

**PUBLICATION**

**Planning and Early Execution of the War in Iraq:  
An Assessment of Military Participation**

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## Summary

On October 4, 2006, the *Washington Post* editorialized “It ... seems clear that U.S. chances for success in Iraq would have been far better than they are today were it not for the overwhelming and shocking incompetence with which the administration has managed the war.”

On April 11, 2006, General Peter M. Pace, now chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and in 2001–2003 the vice chairman, said:

We had ... every opportunity to speak our minds, and if we (did) not, shame on us because the opportunity (was) there. The plan that was executed was developed by military officers, presented by military officers, questioned by civilians as they should, revamped by military officers, and blessed by the senior military leadership.

This paper presents an assessment of the U.S. professional military’s participation in the planning and early execution of the second Iraq war. Its purpose is to shed light on what, given a presidential judgment that force might be used to bring about regime change in Iraq, produced so faulty a performance.

The assessment is harsh. A very high standard both of insight into the Iraq situation and of steadfastness with civilian leadership was required on the part of the most senior four-star officers involved; that standard was not met and the nation has suffered.

On December 15, 2006, the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps released their new field manual, *Counterinsurgency*. Its Foreword states:

Soldiers and Marines are expected to be nation builders as well as warriors. They must be prepared to help reestablish institutions and local security forces and assist in rebuilding infrastructure and basic services. They must be able to facilitate establishing local governance and the rule of law. The list of such tasks is long; performing them involves extensive coordination and cooperation with many intergovernmental, host-nation, and international agencies.<sup>1</sup>

That the U.S. Army “must be prepared to help reestablish institutions and local security forces and assist in rebuilding infrastructure and basic services [and] be able to facilitate establishing local governance and the rule of law” has long been a lesson of history, including Vietnam and the occupations of Germany and Japan after World War II.

As this paper describes, the responsible senior military professionals did not understand that basic reality or, if they did, they acquiesced in a deeply flawed post-hostilities Iraq plan.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *FM 3-34* and *MCWP 3-33.5* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006).



## Section One

### The Evolution of the Department of Defense, 1947–2000

During the American Revolution, military affairs were largely supervised by the Continental Congress. Under the Articles of Confederation a secretary of war with a War Office had that responsibility. The Constitution ratified in 1789 established the president as commander in chief of the armed forces of the United States; the Congress soon acted to establish a War Department headed by the secretary of war. Legislation passed in 1798 transferred supervision of naval affairs to a Department of the Navy under the secretary of the Navy.

The two fundamental functions of a military department are building the forces and employing the forces. With the passage of time the War Department and Navy Department each evolved its own structure for performing these functions. At the beginning of World War II a chief of staff with a General Staff directed all Army activities, reporting to and in the name of the secretary of war (who had his under and assistant secretaries), and a chief of naval operations directed, for the secretary, the operating forces of the Navy, while building the forces was largely under the direction of uniformed bureau chiefs responsible to the Navy Secretariat.

To assist him in the policy and overall strategic direction of U.S. military operations and to work with the British Chiefs of Staff Committee in the direction of allied operations, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), consisting of the Army chief of staff, the chief of naval operations, and the commanding general of the Army Air Forces; he named Admiral William D. Leahy chief of staff to the commander in chief and the chairman of the JCS. The service chiefs cooperated in the establishment of unified theater commands made up of service components; for each command a service chief and his staff acted as the “executive agent” for the JCS.

The National Security Act of 1947 combined into a National Military Establishment (NME) the War Department, the Department of the Navy, and a separate Department of the Air Force created from the existing Army Air Forces. In the NME, headed by the secretary of defense, each department secretary maintained quasi-cabinet status.

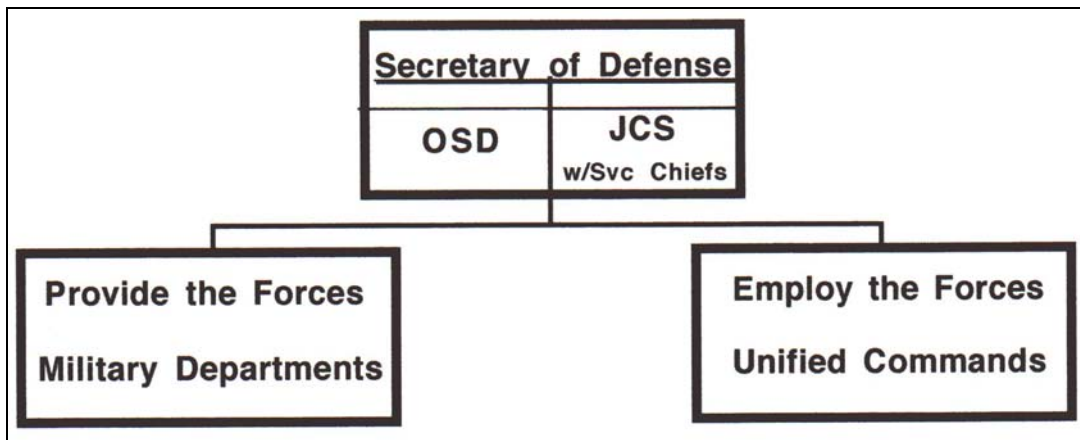
The 1947 Act also established a JCS made up of the Army and Air Force chiefs of staff and the chief of naval operations; it called for a small Joint Staff but no chairman. Amendments passed in 1949 ended the department secretaries’ quasi-cabinet status, renamed the NME the Department of Defense, created a JCS chairman, and increased the size of the Joint Staff. Unified theater commands made up of service components (or “specified” single-service commands) continued to exist, with a service chief as the JCS “executive agent.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A specific service to act as point of contact with a specific theater, usually dependent on the nature of that theater (Army or Navy).

The next fundamental shift was brought about by the Goldwater–Nichols Act of 1986. It made the JCS chairman the principal military advisor to the president and secretary of defense; it created a vice chairman senior to the service chief members, now including the commandant of the Marine Corps; and it gave the JCS chairman jurisdiction over an enlarged Joint Staff. The Act also provided that, under and for the president, the secretary of defense directly commanded the unified and specified combatant commands.

Although fifty years had transformed the Department of Defense and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), had strengthened the authority of its secretary, and increased the authority and responsibilities of the JCS chairman, in 2000 the department’s essential structure remained as shown in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1**  
**Structure of the Department of Defense, 2000**

## **Section Two**

### **The U.S. Military Profession**

Whenever the United States has waged war, an informal contract has existed between the civilian authorities who provide political and strategic direction to the forces to be employed and the professional military establishment that helps those civilian authorities decide what is to be done and then undertakes the further strategic direction of those forces and carries out their operational and tactical direction.

Except in 1898, when the bungling personal direction of the Spanish-American War by Secretary of War Russell A. Alger through the Army’s bureaus led to the 1903 creation of the



General Staff under a chief of staff, that basic relationship essentially prevailed from 1775 to 2002 (although it was severely tested in the Vietnam War).

In his book *The Soldier and the State* Samuel P. Huntington describes how

...virtually all of the institutions of American military professionalism (including schools at all levels devoted to the study of the art of war, structures of sea and field command, systems for the development and management of personnel, and professional military staffs responsible to civilian control) originated between the Civil War and the First World War.<sup>2</sup>

Huntington's fundamental thesis was that "the modern officer corps is a professional body and the modern military officer a professional man." He writes that the distinguishing characteristics of a profession are

- expertise – "specialized knowledge and skill ... acquired only by prolonged education and experience,"
- responsibility – The professional "is a practicing expert ... performing a service ... which is essential to the functioning of society. The client of every profession is society, individually or collectively," [and]
- corporateness – "... a sense of organic unity and consciousness ... as a group apart ... its origins in the lengthy discipline and training necessary for professional competence."<sup>3</sup>

Huntington concludes that "The vocation of officership meets the principal criteria of professionalism" and writes:

What is the specialized expertise of the military officer? ... This central skill is perhaps best summed up (as) ... "the management of violence." ... The direction, operation, and control of a human organization whose primary function is the application of violence is the peculiar skill ... common to the activities of air, land, and sea officers. ... The larger and more complex the organizations of violence which an officer is capable of directing, and the greater the number of situations and conditions under which he can be employed, the higher is his professional competence. ... The officer who can direct the complex activities of a combined operation involving large-scale sea, air, and land forces is at the top of his profession. ... No individual, whatever his inherent intellectual ability and qualities of character, could perform these functions efficiently without considerable training and experience.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (New York, Vintage Books, 1957), 237–269.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 11–12.

Huntington wrote in the 1950s. In the next two decades, U.S. military professionals lived through the Eisenhower administration’s reallocation of defense resources based on the New Look strategy of “massive retaliation,” President John F. Kennedy’s “flexible response” and its conventional force buildup, President Lyndon B. Johnson’s increased commitment to the Vietnam war, President Richard M. Nixon’s strategy of Vietnamization and withdrawal, and, during the Ford presidency, North Vietnam’s 1975 victory. The 1970 *Army War College Study on Military Professionalism*<sup>5</sup> had, in the Army, a major downstream effect in restoring a commitment to pre-Vietnam ideals of professional behavior. As the Vietnam war ended, the 1973 Yom Kippur War triggered an overhaul of Army conventional warfare doctrine; it also presaged a greater U.S. involvement in the Middle East.

The next twenty-five years brought the Rapid Deployment Task Force, soon to become Central Command (CENTCOM), oriented on the Persian Gulf and the Middle East (President Jimmy Carter announced that any outside attempt to gain control in the area would be “repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force.”)<sup>6</sup> Eight years of the Reagan buildup then produced the forces that saw, under President George H. W. Bush, the end of the cold war and a decisive victory over Iraq in Desert Storm.

Meanwhile, more and more civilians, in think tanks, in universities, and in ever-higher positions in government, were acquiring a kind of military expertise without ever serving in uniform. (When Robert McNamara became secretary of defense in 1961, he brought with him the “Whiz Kids” who, in rummaging around the Department of Defense, found places where systems analysis uncovered serious deficiencies in the professional staffs’ planning.) And, incidentally, with no noticeable change in officer professionalism, women entered the force in ever-larger numbers, rising to higher and higher rank.

The budget-driven restructuring (“downsizing”) at the end of the cold war, strategically questionable at the time, introduced a stress on the military’s (particularly the Army’s) professional ethic that persists today. When combined with the cultural aspects of “can do,” loyalty to civilian direction, and an overall belief in the critical role of the military in protecting the nation, this missions-resources imbalance strained the culture of “loyal servant/civilian control.” But this was not a new phenomenon.

Toward the end of the twentieth century a movement called the “revolution in military affairs” began to take hold in U.S. military institutions.<sup>7</sup> In his 2000 election campaign, candidate

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Army War College, *Study on Military Professionalism* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, 1970).

<sup>6</sup> Jimmy Carter, “President’s State of the Union Address,” January 23, 1980.

<sup>7</sup> “Driven both by military needs and galloping innovations in the new economy, [we have] developed ‘information superiority,’ [permitting] an effective ‘information umbrella’ over our own forces and those of our friends and allies. [T]his dominant battlefield knowledge [gives] us an operational superiority that [goes] beyond our obvious strength in

George W. Bush promised to increase American military effectiveness and efficiency through “transformation” of the U.S. military, by introducing information age computing and telecommunications technologies to the mix of forces that had fought the cold war.

In 2000, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) published its *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century*. This book was the product of dozens of participants and two major conferences addressing the “values, philosophies, and traditions that animate” U.S. military forces and are “the bedrock of military effectiveness.” Dealing for the most part with the commissioned officer corps of all services and with their families as well, the CSIS study was far more comprehensive in its scope and findings than can be summarized here. It did say this:

The study group’s judgment is that the fundamental U.S. military values, philosophies, customs, and traditions, even though under stress, are fundamentally suitable for, and essential to, effective military operations in the envisaged environment of the twenty-first century. But they must be modified in their application to ensure operational effectiveness. This is particularly true considering that likely operations in the future will demand both traditional stamina and greater tactical flexibility.<sup>8</sup>

An evaluation today might conclude that while military professionalism is generally healthy— and remarkably so at junior and mid-grade levels—we have not always met the requirement for universally high standards of service at senior levels. Surely the twenty-first century places extraordinarily high demands on our top leaders for competence, commitment, and candor. Possible reasons for shortcomings at senior levels could include environmental complexity, dilemmas of loyalty inadequately addressed in education and guidance, and a selection system that has not matured to the point where it can ensure that all general officers exemplify the key professional values.<sup>9</sup>

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arms and technology. It [means] a quicker, smarter use of those advantages than the world has ever known. At century's end, we have the opportunity to vastly improve the U.S. military, making it both affordable and better suited for today's crises. But if we are to lead this historic transformation rather than be swept along by it, we must complete the revolution in military affairs.” Admiral William A. Owens, Vice Chairman, JCS, 1994–1996, *Blueprint Magazine*, January 1, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS], *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, D.C.: The CSIS Press, 2000).

<sup>9</sup> This view is offered by Lieutenant General Walter F. Ulmer, Jr., chief of the survey team and chair of the working group of the CSIS study on *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century*. Ulmer was also the team chief of the Army War College study “Leadership Lessons at Division Command Level—2004,” which examined the perceptions of leader behavior of four division commanders soon after they returned to home station from Iraq.

### Section Three Expectations

The expectations of a commissioned officer can be summed up in these words from his oath of office... “...that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter,” meaning that...

...the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will “well and faithfully...[advise] the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense, etc.” [and]...

...the Commander, U.S. Central Command, will “well and faithfully... [perform] the missions assigned to that command by the President or by the Secretary with the approval of the President.”<sup>10</sup>

Clausewitz wrote: “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.”<sup>11</sup> Mao Tse-Tung wrote:

Why are subjective mistakes made? Because the way the forces in a war or a battle are disposed or directed does not fit the conditions of a given time or place, because subjective direction does not correspond to, or is at variance with, the objective conditions, in other words, because the contradiction between the subjective and the objective has not been resolved.... The crux is to bring the subjective and the objective into proper correspondence with each other.<sup>12</sup>

Clausewitz and Mao are saying that the first military requirement is to understand the situation.

To understand the situation was the essential demand on the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commander of CENTCOM if they were to “well and faithfully” perform their duties in the war in Iraq. Integrity, intellect, steadfastness, and technical competence, yes. But, above all, they were called on for professional wisdom and judgment—for insight.

Clausewitz and Mao are saying that if a commander does not understand his situation, anything that he does right will only be done by accident. What good is a very senior professional military officer to the civilian authorities he serves or to the U.S. body politic if his insight is faulty?

As I left Vietnam after my third tour I wrote the following about insight:

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<sup>10</sup> Sections 153 and 164, Title 10 U.S. Code.

<sup>11</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 87.

<sup>12</sup> *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1968), 85.

Insight—or the ability to see the situation as it really is—is the most valuable asset an advisor can have. Intellect alone does not guarantee insight. Soldierly virtues such as integrity, courage, loyalty, and steadfastness are valuable indeed, but they are often not accompanied by insight. Insight comes from a willing openness to a variety of stimuli, from intellectual curiosity, from observation and reflection, from continuous evaluation and testing, from conversations and discussions, from listening to the views of outsiders, and from the indispensable ingredient of humility. Self-doubt is essential equipment for a responsible officer in this environment; the man who believes he has the situation entirely figured out is a danger to himself and to his mission.

I dwell on this because, while insight is the secret of good generalship in any situation, it is even more a requirement among the intangibles, nuances, and obscurities of a situation like Vietnam. Certainly the responsible officer must be a man of decision, willing to settle on a course of action and follow it through. But the reflective, testing, and tentative manner in which insight is sought does not mean indecisiveness. It simply raises the likelihood that the decided course of action will be successful, because it is in harmony with the real situation that exists.”

I believe that great costs could have been saved in our Vietnam experience if our individual and collective insight had been better as things were developing.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Section Four**

##### **Fallibilities**

“War is the great auditor of institutions.” So wrote Correlli Barnett in *The Swordbearers*.<sup>14</sup> Extensive training and experience do not guarantee high professional competence. Four-star officers can and do fall short, their failings often exposed by war.

In the three-volume *Military Effectiveness*,<sup>15</sup> twenty-one historians assessed the military effectiveness of seven nations (the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, France, Italy, and Russia) in three periods: the First World War, the period between the two World Wars, and the Second World War. The authors assessed the political, strategic, operational, and tactical effectiveness of the seven nations’ militaries.

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<sup>13</sup> *Senior Officer Debriefing Report of Major General John H. Cushman*, Headquarters, Delta Regional Assistance Command, 14 January 1972, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Correlli Barnett, *The Swordbearers: Studies in Supreme Command in the First World War* (London: Cassell Military, 1963), 10.

<sup>15</sup> Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray, eds., *Military Effectiveness* (Boston, Mass.: Allen & Unwin, 1988).

For the editors I then wrote a summary that addressed primarily the operational and tactical realms, those in which the people of a nation have a right to expect professional military competence: “In the spheres of operations and tactics, [the historians’ ratings] suggest for the most part less than general professional military competence and sometimes abysmal incompetence.” (America’s military in World War II received the only top rating in operational performance, and was highly rated in the other areas as well.)<sup>16</sup>

Having acquitted itself well in World War II and the Korean War, the U.S. military establishment cannot be said to have excelled in the Vietnam War. In his book *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam*,<sup>17</sup> H.R. McMaster made use of newly released transcripts and personal accounts to tell of the Washington-level direction of that war. In a review of the book published in *National Interest Magazine* (Spring 1998), Eliot Cohen, professor of strategic studies at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, stated:

McMaster has written a scathing indictment of America’s civilian and military leadership during the early phases of the Vietnam war, and he speaks ... with unique moral authority. ... McMaster earned his moral authority under fire ... [in the Gulf War]. ... His call to his leaders to hold themselves to high standards of professional integrity is, therefore, an important one. No wonder, then, that General Fogleman (Air Force Chief of Staff who resigned in 1997),<sup>18</sup> himself an acute student of history, would pay close attention to a work that on nearly every page excoriates his predecessors for their unwillingness to speak and act as their positions required.

Nor did the war’s operational direction reflect well on General William C. Westmoreland who commanded in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968. General Creighton W. Abrams, his successor, brought a more effective operational concept. Lewis Sorley makes this clear in his book *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and the Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam*.<sup>19</sup> A review noted:

In 1970 or early in 1971 the United States had essentially won the Vietnam War. [W]e had defeated the Viet Cong in the field, returned effective control of most of the population to the South Vietnamese and created a situation where the South Vietnamese armed forces could continue the war on their own, so long as we provided them with adequate supplies and intelligence,

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<sup>16</sup> John H. Cushman, “Challenge and Response at the Operational and Tactical Levels, 1914–45,” in *Military Effectiveness*, Vol. III, 320–340.

<sup>17</sup> H.R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

<sup>18</sup> General Fogleman did not resign; he applied for and was granted retirement.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and the Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam* (New York: Harcourt, 1999).

and carried through on our promise to bomb the North if they violated peace agreements.

This situation had been brought about by the changes in strategy and tactics which were implemented by Army General Creighton Abrams when he replaced William Westmoreland in 1968, after the military triumph but public relations disaster of the Tet Offensive. Where Westmoreland had treated the War as simply a military exercise, Abrams understood its political dimensions. Abrams ... ended Westmoreland's emphasis on body counts and destroying the enemy and switched the focus to regaining control of villages. He understood that eventual victory required civilian support for the South Vietnamese government and this support required the government to provide villagers with physical security from the Viet Cong.

Abrams was accompanied in implementing this new approach by Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and by William Colby (who) oversaw the pacification program. Together they managed to salvage the wreckage that Westmoreland had left behind and they retrieved the situation even as Washington was drawing down troop levels. In 1972, with the Viet Cong essentially eliminated as an effective fighting force, the North Vietnamese mounted a massive Easter offensive, but this too was decisively defeated.<sup>20</sup>

But it was too late. The American people were losing faith in the war. By the end of 1973 the United States had withdrawn all its troops. Before long the Congress provided no further logistical support to the South. North Vietnam launched its final offensive; the South collapsed and surrendered on April 30, 1975.

In the late 1970s the U.S. Army began two decades of remarkable recovery from the Vietnam War, focusing once more on Europe. By the time the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and the cold war had ended, the Army's soldiers, leaders, doctrine, and materiel were ready for modern air/land war. Responding to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and after weeks of air bombardment, Third U.S. Army, with seven American divisions, one British division, and one French division in two corps conducted in Desert Storm a mechanized desert war for which it was superbly suited. Iraq surrendered in March 1991.

Desert Shield/Storm was a near-textbook example of how to work the civil-military informal contract. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, President George H.W. Bush made the basic decision to act; Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney then reviewed the plan from theater commander General H. Norman Schwarzkopf through JCS Chairman General Colin Powell; with his guidance Schwarzkopf and Powell mostly did the rest. With victory in hand, the president decided when to end the war (although perhaps too soon). The informal contract would not work that way the next time.

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<sup>20</sup> Reviewed at brothersjudd.com on March 19, 2001. The author, Lewis Sorley, agrees.

With early talk of a “peace dividend,” the U.S. military entered a time of force shrinkage and “transformation” aimed at preparing it for the twenty-first century. By 2001 the Army had gone from a strength of 750,000 soldiers in eighteen divisions to 480,000 soldiers in ten divisions, and was looking at even less. But the Army’s field organizations and hardware were about the same as those of 1991. Its senior professionals were no longer reflecting on Vietnam, and its schools had cut back on teaching the lessons of that war.<sup>21</sup>

In 1957 Samuel Huntington wrote that “the specialized expertise of the military officer ... is perhaps best summed up [as] ... ‘the management of violence.’” Experience in Iraq was about to demonstrate that, given that an army’s ultimate reason for being is to ensure a government’s own control of its land and people, military expertise is required in far more than the management of violence.

## **Section Five**

### **Pentagon Changes Under Secretary Rumsfeld**

Donald H. Rumsfeld was sworn in as secretary of defense on January 20, 2001. He had already been secretary of defense in 1975–1977, the youngest in U.S. history. Focusing on “transformation,” he immediately moved to gain control over the Department of Defense.

In his first four months at the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has launched a score of secretive studies and posed hundreds of tough questions as he has tried to create a new vision for the American military. He has also rallied critics, ranging from conservative members of Congress ... to some of the generals who work for him [who have] in dozens of interviews expressed deep concern that Rumsfeld has acted imperiously.... In an extensive interview in his Pentagon office last week, Rumsfeld argued that his review has been necessary, rational and inclusive, involving more than 170 meetings with 44 generals and admirals. “Everyone who wants to be briefed I think has been briefed,” he said. “Everyone cannot be involved in everything.”<sup>22</sup>

Mr. Rumsfeld saw that one thing had changed since 1977: Section 162 (b) of Title 10 U.S. Code was explicit:

Unless otherwise directed by the President, the chain of command to a unified or specified combatant command runs –  
(1) from the President to the Secretary of Defense; and

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<sup>21</sup> Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 268–275; John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (New York: Praeger, 2002), 206.

<sup>22</sup> *The Washington Post*, May 20, 2001, A1.



(2) from the Secretary of Defense to the commander of the combatant command.

Bob Woodward<sup>23</sup> describes a secretary of defense who, three weeks in office, exploded when he was not immediately informed of U.S./U.K. air strikes in Iraq, the largest in two years. He tells how JCS Vice Chairman Richard Myers and Vice Admiral Scott Fry, director of the Joint Staff, drew the secretary's immense wrath when other operational reports were not instantaneously passed to him.

But carefully crafted sections of the 1986 Goldwater–Nichols Act had prescribed the duties of the JCS chairman and his Joint Staff director with regard to the combatant commands. From Section 163, Title 10, U.S. Code:

Role of Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff:

(a) ... the President may –

(1) direct that communications between the President or the Secretary of Defense and the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and

(2) assign duties to the Chairman to assist the President and the Secretary of Defense in performing their command function.

(b) (1) The Secretary of Defense may assign to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff responsibility for overseeing the activities of the combatant commands...

In those weeks, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his Joint Staff director were simply operating as the former president and secretary of defense had directed. While it did not take them long to change their ways to suit their new boss, it may have been that the secretary had not perused all of Title 10. From Section 155:

Joint Staff

(a) There is a Joint Staff under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Staff assists the Chairman and, subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Chairman, the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in carrying out their responsibilities ...

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<sup>23</sup> Published official histories do not exist, thus the only source available for much of this section and the rest of this paper are the books of reputable reporters with access to sources who will talk to and share documents with them. These include Bob Woodward's *State of Denial* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006); Tom Ricks's *Fiasco; The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006); and Michael R. Gordon's and Bernard E. Trainor's *Cobra II, The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Pantheon, 2006).

(c) The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff manages the Joint Staff and the Director of the Joint Staff ...

(d) The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that the Joint Staff is independently organized and operated so that the Joint Staff supports the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff ... to provide

- (1) for the unified strategic direction of the combatant forces;
- (2) for their operation under unified command; and
- (3) for their integration into an efficient team of land, naval, and air forces.

In any event, it seems that Mr. Rumsfeld decided to relieve Admiral Fry. Woodward writes:

Word reached General [Hugh] Shelton [JCS chairman] ... that Rumsfeld was planning to do precisely that ... Shelton bolted up to Rumsfeld's office and barged in ... "if you're not happy with Scott Fry," [he] said, "he works for me, and ... it means you're unhappy with me. You can have two for the price of one." Rumsfeld ... denied that he had any plan to fire Fry.<sup>24</sup>

Secretary Rumsfeld once suggested to General Shelton that the chairman give his advice to the president through him. Reminding the secretary of Section 151 of Title 10, U.S. Code, namely:

(b) (1) The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense ...<sup>25</sup>

Shelton said that he did not see how that would be possible under the law.<sup>26</sup>

Woodward gives a play-by-play account of the fateful process through which President George W. Bush, Vice President Cheney, and Secretary Rumsfeld decided who would replace General Shelton as chairman of the JCS.

After a comprehensive review, two prime candidates emerged: Air Force general Richard Myers, vice chairman of the JCS, and Admiral Vern Clark, chief of naval operations.<sup>27</sup> Told that

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<sup>24</sup> *State of Denial*, 32.

<sup>25</sup> In (2) that follows, the law also says "The other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are military advisers to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense." It then spells out procedures for separate advice.

<sup>26</sup> *State of Denial*, 38.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 56: "[Marine Corps Commandant James Jones] was called with no advance notice on a Saturday morning for an interview with Rumsfeld about the JCS chairmanship ... [Thinking] who would want to be his chairman and senior military advisor, given that it appeared that Rumsfeld didn't really want military advice? He wanted voluminous

he was to meet with President Bush about the job of chairman, Admiral Clark insisted that he first have an understanding with Secretary Rumsfeld. Saying that he was quite satisfied to continue as chief of naval operations, he brought up all the studies and reports that the secretary had kept from the Joint Chiefs. He told Rumsfeld, “Mr. Secretary, you have locked us out of this process.... If I am going to be your senior military advisor you have to know what I think and I have to know what you think.” In a long interview, Admiral Clark told the vice president that the Vietnam-era military leaders had lost their ability to affect the process; they didn’t talk straight. Secretary McNamara manipulated the system, and the country and the military paid a price. “Mr. Vice President, whatever you do, you’ve got to pick a military leader who will never let that happen again.”<sup>28</sup>

In the summer of 2001, overhaul of the defense establishment and military transformation were Secretary Rumsfeld’s main goals. There was little notion that there would soon be war. Woodward writes: “Since it was now down to Clark or Myers, Shelton thought he owed Rumsfeld his recommendation. ‘Vern is the best by far,’ he said. Clark would push hard against Rumsfeld, which Shelton felt was exactly what Rumsfeld needed. But Myers was the exact opposite. He would state his view, but if Rumsfeld disagreed, would withdraw and acquiesce. Shelton had seen it happen.”<sup>29</sup>

On August 24, 2001, President Bush announced his selection. The new JCS chairman would be General Myers; Marine general Peter M. Pace would be vice chairman. Eighteen days later Islamic jihadists seized four fuel-laden American commercial aircraft, determined to fly them into targets in New York City and Washington, and the United States was at war.

## **Section Six**

### **Planning for the Iraq War**

From Title 10, U.S. Code:

153 (a) – Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall be responsible for ...

(1) Assisting the President and the Secretary of Defense in providing for the strategic direction of the armed forces.

(2) Preparing strategic plans ... preparing joint logistic and mobility plans...

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information and detail from others, but then he would only follow his own advice. ... Jones took the unusual step of declining the interview, saying he wanted to remain the Marine Corps commandant.”

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 65.

(3) Providing for the preparation and review of contingency plans which conform to policy guidance from the President and the Secretary of Defense...

164 (b) (1) The commander of a combatant command is responsible to the President and to the Secretary of Defense for the performance of missions assigned to that command by the President or by the Secretary with the approval of the President.

In July 2000 Army general Tommy Franks had moved from command of Third U.S. Army, which was the Army component of CENTCOM (ARCENT), to become CENTCOM's commander, responsible for the Middle East.

After 9/11, Secretary Rumsfeld's immediate priority was to deal with the attack's perpetrators: Al Qaeda and its leader Osama Bin Laden, and their Taliban supporters in Afghanistan. Responding to the president and Secretary Rumsfeld, General Franks prepared plans for air strikes and for the use of special forces teams to work with Afghan resistance forces. On October 7, 2001, U.S. bombers began hitting Taliban sites. On October 19, Northern Alliance forces began to move. By November 9, with U.S. air support, they had Mazar el Sharif. On November 12, they took Herat and on November 13, Kabul.

On November 25, a Marine Expeditionary Unit, staging from ships in the Arabian Sea, assaulted into Kandahar, followed in weeks by Army units from the 101st Airborne and 10th Mountain Divisions. On December 5, Afghan delegates meeting in Bonn chose Hamid Karzai, an Afghan tribal leader, to head an interim government. The Taliban withdrew from Kandahar and Bin Laden's forces retreated into mountains near Tora Bora in eastern Afghanistan; U.S. forces redeployed there. On December 22, Hamid Karzai was sworn in as chairman of an interim government, which the United States announced that it would recognize.<sup>30</sup>

But, on November 27, Secretary Rumsfeld had told General Franks to get back in a week with a plan for Iraq. Planning, General Franks saw the secretary of defense as his next higher commander. Dealing directly with the JCS chairman, vice chairman, and Joint Staff, he disdained the service chiefs as "Title Ten [obscurities]" whose functions were simply to provide the service components that he commanded and that he put to work on his planning.

Viewing the U.S. success in Afghanistan, Mr. Rumsfeld wanted a plan that—taking full advantage of technology, and employing surprise, firepower and speed of maneuver—would quickly defeat the Iraqi forces, weakened since 1991, and bring down Saddam Hussein. Unlike in the Gulf War, which he thought had been wasteful, he was determined to keep the land forces small, with lean logistics. No larger than needed to defeat the Iraqis and topple the regime, they

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<sup>30</sup> In *American Soldier* (New York: Regan Books, 2004), 250–282, General Franks writes of these Afghanistan operations and of Iraq planning as a "New Kind of War."

could be quickly reduced. General Franks accepted that, and in iteration after iteration the two principals produced such a plan.

To some who observed the process, Mr. Rumsfeld's numbers seemed to be pulled out of thin air. Franks would draw up a new plan, but Rumsfeld would poke, prod, and question at every turn. Defense Department civilians would move into Franks's planning cells to monitor his work, and the general would be summoned to Washington repeatedly to present his new plan and to receive instructions from Secretary Rumsfeld himself. But General Franks, in his book *American Soldier*, portrays it differently: negotiations were tough, but both men were working toward the same objective.

ARCENT, under General David McKiernan, provided not only combat and combat supporting troops, but also all theater logistics; ARCENT also did the detailed Army troop list planning and number crunching. But, rather than using the "time-phased force deployment list" painstakingly worked out by CENTCOM and the services, the secretary of defense himself calibrated the flow of fighting units up to the hour the invasion was launched and beyond. Thus, unit personnel arrivals did not match the arrival of unit equipment, and mutually dependent units were separated to arrive at random or not at all. Thus, when in the first days of the offensive Saddam's fedayheen in large numbers began attacking the advancing forces' logistics tail, the armored cavalry unit equipped with infantry-carrying helicopters and Apache gunships that had been slated to patrol those rear areas was not there; it was Stateside frantically responding to a call to deploy—too late.

When unification took place in 1947 the War Department had a long-standing capability and institutional memory for postwar governance of a defeated enemy, recently demonstrated in Germany<sup>31</sup> and Japan; that tradition was now a distant memory. When National Security Council principals and staffers grappled with issues of Iraq's postwar governance and reconstruction, it was no longer obvious that a successful such endeavor would surely entail a comprehensive theater post-hostilities plan for the defeated Iraq. Quite the opposite: a long occupation with a heavy American footprint was not visualized; the United Nations would be engaged; other coalition members would participate; and Iraqis themselves would quickly take over.

At CENTCOM there was little post-hostilities planning; Mr. Rumsfeld's key principals had told General Franks to "leave Phase IV [the post-Hussein-defeat phase] to us." Mr. Rumsfeld himself waved off help offered by the State Department. ARCENT set up a post-hostilities

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<sup>31</sup> "Long before the dust settled on European battlefields in World War II, the US Army had to face the difficult tasks of occupying and governing war-torn Germany. Its leaders and troops were called upon to deal with a series of complex challenges in political, economic, financial, social, and cultural affairs, tasks beyond the traditional combat roles of soldiers. This volume... offers an in-depth study of the first year, the formative period of the occupation, a most eventful phase in the shaping of post-war Europe...it analyzes efforts to combat hunger, disease, and crime, preserve cultural artifacts, re-establish industry and utilities, and resolve thorny problems involving currency, housing, education, newspapers, elections, and displaced persons. The account shows the pitfalls and difficulties in planning, organizing, and executing such a complex undertaking." Earl F. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany, 1944–46* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1975), iii.

planning cell, but not until Secretary Rumsfeld named retired Army lieutenant general Jay Garner to take charge of an Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance two months before the invasion did real planning begin. Garner would in effect work for the secretary of defense, creating divided in-theater command. Hastily collecting a staff, he deployed to Kuwait just days before D-Day.

As operations began, plans for constituting key ministries of a post-Hussein Iraqi national government and for putting in place provincial governments were essentially unformed. Provisions ensuring that there would be an Iraqi army and police force did not exist. The troops were not told what to do when the Iraqi army was defeated. Post-hostilities operational concepts were not developed and made known. Plans and capabilities for psychological operations (psy-ops) were rudimentary at best. Gaping holes remained.<sup>32</sup>

## Section Seven

### Warnings

In mid-November 2002 seventy national security experts and Mideast scholars met for two days at the National Defense University to discuss Iraq after Saddam. Calling for unity of post-hostilities effort, the workshop's report said that "*the primary post-intervention focus of U.S. military operations must be on establishing and maintaining a secure environment*" (emphasis in the original) and that absent a realistic and comprehensive civil-military plan the outcome would be short-term success but long-term failure: "...and the resulting chaos and crises that would attend such a failure."<sup>33</sup>

Then, in December 2002, a days-long joint and interagency workshop at the Army War College<sup>34</sup> considered the same matter. Its report stated:

In recent decades, U.S. civilian and military leadership have shied away from nation-building. However... [i]f this nation and its coalition partners decide to undertake the mission to remove Saddam Hussein, they will also have to be

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<sup>32</sup> Far-reaching consequences stemmed from these planning failures. Example: military police shortages, coupled with the often indiscriminate roundup of suspects as resistance mounted, produced overcrowded prisons. "Of the 17 detention facilities in Iraq, the largest, Abu Ghraib (seriously overcrowded [and] under-resourced) housed up to 7,000 detainees in October 2003, with a guard force of only about 90 personnel from the 800<sup>th</sup> Military Police Brigade." Excerpts from the (James Schlesinger) Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations, quoted in *The Washington Post*, August 25, 2004, A13.

<sup>33</sup> Institute for National Strategic Studies, Workshop Report, *Iraq: Looking Beyond Saddam's Rule* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 20–21 November 2002), [On-line] URL: [http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Repository/INSS\\_Proceedings/Iraq/Iraq\\_Workshop\\_Nov02/Iraq\\_workshop\\_Nov2002.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Repository/INSS_Proceedings/Iraq/Iraq_Workshop_Nov02/Iraq_workshop_Nov2002.pdf) (Accessed on January 17, 2007.).

<sup>34</sup> Conrad C. Crane and W. Andrew Terrill, *Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario* (Carlisle, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, February 2003).

prepared to dedicate considerable time, manpower, and money to the effort to reconstruct Iraq after the fighting is over. Otherwise, the success of military operations will be ephemeral, and the problems they were designed to eliminate could return or be replaced by new and more virulent difficulties...

Iraq presents far from ideal conditions for achieving strategic goals. Saddam Hussein is the culmination of a violent political culture that is rooted in a tortured history.

Ethnic, tribal, and religious schisms could produce civil war or fracture the state after Saddam is deposed. The Iraqi Army may be useful as a symbol of national unity, but it will take major reeducation and reorganization to operate in a more democratic state.<sup>35</sup>

The report presented a mission matrix listing 135 specific tasks that must be performed to build and sustain a state, arraying those tasks across four phases of occupation, and designating whether military forces or civilian agencies should perform them. It said: “The U.S. Army has been organized and trained primarily to fight and win the nation’s major wars. Nonetheless, the Service must prepare for victory in peace as well.”<sup>36</sup>

Among the agencies represented at both the November and December workshops were the Departments of State and Defense, the Joint and Army Staffs, the National Defense University, and the U.S. Joint Forces Command.

There is no evidence that either of these two efforts had a significant influence on the JCS or on CENTCOM as they planned for Iraq.<sup>37</sup>

## **Section Eight**

### **Early Conduct of the Iraq War**

On March 20, 2003, with Turkey unwilling to accept U.S. forces for a thrust from the north, coalition land forces attacked from Kuwait; air bombardment began. Coalition forces secured Iraq’s oil fields essentially intact. On March 26 the 173rd Airborne Brigade parachuted into northern Iraq. In sometimes heavy fighting, British and U.S. Army and Marine division operations went well; American troops were at the outskirts of Baghdad within two weeks. A week later the Iraqi armed forces and government had collapsed; Saddam’s statue was pulled down on April 9.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. iii, v.

<sup>37</sup> The Army War College workshop report received wide distribution. The under secretary of defense for policy limited the NDU workshop report to the OSD and Joint Staff, according to Colonel Paul Hughes (USA, Ret.), who ran that workshop.

Chaos ensued. As national police melted away, law and order ceased to exist. By April 12 looting had become serious in the major cities. In Baghdad, except for the Oil Ministry, which was guarded by U.S. troops, most government and public buildings, Iraq's National Museum of Iraq, and major hospitals were plundered; virtually nothing of value remained.<sup>38</sup> Violence broke out throughout the country. Sunnis and Shiites clashed, and scattered attacks began on coalition forces.

As coalition forces redeployed, Anbar Province in western Iraq, the heartland of Sunniism and Baathist support, was treated as an “economy of force” operation and only sparsely covered by American troops. Secretary Rumsfeld questioned the need for the 1st Cavalry Division and did not call it forward; it eventually deployed in 2004. At first visualized as attacking from Turkey, the 4th Infantry Division finally arrived. Itself inadequate, the full suite of planned troops was not on hand for weeks.

As soon as possible, we want to have working alongside the commander an interim Iraqi authority, people representing the people of Iraq. And, as that authority grows and gets greater credibility from the people of Iraq, we want to turn over more and more responsibilities to them.

– Colin Powell, press conference, March 28, 2003

We will leave Iraq completely in the hands of Iraqis as quickly as possible.

– Condoleezza Rice, press briefing, April 4, 2003

Jay Garner and his team moved to Baghdad on April 18. On April 21 Garner said, “The new ruler of Iraq is going to be an Iraqi. I don't rule anything.”

On April 24, Secretary Rumsfeld informed General Garner that former diplomat L. Paul Bremer would come to Iraq as presidential envoy; the president announced the appointment on May 6.<sup>39</sup> Arriving in Baghdad on May 12, Bremer created the Coalition Provisional Authority, and on May 16 he issued Regulation Number 1, stating that “The CPA shall exercise powers of government temporarily.”

Bremer would now “rule.” He would oversee, direct, and coordinate “all U.S. Government programs and activities in Iraq, except those under... the Commander, U.S. Central Command.”<sup>40</sup> The divided on-scene authority for security and reconstruction in Iraq that had existed since the

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<sup>38</sup> A well-crafted annex to the Operation Iraqi Freedom operations plan would have placed a list of key ministries and other facilities, with maps and data, in the hands of the attacking divisions, ready for tasking their units to protect them.

<sup>39</sup> The White House press release stated: “[Ambassador Bremer] will report to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and will advise the President, through the Secretary, on policies designed to achieve American and Coalition goals for Iraq.”

<sup>40</sup> Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, *The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA): Origin, Characteristics, and Institutional Authorities* (Washington, D.C.: CRS, updated June 6, 2005), CRS 12.



invasion began was thus set in concrete. With poor coordination between the two authorities, unity of effort suffered.

On May 16 Mr. Bremer issued Order 1, removing all Baath party members from office. On May 23 he issued Order 2, dissolving the Iraqi army and other entities of the Baathist state; both orders surprised the military chain of command. An uncoordinated insurgency had already begun; with disaffected former Iraqi soldiers and officials now joining, it metastasized and received increasingly competent direction. Despite early positive developments, the insurgency situation in Iraq is worse today than in mid-2003 and the outlook continues grim. Sectarian strife is increasing unabated.

## Section Nine

### When to Part Company

Given that the president judged that the United States might go to war in Iraq and in time took the United States to war, what responsibility and accountability does the U.S. professional military establishment, and specifically its four-star officers in key positions at the time, bear for the near-disastrous state of affairs in Iraq?

When one considers the fundamental responsibility of the military professional, especially one of very senior rank, the failure of the key military four-stars to exercise good judgment and to stand their ground over divided command in immediate post-conflict Iraq is profoundly troubling. It was their responsibility to have understood both their duty and the lessons of history and of war and to have withstood the pressure to commit, or permit, grave lapses in preparation for the war's second phase.

Asking to be relieved of responsibility unless changes were made was an option available to any one of them.<sup>41</sup> A striking such example is that, when confronted with Prime Minister Churchill's and the "bomber barons'" implacable opposition to his wish that the Allied strategic bomber force in England be placed under his direction for the Normandy assault, General Dwight D. Eisenhower finally wrote, "If a satisfactory answer is not reached I am going to take drastic action and inform the Combined Chiefs of Staff that unless the matter is settled at once I will request relief from this Command."<sup>42</sup> He got his way.

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<sup>41</sup> On this point, Napoleon wrote in his Maxim LXXII: "A general-in-chief has no right to shelter his mistakes in war under cover of his sovereign, or of a minister, when these are both distant from the scene of operation, and must consequently be either ill informed or wholly ignorant of the actual state of things. Hence it follows, that every general is culpable who undertakes the execution of a plan which he considers faulty. It is his duty to represent his reasons, to insist upon a change of plan—in short, to give in his resignation rather than allow himself to be made the instrument of his army's ruin."

<sup>42</sup> Quoted by John S. D. Eisenhower in *Allies* (New York: Doubleday, 1948), 447. From Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (New York: Doubleday, 1948), 222: "...when a battle needs the last ounce of available forces, the

Or, without asking to be relieved, they could have objected far more strenuously. General Matthew B. Ridgway, who in 1953 was named Army chief of staff by President Eisenhower and whose two-year term was not renewed, wrote:

...The professional military man has three primary responsibilities:

First, to give his honest, fearless, objective, professional military opinion of what he needs to do the job the nation gives him.

Second, if what he is given is less than the minimum he regards as essential, to give his superiors an honest, fearless, objective opinion of the consequence of these shortages as he sees them from the military viewpoint.

Third and finally, he has the duty, whatever the final decision, to do the utmost with whatever he is furnished.<sup>43</sup>

Ridgway, commanding the 82d Airborne Division, followed these principles when he was ordered in 1943 to drop the division on Rome. He believed the mission would destroy his division and objected vigorously to the highest levels. He then returned to his division and prepared to carry out the mission.

Although George C. Marshall strongly disapproved of officers' resigning in protest over policy, a principle he is famous for holding to as secretary of state, he threatened to do so once as Army chief of staff. In 1940–1941, when Army expansion was under way, some influential people advocated a scheme to generate Army officers by reinstating the "Plattsburg" officer training camps for civilian volunteers of the period before the United States went to war in 1917. The Army's system of Officer Candidate Schools was already in place; it required that the officer candidate first be an enlisted man. The pressure on General Marshall to embrace this scheme became so great that he told Secretary of War Henry Stimson he would resign if it were adopted. It was not.<sup>44</sup>

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commander must not be in the position of depending upon request and negotiation to get it. It was vital that the entire sum of our assault power, including the two Strategic Air Forces, be available for use during the critical stages of the attack. I stated unequivocally that so long as I was in command I would accept no other solution."

<sup>43</sup> *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway*, as told to Harold H. Martin (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 346.

<sup>44</sup> "I did something at one stage which I think is very reprehensible on the part of a government official, the more so when he is a military official, which is a long-enduring status. It came to a certain point in this matter where the pressure and the advice of the secretary of war was coming entirely from New York. Judge Patterson had come down. He was a training camp man. This wasn't his bailiwick. He was on the supply side but he moved into this. Bill Donovan was into this. A member of the New York Times publishing house, a reserve general [Julius Ochs Adler] was in it. They finally got to the point where they were going to put this over. I then told Mr. Stimson, 'Very well, Mr. Stimson, I have done my best and I have the entire staff with me. They all see this thing alike to avoid this dilemma. Now it has arisen and it is going to take form apparently. I tell you now that I resign the day you do it.' As I say, I think this a rather reprehensible attitude for a member of the government at a time like this, particularly when he's a military member, when he's a career man—but nothing else could stop the thing. So I decided I would just take that stand. If

For General Franks the moment of truth should have come no later than January 2003 when the secretary of defense placed Jay Garner in charge of postwar Iraq. He should have immediately recognized that this would result in a divided command for the post-hostilities phase, that that phase was crucial for successful mission accomplishment, and that it was time for him to take a stand.

At that moment General Franks could have met with Mr. Rumsfeld to tell him that he intended to make Army general John Abizaid, his newly arrived and highly capable Arabic-speaking deputy commander, responsible for Phase IV, which would begin seamlessly with the defeat of Hussein's army. As Franks's deputy, Abizaid would take over Garner's operation and become the temporary military governor of Iraq. A transition to a civilian-led reconstruction regime would come in due time. Learning from post-World War II experience in Germany and Japan, including their strong psyops components, General Franks could have told the secretary that he intended General Abizaid to plan a coordinated military-civilian post-hostilities operation, based on the solution applied by General Creighton Abrams that was successful—but too late—in the Vietnam War.

In any case, General Franks should have insisted that the secretary assign him the post-hostilities mission. With no more than the forces that could then be made available, proper planning and competent military-civilian decisionmaking in post-hostilities operations would surely have produced a more favorable outcome in the early months of the war, and Iraq would be in much better shape today.<sup>45</sup>

If the secretary had said “No,” General Franks should have asked to be relieved of command.

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they were going to do it—and I considered it a colossal mistake—they would do it without me.” George C. Marshall, *Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, Larry L. Bland, Joellen K. Bland, and Sharon Ritenour Stevens, eds. (Lexington, Va.: George C. Marshall Foundation, 1991), 300.

<sup>45</sup> “For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: ‘It might have been!’” John Greenleaf Whittier, “Maud Muller.”

## Section Ten

### Conclusions

The secretary of defense grievously misjudged the war's post-hostilities requirements.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff failed in that he did not comprehend the nature of the war that the United States was about to enter and the grave deficiencies in the secretary of defense's guidance for its post-hostilities phase, or, if he understood all that, in that he did not forcefully make his objections known to the secretary of defense and if necessary to the president.

General Franks failed in the same way, and in that he did not offer an alternate plan that met the situation within resources reasonably available.

The other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff failed in that they either did not comprehend the nature of the war and the deficiencies in guidance, or understanding them did not forcefully make known their objections.<sup>46</sup>

Colonel Richard M. Swain, Ph.D., a historian and professor of officership at West Point's Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic, admires General Marshall. In an email exchange I asked him, "What do you think a Marshall-like four star would have done in Myers' or Franks' shoes?"

He answered, "In Myers', I think he would have spoken to the President. [In Franks',] Eisenhower would have had a plan."

## Section Eleven

### In the Future...

In crafting the Goldwater–Nichols legislation of 1986, the Senate and the House of Representatives wrote that "the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military

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<sup>46</sup> In a Senate hearing on February 25, 2003, General Eric K. Shinseki, Army chief of staff, was asked for "some idea of the magnitude of the Army's force requirement for an occupation of Iraq." He replied, "...something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers... it takes a significant ground force presence to maintain a safe and secure environment, to ensure that people are fed, that water is distributed, all the normal responsibilities that go along with administering a situation like this." Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz then called that number "way off the mark." (Ricks, *Fiasco*, 97). Bob Woodward (*State of Denial*, 142) writes that, at apparently about the same time, Shinseki's Vice Chief of Staff General John M. Keane "reminded [General Jay] Garner of the principle of unity of command. One person had to be in charge in each theater of operation. Franks should be in charge of Phase IV and held accountable for stability... 'Jay. If we've learned one thing in the last fifteen years, it's this.'" The force with which the Army's leadership presented such positions within the Joint Chiefs of Staff and to the secretary of defense and the president has not been reported.

adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.” But they carefully provided (now in Section 151, Title 10 US Code) that:

(b)(2) The other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are military advisers to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense as specified in subsections (d) and (e)...

(d) Advice and Opinions of Members Other Than Chairman. – (1) A member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (other than the Chairman) may submit to the Chairman advice or an opinion in disagreement with, or advice or an opinion in addition to, the advice presented by the Chairman to the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense. If a member submits such advice or opinion, the Chairman shall present the advice or opinion of such member at the same time he presents his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense, as the case may be.

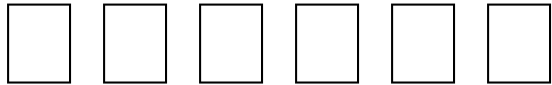
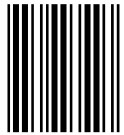
(e) Advice on Request. – The members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, individually or collectively, in their capacity as military advisers, shall provide advice to the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense on a particular matter when the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary requests such advice.

The president and secretary of defense should emphasize to each member of the JCS other than the chairman that, when they think a matter of grave importance warrants, they should avail themselves of the provisions cited above, and members of Congress should keep these provisions always in mind.

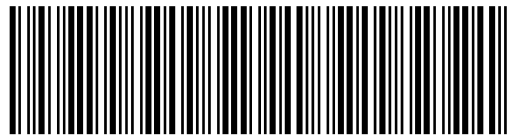
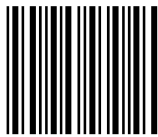
The selection criteria for general and flag officers should emphasize the qualities of, first, judgment, wisdom and insight, and second, a consistent forthright expression of views. In selection to three- and four-star rank, these qualities are of highest importance. The Senate in its confirmation process for general and flag officers, especially those of higher rank, should keep this in mind.

### **Acronyms**

CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
NME	National Military Establishment
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense



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