

Heritage Lectures

No. 915

Conference June 17–18, 2005



Published by The Heritage Foundation

December 2, 2005

The Impact of Peacekeeping and Stability Operations on the Armed Forces

Peter F. Herryly

The uses of armed force by the Western powers since 1990 have drawn the attention of researchers in Europe and the United States to the difficult issues involved in the maintenance of peace and stability. The associated military operations are not “war”—at least in the conventional, declared sense of the term—yet often involve savage and difficult combat. Previous conferences have focused on various aspects of these types of operations: the fundamental nature of armed conflict, the difficulties associated with the reconstruction of states after conflict, and the nature of the all-volunteer Western professional militaries.

This year’s meeting investigated another aspect of peacekeeping and stability operations: the impact of these operations upon the armed forces that must conduct them. The history of such operations over many decades demonstrates that their complexity and lack of clarity on the ground poses serious and often confusing issues for the soldiers charged with their prosecution. These impacts surface in areas as disparate as military effectiveness and doctrine, interpretations of international law and the law of warfare, the sociology and psychology of armed forces, and the relations between armed forces and their parent populations.

Operations Other Than War

To keynote the 2005 conference, Rear Admiral Richard Cobbold of the Royal United Services Institute first noted how “not war-fighting” operations vary in intensity, duration, environment, risk and lethality, involvement with the civilian population, acceptance

Talking Points

- In a vicious operational environment, caring for the enemy, perhaps while extracting intelligence, demands high-quality professionalism. Playing it off the cuff is not the answer. Forces of democracies must do better.
- Well-chosen historical examples can yield great insights on current operations, especially in considering the varying impacts of operating in differing cultures and the complexities for military personnel found in dealing with other actors as opposed to enemy armies.
- Overall, while legal considerations are not an unbearable restraint if paid sufficient and careful consideration, issues of law establish tight boundaries which commanders neglect at peril to themselves and their mission.
- Pacifism presents a dangerous obstacle to European efforts, and American activism in the Middle East has not been well received. If matters are to improve, there is a need for a more pragmatic United States.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:
www.heritage.org/research/nationalsecurity/hl915.cfm

Produced by the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis
Institute for International Studies

Published by The Heritage Foundation
214 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002–4999
(202) 546-4400 • heritage.org

Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the views of The Heritage Foundation or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress.

and support at home, and the suitability and flexibility of rules of engagement.¹

The anomaly faced by the United States and partners in a coalition, he continued, is that while victory in the sense of defeating the enemy's military power is comparatively easily gained, broader campaign aims—for instance, to create a self-sustaining pluralistic democracy in Iraq—may be not only more challenging than the military aim, but also best served by the nature of preceding military operations.

“As for the impact on the soldiers, sailors and airmen who undertake these non-war-fighting operations,” said Admiral Cobbold,

the risks are very real, and mean that a career in the Armed Forces is now markedly different from one in the Cold War, where lethal operations were exceptional, and peace-keeping implied that there was a peace to keep. . . . Physical injuries are not the only ones that debilitate. Psychological trauma can lead to mental injuries [like] Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD.

These operations affect recruiting, affected by public perceptions of the operations and by feedback from the front line:

Fighting itself does not seem to damage recruiting, rather it is the shadowy accompaniment. If the fighting force is strong up the chain of command and back into the Ministries of Defense, if the politicians support and sustain the troops both morally and materially, then damage will be little. If the community as a whole becomes detached from the operations and if politicians are seen to have behaved opportunistically, then trouble will be close behind. . . .

Reservists are increasingly drawn into peace-support operations. This reliance stresses employers and reservists alike. “Reservists are part-timers, ready to do their bit when the devil rides. But when the devil is riding in many places around the world, every month of the year, for years on end, the ratio-

nale of being a reservist can weaken.” Moreover, the admiral pointed out, reservists are not so deeply integrated into the military structure as regulars, and therefore prone to unexpected lapses. Their recruitment and retention can be vulnerable.

The professionalism of forces frequently involved with peace-support operations merits consideration. On the one hand, such operations build battle-readiness that can aid survival in theater. However, servicemen and women returning from deployments have some skill sets honed to a fine edge, while others have regressed. A mass of lessons must be identified and turned round with speed so that they can be learned in theater and the home base. But the enemy also learns lessons fast, so the command chain must be alert to the dangers of learning lessons relevant to the “last war,” even if it is only a few days ago. This demands tactical and doctrinal agility of a high order.

Furthermore, military activity is but one strand that has to be integrated into the conduct of the overall campaign. The admiral noted that the demands for comprehensive training are higher for these operations than for war-fighting, particularly as the severity of extreme peace-support operations can equal, and even exceed, those of much war-fighting. The diversity of tasks, and sometimes their unexpected nature, means that the training manuals cannot cope with every eventuality. This in turn means that junior officers and NCOs may have to cope with situations drawing on inculcated values gained through education rather than procedures and tactics learned in training. Education takes time and has to be nurtured. “Growing education” is a big concept, dependent on national education systems and the setting and maintaining of recruiting standards.

The deeply regrettable incidents at Abu Ghraib, Camp Bread Basket, and Guantanamo cast a long shadow. The causes: Young people were put in positions of authority and sensitivity for which they were ill-prepared or underqualified. Others, more mature and higher in command, did not do well

1. See Rear Admiral Richard Cobbold, “The Effects of Operations Other Than War-Fighting on the Participants,” Heritage Foundation *Lecture* No. 894, August 19, 2005 (delivered June 18, 2005).

either. In a vicious operational environment, caring for the enemy, perhaps while extracting intelligence from them, demands high-quality professionalism. Playing it off the cuff is not the answer. Forces of democracies must do better.

In addition to training, effective support of the front line is essential. Governments must ensure that equipment works and is capable enough for the tasks in hand—always. Stores must be available in the quantity required, when required, wherever required. Shortfalls in support can fester, and the morale of deployed forces can swing in large oscillations with little notice and with little cause.

The media, ubiquitous and “fearless” in the pursuit of viewing and circulation figures, also have a vital role in monitoring good governance. They can drum up effective pressure on governments when support for the front line seems sloppy. However, inaccurate reporting may affect servicepeople in a negative fashion. Those in the front line may see the media output and react to it, perhaps giving excess credence to the journalists’ wisdom. Families, upset by pessimistic forecasts and damning assessments, or weakened in resolve by community response to the output, may pass on their doubts to the front line.

To conclude, Admiral Cobbold reinforced what a multifaceted and intermeshed subject this is, noting that we live in a globalized world where the struggles are hugely asymmetric. Stability and peacekeeping operations come in many shapes and sizes, with characteristics prone to change rapidly; they are conducted by a vast array of actors, most of whom have discrete and not necessarily overt agendas, and they resist efforts to be coordinated. “Service-people...are ordinary people whom we ask to do extraordinary tasks. We, in the narrow and wider defense communities of democracies, need to be with them and sustain them, lest their successes are despite us, and their failures because of us.”

Western Military Interventions in Context

Dr. Guillaume Piketty, Directeur de Recherche, Centre d’Histoire de Sciences Po, introduced the panel entitled “‘Strangers in Strange Lands’? The Historical Context of Western Military Interventions.”

The changing nature of conflict in the past several decades has involved the Western world in a series of operations aimed at keeping the peace or, more problematically, maintaining “stability” in the search of a peace to maintain. Though these operations are very removed from the objectives and spirit of military enterprises associated with the previous era of colonialism, they still necessarily involve soldiers from one culture engaged in operations involving combat conducted in the midst of a very different culture.

Moreover, most often, these operations are faced with shadowy enemies or quasi-enemies whose only viable military options are those associated with guerrilla warfare. Thus, in discussing the impact of these stability operations upon the armies that conduct them, well-chosen historical examples can yield great insights on current operations, especially in considering the varying impacts of operating in differing cultures and the complexities for military personnel found in dealing with other actors as opposed to enemy armies.

In his introduction, Dr. Piketty focused on two aspects of peacekeeping as important today as during past operations: the nature of the individual soldier and the challenge of concluding such operations. He noted that the question of a soldier’s identity—whether professional, volunteer, or recruited—gives insight into motivations. What is his sense of “just” or “unjust” war? Cultural restraints influence that identity.

The way in which an occupying force conducts its operations also has repercussions on the individual. Armies must combat resistance without replacing the local police. There appears to be an historical tendency to resort to brutal methods of control such as executions, aggression against civilians, and torture. When tolerated or employed by an army, these methods affect the individual. In peacekeeping operations, soldiers are confronted with a paradox: They are trained for warfare but must react passively.

These complexities point to the issue of training for stability and peacekeeping operations. As in the past, instructional methods must be vigorously invented and constantly adapted. Pressures from

journalistic, political, and legal forces “back home” complicate the situation.

Dr. Piketty next addressed withdrawing from and concluding stability operations. As in the historical cases presented by the panelists, modern peacekeeping troops confront the challenge of reinsertion to their respective societies. Returning soldiers cope with psychological consequences and sometimes a sense of guilt. Modern peacekeepers must find a place in a world that increasingly turns a blind eye to violence, where conflicts are “humanitarian” and bombardments “surgical strikes.”

Dr. Piketty asserted that societal reaction to returnees merits attention as well. How are the mutilated, imprisoned, and injured received? The moral economy to which soldiers return determines to what extent they are accepted or “marginalized and rejected.” Moral economy also defines the collective mindset towards representation and memorial of these operations.

Upon establishing the presence of these issues, equally challenging today as they have been historically, Dr. Piketty turned the discussion over to the panelists.

The historical perspective offered by the participants of Panel I was striking in its relevance and disturbingly familiar insights. Professor of History at Texas A&M University Brian Linn’s evocation of the almost completely forgotten American counterinsurgency in the Philippines, for example, seems eerily reminiscent of events in Iraq since 2003.² Professor Linn portrayed the ease of the American conquest in 1898, the best benevolent intentions of the U.S. President, and the swift descent into a bitter guerrilla war where the insurgents used a variety of tactics including the 1900 equivalent of suicide bombers (aimed as much at sabotaging U.S.-led initiatives to improve the daily lives of Filipinos as they were at ensuring a steady stream of American casualties to weaken U.S. domestic support for the war).

The Philippine Insurrection also saw marked improvement in the initiative of small-unit leaders in

the U.S. Army, the crucial nature of the effort to recruit and field Filipino troops and police able to secure their own country, and the drift by a few American military into the abuses of torture and execution. Also convincingly laid out was how in three to four difficult years the Army managed to turn the corner, so much so that the combat actions from 1902 onwards were more an intra-Filipino fight.

Another provocative insight was how the Army managed what would now be termed its after-action review process. The Army consciously chose to exclude lessons learned from the Philippine conflict. While somewhat understandable in view of the World War I conflict on the horizon, this left the U.S. Army with a void of baseline doctrine for the many counterinsurgencies that would punctuate its next century of existence. This was similar to the post-Vietnam War era, when the Army steadfastly turned its back on its counterinsurgency experience in order to focus exclusively on the challenge of conventional combat.

Claude d’Abzac Epezy and Pierre Journoud, Centre d’études d’histoire de la Défense (CEHD), discussed the aftermath of the war in Indochina (1946–1964) and its subsequent impact on French Army doctrine and organization in Algeria and later. The French Army experience in Indochina led to a focus on counter-revolutionary warfare—which, when transposed into the Algerian War context, led some of the French Army onto dangerous paths. That is, the necessity to influence the press and other aspects of the struggle over “information operations” inevitably led some of the French Army to move outside the military sphere. The results included the attempted coup of 1962. Afterwards, the French Army completely rejected concepts and tactics developed in these two wars, some of which in the military sphere were innovative and acceptable. But “the baby was thrown out with the bathwater.”

Colonel David Benest, Defense Leadership and Management Center, United Kingdom, provided a third perspective by looking at the British experi-

2. See Brian McAllister Linn, “The Impact of the Imperial Wars (1898–1907) on the U.S. Army,” *Heritage Foundation Lecture* No. 908, November 14, 2005 (delivered June 18, 2005).

ence over the last century with stability operations, including a domestic operation with overtones of such, namely Northern Ireland. Colonel Benest focused on 1916 onwards and described the various waves and evolution of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) insurgency and the British responses.

As context for these operations, Colonel Benest reminded the conference that Britain had been involved in almost continuous counterinsurgency operations throughout the 20th century, most notably in South Africa, Palestine, Mesopotamia (Iraq), India, Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Borneo, and Aden. And throughout the Northern Ireland campaign that began in 1969, the British were also involved in high-intensity conflicts in the Falklands, the Gulf War, and Operations Iraqi Freedom (not to forget Korea and Suez in the 1950s.) His remarks focused on several major observations.

- The first is how operations in Northern Ireland from 1969–1999 evolved from what can be referred to as a “colonial” strategy to a “forensic” and surgical use of force.
- The second is how rules of engagement evolved. The best solution that presented itself was the guidance to soldiers given in the “Yellow Card,” which has more or less stood the test of time and is still in use in Basra today. In essence, a soldier was permitted to use lethal force only where life had been or was about to be endangered and there was no other means of preventing further loss of life.
- The third concerns the crucial role that technology has played, both in the hands of the terrorist and as a countermeasure to terrorist attacks. One of the earliest uses of technology in the cause of Irish Republicanism can be traced to the submarine built in the U.S.A. in 1881, the “Fenian Ram” designed for attacks on British ships. The IRA also pioneered the vehicle-borne IED—hence the “VBIED” so common in Iraq today, together with “barrack buster” mortars, off-route mines, command wire-initiated IEDs (CWIEDs), and under-vehicle IEDs (UVIEDs). The Security Forces, equally, have evolved countermeasures such as

specialist search and a range of non-lethal capabilities.

- The fourth notes the human dimension to this campaign. Casualties rose to over 3,700, of whom 2,050 were civilian. The scale of deployment is also noteworthy, with more troops deployed even today than in Iraq and Afghanistan combined. Human intelligence has been key to success. The media have been a continuous influence. Relations between the Armed Forces and Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) were not always as cordial as might have been expected after such a long period of cooperation, not least over issues such as tactics—the armed forces seeking unpredictability when the police needed routine. Finally, the culture of the Northern Irish had to be understood.

In conclusion, the British experience of Northern Ireland can be summarized as a very long and painful one. It has enshrined a combination of both high- and low-intensity conflict and “nation building.” Those who insist that “there is no military solution” are of course merely stating the blindingly obvious, as could be said of any war at any time. On an optimistic note, the IRA cease-fire of July 1997 has held. But, pessimistically, Colonel Benest noted that this amounts to the 10th cease-fire since 1916.

The Clash of Cultures

From this historical foundation, the discussion shifted to the sociological perspective. The impact of peacekeeping and stability operations upon the sociology of the armies can vary from positive (for instance, the increased cooperation and mutual understanding among allied armies who participated in Balkans stability operations after 1995) to destabilizing, depending of course on the nature and intensity of the operations. The varying sociological and psychological impacts—anticipated and actual—are seen in areas as diverse as the impact upon military leadership, issues of recruiting and retention, and effects on military families.

Roland Marchal, Chargé de recherche at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), moderated a panel on “The Clash of Cultures: Sociological Perspectives” where three national views each illustrated a different aspect of

the impact of stability operations on Western armies and their parent populations.

In the case of Germany, Professor Jörn Thiessen, Leiter des Sozialwissenschaftlichen Instituts der Bundeswehr in Strausberg, addressed the implications for the Bundeswehr and its linkages with the German people, given the recent evolution towards a professional, power-projection military in Germany and the presence of German troops in the Balkans, Somalia, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. Professor Thiessen presented the latest in polling data compiled by his organization. Concerning the relationship between the German Army and the German people, the various overseas operations of the German Army have left a rather strong acceptance of stability operations on the “soft” or humanitarian end of the scale, but there is as yet scant support for operations on the “combat” side of the scale.

Colonel (Retired) André Thièblemont, ethnologist, discussed the cultural, sociopolitical, and operational impacts of what the French Army often calls “external” operations, including upon the cohesion of the Army itself, especially its regimental system. Like Germany, the positive images and publicity that have followed French Army operations in the Balkans and elsewhere have substantially enhanced the image of the French Army in France. This has also contributed to the improvement of a certain ability “on the ground” on the part of young leaders.

Colonel Thièblemont’s concerns stem from the way the French Army organizes its deployments, which he sees as producing the following negative effects:

- A marked decline in regimental cohesion, owing to the effects of four-month deployments and “mixing and matching” to create deployable units, and
- A decreasing focus on tasks associated with direct ground combat. This is in part the fault of the “Yellow Card” system of over-onerous rules of engagement.

Dr. Lenny Wong, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, looked at certain emerging principal impacts of current stability operations on the U.S. Army. Specifically, he has been studying

the effects on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq on the U.S. Army’s junior leaders and the task of developing adaptive leaders. Dr. Wong quoted President George W. Bush to say:

Building a 21st century military will require more than new weapons. It will also require a renewed spirit of innovation in our officer corps. We cannot transform our military using old weapons or plans. Nor can we do it with an old bureaucratic mindset that frustrates the creativity and entrepreneurship that a 21st century military will need.

In his analysis of this challenge, Dr. Wong noted that the development of adaptive leaders is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Today’s soldiers are faced with many roles, including warrior, peacekeeper, engineer, mayor, and friend. These roles must be assumed in the face of a complex environment where cultural differences, warfare, and change produce numerous obstacles. When top-down guidance is limited to providing simply task and purpose, according to Dr. Wong’s extensive recent field research, the result seems to be that junior leaders become confident, adaptive, flexible, innovative, and creative.

Impact of Law and Media

Next, the panel on “Operations on ‘Complex Terrain’: The Law and the Media” explored the context of stability operations in 2005, which operate within a myriad of legal constraints and in the modern “hyper-mediatized” environment. During the past decades, the interventions by major Western nations have witnessed an increasing involvement in planning and execution by staff lawyers and public affairs specialists. This undeniable growth in the importance and visibility of these heretofore rather marginal actors on military staffs reflects the growing importance of how these interventions are perceived by the populations of the intervening powers, the nations whose stability is being sought, and the “onlookers” (other nations in the world).

Opinions among the conferees differed as to the impact of legal operations. All agreed that today’s military leaders are “joined at the hip” to lawyers: Major General Jonathon Riley had four lawyers of his own in his multinational division headquarters

in southern Iraq during the past year; his brigade commanders, one each. Dr. James Carafano stated, however, that the broad legal issues are settled: It is a function of executing within established boundaries. He did point out three challenges that exist in this area: which law applies among coalition partners; issues concerning non-lethal weapons; and the increased role of the private sector. General Riley pointed out that there often arises the question of which law applies as between host nation and intervening nation.

Overall, while it is clear that if they are paid sufficient and careful consideration, legal considerations do not constitute an unbearable constraint, issues of law nevertheless establish tight boundaries which commanders neglect at peril to themselves and their mission.

In the realm of media relations, the discussion centered around how the media observe (and perceive) stability operations and what are the impacts of planning and operating in the glare of modern jurisprudence and the modern media.

Laurent Boussié, France 2 war correspondent of much experience, shared his impressions of how his profession is evolving. According to his own experience, not much progress has been made in media coverage of these kinds of operations. The media scene itself has become confused. Television has less influence; what it means to be objective has changed (there is more pressure to show “how war really is,” a lot of it from the impact of the Arab news media).

The West’s militaries have tried to become more sophisticated about the press, but it is also true that they would like in a certain way to shape its coverage. At the same time, the press in certain countries tends to have a “jump on the same bandwagon” approach. In short, M. Boussié presented a complex picture, which undoubtedly complicates the lives of armies on the ground.

Isabelle Mariani of the French Conseil Superior de l’Audiovisuel then spoke from the government regulatory perspective. She laid out the reasons why the prospects of regulatory agencies actually controlling and/or moderating media behavior are increasingly very slim. In discussing these issues in

1985, French President François Mitterrand said that liberty of the press is inalienable, but the challenge lies in how to organize this liberty. During the 20th century, law in France was preoccupied with how to regulate the press in time of war, but the escalating onslaught of non-press media has been progressively making any such regulation more and more problematic.

Dr. Carafano rejoined that while the media are an insoluble problem in stability operations, it might be overblown. When all is said and done, history shows that the media follow events, he maintained. The conferees then drew a connection between the history of the French Army in Algeria and the interaction of the military with the media in current operations: If military leaders are tempted by the dynamic of winning an “information campaign” to deal on a higher order of effectiveness with the media, this may lead them on to dangerous (political) ground.

Military and Political Science

In the final panel, “Boots on the Ground’: Perspectives in Military and Political Science,” Frédéric Charillon, Director of the French Ministry of Defense’s Center for Social Studies in Defense, moderated a wide-ranging series of presentations and spirited discussion.

Professor Christopher Coker talked about the impact of today’s military mission and environment upon the soldier. He explored the evolution of concepts of honor, dignity, and sacrifice within the context of modern Western societies that increasingly impose other norms that undercut or are even antithetical to the old norms of honor (which stemmed from the individual’s place in the regiment and society). Dignity came from one’s own self traditionally, but increasingly society tries to codify dignity.

This has all crystallized around the issue of trauma, which seems to be substantially on the rise among Western militaries even as the actual difficulties of their operations to maintain peace and stability are less onerous in terms of numbers of casualties than those of all-out war. Trauma is on the rise because death is harder to define as meaningful anymore and stoicism in the West is in decline.

Thus, Western militaries confronted with the necessity of stability operations are actually faced with an acute sort of crisis: The very motives that drive them to these interventions are less and less motivating for the soldiers who must conduct them. This is exacerbated by the differences in values and norms between intervening countries and their militaries and the societies in which they are intervening. It is dangerous to try to impose one's own norms on another culture, and it is certainly not something that intrinsically motivates soldiers to sacrifice, especially with the excessive contractual perspective of today's service.

Dr. Douglas Johnson, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, then passed to another impact of stability operations on the military: their impact on doctrine and values. Taking the case of the U.S. Army, he traced its extensive history of stability operations from 1848 to the present. He stressed that one of the major impacts of such operations in the 19th century was that after the post-Civil War occupation of the American South, there arose a strong legal and doctrinal bias against soldiers performing police duties. This prohibition remained a strong constant throughout the 20th century, with various operational implications. For instance, in the Balkans during the 1990s, the Army was constantly searching for someone, some agency, to take the lead on policing.

In the 21st century, Dr. Johnson pointed out, the impacts of current action in Afghanistan and Iraq seem to be causing a doctrinal ferment. Operational requirements on the ground are causing commanders to look for ways to solve policing problems, and since doctrine is not intended as a straitjacket for commanders, they are doing so with some energy. But according to Dr. Johnson's reading of the current evolution of Army and joint doctrine, the major thrust is still to define stability operations in a much wider context than purely military (as opposed to expanding the military's doctrinal role). In fact, the U.S. military as a whole seems to be restating its belief that such operations must be a responsibility of government as a whole, working in a truly effective way at the interagency level.

Lieutenant General (Retired) Carlo Cabigioso, who commanded NATO forces in Kosovo and

served as adviser to the Italian forces in Iraq, looked at these operations from the multinational point of view, because in the current environment, they are and will be inevitably conducted by coalitions. This imperative has major effects on the Western militaries. For instance, a principal value of NATO clearly lies in its long history of working out common procedures, common understanding, and common phrases. These are of inestimable value even—or especially—when operating with non-NATO partners.

Nevertheless, these coalition efforts are not without strain. When dealing with a mixture of forces, one must consider their background, culture, and history. Everyone wants respect for their culture, yet friction often arises—for instance, between Latin and “Anglo” cultures—with various feelings of superiority. In consequence, operational planners need to consider all national linkages. This complicates planning and is even more complex in the current operational climate, where psychological operations to disrupt the cohesion of an adversary are increasingly important. As for relations with the media, in his opinion, they have evolved; 15 years ago, commanders were afraid to talk to journalists, while today they are trained to do so (with a good rule to always tell the truth or not speak at all.)

Stability operations are not easy. They require continuous and sophisticated planning against uncertainty, a strong focus on intelligence and prevention, and truly multinational staffs, with a very broad-based appreciation of the interagency process and requirements.

Jean-Yves Haine, research fellow for European security at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), then directed the discussion to yet another perspective: that of organization and capability at the level of Europe and between Europe and the U.S. He noted that operations in the 1990s had revealed shortcomings in the overall European capacity to act effectively; examples included the traumas of the Balkans and Rwanda.

Kosovo became a turning point in trans-Atlantic relations. The gap in military capabilities along with the way in which the U.S. handled the war led

to the failure of coalition warfare. The endless political talk that accompanied this failure nearly killed NATO, and the result was that NATO was forced to reduce the number of participating nations.

Coalition warfare met with further difficulties between the U.S. and Europe regarding the response to September 11. While the U.S. has the luxury of exporting the fight, Europe does not have that option as terrorists are living there already and are harder to track. In addition, the notion of a “pre-emptive strike” does not exist for European militaries; they prefer using “preventive engagement” instead. Therefore, the temptation to take action in Iraq was greater for the U.S. than it was for Europe.

Professor Haine next examined the nature of European strategy as it has emerged. Composed of an inward-looking group of states, Europe’s institutions remain process-oriented, and in the parliament there is a lack of trust between member states. Due to the risk-aversion factor, European strategy tends to lack capabilities, favoring quick-in, quick-out operations—those that are short-term, regulated by the UN, which result in peacekeeping troops taking over, such as with Africa.

Europe faces challenges including the end of conscription, the end of territorial defense, and the coordination of transformation efforts. A more difficult challenge to overcome is the growing opinion that the use of force is nearly unacceptable. Pacifism presents a dangerous obstacle to European efforts, and American activism in the Middle East has not been well received. If matters are to improve, there is a need for a more pragmatic United States. What is more, Europe is learning through trial and error, a process that is taking too long. This is likely to result in the stagnation of the current situation for another five to 10 years.

Major General Jonathon Riley, British Army, just-retired commander of the multinational division headquartered in Basra, presented a commander’s view, informed by his service in Northern Ireland, Iraq, Sierra Leone, and the Balkans.³ He insisted, first of all, that every level of command must add

value to an operation and should be removed if it does not.

The divisional level is the lowest level at which deep, close, and rear operations are organized and the lowest level that plans and conducts operations simultaneously. Thus, the divisional level of command concerns itself with a variety of tasks: planning, resourcing, and coordinating local security forces; surveillance, reconnaissance, intelligence, and targeting; divisional-level joint operations; contingency plans; media operations; and coordination with higher political and military authorities in theatre and at home.

These complexities raise the issue of training for the “worst case.” For the British Army at least, the collective training regime is based on the maxim that war-fighting is the most demanding activity and all other operations are seen as “stepping down.” War-fighting is undoubtedly highly demanding, but counterinsurgency and operations other than war are arguably more complex and just as demanding in other ways. “And at the point of contact, a fight is a fight whether in down-town Belfast, Al Amarah, or Wireless Ridge.” War-fighting requires weapon systems that deliver destructive effect; counterinsurgency and operations other than war require intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance systems of greater precision. War-fighting intelligence training does little to prepare staffs for the fusion challenges of counterinsurgency operations.

The flexibility required of commanders at all levels in counterinsurgency is also arguably greater. At its most intense, counterinsurgency may require any commander, even quite a junior one, to coordinate air, aviation, indirect-fire, and organic direct-fire weapons in a battlespace in which humanitarian operations, coordination with non-governmental organizations and other government departments, and security-sector reform tasks continue at the same time. This level is rarely practiced during collective training.

Drawing on experience in Iraq and the Balkans, General Riley then directed his focus to multina-

3. See Major General Jonathon P. Riley, “Boots on the Ground: The Impact of Stability Operations on the Armies That Must Conduct Them,” Heritage Foundation *Lecture* No. 893, August 8, 2005 (delivered June 18, 2005).

tional operations. He warned that in coalitions, one must be aware of national caveats and “[so-called] red cards.”

In Iraq in particular, I had to be careful never to issue an order unless I had first established that it could be obeyed. This paid off over the election period when requests for aviation and medical assistance, referred to Rome and The Hague, came back with a positive response in the truly remarkable time of 10 minutes. I could rarely get an answer from my own country in less than 10 days.

However, in some ways, coalitions are more effective than established alliances. Alliances have hard-wired, permanent structures with all the attendant bureaucracy, and all members have equal say. Coalitions have ad-hoc structures, made for the moment, and the amount of influence is directly proportional to the size of the contribution. It is a partnership, but a partnership of unequals where decision-making is driven by the powerful.

Major General Riley found that the best solution is often a coalition centered around alliance members. In this way, the military effectiveness will be partly a reflection of mutual trust and familiarity, partly a reflection of the longer-term development of common doctrine and procedures, and partly a function of tempo. On an operation where tempo is low and risk is also low, multinationality can go to a low level. There is time to consult national capitals and respect red cards in a way that is not possible on high-tempo, war-fighting operations. But it should not be supposed that this degree of multinationality can be regarded as normal or acceptable in high-tempo operations.

Next, General Riley turned to some of the challenges of security-sector reform. Reforming a broken army is challenging but can readily be tackled by an organized military force. Some specialist teams are needed for specialist functions, but in general, everyone can take part in it. It does not require special training; it is often a matter of reproducing oneself.

Police reform is another matter. In southern Iraq, Britain stepped forward to take the lead in three of the four provinces. The fourth was taken by Italy.

The British model was failing in Iraq until rescued by the military and the Italians. Great Britain—or, indeed, any other nation—must step forward to take the lead on police reform only if our policing model is appropriate to the problem. It was not right in Iraq, which has a legal and policing model on continental European lines. Moreover, police forces on British or American lines do not come equipped with the organizational skills to reform an institution, to put systems in place, to build infrastructure, to manage complex equipment. The correct lead nation for Iraqi policing was Italy. Contractor use should be limited as their usefulness is too constrained by factors such as force protection, doubtful motivation, and working practices. Only professionals, whether soldiers or policemen, can produce professionals.

In complex operations, the ability to expend resources on things like security-sector reform, rather than have to fight an insurgency, often depends on the degree of consent from the local population. Consent is of course a relative, not an absolute, concept. It can vary from place to place, and in time. It can be present at governmental level but not on the ground, or vice versa. It is also not the same as compliance: enforceable through coercion. Consent therefore matters, but it does not come free; it has to be earned through things like profile, how you operate, how you form partnerships locally. And although it gives you freedom, it can also be a constraint, as offensive operations must be justified to the people and the press for consent to stand.

Nor is consent infinite, and the military can often be the prisoner of other lines of operation. General Riley cited southern Iraq:

For two years, the civil side has done nothing to improve the electricity supply. Demand has risen fourfold; but generation and transmission have scarcely moved at all. People who see no improvement in their lives as a result of regime change rapidly become disillusioned, and they take it out on the most visible element of the coalition—the uniformed military. The civil side has failed in Bosnia, failed in Kosovo, and is failing again in Iraq. If the US in particular wants its

programme of exporting democracy to succeed, this has got to change.

General Riley concluded by asking how the experience of operations like Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, and Iraq has changed the British Army:

Britain went into Northern Ireland only six years after the end of National Service. The officers and NCOs were used to a hierarchal, rigid way of doing things. Of course we had experience of campaigns like Malaya, Borneo, Aden, Cyprus and Kenya, but these were really a continuum pre-war Imperial Policing. In Northern Ireland British forces found themselves fighting a sophisticated terrorist organization, in their own country, in the glare of the media. At the beginning, neither side was very good at it. Since then the operational environment has become steadily more complex. They had to delegate authority to lower levels, get used to uncertainty, and deal with the media. They now work with aid agencies, other government departments and allies. Complex equipment is used, procured for high-intensity fighting in the Cold War, in low-intensity dispersed operations. They have become used to uncertainty, used to cultural asymmetries, and reasonably good at switching from fighting to post-conflict activities.

At the same time risks were taken with war-fighting capability, sacrificing our training for the general in order to rehearse for the particular. Forces have become very subject to the long political screwdriver. And the British government (and high command) has consistently failed to recognize that while embracing a degree of high technology, low-tech skills built up over the years should not be abandoned. These are the ones required for the complex operations just as much as the high-tech equipment, and while one can buy equipment, one has to grow experience. Yet every success is greeted with cuts, and at every turn we are expected to do the same job, in a more complex environment, with less people.

—Peter F. Herrly, Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired), is the President of Herrly Group, an international consulting and executive development firm. The foregoing is a summary of the proceedings of a conference on “The Test of Terrain: The Impact of Stability Operations Upon the Armed Forces,” held in Paris, France, on June 17–18, 2005, and sponsored by the Strategic Studies Institute of the United States Army War College, the Centre d’Etudes en Sciences Sociales de la Défense (Ministère de la Défense), the Royal United Services Institute, the Association of the United States Army, the Förderkreis Deutsches Heer, The Heritage Foundation, and the United States Embassy Paris.