in Basra.[637] However, the positive feedback from the local population did not last – an issue that is further discussed below.

British Objectives in Iraq

The UK was the junior partner in the coalition in Iraq, and a central question is the extent to which the British interpretation and approach to the campaign in Iraq mirrored that of the US. It is, therefore, relevant to examine the British political and military aims and planning approaches.

On 7 January 2003, ten weeks before the war, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw stated that the policy objectives in Iraq were 'to ensure Iraq complies with its obligations under relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs), including by giving up its weapons of mass destruction'.[638] There is, in other words, an emphasis on the UN Security Council resolution that was not quite as obvious in the US case. The Foreign Secretary went on to give a more detailed view of the UK Government's objectives on Iraq:

> Our prime objective is to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their associated programmes and means of delivery, including prohibited ballistic missiles

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[636] Rod Thornton, 'British Counter-Insurgency Operations in Iraq', in *House of Commons Defence Committee, Iraq: An Initial Assessment of Post-Conflict Operations: Sixth Report of Session 2004–05, Volume II, HC 65-I* (London: The House of Commons, 2005), p. Ev. 143.
[637] Ibid.
[638] Jack Straw's statement in Parliament on Iraq, 7 January 2003.

(BM), as set out in UNSCRs. This would reduce Iraq's ability to threaten its neighbours and the region, and prevent Iraq using WMD against our own people. UNSCRs also require Iraq to renounce terrorism.[639]

In March 2003, it was clear to the British Government that Iraq was not complying with its disarmament obligations and that military action was necessary to remove Saddam Hussein's regime in order to enforce Iraqi compliance.[640] At the Azores Summit on 17 March 2003, Tony Blair announced the UK's *Vision for Iraq and the Iraqi People*, a document that outlined the future end-state of Iraq as 'a stable, united and law-abiding state within its present borders, co-operating with the international community, no longer posing a threat to its neighbours or to international security, abiding by all its international obligations and providing effective and representative government for its own people'.[641] An unarticulated political aim in Iraq was to support the US and thereby strengthen the position as its greatest friend and ally.

On 20 March 2003, the Defence Secretary announced in Parliament the British objectives for the military campaign in Iraq:

a. Overcome the resistance of Iraqi security forces.

b. Deny the Iraqi regime the use of weapons of mass destruction now and in the future.

c. Remove the Iraqi regime, given its clear and unyielding refusal to comply with the UN Security Council's demands.

d. Identify and secure the sites where weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are located.

e. Secure essential economic infrastructure, including for utilities and transport, from sabotage and wilful destruction by Iraq; and

f. deter wider conflict both inside Iraq and in the region.[642]

The MoD also issued a number of wider political objectives in support of the military campaign that would demonstrate goodwill towards the Iraqi people, work with the UN to lift sanctions, sustain the widest possible international and regional coalition in support of military action, preserve regional security, help create conditions for a

[639] Ibid.
[640] UK MoD, *Iraq: Military Campaign Objectives*, (March 2003), accessed 15/04/05, <http://www.operations.mod.uk/telic/objectives.pdf>
[641] MoD, *Operations in Iraq, First Reflections*, (2003), p. 34.
[642] UK MoD, *Campaign Objectives*.

future, stable and law-abiding government of Iraq, and to further the British policy of eliminating terrorism as a force in international affairs.[643]

To determine the British interpretation of the campaign these objectives are later discussed in relation to the post-conflict planning process and the conduct of operations in Iraq.

Civil-Military Co-ordination and Co-operation: A Comprehensive Approach?

The previous chapter described a British approach to complex irregular warfare that involves close civil-military co-operation in the field as well as within the civil-military interface at the strategic level. This section investigates the extent to which this principle was adhered to in the context of Iraq. The section therefore involves two thematic discussions: post-conflict planning and the command and control structures.

Post-Conflict Planning

The main issue of this section is the fact that the UK was the junior partner in a coalition in which the senior partner clearly did not provide enough planning of the post-conflict phase. Obviously, the UK was part of the coalition that went to Iraq without a complete strategy for post-conflict operations, but what role did the British play in the planning process? How did they seek to influence the senior coalition partner?

A MoD report on the War in Iraq described the detailed planning for the post-conflict phase as taking place in parallel with the contingency planning for combat operations. 'Indeed, the military campaign was designed specifically with the coalition's post-conflict objectives in mind: for example, offensive operations were carefully targeted to ensure they had the least possible impact on Iraq's civil infrastructure'.[644] However, the importance of giving the impression that conflict was not inevitable during the run up to the launch of the operation led to certain planning problems. Contingency planning for a post-conflict Iraq was very sensitive, as it had to start from the assumption that a conflict would eventually take place. A consequence was that involvement in the initial stages of the post-conflict planning

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[643] UK MoD, *Campaign Objectives*.
[644] MoD, *Lessons for the Future*, Chapter 11 – Post Conflict Operations.

was restricted to a relatively small group within the British Government. The Cabinet Office initially took the lead in co-ordinating work on post-conflict planning and reconstruction, but as the work grew this responsibility was increasingly transferred to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).[645] More specifically, British planning for the post-conflict phase was centralized in the Iraq Planning Unit (IPU), based in the FCO. The IPU was led by a senior Foreign Office official and worked closely with the Government's central co-ordinating machinery in the Cabinet Office. It included an interagency group of MoD military and civilian staff as well as FCO, Department for International Development and Treasury officials.[646]

However, the Butler Report, which investigated the treatment of intelligence on WMD in the run-up to the war, noted that the traditional committee system had been bypassed. The report argued that Prime Minister Blair used a smaller group of people for policy-making, which confirms his presidential style of leadership, as discussed in the chapter on the British pattern of civil-military relations. The Butler Report expressed concern that 'the informality and circumscribed character of the Government's procedures which we saw in the context of policy-making towards Iraq risks reducing the scope for informed collective political judgement'.[647] The presidential style of Prime Minister Blair, resulting in limited committee work, was enhanced by the need for secrecy in the run-up to the war. In essence, the traditional approach to planning and operations, involving interagency co-operation and co-ordination through the committee system, may therefore have been circumvented.

Peter Hennessey has a more nuanced view of this problem. He notes that 'the Prime Minister's "morning meetings" or the "War Cabinet" were in fact proper Cabinet Committee meetings, although in ad hoc form and more limited in scope'.[648] In other words, the committee system was not bypassed, but limited. The question that must be raised is how limited the committee system can be and still deserve the title of committee system? Nevertheless, Hennessy goes on to argue that the mistakes of intelligence interpretation and policy-making in the run-up to the war were hardly the faults of centralization of the government structure and the exclusion of Cabinet Committees from the planning process. Instead, the system failure occurred at formal

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[645] Ibid.
[646] MoD, *First Reflections*, p. 33.
[647] *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction*, p. 160.
[648] Peter Hennessy, 'Informality and Circumscription: The Blair Style of Government in War and Peace', *Political Quarterly*, 76:1 (2005), p. 5.

Cabinet meetings. 'If the full Cabinet will not take on a dominant Prime Minister in full cry – even in the last days before hostilities begin – there is no other part of the system of government that can compensate for such supineness'.[649] This thesis has two possible explanations for this supineness in the British case. First, the presidential leadership style of Prime Minister Blair may not only have demanded stricter agreement regarding policy within the Cabinet, it may also have led to the recruitment of Cabinet ministers who were generally considered compliant. Second, because the work of Cabinet committees was limited, the multitude of different information and ideas generally produced within committees may have been limited, thereby failing to produce alternative views to the Cabinet ministers'. In the final analysis, the British committee system of interagency co-operation was not employed to its fullest capacity in the planning process of the war in Iraq.

The lack of pre-war planning of post-conflict operations has been covered in the chapter on the US in Iraq, and it seems the British were, at an early stage, concerned about the lack of planning on the other side of the Atlantic. The British complained internally in a memo written in advance of a Cabinet meeting on Iraq held on 23 July 2002. The memo noted that 'military planning for action against Iraq is proceeding apace', but adds that 'little thought' has been given to 'the aftermath and how to shape it'. The memo warned that 'a post-war occupation of Iraq could lead to a protracted and costly nation-building exercise….As already made clear, the U.S. military plans are virtually silent on this point'.[650]

In contrast with the US administration, the British MoD also published a post-conflict strategy at the onset of the campaign. This stated that in the wake of hostilities, the immediate military priorities for the coalition were to:

a. provide for the security of friendly forces;
b. contribute to the creation of a secure environment so that normal life can be restored;
c. work in support of humanitarian organizations to mitigate the consequences of hostilities and, in the absence of such civilian humanitarian capacity, provide relief where it is needed;
d. work with UNMOVIC/IAEA to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery;
e. facilitate remedial action where environmental damage has occurred;

[649] Ibid., pp. 9, 11.
[650] Walter Pincus, 'Memo: U.S. Lacked Full Postwar Iraq Plan', *The Washington Post*, 12 June 2005.

f. enable reconstruction and recommissioning of essential infrastructure for the political and economic benefit of the Iraqi people; and

g. lay plans for the reform of Iraq's security forces.[651]

The extent to which the early concerns and the later plans and objectives were expressed to those across the Atlantic is unclear. The former British Ambassador in Washington Christopher Meyer argued in his memoirs that Prime Minister Blair had been very weak in the discussions with President Bush before the war. The British, as the only major coalition partner, had much more leverage than what was used before the start of the campaign.[652]

A House of Commons Committee report argues the obvious: 'The post-conflict situation with which the coalition was faced did not match the pre-conflict expectations'.[653] The report made this argument despite the fact that advisors from the academic world had warned of the difficulties and complexities of post-conflict operations in the context of Iraq.[654] The committee listed five key planning misjudgements: first, instead of the grateful, amenable population, which the coalition had apparently hoped to find, many Iraqis sought actively to take advantage of the power vacuum that followed the combat phase. Second, and perhaps most importantly, the coalition underestimated the insurgency – or, at least, its potential. Third, the coalition seemed to be unable to decide what to do about the Iraqi military and security forces. Fourth, the coalition did not appear to plan adequately for the scope of the reconstruction task that lay before it nor did it seem to realize how quickly it would be expected to act to ameliorate the situation. Finally, the coalition underestimated the number of troops required to meet the challenges of Iraq's post-conflict transition.[655]

The Defence Committee's critique, which talks of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad as a complicating factor for the British, implies that the co-operation with the American partners was part of the problem. 'This has also been one of the first times in recent history that the UK has had to take on the obligations of an

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[651] UK MoD, *Campaign Objectives*.
[652] Cited in Mary Jordan, 'Blair Failed In Dealing With Bush, Book Says', *The Washington Post,* 8 November 2005, accessed 28/06/2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/07/AR2005110701569.html>
[653] House of Commons Defence Committee, *Iraq: An Initial Assessment of Post-Conflict Operations*, p. 1.
[654] A notable voice was Professor Lawrence Freedman. Cited by Christopher Dandeker in email correspondence with the author (30 Aug. 2007).
[655] House of Commons Defence Committee, *Iraq: An Initial Assessment,* pp. 15–17.

occupying power, and operated as a junior partner in a counter-insurgency'.[656] With what right can the UK as the junior partner in a coalition fall back on the fact that it was not solely, or even mainly, responsible for the misjudgements in the pre-war planning process?

It is clear that the British were concerned about the lack of US planning for the post-conflict phase, and that the MoD went somewhat further than its coalition partner in the post-conflict planning process. However, the British administration did not push its coalition partner very far. In reply to a question from the House of Commons Defence Committee regarding the level of involvement the MoD had in the US planning and conduct of post-conflict and counter-insurgency operations outside the British area of responsibility, the government made no attempt to hide behind the fact that it is a junior partner in coalition with a superpower.[657] Instead, the British Government argued that it had been extensively involved in the coalition planning of post-conflict operations. The UK had significant representation in the US-led headquarters. Embedded British officers also contributed to the development of the coalition's campaign plan. There has also been extensive exchange of information between the countries regarding counter-insurgency experience and doctrine.[658]

Not only was the British Government part of the planning process, it also shared many of the miscalculations before the war. The House of Commons Defence Committee asked the British Government about the estimates on the size and scope of a possible insurgency before the end of major combat operations. The reply was that 'the prospects for a major insurgency were not the main focus of the MoD's attention at the time and there was very limited relevant intelligence'. The administration, nevertheless, recognized that, after a brief honeymoon period, significant elements of civil society could become anti-occupation and that caution needed to be taken considering the reduced Sunni role in the running of Iraq. 'However, an insurgency on the scale that subsequently developed was not foreseen before the end of major combat operations'.[659]

The Defence Committee also questioned the level of guidance given before March 2003 to British commanders on re-building the Iraqi Security Forces. The

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[656] Ibid., p. 1.
[657] Ibid., p. 146.
[658] Ibid.
[659] Ibid., p. 145.

government's reply indicates the planning consequences the assumption of limited insurgency in the post-conflict phase would have.

> Formal guidance to British Commanders on the conduct of Operation TELIC [Iraq] was issued in the form of an Executive Directive from CDS [Chief of the Defence Staff] to the Joint Commander for Op TELIC, dated 18 March 2003. This stated that one of the tasks of the commander was 'if directed, be prepared to contribute to the reform of Iraq's security forces'. At this stage, however, formal guidance was mainly concerned with combat operations.[660]

The combat phase was, in other words, the main concern of pre-war planning on both sides of the Atlantic, and post-conflict operations were treated as a contingency to be dealt with at a later stage. This could possibly be explained given the British military's culture of flexibility and muddling through. However, the magnitude of the post-conflict task would make such an approach in the Iraqi case rather futile.

The British Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Michael Walker, has stressed that 'if the Chiefs of Staff and I had doubted that we were on the right strategy, we would not hold back from saying so'.[661] Even with the political considerations and the lack of influence in an unequal partnership considered, the British did accept the campaign plan by remaining a coalition partner, as well as by forcing changes by exerting real pressure as the only serious coalition partner. In the final analysis, there are few extenuating circumstances for the British as the junior partner within the coalition.

British Command and Control Structures

The previous section noted that the British committee system was not utilized to its fullest potential. The MoD report on first reflections of the war in Iraq nevertheless argued that, at the top levels of strategic command, inter-departmental consultation was ensured through the creation of special committees led by the Cabinet Office. Moreover, within the MoD, the Defence Secretary normally met twice daily with the CDS and others in the direct chain of command for the operation. The Permanent Secretary advised regularly on policy issues. The Chiefs of Staff also met most days, including with officials from other relevant Departments and agencies, to assist the

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[660] Ibid., p. 146.
[661] Michael Walker, 'The Heart of Defence: Men and Women of the UK Armed Forces', *RUSI Journal*, 150:6 (2005), p. 25.

Chief of the Defence Staff.[662] However, as noted above, the Butler Report showed that the level of interagency co-operation and committee deliberation in the run-up to the war was less than usual in the case of Iraq. A number of consequences are discussed later in this chapter.

The military command and control structures for the operations in Iraq were in accordance with British doctrine established with the Chief of Joint Operations (CJO), General Sir John Reith, appointed as Joint Force Commander. He was responsible to the Chief of the Defence Staff for the conduct of operations, and exercised operational command over all British forces assigned to the operations in Iraq. The CJO exercised his responsibilities through the Permanent Headquarters to the UK Contingent Commanders in theatre, Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burridge. This form of national command did not mirror the US command structure and therefore led to a degree of complexity at the operational and tactical levels. However, the specifically British structure of command also ensured that UK forces would only undertake missions approved by British commanders.[663] In the field the three UK Contingent Commanders (Maritime, Land and Air) operated under the tactical control of their respective US Component Commanders. This reflected years of interaction and co-operation between the two countries in the Gulf region. A defence report suggests that 1(UK) Armoured Division worked exceptionally well under US command thanks to the strong professional links already established between the armed forces.[664]

Regarding the civil-military co-operation and co-ordination in the field the House of Commons Defence Committee noted that British forces carried out their reconstruction-related tasks admirably, but remained concerned about the level of support offered by other departments and organizations. The MoD responded by contending that the security situation restricted the freedom of movement of DFID and FCO personnel.[665] Regarding the NGOs the security situation was so severe that they have not been able to operate in southern Iraq at all.

These concerns are confirmed by Captain Louise Heywood who worked as a Civil-Military Co-ordination Officer in Iraq. Captain Heywood argues: 'I am very critical of interagency co-operation because it does not exist on the ground'. She noted that there was very little joint planning between the different agencies involved, and

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[662] MoD, *First Reflections,* p. 32.
[663] MoD, *Lessons for the Future*, Chapter 3.
[664] Ibid.
[665] MoD, *An Initial Assessment*, pp. 12–13.

that the result was loss of unity of effort. The military emphasized traditionally well-understood and well-defined functions, such as Security Sector Reform (SSR). However, Heywood notes that while SSR was of great importance in Iraq, the narrow focus of the military as well as the lack of civilian organizations in the region meant that civil-military integration of the British intervention was largely set aside, particularly in the early phases of the Peace Support Operation.[666]

Lack of civil-military integration and the severe security situation meant that the traditionally civilian aspects of post-conflict operations, such as political reform, capacity building, and economic reconstruction, were forgot in the early post-conflict operations. In the end, the military was involved in post-conflict activities for which it clearly was not trained for, such as governance capacity building. The main reason was that the security situation did not allow other agencies to handle them. Lack of training as well as lack of interagency planning and instructions meant that the military would do things that were detrimental to the activities of DFID, causing further rifts and even more lack of communication and information sharing between the agencies. Most seriously, according to Heywood, was the fact that as late as 2006, there was 'no overarching plan' for post-conflict reconstruction, and therefore no continuity in reconstruction activities. Instead, military commanders were allowed to rotate every six months with a new set of objectives they wanted to achieve – objectives that included civilian aspects, such as governance. As a consequence there was little interaction between DFID and the MoD in the field. The interaction Foreign Office and the MoD was slightly better, mainly thanks to the political advisors within divisional and brigade headquarters. However, they were not involved with civil-military co-ordination or co-operation.[667]

In conclusion, neither the interagency integration at the strategic level, nor the civil-military co-operation and co-ordination of operations in the field was as well developed as would be expected of the British approach to complex irregular warfare. The planning process did not utilize the full capacity of the interagency committee system, and, in the field, the level of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination was

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[666] Interview with Captain Louise Heywood, 26 January 2007. Many of her comments are published in Louise Heywood, 'CIMIC in Iraq', *RUSI Journal*, 151:6 (December 2006), pp. 36–40.
[667] Ibid.

not enough to address the full range of post-conflict issues.[668] It seems the British conceptualization of the campaign in Iraq was more or less made in conventional terms. The British approach to complex irregular warfare was at the strategic level violated in several respects, and focus was placed on the invasion phase of the campaign. The strategic-level misinterpretation of the campaign in Iraq is bound to have had consequences for the tactical conduct of operations, which is the topic of the following section.

Tactical Behaviour of British Troops

The analysis of British conduct of tactical operations in Iraq has produced slightly contradictory results. The findings are presented in three thematic discussions. First, the hearts and minds approach is analysed with reference to the use of force as well as force protection policy. Second, the cultural understanding and adaptability of British troops are discussed. Finally, this section looks at the outcome and effectiveness of British conduct.

The Hearts and Minds Approach

British Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon declared at the onset of the campaign that '[o]ur focus on the minimum use of force makes sense militarily, as well as being consistent with our obligations under international law. In particular, for this campaign, we not only have an eye to overcoming resistance to our forces, but also to the very real need to enable the rapid reconstruction of Iraq in the wake of hostilities'.[669] The idea of minimum use of force is really a standing operating procedure for the British forces and therefore nothing exceptional in the case of Iraq. However, it is still worth highlighting as it stands in stark contrast to the American way of war. The Defence Secretary's statement also showed that at least some level of mental preparation for the post-conflict phase of the campaign existed during the invasion phase. The patient attack and the quick transition to firm but friendly patrolling of the streets in Basra have already been described as two examples of the

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[668] The British failure to apply the Comprehensive Approach in practice has also been described by Leo Docherty in the context of the Helmand Province in Afghanistan. See Leo Docherty, *Desert of Death: A Soldier's Journey from Iraq to Afghanistan* (London: Faber and Faber, 2007), pp. 185-192
[669] Defence Secretary and Chief of the Defence Staff: Press Conference at the Ministry of Defence, London, 21 March 2003, accessed 23/11/05, <www.operations.mod.uk/telic/press_21march.htm>

British hearts and minds approach. However, the British way of war became more evident in the post-conflict phase.

Instead of the expected humanitarian crisis the most immediate and visible post-conflict challenge was the period of looting that followed the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. Looting was not completely unexpected, according to a MoD report on Iraq, but the scale of the problem was greater than envisaged and particularly difficult for forces to address while they were still committed to combat operations.[670]

However, through 'Quick Impact Projects' (QIPs), the British forces were able to make a relatively quick positive impact for the population in Southern Iraq. The funding for QIPs was made available as a direct result of lessons learned from Afghanistan and proved very useful in Iraq. According to the British administration, QIPs have helped gain the consent of the Iraqi people by providing early security, education and health activities. Moreover, British forces quickly began to work with senior police figures in Basra to encourage the Iraqi police back to work. Joint UK/Iraqi police patrols commenced on 13 April 2003, only a few days after the fall of Basra. In December 2003, there were already around 2,000 Iraqi police back at work in the city. Similar initiatives took place in towns across the British area of responsibility, with the result that Basra and the Maysan provinces were quickly declared permissive environments by the Humanitarian Operations Centre.[671] The initial results were increased security and normality in the UK area of responsibility.[672] The levels of looting and destruction by early insurgent attacks were also much more limited in the British area of responsibility. This was partly due to the larger support from the Shia-dominated population in the south than from the Hussein supporting Sunni population in the American area of responsibility, and partly due to the effective takeover of British troops in Basra, which quickly established a greater sense of security than in the bigger and more complex city of Baghdad.

However, the British conduct of operations as well as the long-term consequences of British behaviour, have been seriously questioned as the security situation in the British area of operations deteriorated after the relative calm of the initial honeymoon period. Before becoming involved in that discussion, let us take a closer look at some examples of British conduct of tactical-level operations.

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[670] MoD, *Lessons for the Future*, Chapter 11.
[671] MoD, *First Reflections*, p. 36.
[672] MoD, *Lessons for the Future*, Chapter 11.

On 2 August 2004 the US forces launched a major offensive in Najaf against the Mehdi Army, led by Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. The attacks on Najaf also involved a threat to attack al-Sadr's forces in the holy mosque of Imam Ali. The offensive and the threat against the mosque caused much anger in southern Iraq and led to widespread unrest in the British area of responsibility. The unrest in Basra led to a number of British casualties over a short period. A number of British bases were besieged and battles were fought with much greater intensity than anything experienced during the invasion phase of the campaign. During these battles the British showed restraint by taking heavy fire without resorting to indiscriminate weaponry, such as artillery, fast-jet air strikes or helicopter gunships.[673] However, as a result of the increased insurgent activity, the British decreased the patrolling of the streets of Basra, and instead chose to remain passive within their bases. During this time the British only patrolled within a perimeter of 100 yards from base. The resulting security vacuum was quickly filled by forces loyal to al-Sadr. The British troops, nevertheless, had Special Forces operating in the city, and enough intelligence on the key leaders of the estimated 400 insurgents to 'take them out if we want to'. The British commanders insisted that their strategy of waiting out the barrage was preferable to attacking Sadr's militia. Such an attack would, according to the commanders, lead to an escalation of violence and the increased risk of civilian casualties.[674] Innocent casualties and collateral damage were thus kept to a minimum, and despite heavy casualties among insurgents, overall consent, therefore, still remained among the local population. Against US orders, negotiations were also held with the insurgents to help reduce the tense situation.[675]

An interesting and contrasting event was the forced liberation of two British Special Forces soldiers from an Iraqi jail in Basra in September 2005. Relations between the British and Iraqis had turned sour during the summer of 2005, following a series of incidents, including the release of film footage showing British troops beating up Iraqi youths. As the Basra police refused to release the Special Forces detainees, the British used armoured vehicles, supported by attack helicopters to smash the walls of the prison in an attempt to forcibly release them. In the event, an

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[673] Thornton, 'British Counter-Insurgency Operations in Iraq', p. 144.
[674] Thomas Harding, 'Iraqis urge the Army to reclaim the streets from Shia rebels', *The Daily Telegraph*, 30 August 2004, accessed 03/08/06, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/core/Content/displayPrintable.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/08/30/wirq130.xml &site=5>
[675] Thornton, 'British Counter-Insurgency Operations in Iraq', p. 144.

angry mob attacked two armoured vehicles with rocks and petrol bombs.[676] The incident caused a break-off of contacts between the Iraqi authorities and the British troops. The governor of Basra, Mohammed Walli, called the British assault 'barbaric, savage and irresponsible'.[677] The day before this incident about 200 members of the Mahdi Army staged a show of force in the city, blocking roads in the city centre and demanding the release of a local commander who had previously been arrested by British and Iraqi security forces. After a stand-off lasting several hours, the militiamen withdrew after negotiations between an al-Sadr representative and the Iraqi police and the British forces.[678] A day of stand-off and negotiation with the militia was, in other words, followed by use of force on both sides.

A similar event took place in May 2006, when British soldiers clashed with local insurgents after a UK helicopter crash in Basra. When reinforcements were sent to secure the area, they came under attack by live fire from small arms as well as petrol bombs and stones. Several armoured vehicles caught fire and the British forces were forced to open fire during the unrest that in the end killed five people. Just as worrying as the unrest was the fact that crowds of Iraqis cheered and celebrated at the site of the helicopter crash as the wreckage burned. The BBC's Andrew North claimed that the event marked a 'dramatic change in attitude' towards the British presence in southern Iraq, and that the event would make it increasingly difficult for British troops to control the streets of Basra.[679]

However, the day after the helicopter crash and the subsequent riots, the Basra battle group commander, Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Bowren, took his men patrolling in soft hats. The patrol was described as a deliberate attempt to convey the army's view that the displays of hatred and triumphalism at British casualties did not represent the majority of Basra's opinion. While the patrol was attacked by rocks in certain areas, it received a warmer welcome in others.[680]

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[676] 'British forces break soldiers out of Basra jail', *Times Online*, 19 September 2005, accessed August 2006, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7374-1788054,00.html>,
[677] Ellen Knickmeyer and Jonathan Finer, 'British Smash Into Iraqi Jail To Free 2 Detained Soldiers', *The Washington Post*, 20 September 2005, p. A01.
[678] 'British forces break soldiers out of Basra Jail', Times Online September 19, 2005, accessed 22/05/2006 at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/iraq/article568439.ece
[679] 'Fatal Basra crash sparks unrest', *BBC News*, 6 May 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4981148.stm>
[680] Paul Wood, 'Taking the Pulse of Life in Basra', *BBC News,* 8 May 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4752709.stm>

Arguably, the most debated episode of the British post-conflict campaign was the November 2004 redeployment of the Black Watch Regiment to an American-controlled area close to Baghdad. The redeployment was made in support of the American operations in Fallujah and relieved the US Marines that normally patrolled the area. The fact that the British troops were subordinate to US commanders in what was considered a more dangerous area, created great debate in the UK. Lt. Col. James Cowan, the regiment's commanding officer, was in the end promised total control over the way his men operated. The British also negotiated an agreement with the Americans that laid down what missions and tasks the British troops would undertake, and that they would be carried out under British Army rules of engagement.[681] Although the British conducted their operations in full combat gear, the hearts and minds approach was thereby exported to the redeployment area.

An early setback proved that the area was as dangerous as expected. On 4 November 2005, eleven soldiers were caught in a suicide bomb blast at a checkpoint. Three of them as well as their civilian interpreter died instantly while the other eight were injured. This could be interpreted as a failure of the British approach, but while the event certainly raised the guard of the Black Watch, the hearts and minds campaign continued. In fact, less than 24 hours after the attack, troops were out on foot patrols again. Lt. Richard Holmes, the patrol commander, argued that 'we've got to get out, get the intelligence, and get feet on the ground, otherwise we'll never get anywhere'.[682]

In the aftermath of these attacks, the Black Watch conducted a large search operation named 'Operation Tobruk' that possibly shows a different mindset of the Black Watch in the more volatile area south of Baghdad. Soldiers stormed what was considered an insurgent stronghold by bursting into houses and arresting a large number of people. The emotional stress of the British troops was evident in the comments of a sergeant before the operation: 'It's payback time. We have been looking forward to getting out there and stopping these people attacking us'.[683] The

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[681] Michael Smith, 'Black Watch will operate by Army rules', *The Daily Telegraph*, 22 October 2004, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/10/22/wirq122.xml&sSheet=/news/2004/10/22/ixhome.html>

[682] Richard Lloyd Parry, 'No turning back in the battle to win over hearts and minds', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 November 2005, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;jsessionid=0CXATDY0FACWRQFIQMFSFF4AVCBQ0IV0?xml=/news/2004/11/06/wirq306.xml>

[683] David Harrison, '"Payback time" for Black Watch', *The Times*, 26 November 2004, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7374-1375087,00.html>

operation stands out as 'unBritish', and was clearly not a typical hearts and minds operation. Walls were knocked down, doors smashed, and stun grenades thrown. More than 700 soldiers in over 100 vehicles, including 42 Warrior armoured assault vehicles, took part in the operation that lasted for twelve hours. Interestingly, despite the sense of 'payback time' and the unusually brutal tactics that led to the arrest of more than 100 men, only a handful of shots were fired, leading to no casualties on either side.[684] It seems that, even under emotional stress, the principle of minimum use of force was adhered to by officers and soldiers alike. It is also clear that the British approach to force protection, involving close contact with the local population, emphasis on human intelligence, and hearts and minds approaches, was maintained despite increased violence.

Cultural Understanding and Adaptability

Christopher Varhola contends that the British had even less recent institutional experience in the Middle East than the US military, and that no civil-military assets within the British armed forces were specifically trained for the Middle East at the onset of operations. Varhola argues that the lack of experience from the region resulted in poor understanding of local culture, which was reflected in the frequent riots in Basra and the negative attitudes of Iraqis towards British forces in southern Iraq. As an example, early in the campaign British soldiers looking for weapons conducted house searches with dogs. In the Muslim faith the dog is an unclean animal, and the use of dogs in Arab homes was perceived as an insulting act meant to demonstrate British dominance. Local leaders, clerics, and residents, therefore, complained that British soldiers were not sensitive to the local customs.[685]

This view is confirmed by Andrew Garfield who maintains that the cultural awareness of British soldiers who participated in the invasion phase of the operation was surprisingly poor. However, he also notes that this shortcoming was quickly rectified by adding lengthy cultural training of subsequent troop rotations. In a training city, modified to look like a typical Iraqi city, British soldiers were trained in interpreting situations as well as interacting with the local population. Garfield thereby

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[684] Ibid.
[685] Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq'.

argues that the British showed excellent adaptability when faced with difficulties and initial shortcomings.[686]

The fact that British soldiers were not well prepared for the context of Iraq shows the importance of understanding that each conflict presents unique challenges, and that there are limits to the benefits of experience from Northern Ireland and other conflicts.[687] As previously argued, the British culture of minimum use of force and political sensitivity also does not provide a guarantee against abuse. The case in which three British soldiers were charged and later jailed and dismissed from the army in disgrace over the abuse of Iraqi detainees in Basra highlights this fact.[688] Such events underline the lack of understanding of the political and strategic consequences of tactical mistakes. However, the British armed forces generally have a good understanding of the importance of the strategic narrative and of making the right impression on the local population and leaders. As an example, British Brigadier Nick Carter argued in 2004 that maintaining the goodwill of local Shia Muslim leader Sayid Ali al-Safi al-Musawi was vital. 'The moment that Sayid Ali says, "We don't want the Coalition here", we might as well go home'.[689] To keep up to date with public opinion the British Operational Analysis section at Division Headquarters therefore conducts continuous surveys administered by locally hired Iraqis throughout the whole of its sector.[690]

Outcome of British Operations

Initial reports from the British area of operations mostly contained positive contrasts with the American sector. The House of Commons Defence Committee argues that the considerable success that had been achieved in the UK-controlled areas can be traced to the British forces' ability to adapt to changing circumstances. 'Suppleness and pragmatism are at the heart of the British forces' professionalism'.[691] However, the early gains in terms of security and reconstruction efforts were quickly replaced by increasing security problems and growing insurgent activity in and around Basra. As

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[686] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV'.
[687] Bulloch, 'Military Doctrine and Counterinsurgency', p. 4.
[688] See 'Iraq abuse case soldiers jailed', *BBC News*, 25 February 2006, accessed 15/04/06, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4296511.stm>
[689] Melissa Kite and Alex Thomson, 'Violence in Iraq will get even worse, says Blair', *The Telegraph*, 18 April 2004, accessed 15/01/07, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/04/18/wirq18.xml>
[690] Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq'.
[691] House of Commons Defence Committee, *Iraq: An Initial Assessment*, p. 1.

noted, the effectiveness of the British approach in Iraq has therefore been questioned. However, before discussing the soundness of British tactics, it should be observed that the number of UK military personnel deployed in Iraq decreased substantially after the initial invasion phase. The peak during major combat operations involved 46,000 British troops, a number that in May 2003 was down to 18,000. In May 2004, only 8,600 soldiers remained to control the south of Iraq.[692] With only 8,000 troops overseeing security in the Shia heartland, British troops had no option but to apply a 'softly-softly approach', keeping a low profile and handing over much responsibility to the local authorities. However, reports from early 2006 indicated that many Basrans were disappointed by the British military's hands-off approach that allowed hard-line groups to take control of the city.[693] Similarly, an anonymous senior British Army officer who has served in Basra claims that the brigade-sized force employed to secure the British area of responsibility is 'farcically small' for the task. 'We've done some bloody good things, but the truth is that we've also had to turn a blind eye to an awful lot of iffy behaviour from the militias – assassinations, graft, vote-fixing and so on'.[694]

Human Rights Watch has presented a bleak view of British post-conflict operations in the Basra area. The report reveals that extensive looting and civil unrest took place in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Basra. It further argues that 'the extent of looting in the first week, and British failure to respond to it, convinced many residents of Basra that their security was not a priority for British forces'.[695] The report is, according to Alice Hills, significant, as it implies that what the British considered an acceptable level of disorder and violence in the aftermath of the fall of Basra was, in the eyes of the local population, not enough to provide the sense of individual security that was necessary to create or maintain support for the occupation.[696]

This can be put in relation to the British emphasis on security sector reform in the area. While violence was kept at what the British considered an acceptable level,

[692] 'UK Operations in Iraq: Key Facts and Figures', Defence Factsheet, accessed August 2006, <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/OperationsFactsheets/OperationsInIraqKeyFactsFigures.htm>

[693] James Hider, 'Hardliners exploiting Britain's softly-softly approach', *The Times*, 1 February 2006, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7374-2019096,00.html>

[694] Trevor Royle, 'Basra Burns: The British Army's softly-softly approach in Iraq', *The Sunday Herald*, 25 September 2005, <http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4156/is_20050925/ai_n15618155>

[695] Human Rights Watch, *Basra: Crime and Insecurity under British Occupation*, (2003), accessed 03/04/06, <www.hrw.org/reports/2003>, p. 8.

[696] Alice Hills, 'Basra and the Referent Points of Twofold War', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 14:3 (2003), pp. 38–39.

they successfully trained Iraqi troops that have been able to take over responsibility for security in two of the provinces in the British area of responsibility.[697] From that perspective, not only were there enough British troops in Iraq, but also operations were going according to plan. However, as Captain Heywood noted, the emphasis on SSR meant that the many other aspects of post-conflict reconstruction were forgotten or impossible to execute. The fact is that the security situation did not allow the Foreign Office, DFID personnel, or NGOs to operate in the area, resulting in limited successes in reconstruction and political reform. The hands-off approach to operations and the limited amount of soldiers in the British area of responsibility were not adequate to achieve the more far-reaching political aims of the campaign in Iraq.

Meanwhile, Operation Sinbad, a jointly executed operation by the Iraqi Security Forces and the British, conducted between September 2006 and March 2007, did regain some initiative by rooting out corruption in the police force and by conducting extensive reconstruction projects in Basra. It has also proved the worth of the Iraqi Security Forces trained by the British. The Iraqi 10th Division is from the spring of 2007 in charge of planning and leading security operations in Basra with minimal or no coalition support. However, the operations also highlighted the difficulty of shaping events in Iraq, and the lack of available troops. Toby Dodge argues that 'Britain has never had the forces [in Iraq] needed to make a sustained difference to law and order, and meaningful reconstruction is almost non-existent'.[698] The improvements during Operation Sinbad seem to have been temporary as reports coming out of Basra during the spring speak of increased attacks on British troops, as well as a quick return to a militia-led anarchy on the streets. The police are again completely run by militia groups, as are large parts of the Iraqi Army.[699]

As junior partner in the coalition that occupies Iraq, the British forces seem to have opted for a limited approach that keeps the security situation at an acceptable level while conducting security sector reform in the British area of responsibility. The approach means that British troops are leaving the country and that the responsibility

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[697] The transfer of responsibility to Iraqi security forces has been completed in the provinces of Muthanna (transferred on 13 July 2006), and Dhi Qhar (transferred on 21 September 2006). The UK MoD further hopes that both the Maysan and Basra provinces will be transferred to full Iraqi control in the second half of 2007.

[698] Toby Dodge cited in 'Operation Sinbad: Mission failure casts doubt on entire British presence in Iraq', *The Independent*, 8 October 2006, accessed 04/03/07, <http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article1819651.ece>

[699] Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, '"Welcome to Tehran" – how Iran took control of Basra', *The Guardian*, 19 May 2007.

for security is transferred to the Iraqi security forces. However, for the local population, the operations have not been enough as the security situation has been severe for civilians, and as the civilian aspects of post-conflict operations – such as economic reconstruction and improved governance – have been sacrificed. This has also failed to meet the requirements of the political aims of the campaign in Iraq.

Despite the hearts and minds operations of the British forces, the lack of security as well as the failure to conduct the civilian aspect of post-conflict reconstruction meant that the local community's consent was never secured. This view is confirmed by Lt. Gen. Sir Robert Fry, Deputy Commander of Multinational Force Iraq, who has argued that one of the greatest problems in Iraq was the failure to translate tactical behaviour into operational effect in the pursuit of strategic goals.[700] There is, in other words, a disconnection between the strategic-level aims and the tactical work in the field. Despite British tactical behaviour that, to a large extent, mirrors the lessons learned of past expeditionary operations, the intended operational effects of stabilization and reconstruction are painfully absent. Heywood maintains that she experiences 'a worrying lack of willingness among Government agencies to work together effectively'.[701]

Despite the deteriorating security situation after the initial honeymoon period, the British have, in fact, handed over responsibility in three of its four provinces, with the Basra province most likely in the autumn of 2007. The security sector reform has, in some respects, been successful, producing a number of reliable Iraqi military units. A positive view comes from Andrew Garfield:

> Notwithstanding the fact that the UK's area of responsibility is less hostile than many of the areas occupied by U.S. forces, informed opinion suggests that the British approach to S&R [stability and reconstruction], which differs significantly from that of the U.S., has achieved some success in Iraq, ensuring greater stability, fewer casualties, less alienation, and more rapid reconstruction.[702]

Garfield credits the British organizational culture, the effective adaptation of existing doctrine for Peace Support Operations, and a much more integrated national

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[700] Robert Fry, 'Expeditionary Operations in the Modern Era', *RUSI Journal*, 150:6 (December 2005), p. 62.
[701] Heywood, 'CIMIC in Iraq', p. 40.
[702] Garfield, 'Succeeding in Phase IV', p. 10.

approach to stability and reconstruction operations.[703] The findings of this chapter, nevertheless, suggest a more nuanced view of British operations in Iraq. Moreover, in the final analysis, the outcome of operations in Iraq can really only be measured in terms of coalition success on a national scale, and the British have in this regard done little beyond damage control and providing for their own exit strategy.

Anthony Cordesman argues that the problem in the southern provinces was that the British essentially gave up. The British lost control after the election in 2005 and 2006 as different Shiite groups came to power. 'Once they came under control, the Shiites firmly were in charge of virtually the entire area and there was little the British could do about it'.[704] Other analysts contend that the soft approach of the British was the very reason Basra slipped out of their grasp in 2005. The determination not to inflame the local populace and the failure to project power meant that the British military all but invited an external challenge. 'With Basra civilians cowed and the levers of civic power increasingly coming under the domination of fractious religious parties, it has become tragically apparent that, for all intents and purposes, British forces have been relegated to the role of mere spectators'.[705] In June 2007, the situation in Basra is described as completely out of control. Different militia groups control the oil production, the ports and borders, as well as the police and large parts of the military.[706] Serving British soldiers have told the media that they feel like 'just sitting ducks', constantly being mortared in their camps, and shot at during every patrol.[707]

Clearly, the combination of the soft approach and very limited numbers of troops in the area of operations has failed to establish what Rupert Smith calls a 'condition in which the political objective can be achieved by other means and in other ways'.[708]

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[703] Ibid.
[704] Anthony H. Cordesman, 'The British Defeat in the South and the Uncertain Bush "Strategy" in Iraq: "Oil Spots", "Ink Blots", "White Space", or Pointlessness?', *SCIS Report*, 21 February 2007.
[705] Patrick Devenny & Robert McLean, 'The Battle for Basra', *The American Spectator*, 1 November 2005, accessed 04/09/06, http://www.spectator.org/dsp_article.asp?art_id=8953
[706] Abdul-Ahad, '"Welcome to Tehran"'.
[707] Terri Judd, 'Serving British soldier exposes horror of war in "crazy" Basra', *The Independent*, 27 April 2007, accessed 13/05/07,
http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article2488848.ece
[708] Smith, *Utility of Force*, p. 270.

Conclusion

The British ability to adjust from war to peacekeeping is a familiar phenomenon, witnessed in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. Few commentators were therefore surprised by the professionalism and flexibility displayed by the British in Iraq. However, during the initial invasion phase the British also showed that it is possible to wage war with the more far-reaching political aims of democratization and post-conflict reconstruction in mind. The siege and fall of Basra showed well-developed political understanding of the British armed forces and restraint in the use of force even in open battle. The patience and respect for civilian lives and property during the battle for Basra serve as an example of what Lawrence Freedman calls 'liberal warfare'.[709]

In important ways, the British have adhered to their way of war and the principles of complex irregular warfare. Tactically, British forces conducted hearts and minds operations involving the minimum use of force, good political understanding, and force protection through foot patrolling and interaction with the local community. The British troops, moreover, displayed an ability to be tactically flexible. Not only did they have the capability to adjust from the invasion phase to the post-conflict reconstruction tasks, they also displayed the same flexibility when being exposed to different levels of threat like during the Black Watch operations south of Baghdad in support of the US operations in Fallujah. Several instances in which escalation would seem normal were, in fact, deescalated by the British.

At the same time, a number of principles of complex irregular warfare were violated. Most importantly, the British failed to draw upon the complete set of national instruments of power. At the strategic level the interagency committee system was not utilized to its full potential, creating strategic-level planning of the operations in Iraq that were of low quality as it seriously underestimated the post-conflict phase of the campaign and consequently did not produce an effective phase IV plan. This can partly be explained by the fact that the British were the junior partner in the coalition, and therefore not solely responsible for strategy and operational planning in Iraq. However, as the analysis above has shown, the British did have leverage in the operational planning and also chose to accept the Pentagon plans. At the tactical level, the principles of civil-military co-ordination and co-operation, as well as unity of

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[709] Freedman, *The Transformation of Strategic Affairs*

command and effort, were also violated. The co-operation between different agencies involved in the British operations was substantially more limited than expected from the British approach.

As discussed above, the consequences of the hands-off approach of the British forces are contested by academics and US practitioners alike. While substantial results have been achieved in terms of security sector reform and handover of responsibilities to Iraqi authorities, the British have failed to provide security for the Iraqi population as well as for civilian organizations that have not been able to operate in the south of Iraq. The small number of troops is a significant factor as the British from 2004 have operated with about 8,000 troops in a vast area of operations. In an imperial policing fashion, the British seem to have found what they feel is an acceptable level of violence without wasting too many resources and without creating too much of an imprint on Iraqi society. The result is that the British approach in Iraq has failed to establish a condition from which to achieve the political aims of the operations by political and diplomatic means.

The two cases have, to a large extent, supported the hypothesis of this thesis. However, two significant questions in terms of the theoretical framework of this thesis have surfaced. First, why have the American armed forces, at least seemingly, started adjusting to complex irregular warfare, despite only minor changes in the civil-military interface? Second, why did the British not adhere to their way of war in the context of Iraq? The general findings of the two cases – compared and contrasted in relation to the hypothesis – as well as these important contradictions are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 9

EVALUATING THE HYPOTHESIS: THE CASES COMPARED AND CONTRASTED

The case studies of US and UK patterns of civil-military relations, their ways of war, and their operations in Iraq have until this point been considered separately in order to trace the causal processes of each case. In this chapter, the more important findings from the case studies are used to evaluate the theoretical framework as well as to assess and further expand on the hypothesis constructed from the theoretical framework. This is achieved by comparing and contrasting the observations and conclusions of the cases with reference to the theoretical framework of the thesis. The discussion in this chapter also provides an opportunity to examine and discuss the sometimes contradictory observations of the case studies.

A Recapitulation of the Theoretical Framework and the Hypothesis

The theoretical framework for analysis, created in Chapter Two by a critical review of the existing literature, argued that different patterns of civil-military relations affect the conduct of operations in two important ways: *directly*, as the level in the chain of command where strategic aims are created and translated into operational plans and activities, thereby affecting the planning and implementation of operations, and; *indirectly*, by being the arena in which funding, doctrine and direction for the military organization is decided, thereby determining the structure and culture of the armed forces. The direct causality of certain patterns of civil-military relations was partly derived from lessons learned and best practice in complex irregular warfare. Lessons from past operations stress the importance of comprehensive civil-military approaches, involving integration and joint planning at the strategic and operational levels and co-operation and co-ordination at the tactical level, to achieve unity of command and effort. The direct causality was also derived from mission command

theory and the discussion on organizational culture and trust. Effective command and control in complex operations requires certain levels of trust in order to use mission type orders. At all levels of command, the structural set-up should, therefore, strive towards increased trust and mutual understanding across departmental and agency boundaries. The indirect causality is essentially about having civil-military structures that produce armed forces fit for purpose – size, training, doctrine, equipment and culture that are useful for whatever purpose the political leadership intends to use them, or what we call the functional imperative of the armed forces. Perhaps the most important mechanism of the indirect causality is the definition of the functional imperative, and the adjustment of the armed forces to those tasks. In other words, how, and by whom, is the functional imperative defined, and to what extent are the armed forces adjusted to it?

Chapter Two also provided a hypothesis of how different patterns of civil-military relations influence operational effectiveness – a hypothesis derived from this theoretical framework. It stated that the complex nature of contemporary peace support operations means that integrated civil-military approaches are necessary for effectiveness in achieving the often far-reaching political aims of democratization and economic development. Such integrated, or comprehensive, approaches to operations also require integrated institutions at the national strategic level, and at the international organizational level in cases of multinational operations within different organizational frameworks. Two main reasons were highlighted as explanation of why integrated civil-military structures at the strategic level provide better results in complex PSOs:

1. The indirect impact means that integrated structures provide more accurate and up-to-date interpretations and adjustment to the functional imperative of the armed forces. This means that the instruments of national power, not least the military, are better suited for the contemporary strategic context.

2. The direct impact of integrated structures is that they provide more inclusive command and control structures at the strategic level, which means that all relevant actors in complex operations are co-ordinated through integrated planning and execution of operations – providing what the British call the comprehensive approach.

The starting point for the evaluation and discussion of the theoretical framework and the hypothesis is the independent variables of the two cases – the patterns of civil-military relations in the US and the UK.

Civil-Military Relations in the US and UK

The analyses in Chapters Three and Five made it clear that British and US civil-military relations are poles apart. At the surface the differences are not entirely obvious. The British centralized system of government displays an intricate web of committees that ensures at least some level of formal interagency co-operation and involvement of all relevant government ministries in security-related policy-making. The US government structure also involves a system of interagency working groups and committees, albeit less extensive and at higher levels of the government hierarchy. Where the British system has the Cabinet committees for high-level policy-making, the US system has the National Security Council with its staff. However, a closer look at the two systems, especially of the cultural aspects, reveals greater differences in terms of civil-military relations.

The British parliamentary political system has – at least in relative terms – a tradition of cross-government co-operation. The work of interagency committees is considered an important tool for successful and comprehensive consideration of issues, especially related to security. Historically, the pragmatic lessons of imperial management developed strong links between the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence, as all operations were conducted in close co-operation between the different agencies and ministries involved. At its best the British committee system ensures that expertise is drawn from all relevant ministries and agencies when planning and executing complex irregular warfare. However, as noted in the analysis of the British case, the integration and co-operation across Whitehall are limited by departmental turf wars. Moreover, Prime Minister Tony Blair's presidential style of leadership had centralized governmental decision-making and further limited the status and importance of interagency co-operation in committees. A problem with the committee system of interagency co-operation is that it takes time and that it is often too slow for the effective implementation of contemporary military operations that require quick decision- making by the political leadership. In the UK, there are calls, therefore, for stronger formal structures at the interagency level.

In the US case, the interagency system is caught in the political system of checks and balances, in which distrust and competition are considered virtues and upholders of democracy. Regardless of the democratic virtues of checks and balances, the system has reduced the importance of the work done in interagency committees. While the interagency structures are rather well-established, the executive authority and status of these committees and working groups are minimal. An example is the National Security Council that, despite its inclusion of all the major players involved in national security matters, has virtually no mandate beyond an advisory function. The meetings of interagency working groups are moreover described as information sharing procedures, during which the different representatives describe their own views on different issues. Negotiations, discussions, modifications of positions or mutual decisions rarely take place.

The cultural differences are important because of the consequences thereof. Apart from the more obvious interagency co-operation and co-ordination a positive consequence of the British integrated system is that it creates trust at the institutional as well as the interpersonal level. By working together with colleagues from other agencies and departments, British civil servants develop mutual trust and understanding across Whitehall. Successful co-operation also means that they develop a sense of trust in, and respect for, the system or the institutions for which they are working. The British system of collective cabinet responsibility is unmatched in the US presidential system. In the US system the most important decisions can be made by the President without, and even against, the advice of the cabinet. Furthermore, the absence of a tradition of interagency co-operation in the US case means that issues are, to a larger extent than in the British case, dealt with by single departments, resulting in stovepipes. At best other relevant departments and agencies are informed of decisions and plans. The process of post-conflict planning for Iraq is an obvious case in point, in which the DoD was given the responsibility for planning and thereafter failed to include the expertise and resources from other relevant departments and agencies.

By comparing the defence ministries in the two cases, the structural and cultural differences become greater. While the British MoD includes a well-developed integration of military and civilian staff at all levels, the US DoD is divided into a military and a civilian side of the Pentagon. However, it should be noted that the US DoD also involves a more limited integration of its civilian and military staffs, even at

the heart of the Joint Staff. Nevertheless, while the British emphasize civil-military interaction and integration at all levels of the ministerial hierarchy, the divide between the civilian and military sides of the US DoD creates more limited areas of meaningful interaction. In the central areas of the British Ministry of Defence there is widespread civil-military mixed management of the different divisions. An example is that where the head is a military officer, the deputy is often civilian and vice versa.[710] As noted in Chapter Three, the level where meaningful civil-military interaction and co-ordination in the US case take place is at the very top levels – often at the level of the Secretary of Defense, who receives separate policy and military advice from the two sides of the department.

The MoD's functions are carried out as one organization as opposed to the Pentagon which includes a sharp divide between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the staff of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The limits on serious civil-military interaction at the highest levels of the department create few 'buffer zones' in which differences of opinion can be sorted out and reconciled at lower levels. It also creates an exaggerated reliance on the individuals at the top levels. Moreover, at the higher levels of the DoD, there are very few career civil servants who, with extensive knowledge of both military and political matters, can function as a buffer and mediator in the civil-military interface. A possible benefit of the US system is that it provides the political leadership with both purely military and political advice, while the British system always provides military advice with the political aspects already included and vice versa. This could, according to the divided approach to civil-military relations, lead to the politicization of the armed forces and a loss of professionalism. However, the value of military advice without consideration of the political aspect can be questioned in a context of politically sensitive operations. The integrated approach to civil-military relations instead emphasizes the ability to understand both political and military aspects of security affairs as an important part of military professionalism.

Culturally, the British Ministry of Defence's system of integration of civil servants, officers, and political appointees creates a higher level of mutual trust, respect and understanding than within the more limited co-operative culture of the interagency arena, and that stands out in stark contrast to its US counterpart. Civil-

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[710] Hopkinson, *British Defence Policy*, p. 33; confirmed in interviews with Ben Palmer and Brig. Simon Mayall.

military integration in the British case ensures that both military and political expertise is heard, and more importantly, that the civilian and military advice is adapted and compromised when issues reach the top levels of the ministry. Pure military and political advice, as emphasized in the US, is not considered as important in the UK. Great care is taken to include the political aspects of military planning and operations at the Permanent Joint Headquarters as well. This is meant to provide for civil-military co-operation and co-ordination in the planning and execution of complex operations as well as the inclusion of all actors or instruments of power available to the state. However, as noted, this was not achieved in the case of Iraq.

Another factor worth highlighting in the British case is the importance of professional civil servants who provide extensive expertise, institutional memory and continuity across administrations as well as seasoned perspectives on policies and programmes. As such, the corps of professional civil servants has the potential not only to provide a broader civil-military perspective and act as a buffer between the political and military leaderships. They can also maintain the personal relationships and trust across agencies and departments that are essential for inter-office interaction as well as for interagency co-operation. Several US commentators therefore argue that it is time to start reversing the trend that increases the number of political appointees in order to increase the effectiveness and to retain the best and the brightest within the organization.[711]

In sum, the US case is extreme in its adaptation of the divided approach, which is not surprising as the US case is what Huntington sought to describe and explain in his seminal work. The British case, instead, provides an example of integrated Janowitzean type civil-military relations, although not quite as clear cut as the US case. By contrasting the two cases it also becomes clear that where the US system stresses civil-military division and the importance of pure policy advice and pure professional military advice to the top-level policy-makers, the British system emphasizes integration and reconciliation between policy matters and military matters at all levels for joint civil-military advice to the leadership. The British do not separate policy from military matters, neither conceptually nor practically.

According to the hypothesis of this thesis, the contrasting cases of civil-military relations should cause conflicting outcomes in the conduct of operations in complex

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[711] Email correspondence with Adam Grissom, RAND Corporation, 2 March 2005; and Interview with Colonel Guy White; and see Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 57.

irregular warfare. The following section, therefore, examines the direct and indirect impacts that the different patterns of civil-military relations in the two cases have on operational effectiveness.

The Indirect Effect of Civil-Military Relations

The different patterns of civil-military relations indirectly affect the conduct and effectiveness of operations by determining the structure, doctrine, equipment, and culture of the armed forces. These factors have, in this thesis, been brought together and described as the US and British ways of war and their approaches to complex irregular warfare.

The US and British Ways of War

The British way of war, as described in Chapter Four, has developed as a combination of pragmatic lessons from imperial policing and counter-insurgency operations on the one hand, and the civil-military conditions of low-cost civilian monitoring of the armed forces during the period of military professionalisation on the other. The British military professionalised as a political tool in the colonies, making them highly sensitive to the wills of the political leadership. The functional imperative to which the armed forces had to adjust its structure and culture was defined by the political leadership as a result of the strategic context.

The UK has, therefore, developed a strategic culture with preference for small wars, involving the armed forces in a supporting role to achieve political aims. Political primacy has been a key pattern in British civil-military relations. Flexibility and adaptability were other necessary features of the British approach in order to effectively adjust to the multitude of different tasks involved in policing the Empire as well as to perform effectively within very different contexts and cultures. Another aspect of the British approach to complex irregular warfare derived from pragmatic lessons of colonial policing is close co-operation between the civilian and military leaderships. By producing soldiers and officers with flexible and adaptable mindsets, and by nurturing sound civil-military relations, the British armed forces have a well-established capability of quickly adjusting to different levels of conflict. The British military also learned the importance of restraint in its application of force and has wholeheartedly accepted the hearts and minds philosophy involving the minimum use

of force. The emphasis on flexibility has further meant that, until recently, doctrine has not been of great importance.

The structure of the British armed forces supports the culture by being built around the regimental system, which produces trust and decentralized command in operations. The British military stresses the importance of small unit operations and conducts its operations with the battalion as the most important building block. This suits complex irregular warfare well by allowing for mission command and trust in the lower levels of the command chain, where the important decisions are made on a daily basis. Regarding the contents of doctrine, the findings are, however, slightly ambiguous. An emphasis on warrior values and the core function of fighting wars are underscored to an extent that does not quite reflect the British way of war. However, as Brigadier Simon Mayall argues, while the British train for war, they mentally prepare for small wars and counter-insurgency.[712] In other words, while the foundation of British training and doctrine is traditional warfare, the fine-tuning is for complex irregular warfare, invoking the strategic and cultural culture of the armed forces in general, and the regiments in particular. Flexibility, hearts and minds approaches and cultural understanding are not the contents of basic training or doctrine, but are instead invoked by the history and traditions of the organization. Significantly, the British armed forces are also considered one of few military organizations capable of performing both types of tasks to a high standard.[713]

These features of the British way of war have been maintained and refined to this day through the operations in Northern Ireland as well as the peace operations of the 1990s. With reference to the theoretical framework of this thesis, the British structure and culture of civil-military relations have via the functional imperative had an indirect impact on the conduct and effectiveness of the British military by providing for a military and interagency structure and culture emphasizing complex irregular warfare. In relation to the principles of best practice in complex irregular

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[712] Interview with Brig. Mayall.

[713] The US armed forces provide the obvious example of a superior conventional warfighting force that displays problems in operations short of war. At the same time, the Scandinavian armed forces, employing volunteer reserve soldiers, are generally acknowledged as highly competent peacekeepers, with a sense of legal and political understanding, coupled with compassion for, and cultural understanding of, the local communities. The fighting power of these forces is, on the other hand, seriously questioned. On Swedish peacekeepers see Lennart Andersson, *Militärt ledarskap – när det gäller: Svenskt militärt ledarskap med fredsfrämjande insatser i fokus* [Military leadership 'when the stakes are high': Swedish military leadership focusing on peacekeeping operations], unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Stockholm, Sweden (2001).

warfare, as discussed in Chapter 1, the British patterns of civil-military relations thereby produce a strategic culture that should be more effective in such operations. The British armed forces are conceptually and morally 'fit for purpose'. However, a negative aspect is that the strong civilian control of the armed forces has failed to secure enough funding to maintain armed forces with the size and equipment necessary to fulfil their roles in national and international security. The British, therefore, have limited capability in the physical sense, and have come to rely on the US as an ally in the defence of the nation as well as in the projection of British interests internationally. The peace support operations in Bosnia and Kosovo are obvious examples in which the British and the rest of the European armed forces proved incapable of addressing the problems without the help of their American ally.

In contrast with British military professionalisation under close political scrutiny, US military professionalism was developed in complete isolation from the political leadership. Moreover, the Huntingtonian divide between political and military leaders as well as the cost of political monitoring and control of the armed forces have led the US military to define its functional imperative without interference from the political leadership. Based on a misreading of classical Prussian texts the US military has therefore come to focus on large wars of annihilation, fought quickly, and at minimum cost, employing high technology, maximal firepower and overwhelming force. The US approach to all types of military operations begins with an anti-Clausewitzian conceptual division between war and peace, and the separation of political aims and military implementation. The US military strives to be apolitical in peace as well as in war and has therefore a poorly developed understanding of how to translate military victories into desired political aims as well as to adjust military activity in relation to different political aims.

The US military is structured to suit the American way of war, using the division as the most important building block for operations as well as training. The strategic culture for conventional warfare largely applies to US involvement in complex irregular warfare as well. The limited, or complex, political aims of such operations as well as the fact that the US military do not see such operations as part of their functional imperative mean that a low tolerance for casualties is added to the list as an American way of peacekeeping. US doctrine largely reflects the cultural bias of the organization and emphasizes the warrior ethos for fighting conventional wars. However, it also contains many of the best practices discussed in Chapter One of this

thesis. US army doctrine on stability and support operations as well as the recently published doctrines on counter-insurgency operations are well up to date with the principles of complex irregular warfare. As argued in the chapter on the US way of war, this diversity is a result of an ongoing debate regarding the functional imperative of the armed forces. While operations other than war are clearly gaining in importance within the doctrinal studies and publication, they have not had an impact on US military culture or the American way of war. Thus US operations in the context of complex irregular warfare still reflect the American way of war and the traditional principles of conventional warfare. This was also confirmed within the scope of the study of US operations in Iraq.[714] The cultural preferences of the US military take precedent over the choice of doctrine when it comes to the planning and implementation of operations – regardless of the actual nature of the conflict.

We can explain this outcome by noting that there are at least two different cultural narratives within the US military – a dominant and a subordinate. The narrative of conventional warfare and the traditional American way of war has a deeper cultural foundation than the more recent and secondary tasks of complex irregular warfare, counter-insurgency and post-conflict type operations. In the language of the multi-layered model of culture, the emphasis of the outer layer of artefacts and products, in this case the language and content of doctrine, is easier to change than the deeper cultural layers of norms and values, as well as the basic assumptions of the organization. As long as the basic assumptions and the norms and values of the organization are focused on traditional understandings of warfare, it will remain the dominant cultural narrative. As noted in Iraq, the subordinate cultural narrative of complex irregular warfare, as articulated in recent doctrines and tactical adjustments, is therefore likely to have little effect on behaviour.

The patterns of US civil-military relations influence the conduct of operations indirectly by promoting a strategic and organizational military culture that narrowly defines the functional imperative as that of conventional warfighting. As noted in the theoretical section of this thesis, Carnes Lord argues that, left to themselves, bureaucracies tend to pursue goals that reinforce their organizational essence, and that bureaucracies also tend to value autonomy even more than expanding tasks into other

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[714] US operations in Vietnam and Somalia are also indicative of this. See Mockaitis, 'From Counter-Insurgency', p. 52.

areas.[715] Thus, allowing the armed forces to define their own functional imperative, risks having armed forces not fit for purpose in relation to the political leadership's wishes and needs. One should, therefore, not be surprised by the fact that the US military has come to underscore its cultural essence of conventional warfare to the extent it has. However, the failure to apply the principles of complex irregular warfare, in contexts where they are needed, limits the effectiveness of the US armed forces in such operations. With a political leadership that utilized the US military pre-emptively on an expeditionary basis in order to provide stability and democratization, the US military is clearly not fit for purpose. It is, however, equally clear that the US patterns of civil-military relations provide excellent forces for conventional large-scale warfare.

In conclusion, the UK and the US cases confirm a causal link between the patterns of civil-military relations and strategic culture. The causal mechanisms identified between the two variables are the cost of monitoring and controlling the armed forces as well as the related mechanism of who decides the nature of the functional imperative. The following section compares the findings of the studies of US and UK operations in Iraq in order to complete the indirect causal chain between certain patterns of civil-military relations and the conduct and effectiveness of operations in complex irregular warfare.

The Dependent Variable: The Conduct and Effectiveness of Operations in Iraq

The nature of civil-military relations affects the tactical behaviour in Iraq, both directly and indirectly. Mission interpretation, strategic planning, rules of engagement and direct orders are examples of direct influence from the civil-military interface. However, the conduct of operations of US and British troops is more a result of tradition, culture and training – indirectly influenced by the nature of civil-military relations as described above.

The British forces in Iraq effectively adjusted their tactical behaviour to the context of complex irregular warfare, as that is the cultural preference of the British military. With speed and relative ease the British troops transitioned from the invasion phase mode of operations into a post-conflict mode. On a positive note, the hearts and minds approach, minimum use of force, and the firm, but friendly, foot patrolling in Basra contributed to an early level of trust among the local population. Moreover,

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[715] Lord, *The Presidency and the Management of National Security,* pp. 17–18.

during the combat phase as well as during the more violent episodes of the post-conflict phase, the British armed forces also successfully applied tactics with the larger political aims in mind, employed the hearts and minds approach of minimum use of force, and, thereby, minimized unnecessary casualties and damage to civilian property.

However, a number of negative aspects also emerged in the analysis. At the tactical level the principles of civil-military co-operation and unity of effort were violated. A surprisingly low level of cultural understanding was also displayed early in the campaign. The British military also focused on security sector reform during the post-conflict phase and therefore neglected the traditional civilian aspects of governance and economic reconstruction. By disregarding these aspects of post-conflict operations, the British failed to produce notable improvements in the daily lives of ordinary Iraqis. Thus, the British occupation never gained legitimacy, and the hearts and minds of the local population were never won. The analysis showed that there was no joint civil-military planning to address these issues, resulting in a rift between the different agencies involved. At the strategic level, the British interagency system was weakened by the presidential-style leadership of Prime Minister Blair, and by the need for secrecy in the planning process, which led to a smaller circle of involved people and committees than normally. This was a factor in the serious underestimation of the security situation in post-war Iraq, and the corresponding limits of post-conflict planning and operations.

A report by Human Rights Watch noted that the level of post-conflict policing in Basra was not extensive enough, and that the early consent for British operations, gained by professional tactical behaviour, was quickly lost.[716] The impact of British troops was too limited to create adequate security for the local population, or for civilian organizations that should have been involved in the rebuilding of the political and economic functions of Iraq. Neither the operational effects of security and stability nor the political aims of democratization and economic reconstruction have, therefore, been achieved four years into the campaign.

In sum, the British misinterpreted the requirements of the campaign in Iraq and initially focused most energy and resources on a conventional operation, despite the normal conceptualization of war and peace as a gradual scale in different shades of

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[716] Human Rights Watch, *Basra,* p. 8.

grey, and the cultural preference for small wars and counter-insurgency. After the invasion phase, the British military nevertheless quickly reinterpreted and readjusted its operations and alleviated the problems in cultural understanding. However, the initial misinterpretation of the campaign in Iraq may be a reason why the British violated their principle of close civil-military co-operation at the national strategic level as well as in the field.

There was also a missing link between the tactical operation on the ground and the operational and strategic effects that were sought to be achieved. The quick troop reduction from 46,000 during major combat operations to 8,600 at the end of May 2004 exacerbated this problem. The troop reductions, in the face of a deteriorating security situation, have highlighted a limited interest in, or understanding of, the political aims of the operation as well as the limited physical capabilities of the British armed forces. There are simply not enough troops to maintain rotations of more than 40,000 soldiers over a longer period of time – the time that the achievement of the political aims in Iraq would involve. The British patterns of civil-military relations, involving low-cost civilian monitoring and control of the armed forces, have, therefore, failed in this regard. Without the proper resources to achieve the strategic aims, it does not matter how well-adjusted the tactical behaviour is.

In the US military, the strategic context of complex irregular warfare has been treated as an irritating deviation from the kind of wars that it thinks it should be fighting. The US military has therefore found it difficult to adjust its tactics to post-conflict operations after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. The US troops were neither mentally prepared nor trained for complex irregular warfare. Instead, the US military resorted to a mixture of conventional warfare tactics based on firepower and technology, and the ineffective peacekeeping tactics, with emphasis on force protection, displayed several times during the 1990s. In short, the US patterns of civil-military relations have, in the context of Iraq, failed to provide armed forces with the appropriate structure, culture and doctrine for effective conduct of operations. Most of the principles of counter-insurgency and complex irregular warfare have been violated by the US troops in Iraq. Arguably, the most serious flaw was interpreting the campaign in conventional terms, thereby failing to prepare for the complex reality on the ground. The dualistic conceptualization of war and peace and the cultural preferences for conventional warfare meant that the most challenging tasks in Iraq –

the stabilization, occupation and reconstruction of the country – were lost in the planning of the operations.

While a number of positive exceptions in US conduct of operations can be found as well as the seemingly profound adaptations made in 2006 and 2007, the general verdict is that the US forces not only lack cultural sensitivity and understanding, but also have little appreciation of how the political aims of the operation must be reflected in their behaviour on the ground. Lack of cultural awareness, in combination with the US approach to maximize the use of force, often served to alienate much of the local population and therefore undermined the coalition's goals. While this is most obvious in the well-exposed incidences of criminal behaviour, such as the abuse in Iraqi prisons, the bigger concern is the heavy-handed and less known routine work of US forces, condoned by the chain of command.[717] The failure to achieve the political aims of the campaign, the number of dead soldiers and civilians (on both sides) as well as recent changes in training and doctrine in order to overcome the worst problems in Iraq are testament to the fact that the US conduct of operations, as prescribed by US strategic culture, has not been effective. It is worth stressing that the US cultural problem in relation to complex irregular warfare is not confined to the military. The entire political system and security apparatus share the problem of analysing conflicts in traditional interstate terms of war and peace, defeat and victory as well as friends and enemies.

In conclusion, the patterns of civil-military relations, via different functional imperatives, and the American and British ways of war as intervening variables have had a significant impact on the two countries' conduct and effectiveness of operations in Iraq. The British have conducted their operation more in line with what is considered best practice in complex irregular warfare. British forces have adhered to the principle of hearts and minds operations, involving minimum use of force, firm, but friendly, foot patrolling, and interaction with the local population. At the same time, the British violated the principles of civil-military co-operation as well as unity of effort and command. The US troops have used heavy-handed conventional tactics with emphasis on firepower and technology. Both countries misinterpreted the type of conflict they were getting involved in, and prepared for more or less conventional warfare, giving little thought to the post-conflict phase. While the British troops were

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[717] Varhola, 'American Challenges in Postwar Iraq'.

quickly able to adjust tactics to the demands of post-conflict operations, it took the US military and administration a long time before they even acknowledged the insurgency.

In relation to the theoretical framework of this thesis, the indirect impact of civil-military relations on the conduct and effectiveness of operations is thereby supported by the case studies. However, with respect to the hypothesis, arguing that integration should lead to effectiveness, some aspects of the British failure in Iraq as well as the positive adjustments of US behaviour in Iraq must be explained. This is done in the following section of this chapter.

It should also be noted that the indirect effect is the more intangible of the two causal chains between the independent variables of civil-military relations and the dependent variable of certain conduct and effectiveness of operations. The amount of variables involved in determining the structure, training and culture of the armed forces – what this thesis grouped together under the concept of strategic culture – is numerous and the civil-military dimension is but one, albeit important, factor. However, the case studies have traced the causal processes and found a number of important causal mechanisms between the patterns of civil-military relations and the intervening variable of strategic culture. The most significant is the nature and strength of civilian monitoring and control of the armed forces, which determines who decides the functional imperative of the armed forces. The interpretation of and adjustment to the functional imperative is thereafter an important factor in determining a country's way of war.

The Direct Effect of Civil-Military Relations

As argued above, the hypothesis of this thesis created a direct causal effect of certain patterns of civil-military relations on operational conduct and effectiveness, which was derived from lessons learned and principles of best practice in complex irregular warfare as well as from command and control theory. Two related strands of direct civil-military impact on the conduct of operations are evident from the findings of the two case studies. First, the patterns of civil-military relations will have an impact on the conduct of operations by providing the structure and culture of the arena in which strategic aims are set, conflicts are analysed, and operational planning made. Second, the civil-military interface is an important section of the command chain during

operations, and must therefore function as frictionless as the rest of the chain of command in order to provide timely and accurate decisions. The sections below elaborate further on these arguments.

The Civil-Military Interface as an Arena for Strategic and Operational Planning

It is worth repeating that the civil-military interface is the arena in which conflicts are analysed, strategies made and operational assessments and plans approved. In short, the civil-military interface is where the objectives, strategies, size, content and equipment of the forces sent to the theatre of operations are decided. The patterns of civil-military relations – cultural and structural – therefore have an important impact on the conduct and effectiveness of operations. The section on best practices in complex irregular warfare emphasized the need for comprehensive approaches that included all aspects of national power, essentially requiring close civil-military co-operation and co-ordination in the planning process. This is, in other words, the first causal mechanism of the direct causal relationship between patterns of civil-military relations and the conduct of operations.

British civil-military relations, involving relatively well-established interagency structures and civil-military integration, should, according to the hypothesis of this thesis, create comprehensive strategies involving all aspects of national power. However, in the case of Iraq, British interagency structures proved to be weaker than expected. The presidential style of Prime Minister Blair as well as the need for secrecy in the planning process led the British Government to partially abandon the committee system for a more intimate group involved in the policy-making. The traditional British way of war at the strategic level was thereby abandoned. An official commission blamed this un-British way of conducting business for the misinterpretation of intelligence data and policy-making in the run-up to the war.[718]

The British Government and armed forces were the junior partners in the campaign and had limited possibilities to influence the planning of post-conflict operations. However, the British shared many of the flawed planning assumptions regarding post-Saddam Iraq. The British Government has, moreover, continually argued that it did influence the Americans on several points and that it certainly took part in the campaign planning. The British Chief of the Defence Staff has also made it clear that he would have raised his voice if he had not believed in the strategy in

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[718] *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction.*

Iraq.[719] However, the British expressed concerns regarding the post-conflict planning process as early as the summer of 2002. The British also planned the post-conflict phase further than the Pentagon and made some post-conflict goals public on the eve of battle. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the British would have placed more emphasis on the post-conflict phase, had they been the lead nation in this campaign. In the end, additional British post-conflict planning was of little use as the total British contribution to the campaign was so limited, as was the British area of responsibility. Further consequences of the failure to utilize the interagency system to its full potential are discussed below in the section on the civil-military interface in the chain of command.

In the US case, the patterns of civil-military relations involve weak interagency structures and a civil-military divide within the Department of Defense. The failure to provide a comprehensive approach to the campaign in Iraq is therefore less surprising than in the British case. Planning of post-conflict operations was based on a number of false assumptions about the level of consent from the Iraqi population and the level of violence in the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's regime. The complexity and difficulty of the post-conflict phase were thereby underestimated and the planning was inadequate. During the post-conflict planning process, there were, however, plenty of voices who raised appropriate concerns regarding the assumptions and planning of the post-conflict phase, but these voices were effectively left outside the planning process. The limited amount of input in operational planning, due to poor civil-military integration within the Pentagon, and poor interagency structures meant that a small number of military planners, with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's blessing, were allowed to interpret and plan Operation Iraqi Freedom in strictly traditional military terms, essentially leaving the post-conflict phase aside. Nora Bensahel accurately argues that 'the fundamental problem was not the content of these particular assumptions, but the fact that a *single* set of assumptions drove US government planning efforts, and no contingency plans were developed in case that one scenario did not occur'.[720] Not only was the result that the coalition had too few troops in Iraq to secure the country after the fall of the old regime, the American troops that were there were given little guidance or direction, and were, as the previous section noted, neither trained nor prepared for counter-insurgency type operations.

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[719] Walker, 'The Heart of Defence', p. 25.
[720] Bensahel, 'Mission not Accomplished', p. 458.

Bensahel also argues that the Presidential Directive that assigned responsibility for post-conflict operations to the Department of Defense was a key mistake. 'DoD had neither the personnel nor the expertise necessary to lead civilian reconstruction programs on its own'.[721] General Anthony Zinni forcefully expressed the same view in the congressional hearings before the war:

> The military can't be stuck with this problem [post-conflict planning and operations]. We don't do economics and we don't do political business very well. We'll do the security piece and we hope we can train and pass that off eventually, but it's going to be tough. These efforts must be planned for and the structures and resources established before the military action begins.[722]

While the US Government contains substantial expertise on post-conflict operations, it showed in Iraq that it lacks an effective mechanism for combining that expertise into a comprehensive and coherent approach. The decision to put the DoD and the Office of the Secretary of Defense in charge of post-conflict operations was in accordance with the US political culture which tends to divide and assign issues into the departmental stovepipes. The decision was also made in order to create unity of command. However, the result was the opposite, with all other departments and agencies effectively shut out of the planning process. The decision, therefore, meant that the military strategic culture of conventional warfare was allowed to taint the entire planning process. The lack of experience in post-conflict operations within the DoD meant that it never occurred to the military planners that the post-conflict phase might be the only real test of US capability in Iraq. The lack of experience, the competitive political culture, the weak interagency structures, and the distrust between the Departments of State and Defense meant that the expertise that other departments and agencies could provide was effectively excluded from the planning process, and no interagency planning group with appropriate authority was created in order to ensure the inclusion of all relevant strands of information and expertise.

As discussed in the theory chapters, the lack of civil-military co-operation at the strategic level is often further exacerbated in the field of operations. In the US case, the failure to co-locate the military and civilian headquarters in Iraq reveals the limited culture of civil-military co-operation at the operational and tactical levels. This was

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[721] Ibid., p. 470.
[722] Zinni, 'The Future of Iraq'.

done despite the fact that such co-location had recently been successfully tested in the context of Afghanistan.[723] There was, in other words, a violation of the principle of unity of command. This caused unclear chains of command between the civilian and military aspects of the operation. Co-operation difficulties in between the civilian and military agencies in Iraq also led to insufficient unity of effort between these actors. Thus, in the US case, the divided patterns of civil-military relations have created a stovepiped and sequenced planning and execution of operations – completely contrary to the comprehensive approach required for complex irregular warfare.

In both cases, the civil-military interface failed in its role as the arena for strategic and operational planning. Limited interagency integration and civil-military co-ordination led to poor decisions and incomprehensive plans.

The Civil-Military Interface as an Important Part of the Chain of Command

The literature on command and control has emphasized the continued, even increased, relevance of mission command in the context of complex irregular warfare. However, for effective implementation of mission command there has to be a high level of trust and mutual understanding along the entire chain of command, not least in the civil-military interface, where political aims are translated into operational goals and activities in the field. This involves giving appropriate authority to whatever planning structures are in place. Thus, a civil-military interface that lacks the necessary mutual trust and understanding is unlikely to provide an effective headquarters during complex irregular warfare.

The British system combines a centralized political system with a high level of mission type command in the civil-military interface. The interagency committee system and the civil-military integration within the Ministry of Defence create interpersonal trust based on familiarity and reciprocity. Officials from the different departments learn to trust each other and develop a sense of understanding despite possible differences in standpoints and opinions. Finally, interpersonal trust is further enhanced by the fact that British officers and civil servants are traditionally recruited from the same social groups, even the same schools. They may know each other personally, share each other's values, or at least trust the background and schooling of their respective counterparts. The interagency structure of the British system normally provides for the inclusion of all relevant actors and fields of expertise. The political

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[723] Interview with Michael Parmly.

leadership can, therefore, rest assure that all aspects of operational planning are considered within the committee system, thereby minimizing the risk of political micro-management and interference.

However, in the case of Iraq, lack of trust in the interagency committee system led Prime Minister Blair to centralize and reduce the decision-making circle – thereby contributing to the failure to create a comprehensive civil-military approach to operations. The failure to activate the interagency apparatus at the strategic level also had consequences in the field. Civil-military co-ordination and co-operation in the field are difficult to achieve without a comprehensive approach and clear directives from top levels of the chain of command. Without the comprehensive approach and joint directives from the strategic level, operations were, as in the US case, instead controlled in the institutional stovepipes of the individual agencies. Therefore, in the British case, little joint civil-military planning took place in the field, and the different agencies found it difficult to co-operate and co-ordinate their activities. The British way of war, involving civil-military co-operation and unity of effort, was thereby disregarded. The lack of a comprehensive approach and of clear objectives also made it difficult for the British to translate tactical successes into operational and strategic effects. There was no clear overarching aim or strategy to refer to.

As previously noted, the US civil-military interface is based on the American political culture of checks and balances, competition and conflict. This structure is not conducive to the mutual trust and understanding of mission command. Individual character-based trust, formed out of social similarities and shared moral codes, is lacking as civilians and officers generally differ politically and culturally, and are recruited from different social groups. Process-based trust, founded on experiences of reciprocity, fails as the interagency structures and the civil-military integration within the DoD are not extensive enough to create trust based on positive experiences of working together. Moreover, the high number of political appointees within the government departments creates a higher turnaround of people than a professional civil service, thereby missing another possibility of positive personal reciprocity. Institutional trust, flowing from institutional arrangements that create and sustain trustworthy behaviours, is again lacking due to the political system of checks and balances. The institutions of the US system are constructed to promote competition and mutual distrust – they are simply not supposed to create trust.

The civil-military interface therefore functions poorly regarding mission command. While the divided tradition of civil-military relations leads the political leadership to make mission type orders, the system does not include enough trust and understanding to delegate appropriate authority to subordinates. The results can be micro-management and political interference in purely military areas of expertise. The results can also involve military operations with limited understanding of the political aims of operations. In both cases, the outcome is decreased effectiveness of operations. Another aspect of effective command and control is the importance of clear objectives. In complex irregular warfare, these objectives should be the result of comprehensive approaches to the operation, which leads to overarching aims and strategies.

In Iraq, the US planning process was, as already discussed, seriously hampered by the weak interagency system and the divided civil-military relations within the Pentagon. Mistrust between the Departments of Defense and State effectively stovepiped the planning of post-conflict operations, leaving out most expertise outside the Pentagon. Moreover, according to the military leadership, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld micro-managed the planning process, and thereby effectively reduced the number of troops that were considered necessary for the operation.[724] During the campaign, the top levels of the chain of command clearly did not trust the commanders in the field. Interference from the top levels of the Pentagon took place, both regarding the military operations in Fallujah as well as a number of issues regarding the civilian reconstruction handled by the CPA.[725] The US system thereby initially failed to provide adequate plans and directives for the post-conflict phase of operations, and when it did, it was in the form of direct rather than mission type command.

In conclusion, the findings of the two case studies support the hypothesis that the patterns of civil-military relations have a direct impact on the conduct and effectiveness of operations. The main causal mechanism is the level of interagency co-operation and civil-military integration within the defence ministries, creating a level of trust that affects the leadership quality of the civil-military interface – especially the use of mission command. The US system of weak interagency structures and divided civil-military structures within the Defense Department does not produce sufficient

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[724] This process is well-covered by Woodward, *Plan of Attack*.
[725] See Bremer, 'My Year in Iraq'; and Bensahel, 'Mission not Accomplished'.

levels of trust within the civil-military interface, nor down through the chain of command. The results include stovepiped decision-making, incomprehensive plans as well as micro-management by the top levels of command, which were also the results in the context of Iraq. The British structures of close interagency co-operation and integrated civil-military structures create high levels of trust. These normally lead to mission type command within the civil-military interface as well as close civil-military co-operation and unity of effort in the pursuit of the political aims. However, in the case of Iraq, the British administration failed to employ the interagency system and thereby violated a number of principles of complex irregular warfare, making many of the same mistakes as the US administration.

Concluding Questions and Challenges

The observations of the case studies have produced two important questions that, because of their inconsistency with theory, deserve further deliberation. First, why are recent changes taking place in US doctrine and operational conduct, despite a relatively constant pattern of civil-military relations? Second, why have the British failed to operate according to the principles of complex irregular warfare, despite their integrated pattern of civil-military relations and such warfare clearly being a central part of the British way of war? The discussion below seeks to explain these findings within the theoretical framework of this thesis.

Explaining US Improvements

US changes in doctrine and operational conduct are still only small scale and preliminary, and whether major changes will actually take place over the long-term remains to be seen. However, assuming this does indeed happen, an explanation is found in the strategic interaction within the civil-military interface regarding the functional imperative. Recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have highlighted that the military's traditional definition of the functional imperative as well as the continued adaptations of the military to that imperative are increasingly outdated. The US military has had to face a number of upsets in the field. Therefore, a tipping point in the strategic interaction between the civil and military leaderships should be expected when it is beyond doubt that the American way of war is flawed in the

contemporary strategic context and when the organizational status of the armed forces decreases as a result.

With the competence, structure and training of the armed forces seriously questioned by the political leadership, by younger members of the military establishment, and most importantly, by public opinion, the cost of civilian monitoring is likely to decrease and the civilian interpretation of the functional imperative may prevail in the negotiations. At that point serious reconsideration of the American way of war will take place. As noted in the analysis of US doctrine, the increased importance of operations beyond the traditional functional imperative is starting to show within doctrine. As of yet, the contents of doctrines on operations other than war have nevertheless not had an impact on the American way of war, signalling a continued shirking of the military. It should also be noted that, in Vietnam, the same type and scope of failure and the same limited instances of successful adaptation in the field towards the end of the campaign did not produce any cultural or structural changes in the long run.

The US adaptation to complex irregular warfare in Iraq is encouraging, as are the structural changes at the strategic level in Washington, D.C. Another aspect of current changes within the US national security apparatus towards irregular warfare and operations other than war are structural changes in the civil-military interface at the strategic level. Increased interagency structures are sought, but still of limited scale and effect.[726] However, the mutual development of a new definition or construction of the functional imperative and increased interagency co-operation and civil-military integration certainly supports the hypothesis of this thesis.

Explaining British Failure in Iraq

In Iraq, the British not only failed to conceptualize the campaign accurately, they also violated a number of principles of complex irregular warfare and what in this thesis has been described as the British way of war. With relatively well-integrated civil-military structures, and with a strategic culture geared towards counter-insurgency warfare, why did the British fail in Iraq? First, it should be noted that failure in counter-insurgency is not uncommon in the history of the British military. The British

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[726] These changes are discussed in the conclusion, but an example is the creation of the Office of the Co-ordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), and the debate regarding the need for a 'war czar' – a high-powered advisor to the President who oversees and co-ordinates the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

often get it wrong, adapt and muddle through. What has in the past been the British strength is the quick strategic and tactical adaptation to different realities on the ground. However, in Iraq, important aspects of adaptation, most importantly regarding the lack of a comprehensive approach of civil-military co-operation and co-ordination, never took place.

The fact that the British were the junior partner in a coalition is certainly part of the answer to this contradiction. As the junior partner the British were not mainly responsible for strategy and therefore had to subscribe to the US approach. However, an operation that contradicts the very foundation of the British way of war should have raised more debate had it not been supported in the UK. The junior partner theory is therefore not sufficient as an explanation. Instead, the hypothesis of this thesis as well as the empirical findings argue that the failure to integrate the civil-military and interagency structures at the strategic level has consequences throughout the entire chain of command. In the case of Iraq, the presidential-style leadership of Prime Minister Blair as well as the need for secrecy in the run-up to the war led to the circumscription of the interagency committee system. The result was an un-British approach to the planning and execution of operations. The circumscription created weak strategic direction, failed to produce a comprehensive plan, and led to the violation of tactical principles in the field. The section on mission command theory emphasized the importance of mutual trust as well as clear intent. Thus, without clear and comprehensive direction from London, the normal level of institutional trust throughout the interagency chain of command also suffered. In sum, the British integrated form of civil-military relations was violated, changing the independent variable of the causal chain. British interagency structures are simply no longer as integrated as described in Chapter Six, and perhaps the structures described in that chapter are also inadequate in the contemporary context. The high level of structural changes in the interagency arena during the last few years implies that this is the view in Britain. At any rate, the outcome of the changed patterns of civil-military relations in the context of Iraq has been decreased effectiveness in the field of operations.

The failure of the British in Iraq also shows the dangers in over-relying on institutional theory. Despite what can be described as relatively good institutional set-ups for complex irregular warfare, other factors, such as the complex strategic realities in Iraq as well as the sheer lack of British troops in the southern parts of Iraq, meant that the expected outcome was not reached. A number of positive aspects in the

British operations in Iraq, such as the accurate tactical behaviour of British troops, still support the hypothesis of the thesis – integration leads to effectiveness.

Methodological Challenges

To what extent have the case studies of US and British operations in Iraq been effective in testing the hypothesis of this thesis? The case studies as well as the comparative analysis have led to a number of interesting observations and conclusions in the support of the hypothesis. However, what is the explanatory power that can be expected of the choice of methodology in this thesis? The methodology section noted that ideal case comparison requires identification of two cases that are similar in all but one independent variable and that differ in the outcome. This is called 'controlled' comparison and allows the researcher to employ experimental logic in making a causal inference regarding the impact that the variable has on the outcome.[727] As with most case comparisons in the field of social science, the cases of US and British operations in Iraq are far less than ideal. Three specific challenges to the choice of cases were identified in the theory chapter: the different operational contexts of the US and British forces in Iraq; the fact that the British were the junior partner in the coalition as well as the fact that unfinished operations nullified the important variable of outcome in the evaluation of operational effectiveness. These challenges had the potential to weaken the explanatory power of the research design and therefore deserve further deliberation in hindsight of the case studies.

The first challenge is derived from the fact that British and American troops operate within quite different contexts in Iraq. The Shia-dominated British area of responsibility in the south of the country is considered less threatening than the Sunni-dominated areas in the American area of responsibility. Can the different conduct and effectiveness of operations in Iraq be the result of contextual differences rather than the civil-military aspect used in this thesis? It is certainly possible, but a glance at the literature on the performance of US and British troops in past complex irregular warfare supports the argument of this thesis. US troops, whether in the difficult conditions of Vietnam and Somalia, or the more benign contexts of Bosnia and Kosovo, have operated in a similar manner, as that exhibited in Iraq. Equally, the British display of political understanding, minimum use of force and flexibility is a familiar phenomenon from the different contexts of Malaya, Northern Ireland, Kosovo

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[727] George and Bennett, 'Process Tracing'.

and Sierra Leone. The studies of British and US performance in these disparate cases imply that the findings of this study cannot be explained by the different contexts in which the troops were operating. The US and British armed forces most often operate according to their respective ways of war, despite great variation in the contextual variables.[728]

The fact that the British military operated in Iraq as the junior partner in an American-led coalition constitutes the second challenge. It has therefore been difficult to analyse the effectiveness of British strategic thinking in the context of Iraq. An example is the intriguing question as to whether the planning and execution of the post-conflict phase would have been more comprehensive and effective had it been a British-led operation? Although we can never answer that question for sure, the effective and well co-ordinated British operations in Malaya and Sierra Leone would suggest such a possibility. This suggestion is further supported by the fact that the British, despite being the junior partner in the coalition, not only expressed concern about the limitation of US planning of the post-conflict phase, they also went further than the Americans did in the planning of post-conflict operations by creating a list of post-conflict objectives.

Finally, the third challenge is that the outcome of operations is an important variable in the analysis of effectiveness that has not been available in the analyses of US and British operations in Iraq. However, as previously argued, effectiveness – especially in relation to efficiency – is much more than outcome. Rather than focusing on the outcome of operations in Iraq, the conduct of operations has, therefore, been measured against what the literature on complex irregular warfare describes as a number of themes of best practice in terms of effectiveness. This approach has proved effective in that the thematic analyses have provided useful information and increased our understanding of effectiveness in Iraq. The findings have clearly demonstrated that the British conduct of operations, although involving a number of violated principles of complex irregular warfare, has been more effective than the conventional approach applied by the Americans. Looking briefly at the outcome of operations, and notwithstanding the fact that the British have operated within a less hostile context,

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[728] The cases of Vietnam and Malaya are well covered by Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*; and Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change*. Cassidy, *Peacekeeping in the Abyss,* covers US operations in Somalia and the British in Bosnia. An example of the rich literature on Northern Ireland is Colin McInnes, *Hot War, Cold War*. A useful study of British operation 'Palliser' in Sierra Leone is provided by Gwyn Prins, *The Heart of War: On Power, Conflict and Obligation in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2002).

the number of casualties, the early withdrawal of troops, security sector reform and the handover of responsibility to Iraqi authorities also support these findings.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to contribute to a large body of literature that seeks to improve operational conduct and effectiveness of the military and other relevant agencies in complex irregular warfare. More specifically, the thesis has studied the civil-military aspects of effectiveness and how different patterns of civil-military relations affect the operational conduct and effectiveness of states and their armed forces in the most likely and important operations of the contemporary strategic context – complex irregular warfare.

Two main research questions were initially formulated: first, in what ways and to what extent do the patterns of civil-military relations affect operational conduct and effectiveness in complex expeditionary operations? Secondly, how could operational effectiveness be improved by changing the patterns of civil-military relations? To address these questions, the first two chapters constructed a theoretical framework for analysis of the civil-military dimensions of military effectiveness in complex operations as well as a hypothesis of how different patterns of civil-military relations influence effectiveness. Thereafter, two case studies were conducted in order to test and refine the hypothesis. The cases involved studying the patterns of civil-military relations in the US and the UK, their respective ways of war and approaches to complex irregular warfare, and finally, their conduct of operations in Iraq from 2003 until June 2007.

As outlined in the theoretical framework of the thesis, and as confirmed in the theoretical evaluation of the previous chapter, the patterns of civil-military relations affect the conduct and effectiveness of operations in at least two important ways: *directly*, by providing the highest levels in the chain of command – the level where strategic aims are set and operational plans made, and *indirectly* by being the arena in which decisions regarding size, culture, equipment and doctrine of the armed forces

are made. Without well functioning civil-military relations, structurally as well as culturally, effectiveness in complex irregular warfare is unlikely.

The hypothesis derived from the theoretical framework argued that the complex nature of contemporary peace support operations means that integrated civil-military approaches are necessary for effectiveness in achieving the often far-reaching political aims of democratization and economic development. Such integrated, or comprehensive, approaches to operations also require integrated institutions at the national strategic level, and at the international organizational level in cases of multinational operations within different organizational frameworks. There are two main reasons why integrated civil-military structures at the strategic level provide better results in complex irregular warfare.

1. The indirect impact means that integrated structures provide more accurate and up-to-date interpretations and adjustment to the functional imperative of the armed forces. This means that the instruments of national power, not least the military, are better suited to the contemporary strategic context.

2. The direct impact of integrated structures is that they provide more inclusive command and control structures at the strategic level, which means that all relevant actors in complex operations are co-ordinated through integrated planning and execution of operations – providing what the British call the comprehensive approach.

To a large extent, the theoretical framework as well as the hypothesis have been confirmed and strengthened by the case studies in the thesis. However, to conclude we shall return to the hypothesis and more carefully discuss the effectiveness of the two different patterns of civil-military relations discussed in the thesis.

The Effectiveness of the Divided and Integrated Patterns of Civil-Military Relations

The US divided approach to civil-military relations fails to achieve effectiveness in the context of complex irregular warfare. The limited interagency structures and the civil-military divide within the Department of Defense do not produce armed forces 'fit for purpose'. The civil-military divide and high costs of civilian monitoring of the armed forces mean that the US military is still allowed to define its own raison d'être

in fighting and winning the nation's major wars, and is essentially organized, trained and equipped for that purpose. The US military, therefore, has not adapted well to the contemporary strategic context of complex irregular warfare.

The civil-military divide of the US case has also failed to produce mutual trust and understanding within the civil-military interface, which is essential for effective command and control in the context of complex operations. The operational planning process is stovepiped and highly exclusive, and thereby fails to include important expertise and advice from all relevant departments and agencies. The lack of trust in the civil-military interface also means that the political leadership, when it exercises control, does so by micro-managing and interfering in strictly military affairs. These deficiencies were confirmed in the case of Iraq. It is interesting, however, that the current changes in doctrine and operational conduct in Iraq are also accompanied by structural changes in Washington, such as the creation of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), whose mission is to 'lead, coordinate and institutionalize U.S. Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations'.[729]

The integrated form of civil-military relations employed in the British system has provided for armed forces that are better adjusted for complex irregular warfare. A key facilitator is the fact that the British patterns of civil-military relations involve low-cost civilian control and monitoring of the armed forces, which, in stark contrast to the US, has not only allowed the political leadership to define the functional imperative of the armed forces, but also forced the military to adjust structurally and culturally to that imperative. The British approach emphasizes flexibility, minimum use of force, and civil-military co-operation – which are all considered essentials for effective conduct of complex irregular warfare in the contemporary context. The extensive level of interagency co-operation and co-ordination through the committee system includes most relevant actors in the planning and execution of operations. The far-reaching civil-military integration within the Ministry of Defence provides mutual trust and understanding in the chain of command, leading to the implementation of mission type command at the strategic and operational levels of command.

This was, however, only partly confirmed by the case study of British operations in Iraq. The British did not operate in full accordance with the British way of war and

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[729] The S/CRS mission statement is available on its website, <www.state.gov/s/crs/4>

the principles of complex irregular warfare. As noted, the circumscription of the interagency structures can be interpreted as a change in the independent variable. Interestingly, of course, the change away from the integrated pattern of civil-military relations also caused a distinct decrease in the effectiveness of British operational conduct. In essence, without the integrated patterns of civil-military relations, the British failed to operate according to the British way of war.

In sum, the context of complex irregular warfare, involving insurgencies and terrorists seeking to destroy the legitimacy as well as the gains of operations, and with global media broadcasting every action live into living rooms around the world, the cost of inaccurately applying deadly force may prove politically and militarily disastrous. Extensive and authoritative interagency structures as well as civil-military integration within the Department of Defence are likely to create more trust and mutual understanding in the civil-military interface. They are also more likely to create comprehensive civil-military approaches to the planning and execution of operations. Integrated civil-military relations with relatively low costs of civilian monitoring are also likely to result in a mutual interpretation of the functional imperative, reflecting the strategic context as well as the immediate needs of the political leadership – armed forces fit for purpose.

Theoretical Implications

There are a number of implications of this analysis for theory. First, strategic theory and research on military effectiveness must, to a larger extent than before, include the civil-military dimension. The civil-military dimension has the potential to influence the physical, the conceptual, and the moral factors of military effectiveness, and should therefore be part of any analysis of military effectiveness. It can even be asked as to what extent it is relevant to speak of military effectiveness, or 'fighting power', in a context where operations are inherently multidimensional, involving diplomatic, military and economic aspects. A comprehensive view of operational effectiveness is more useful. The question should be whether a country's entire security apparatus is fit for purpose, and thereby measured against the ambitions of the political leadership's foreign and security policy. A state like the US, with national security depending on international stability and international terrorism as well as high

ambitions for spreading democracy, cannot measure its capabilities in strictly military terms, as they are only a part of the equation.

Regarding the physical factor of combat power and effectiveness – the means – the findings of this thesis stress the importance of including civilian assets as well as military ones. The lack of civilian planning structures and civilian professionals capable and available for comprehensive operations is a serious deficiency in most states today. The conceptual factor of effectiveness is in the context of complex irregular warfare pointless without a comprehensive approach that includes all instruments of national power. Doctrine as well as strategic and operational planning must be adjusted accordingly. We can even go as far as calling the concept of 'military strategy' an oxymoron. The strategic level, and perhaps also the operational, of operations will never have a purely military element, and creating military strategy is therefore a futile exercise. Finally, the moral factor has two interesting civil-military aspects. First, moral strength and effectiveness should be analysed as that of society as a whole – military, political and civil society. When one or more of these three actors falter, the moral strength of the system as a whole diminishes. Second, with operations, where it is of great importance to win the hearts and minds of the local population as well as international society, the moral factor can be seen as a 'weapon' with which to transmit the winning strategic narrative and gain legitimacy for operations. In the age of instant media, and a networked global society, or what Shaw calls global surveillance, the ability to convey the right message may be more important than any traditional aspect of 'fighting power'.[730]

A second implication concerns the conceptualization of civil-military relations. Traditionally, civil-military relations theory deals with the relationship between the armed forces, the political leadership and civil society. The operational aspects of this relationship, or what this thesis calls the direct impact of civil-military relations, are a remarkably understudied area. However, at the same time, there is a field of study that deals with different aspects of civil-military relations in the field of operations, involving civil-military co-operation (CIMIC), disarmament, demobilization, and repatriation of ex-combatants (DDR), and security sector reform (SSR). These fields are inherently interrelated, and instead of two different fields of study, a more comprehensive view of civil-military relations is hereby advocated. When discussing

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[730] Shaw, *The New Western Way of War*; Freedman, *The Transformation of Strategic Affairs*

the UN's different functions, a distinction is often drawn between the UN as an 'actor' and the UN as an 'arena'.[731] A similar view of the civil-military interface would be useful. Not only is the civil-military interface the arena in which decisions regarding the size and structure of the armed forces are made, it also needs to be an effective actor in the chain of command during operations.

The third implication for theory also deals with civil-military relations theory. The findings of this thesis dispute Huntington's notion that the functional imperative of the armed forces is a given and that professional armed forces will automatically adapt to that imperative if given autonomy by the political leadership. In fact, the starting point in the notion that military institutions are a function of the societal and functional imperatives is not very helpful. The functional imperative cannot be treated as a given to which a professional military will automatically be adapted. Instead, the functional imperative is the result of civil-military negotiation based on perceptions of the strategic context, the political ambition in international affairs, as well as the organizational culture of the armed forces.

Peter Feaver's principal agency theory of civil-military relations that treats civil-military relations as an 'ongoing game of strategic interaction' between civilian leaders and military agents is highly useful in analysing these negotiations.[732] The US case provides us with an obvious example of the failure to adjust its organizational structure and culture as the functional imperative changes. The strong military culture and the high costs of civilian control of the armed forces mean that the military view of the functional imperative prevails despite an obviously changed strategic context that involves numerous new tasks and priorities for the military. Applying Feaver's agency theory helps explain that, in the strategic interaction between the political leadership and the military, the political leadership was not in a strong enough position and therefore failed to exert its power as the principal actor. The British case provides a contrasting example. The strength of the political leadership in relation to the military has meant that the former has been able to define the functional imperative in accordance with British foreign and security policy, and thereby created a civil-military interface and armed forces properly fit for purpose in the contemporary strategic context. However, the difficulty for the military leadership to

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[731] Mats Berdal, 'The UN Security Council: Ineffective, but Indispensable', *Survival*, 45:2 (Summer 2003), p. 23.
[732] Feaver, *Armed Servants*, p. 282.

exert influence has at the same time resulted in the paradox that the British military establishment is undersized and under-funded in relation to the tasks that are asked of it.

Finally, the findings of this thesis also dispute Huntington's conclusion that military strength and effectiveness are best maximized through objective control of the armed forces, involving a clear divide between the political and military leaderships. Instead, this thesis supports Janowitz's view of military effectiveness as the result of increased integration of civilian and military actors in order to create mutual trust and understanding. This is also supported by Dandeker's view that the inherent tensions of command and control structures in the contemporary strategic context 'can only be mitigated satisfactorily by trust- and confidence-building measures being installed at the political-military interface'.[733]

Instead of seeing the civil-military problematique as a zero-sum game in which an ideal balance between military strength and democratic civilian control should be found, the field of civil-military relations should, in theory as well as in practice, seek synergetic effects that strengthen both military effectiveness and civilian control. The starting point should, as Feaver argues, be the ideal of civilian primacy. Thereafter, a mutual understanding of what the functional imperative constitutes is a necessary point of departure for the ongoing game of strategic interaction regarding the structure and culture of the armed forces and the civil-military interface.

Future Research Directions

The cases explored by this thesis have been useful for the construction and first tests of an interesting hypothesis of the causal relationship between certain patterns of civil-military relations and military effectiveness in complex irregular warfare. To further test and refine the hypothesis and the theoretical framework a number of different case studies are of interest and importance. This thesis used two cases of civil-military relations perceived to be at the extreme ends of what is actually a continuum between divided and integrated structure and culture. Further cases of these extreme ends should be studied in order to test the hypothesis. Such case studies of extreme cases along the continuum of civil-military integration give an opportunity to change a number of variables that may either strengthen or weaken the hypothesis of this thesis. Studying countries like Sweden, with highly divided civil-military structures, yet a co-

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[733] Dandeker, 'Surveillance', p. 241.

operative parliamentary political system and a different geo-strategic position as a small, neutral power, would, therefore, be of great interest for theory. A case study of France, with a relatively similar historical colonial background as the British, yet a very different political system, would also be interesting.

However, future studies should also seek to include cases along the middle sections of the continuum to provide a complete picture of the theoretical framework. The interesting question which can only be answered by looking at further cases is whether outcome – meaning effectiveness in complex irregular warfare – also follows a continuum as expected, or if there is a tipping point somewhere that creates more of a dualistic outcome – either you are effective or not. Obviously, looking at historical operations with actual outcomes in victory and defeat is beneficial in this respect.

Finally, there are also important methodological variations to be made. Creating a number of variables, such as civil-military integration and strength of civilian control of the armed forces, would provide an opportunity to test the hypothesis of this thesis with quantitative methods. While Western civil-military relations are generally well enough covered to be quickly included in statistical analyses, more background on civil-military relations in African and Asian cases is often needed.

Policy Implications

The policy implications of this thesis are, to a large extent, derived from the argument that a particular pattern of civil-military relations produces more effective armed forces. The normative ideal in terms of effectiveness in future complex irregular warfare stems from the literature and is supported in this thesis; operations planned and executed comprehensively with all stakeholders and instruments of national power involved; armed forces and civilian counterparts on the ground operating jointly with enough flexibility as well as political and cultural understanding to adjust activities in accordance with contextual peculiarities rather than doctrine and drilled exercises. This thesis argues that such conduct of complex irregular warfare requires civil-military relations involving strong enough civilian control to define the functional imperative of the armed forces, civil-military integration and mutual understanding in order to produce armed forces that are fit for purpose, extensive interagency co-operation in order to plan and execute operations effectively, and a culture of trust and mutual understanding required for effective command and control

during operations. What can be done within the strategic-level civil-military interfaces of different countries in order to create the structural and cultural fundamentals that are needed in order to achieve such effectiveness?

Before discussing any implications in detail, it should be acknowledged that all political systems are unique and that solutions in one country may not be applicable to other countries and systems. Clearly the political systems and cultures of the UK and the US are very different. Both are successful democratic systems, including certain strengths and weaknesses. Drawing policy implications that are not sensitive to the foundations of a nation's political system risks being futile and potentially dangerous. An example discussed several times within this study is the US system of checks and balances. While making interagency co-operation difficult, the system of checks and balances constitutes one of the most important fundamentals of US democracy, and should therefore be treated as a given. However, the fact that all political systems are different does not mean that lessons from other systems are impossible to implement, it simply means that lessons from across boarders must be adjusted and implemented in accordance with the cultural circumstances of the system. With a sound understanding of the fundamentals and peculiarities of each system, the lessons of this thesis may, therefore, well be implemented in very different contexts. The following section discusses some of the more important policy implications.

First, the multitude of tasks and the complexity of the political aims in contemporary irregular warfare mean that the different instruments of national power must be involved and co-ordinated for effective operations. This requires well-functioning interagency structures as well as a co-operative working culture of trust and mutual understanding. Many commentators advocate a new more powerful interagency structure that better co-ordinates policy and operational implementation across all departments of the government. General Zinni draws upon the lessons from Somalia and argues that all aspects of operations have to be co-ordinated. 'I've seen the disasters in Somalia and elsewhere when coordination mechanisms fail. Those mechanisms for coordination have to be solid, they have to be established from the lowest remote points on the ground to the highest decisions that may be made'.[734] Although the Goldwater-Nichols legislation successfully dealt with a number of problems in the 1980s, the DoD is, according to a CSIS report, more and more

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[734] Zinni, 'The Future of Iraq'

outdated in the changing security context. 'A Defense Department designed for a massive, industrial-era opponent is clearly not suited for combating covert, non-state actors in the Information Age'.[735]

Reforms are taking place on both sides of the Atlantic to build on strengths and remedy weaknesses. In both Britain and the US new interagency planning units have been set up in order to facilitate co-ordination between the military, the development agencies, and the Foreign Office/State Department.[736] For the British, the main problem has been the tardiness of the committee system rather than the need for increased interagency co-operation. Working in committees is often too slow for the effective implementation of contemporary military operations that often require quick decision-making by the political leadership. Calls for stronger formal structures are therefore made, and, as a response, the ideas of 'comprehensive approaches' and 'effects-based operations' have been created. These doctrinal developments seek to increase interagency co-ordination and co-operation within a strengthened permanent interagency and planning structure.

Within what is called 'the comprehensive approach', the British are seeking to make the structure more effective through structural measures, such as the post-conflict reconstruction unit and interagency planning teams (IAPT), to balance the military nature of the Joint Task Force Headquarters. The IAPTs are also intended to have representatives within the JTFHQ as well as within lower level military commands. While such structural changes serve so ensure interagency co-operation in a more timely fashion, they are still dwarfed by the military command structures. As an example, the IAPTs consist of about twelve people while their military counterpart in the JTFHQ has a staff of 200–300. Another problem is that the IAPT currently does not own the execution capabilities, which are, of course, often military, and therefore does not carry the same weight as its military counterparts.[737] It remains to be seen to what extent the new interagency structures can complement the old committee system and the co-operative working culture that has been created. This thesis has, however, noted that the violation of a number of important principles of the British way of war was partly caused by the presidential leadership of Prime Minister Blair and the partial nullification of the interagency committee system. A risk when constructing new

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[735] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 18.
[736] UK: Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU); US: State Department's Office of the Co-ordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS).
[737] Presentation by Lt. Col. Tim Russell at the Ministry of Defence, Stockholm, Sweden, 26 May 2006.

permanent structures that will further streamline the planning process is, therefore, that the benefits of the broad committee system are lost, and the British way of war with it.

The US interagency system is in more pressing need of reform as it lacks both the structures and the culture to co-operate effectively. Obviously, the National Security Council is a useful foundation for such a structure. One important step in the right direction was taken in July 2004 with the creation of the State Department's Office of the Co-ordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). This office serves 'to lead, coordinate and institutionalize U.S. Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife'.[738] The office develops interagency assessment tools and planning frameworks for reconstruction and stabilization, based on the US military planning tools. It is nevertheless problematic that the S/CRS only has a mandate to lead, co-ordinate and institutionalize *US civilian capacity*. As the office is placed within the State Department it remains unclear to what extent it will be able to co-ordinate with the military planning structures.

A problem in the US case is that structural changes mean little if the working culture does not support it. As noted, trust and mutual understanding are essential ingredients in effective civil-military relations during operations, and a facilitator of mission type command from the political leadership. However, trust and understanding across departmental and agency borders are more difficult to achieve than structural changes, as these features are not a part of the US political tradition of checks and balances. Nevertheless, extensive structural changes that force officials from different agencies and departments to work together on a more regular basis have the potential to create interpersonal trust based on reciprocity. Effective outcomes may also develop an increased institutional trust in the structures of the interagency system. Unless there is a cultural change, recognizing the importance of such structures, increasing its status, and giving them stronger mandates, new interagency working groups are not likely to be effective. The big question mark is the extent to which the US interagency system can change its culture *within* the current US political tradition. Can the political culture of checks and balances with a healthy level of interagency competition be combined with a higher level of mutual trust and understanding?

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[738] Information about S/CRS is available at http://www.state.gov/s/crs/c12936.htm

The limited reforms of the US military and the civil-military interface, despite numerous failures in complex irregular warfare, can be derived from the fact that the US military continues to see these types of operations as less important than the 'real' functional imperative of major warfare in the defence of the nation. A shift in US military culture and its approach to complex irregular warfare therefore require a shift in the patterns of civil-military relations. However, the entrenched results of long historical processes are not easily changed. The cost of civilian monitoring of the armed forces and the lack of influence in terms of the functional imperative will not be changed through structural alterations, or imposed change in training. Instead, the military must reach a new level of political understanding that leads to changes from within. Increased integration and civil-military co-operation may lead to increased mutual trust and understanding through experiences of reciprocity and the development of personal contacts outside the profession. It is also possible that the struggle to overcome the challenges in Iraq, in combination with the significance of the operation, will function as an eye-opener for the US military, re-evaluating the functional imperative somewhat.

Another policy implication is derived from the finding that integrated civil-military structures within the defence ministries are more effective than divided structures, especially in the context of complex irregular warfare. The US dualistic view of war and peace as well as of military and civilian affairs has not served the country well in past operations. The divided civil-military approach employed in the US has emphasized the importance of pure and separated military and political advice. It is, however, time to acknowledge that the dualistic view of civil-military relations is no longer applicable in a context where there really is no such thing as a purely military operation other than at the tactical level. In modern conflict, the Clausewitzian idiom, that war is the continuation of policy, is more relevant than ever. More important than pure military advice is, therefore, military advice which understands the political context of the decisions that are to be made. The other side of the coin is the need for policy advice that is well-informed about military consequences and imperatives. Such mutual understanding is only achievable through integrated structures, in which civilians and the military meet on a daily basis to exchange ideas and knowledge. Therefore, the US DoD should consider integrating its military and civilian staff in order to provide comprehensive advice to the political leadership.

The importance of professional civil servants is another policy-related finding of this thesis. One of the recurring themes of the dissertation has been the importance to establish structures that contribute to mutual trust and understanding in the civil-military interface. Professional civil servants, in a range of different departments, with extensive knowledge of both political and military affairs, can thereby provide not only extensive expertise, institutional memory, and continuity across administrations. They also provide a buffer zone between the political and military leaderships as well as across government ministries. With the dual knowledge and long experience they can mediate between locked positions as well as maintain important personal relationships across department and agency boundaries. As noted, several commentators therefore argue that it is time to start reversing the trend that increases the number of political appointees in order to increase the effectiveness and to retain the best and the brightest within the organization.[739] While this trend is more serious in the US case, where all higher level appointments within the DoD are political, the problem has also developed in the UK, not least under the government of Tony Blair.

Finally, the fact that both the US and the British operations in Iraq are, in the summer of 2007, nothing short of a major failure begs to echo the question so well discussed by General Sir Rupert Smith: what political aims can actually be achieved by military force? This thesis argues that certain structures of civil-military relations are more effective than others when force is applied to achieve complex political aims, such as democratization and economic development. However, the failures in Iraq as well as in a number of historical cases – such as the War in Vietnam, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, as well as the peace operations in Rwanda, Somalia and the Congo – show that an increased level of caution is needed in the more adventurous applications of force. Moreover, given the importance of global and local legitimacy of these types of operations, force is best used under a UN mandate to repel aggression or to stop humanitarian suffering. This final observation also highlights the importance of applying the findings of this thesis to international organizations. If force is to be applied – with or without a UN mandate, within a coalition of the willing or an internationally mandated and UN-led force – civil-military integration is imperative for effectiveness.

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[739] Email correspondance with Adam Grissom, RAND;interview with Colonel Guy White; and see Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols*, p. 57.

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