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## The United States Army and Stability Operations – Reform or Just Rhetoric?

### Thesis

This paper will examine whether the United States Army has adopted nation building as a core mission and will incorporate it into its long term planning. The Army has performed a larger number of these missions in recent years and there is some evidence to suggest a change in attitude from within the institution. At the same time, there are significant barriers towards such a change. The thesis of this paper is that the balance of evidence suggests that the United States Army, despite some changes in doctrine and training, has not fundamentally reformed itself in terms of budget and force structure to credibly embrace nation building as a core mission.

### Definition

The definition of nation building is a matter of some dispute. The term itself is not mentioned in Field Manual *Operations 3-0*, nor in FM 5-0 *Army Planning and Orders Production* or FM 6-0 *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*.<sup>i</sup> There is in fact no core definition or doctrine on nation building per se, although there is material on missions that incorporate these kinds of activities. The Army is tasked with providing support to civilian authorities as one of its Army Mission Essential Tasks as defined in the 2001 edition *Operations 3-0* as part of Full Spectrum Operations, but this is not specifically defined and is subservient to the primary role of warfighting. However, the Army is required to be prepared for the related concept of “stability operations,” which are defined as those operations that “promote and protect U.S. national interests by influencing the threat, political, and information dimensions of the operational environment through a combination of peacetime development, cooperative activities, and coercive actions in response to crisis.”<sup>ii</sup>

FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* goes into more detail, defining stability operations as “an overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. Forces engaged in stability operations establish, safeguard, or restore basic civil services.”<sup>iii</sup> For the purposes of this paper, nation building is defined as the non-military aspects of stability operations, including infrastructure reconstruction, providing governmental services, and policing. The goal of such operations is to change the host nation’s system of government and provide for the basic social and economic needs of the population in order to ensure social stability. The key distinction between nation building operations and traditional military operations is that nation building encompasses an explicitly governmental and political role that focuses on the civilian population of the host nation, whereas traditional military operations focus on the elimination or subjugation of a defined enemy force.

There is a distinction between nation building and counterinsurgency (COIN). Counterinsurgency incorporates military elements as by definition it requires an insurgency that must be quelled, usually with at least some use of deadly force. Nation building takes place in the absence of military conflict. There is no “enemy” in nation building missions such as building roads or humanitarian relief. Nonetheless, the two concepts are closely related. Counterinsurgency expert Lt. Col John Nagl states that “Counterinsurgency is nation building in the face of armed opposition.”<sup>iv</sup> While not all nation building is done within the context of counterinsurgency, COIN as is practiced by the United States Army today always incorporates nation building. Therefore, the degree to which the United States Army has embraced counterinsurgency as a core mission to some extent reflects the degree to which it has adopted nation building as a core mission. While this paper focuses exclusively on nation building, it will incorporate evidence on counterinsurgency if it is relevant to the thesis.

### Why This Question is Important

The question of whether the Army has embraced nation building is important for several reasons. First, as President Obama considers whether to deepen involvement in Afghanistan and the intervention in Iraq continues, a major consideration is whether the United States can build institutions like a national army and a stable government in those countries in order to allow for an American withdrawal. Such a decision hinges upon feedback from the Army as to whether nation building is a realistic or even legitimate goal and therefore the question has immediate political implications. If the Army is unable to reform in order to perform nation building, certain policy options will be discouraged by Army representatives in debate or doomed to failure if chosen by policymakers.

Second, the question has implications for bureaucratic politics. The Army, as an institution, has a certain personality, notably described by Carl Builder in *The Masks of War*. The response of the United States Army to the demands of its contemporary missions highlights the ability of a bureaucracy to reform itself in response to demands for change from both external circumstances and internal critics. The research can help determine whether other military services or government departments can break with traditional roles in response to new missions and objectives.

Third, the ability or inability of the Army to transform itself has implications on the rest of the government. Defense contractors, domestic political considerations, and input from both the Executive and Congress limit the ability of the Army to prepare for the missions that it either sees as most important or for the missions that it would prefer to perform. At the same time, the direction the Army takes in force distribution, weapons acquisition, and other internal policies has important political and economic consequences. Forces outside the Army that would be opposed to a transition to a nation building focus can be expected to try to stop any such reform. Because of the sheer size of the Army, any widespread change within the institution affects the country in general and demands attention. The

adaptation of nation building as a core mission of the Army would also impact the Department of State and the Agency of International Development. If the Army adopts nation building as a core mission, it can be expected that these departments could lose resources as the Army moves into what is seen as their area of responsibility and the Department of Defense would no longer consider these departments as having primary responsibility over nation building missions.

### Paper Outline

This paper will seek to prove the thesis that the Army has not made a full transition to nation building by examining several indicators within the service. These include doctrine, training of officers and soldiers, budgetary priorities, and force structure (including the kinds of troops used, the balance between Active Duty Forces and the National Guard and Reserve, the modularity process of the force, and the debate on whether there should be a specially designated force for nation building). Each of these four sections will be examined separately, with a brief explanation as to what a real shift towards nation building would constitute in each section. After an examination of each criterion, this paper will be judge whether a shift has taken place in that field towards nation building. After all the criteria are examined, the paper will conclude that while there have been some indicators of a shift towards nation building, the institution in general has not shifted in this direction.

### Literature Review

There are several possibilities as to the Army's attitude towards nation building and whether it is incorporating these kinds of missions as part of its core role. One possibility is that the Army is not going to embrace nation building because it does not think future threats call for these kinds of missions and it should prepare for conventional adversaries. Another possibility is that the Army is not going to embrace nation building because it is not seen as part of the organization's legitimate role and that the institutional culture is opposed to it. A third possibility is that the Army will actually embrace nation

building because it is seen as the most effective response to future threats and that the Army must increase its competency in these missions because that is what it will be doing in the future. A final possibility is that the Army actually has embraced nation building as part of a change in its institutional culture and that it actually likes nation building. The literature for each of these possibilities will be examined briefly.

### **Army hostile to nation building because it ignores conventional threats of the future**

One reason the Army could be hostile to an embrace of nation building is because it ignores the conventional threats of the future. Only the United States military is capable of responding to a large scale conventional threat that could truly challenge vital national interests.<sup>v</sup> Chief among these threats would be China. In 2006, the Defense Department released a report on China's military modernization program that indicated the Pentagon viewed China as the primary future threat to American security.<sup>vi</sup> Michael Mazarr of the National War College contends that the rise of both China and Russia, as well as the enduring conventional threats of North Korea and Iran, make it premature to dismiss conventional adversaries.<sup>vii</sup> Peter Katel's article on the "Rise in Counterinsurgency" within the defense establishment notes that many generals and defense intellectuals argue that even if there is not a looming conventional threat, the very nature of war makes it impossible to accurately predict the future of conflict.<sup>viii</sup> Kenneth Comfort notes that nation-building is ultimately unsustainable if there is a major war and could conceivably cost the Army the advantage in conventional warfare.<sup>ix</sup> Maintaining a high intensity conventional combat capability requires constant effort and even a temporary lapse could open up the United States to the existential threat that a hostile conventional opponent could represent.<sup>x</sup>

This fear exists within the Army itself. Colonel Gian P. Gentile has emerged as the most prominent spokesperson for a conventional focus, with his writings and arguments highlighted in *The*

*Washington Independent*, *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and other civilian and military publications. Chief among his criticisms is that the Army is losing its conventional capabilities in a world where they are still needed. He notes, "All we need to do is look at Russia and Georgia a few months ago... I don't think the Army should transform itself into a light-infantry-based constabulary force."<sup>xi</sup> The relatively high losses Israel suffered in its 2006 conventional conflict with Hezbollah are seen by conventional warfare advocates as further evidence of this danger and the continuing conventional threat.<sup>xii</sup> Gentile is not alone in his concerns. Colonel William Rigby argues that the Army's dislike of nation building is fueled by concern about preparing for conventional warfare before any other considerations.<sup>xiii</sup> An influential May 2008 white paper "The King and I: The Impending Crisis in Field Artillery's Ability to Provide Fire Support to Maneuver Commanders" maintains that field artillery officers are not being properly trained in their discipline, suffer from poor morale, and that field artillery units as a whole are losing the capability to effectively operate and even the ability to be retrained.<sup>xiv</sup> The commanding general of the U.S. Army Armor Center at Ft. Knox, Donald Campbell Jr., has expressed similar criticisms and concerns about tank units.<sup>xv</sup> The 2008 Army Posture Statement encapsulated this general outlook, as Army Secretary Peter Geren and Chief of Staff General George Casey warned of a decline in the training for conventional warfare, eroding the capability to meet threats such as North Korea.<sup>xvi</sup> Focusing on nation building is simply not useful for major conventional war and is simply too dangerous for many critics.

### **Army ignores nation building because it is not seen as a proper mission**

Another possibility is that the Army will not embrace nation building because it is not seen as a legitimate part of the Army's job. One of the most common explanations for why this mindset exists is that the Army has a particular conception of itself, its profession, and its mission that does not fit nation building. A second common explanation is that the Army does not like nation building or any operations

other than high intensity conventional warfare because of the Vietnam experience. The negative experience the Army had in Vietnam and the immediate challenges of the post-Vietnam era prompted a renewed search for an ethos of military professionalism and mastery of conventional warfare that fed into the already existing institutional culture.

#### The “American Way of War” and Army culture – “The Soldier and the State”

That institutional culture of the American Army emphasized a firm distinction between civilian and military roles, overwhelming force, and an emphasis on large scale, conventional warfare. Russell Weigley would term this high firepower all or nothing approach “The American Way of War” and describe its evolution in an influential 1973 book of the same title. Segal notes that the American military ethos is defined through the warrior role and the definitive experience of combat.<sup>xvii</sup> Robert Cassidy argues that the writings of the American soldier Emory Upton definitively shaped the ethos of the American Army in the years after the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War in Europe.<sup>xviii</sup> The United States Army, even as its missions involved fighting Native Americans in the American west and serving as de facto political authorities, aspired to a Prussian military tradition, emphasizing minimal civilian control over purely “military” matters and a strong professional sense of vocation.

World War II validated and confirmed these ideas within the institution, with the Army of Patton and Eisenhower serving as a model to be emulated.<sup>xix</sup> Carl Builder concurs that the World War II Army was seen as the model to follow.<sup>xx</sup> Professional officers waging high intensity warfare in Europe was viewed as what the Army was supposed to be doing. The American expectation of absolute victory and unconditional surrender reflects not just the institutional culture of the Army, but also the American national character. Gray judges that the “apolitical” and “astrategic” character of American warfare, emphasizing the separation of warfare and politics and a firm distinction between absolute states of “peace” and “war” are primary characteristics of the American military culture.<sup>xxi</sup> Aylwin-Foster

highlights the preference for the direct assault with a large force that he sees at the core of the American way of war.<sup>xxii</sup>

A conception of “apolitical” warfare requires a theory of a professional military officer’s proper role. Samuel Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* is taken as the starting point for defining this. The central skill that separates a professional military officer from a civilian is “the management of violence” – what Huntington calls “the direction, operation, and control of a human organization whose primary function is the application of violence.”<sup>xxiii</sup> Those who perform tasks relevant to the military – such as doctors – but who do not have the technical capability to manage violence are “excluded from positions of military command.”<sup>xxiv</sup> The management of violence that Huntington defines is also held to be universal “in that its essence is not affected by changes in time or location.”<sup>xxv</sup>

Huntington traces the rise of the military profession as a process defined by the removal of the profession of arms from considerations of politics. Historically, the mercenary armies of Europe of the distant past were replaced by aristocrats who owed their position to the newly consolidated monarchs. Military forces became property of the Crown and an instrument of policy rather than autonomous forces acting in the interests of their officers. Eventually, these “gifted amateurs” and politically connected nobles were replaced by experts from all classes that were rigorously trained in specialized military and technical skills, with Prussia serving as the pioneer in this process. Britain, France and other nations eventually adopted this process out of military necessity, and not without controversy.

The removal of military staffing from the realm of politics was coupled with developments in theory about the nature of war itself, especially as expressed by the Prussian military theorist Karl von Clausewitz. Huntington states that, “the basic element in Clausewitz’s theory is his concept of the dual nature of war. War is at one and the same time an autonomous science with its own method and goals and yet a subordinate science in that its ultimate purposes come from outside itself.”<sup>xxvi</sup> On the one

hand, war is “an act of force to compel our adversary to do our will” and, in theory, this application of force can be conducted without limit. However, in actuality, war is always limited and determined by political considerations. Huntington sums up, “in short, war has ‘its own grammar, but not its own logic.”<sup>xxvii</sup>

This duality creates the autonomy needed for a modern professional military to exist. Huntington writes that “the ‘military virtue of an army’ is to be found purely in combat operations which are not to be judged by political authorities. At the same time, “the ends for which the military body is employed... are outside its competence to judge: ‘the political object of war really lies outside of war’s province’... the soldier must always be subordinate to the statesman.”<sup>xxviii</sup> The classic conception of the soldier’s role is therefore apolitical, focused purely on the destruction of the enemy in large scale operations. Political leadership would provide guidance, but would otherwise not interfere with actual military operations. The main goal of both political and military leaders was the creation of a system that maximized military professionalism and objective civilian control.

While this theory provides a useful framework for analyzing civil-military relations, it is a product of its time. Following World War I and particularly World War II, the United States Army “deemphasized its past as a constabulary force, when it had spent a tremendous proportion of its time and energy on policing the frontier and providing much of what passed for local authority.”<sup>xxix</sup> The “lessons” of the World Wars suggested that heavy firepower against large scale conventional forces would be the primary role of the American military from now on. This was fit with Huntington’s contention that the military should maximize its “professionalism” by removing political tasks as much as possible. As the impact of Emory Upton’s writings show, it also fit with a deeper desire within the military to dismiss irregular warfare and nation building as an aberration.<sup>xxx</sup>

Huntington analyzed the military's participation in nation building following the American Civil War and World War II from a hostile viewpoint, suggesting that the American military was being forced to adopt a "broadly political viewpoint" that was negatively contrasted against an apolitical "professional military outlook."<sup>xxxix</sup> Schawlow and Acquement note, "Within Huntington's framework, stability operations would be excluded from the military profession."<sup>xxxix</sup> The military profession was thus in some sense defined by an avoidance of political questions and a focus on large scale conventional operations.

The Army had real institutional interests in promoting this image. Carl Builder notes that after World War II, the Army had become trapped because of the powerful branches within the service. The balance of power between infantry, artillery, and cavalry had to be maintained in order to hold the service together.<sup>xxxiii</sup> As an example of how cultural considerations can drive bureaucratic politics, the horse cavalry survived in Western militaries well beyond its military effectiveness because it served cultural purposes.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Bureaucratic imperatives crystallize into institutional culture, which then prevent institutional reform. The necessity to preserve the power of each branch in the Army helps preserve the Army's organizational culture, as well as serve institutional purposes.

The Army's culture also reflected the institutional interests of the different branches in regards to technology. The "American Way of War" focuses on using high technology rather than other approaches.<sup>xxxv</sup> The interest of each branch, as well as the service as a whole, is for doctrine to emphasize high technology, high intensity conventional warfare. This ensures that the balance of power between the "guilds" that Builder highlights is maintained and that new weapons systems are consistently funded. Adams points out that as a result, big ticket weapons systems for "rapid decisive operations" tend to drive doctrine, rather than doctrine driving technology.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Here again, though an American "Way of War" and Army culture exists as highlighted by Weigley, Ucko, Gray, Aylwin-Foster,

and many others, the culture serves concrete purposes for constituencies within the institution. This leads to an inertia which discourages the Army from taking on new missions, as doing so would jeopardize the interests of these constituencies.

The Army after Vietnam turns against nation building as a distraction from its real mission

Even military defeat is not always enough to shift priorities within a military institution, as Rosen notes about the Russian Army following their defeat in the Russo-Japanese War.<sup>xxxvii</sup> One of the most consistent themes in the literature is that the United States Army responded to defeat in Vietnam by trying to avoid similar conflicts in the future. Rather than taking another look at “small war” tactics and counterinsurgency, Boot argues that the American military believed that conventional tactics had not been used enough and that if politicians had simply allowed the troops to fight and mobilized the resources requested, America would have won. Boot notes, “this view calcified into something of an orthodoxy throughout much of the U.S. armed forces, especially in the army, in the years after 1975... the notion that America erred by not waging total war against North Vietnam would shape the strategic approach of the U.S. armed forces for decades to come.”<sup>xxxviii</sup>

As a response, the Army refocused its training and doctrine on conventional warfare. Lt. Col Yingling quotes counterinsurgency expert John Nagl’s judgment in the COIN classic *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* that “instead of learning from defeat, the Army after Vietnam focused its energies on the kind of wars it knew how to win – high technology conventional wars.”<sup>xxxix</sup> This had an important impact on training within the Army, as it removed “virtually all of its war college classes on counterinsurgency [and jettisoned] field exercises modeled after Vietnam.”<sup>xl</sup> Retired Colonel David Hackworth notes, “After Vietnam... the American military was so ashamed and humiliated... they decided to shove it all under the rug... the new emphasis was, ‘We’re going to fight the Russians at the Fulda Gap. We’ve got

to think about the big-battle war.<sup>xli</sup> The Army would concentrate on what was seen as its core mission of defending Europe from Soviet attack.

To determine that mission, Army Chief of Staff Creighton Abrams, who had pushed forward counterinsurgency while commanding in Vietnam, established a study group to determine a new focus for the Army in Vietnam. The resulting Astarita report called for the Army to refocus on European defense, which was welcomed in the institution. General William E. Depuy stated of the 1976 doctrinal manual FM 100-5 that resulted from this focus, "This manual takes the Army out of the rice paddies of Vietnam and places it on the Western European battlefield against the Warsaw Pact."<sup>xlii</sup> Because the primary strategic military challenge (and the most demanding mission) for the United States was seen to be the military defense of Europe, the Army focused on the threat that was seen to be most dangerous rather than most likely.<sup>xliii</sup>

The Army responded in this fashion for several reasons. First, the Army culture that existed prior to Vietnam was still there, as were the institutional reasons for its perpetuation. The Army needed to maintain the balance of power between the services, perpetuate a vision of future conflict that would ensure support for high technology weapons systems and preserve the Army's image of itself. Carl Builder points out that an attack on the American homeland was just as likely as an attack on Europe and would obviously have even larger consequences.<sup>xliv</sup> Therefore, the Army's focus on a conventional war with the Warsaw Pact in Europe served the Army's internal culture and institutional aspirations, rather than meeting an objective threat.<sup>xlv</sup> Lock-Pullan concurs that the preparation for European War combined the Army's heroic World War II vision of itself with the strategic orientation of the country after Vietnam.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Secondly, the Army would not have been capable of focusing on other missions, even if it wanted to. Richard Lock-Pullan states that the Army had been so devastated by Vietnam, that it had to

focus on its principal mission out of necessity.<sup>xlvii</sup> Related to this “back to basics” approach was a new focus on military professionalism, especially because the Army became an all volunteer force in 1973 and was plagued by racial division, crime, drug use, and low quality recruits. A concept of the ideal of a military professional was thus integral to the post-Vietnam Army’s identity and its effort to rebuild the force. Huntington’s interpretation of Clausewitz’s dual nature of war was in some sense what the military wanted to hear because it provided a guide to rebuilding a shattered force. Nation building was dismissed not just because it didn’t fit the culture or the perceived threat, but because the Army needed to rebuild what it saw as its core competency of conventional war.

Max Boot writes, “Much of the U.S. armed forces drew a curious lesson from Vietnam... instead of concluding that they should employ better strategy and tactics in fighting small wars, they concluded... that they should avoid fighting them altogether.”<sup>xlviii</sup> Colin Powell stated about this attitude, “Many of my generation, the career captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels seasoned in that war... vowed that when our turn came to call the shots, we would not quietly acquiesce in halfhearted warfare for half-baked reasons that the American people could not understand or support.”<sup>xlix</sup> Hostility to open ended and ambiguous operations became a core element of United States military doctrine following the Vietnam War.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Powell Doctrine and the removal of politics

The most important manifestation of this hostility to non-conventional warfare was what became known as the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine, developed by Reagan’s Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger and his top military aide, Colin Powell. This doctrine outlined a series of severe preconditions for the use of the military, including the existence of vital national interests, public support, and overwhelming force. Powell was openly hostile to the use of the Army as a “flexible tool of diplomacy.” Suspicion of limited engagements, particularly those motivated by humanitarian concerns,

prompted Powell himself to speak against military intervention in 1992 in Bosnia, which had been proposed by Democratic candidate Bill Clinton.<sup>li</sup> In contrast, during the First Persian Gulf War, Powell pushed aggressively for a massive commitment of troops and air power, firmly rejecting any attempts to use incremental increases of force or more subtle surgical strikes to achieve political ends.<sup>lii</sup>

Suspicion of peace keeping operations went beyond the Powell Doctrine and Powell himself. Partially, this was due to events. Early in the Army's rebuilding period, the high intensity, conventional 1973 Yom Kippur war was seen as a model for the American Army to follow.<sup>liii</sup> This emphasis on heavy forces, high technology, and aggressive combat tactics was rewarded with victory in the First Persian Gulf War. This triumph seemingly confirmed the wisdom of a focus on the conventional tactics which had worked so well in 1991 and which Army officers expected to use again.<sup>liv</sup>

One of the most important incidents in cultivating hostility towards the nation building concept was the aborted American intervention in Somalia in 1993.<sup>lv</sup> As a result, in later stability operations in the 1990's, force protection was the primary objective of the Army – "the Weinberger Doctrine was applied to peace operations, to the degree possible, and with a view to reduce risks to U.S. combat forces."<sup>lvi</sup> The missions in Bosnia and Kosovo actually served to make nation building more unpopular within the Army.<sup>lvii</sup> In the mid 1990's, "The word was 'we don't do nation-building,'" according to Army chief of staff General George Casey.<sup>lviii</sup> The Powell Doctrine serves as shorthand by many scholars to describe the outright dismissal of nation building from legitimate Army operations.<sup>lix</sup>

The Army's acceptance of this doctrine made a firm distinction between high intensity conventional warfare and "low intensity" tasks such as nation building and counterinsurgency. The logic of this position is that not only should the Army focus on the former, but engaging in the latter will both blunt its combat effectiveness (undermining its professionalism) and involve it in political tasks

(removing the barrier between the soldier and the state). This point is made explicit by the 1992 *Parameters* essay “The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012.”

In this essay, author Charles Dunlap uses a fictional future coup to argue that increasing military involvement in nonmilitary tasks such as policing, riot control, and health care undermine the Army’s combat effectiveness in the future. As a result, using a hypothetical war with Iran as a plot device, he outlines a crushing defeat of the American Army by Iran.<sup>lx</sup> Eventually, the politicized military seizes power in a coup and imprisons the dissident author. Imagining himself going back in time and advising the War College Class of 1992, he argues that the first thing he would say is “demand that the armed forces focus exclusively on indisputably military duties. We must not diffuse our energies away from our fundamental responsibility for warfighting.”<sup>lxi</sup> Dunlap was later awarded a prize for his essay by none other than Colin Powell.<sup>lxii</sup> There is a natural link between *The Soldier and the State* and the Powell Doctrine.

With such a history, the professional norms of the United States Army are overwhelmingly against nation building being accepted as a core competency. Any attempt for nation building to be adopted by the Army has the established culture arrayed against any such reform.

### **The Army has embraced nation building because it sees it as a response to future threats**

A large number of Army officers, civilian leaders, and defense intellectuals have made the case that nation building and other non-conventional operations will be the most common tasks the United States Army will undertake in the future. Thomas Barnett argued in the *Pentagon’s New Map* that the major strategic challenge of the United States was to integrate failing states into the “functioning core” of countries comprising the global economy. Because conventional threats had faded, threats to American interests were most likely to come from the periphery of the global economy. In response, Barnett argued for reorganizing the United States military to meet this new mission.<sup>lxiii</sup>

Widely quoted COIN and nation building advocate Lt. Colonel John Nagl argues that the Army's current engagements in Iraq are critical, but because of demographic trends and urbanization, stability operations are even more likely in the future. The Army must prepare for the missions of the future, which will overwhelmingly involve irregular warfare and stability operations.<sup>lxiv</sup> Col. Peter Mansoor, who was executive officer to General David Petraeus, argues that it is a "stretch of the imagination" to even conceive of a conventional threat to the American military.<sup>lxv</sup> Lawrence Korb and Mex Bergmann state that the United States is most likely to confront irregular or nontraditional challenges and conventional threats are likely to be nonexistent.<sup>lxvi</sup> The RAND Institute reports that stability operations and counterinsurgency will be a regular occurrence in the years to come.<sup>lxvii</sup> Michael Mazarr, who wants a greater focus on conventional threats, concedes that the conventional wisdom within the U.S. defense community is that counterinsurgency and nation building are the missions of tomorrow.<sup>lxviii</sup>

More critically, these views are stated publicly by the current military establishment. Lt. General William Caldwell, commander of the Combined Arms Center at Ft. Leavenworth, states that the greatest threats to the country come not from conventional threats but from failing states unable to provide basic economic security.<sup>lxix</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert Gates argues that nation building operations cannot be avoided by the United States military even though it doesn't conform to the aforementioned American way of war. He states that future missions will likely involve nation building whether the armed forces want this or not. He also says that efforts to address grievances, promote economic development, and create better governance should be preferred to purely military actions.<sup>lxx</sup>

One of the most common themes expressed by advocates of nation building is that the outright refusal to accept nation building or counterinsurgency as a legitimate mission during and after Vietnam was a mistake. Lt. Col Paul Yingling, in his influential and controversial article "A Failure in Generalship," argued that America lost Vietnam because American generals did not prepare the Army for

counterinsurgency. Of more relevance to the thesis, Yingling also condemns the American military effort for not providing more resources to the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), a joint command that performed nation building as well as military tasks.<sup>lxxi</sup>

He specifically condemns Harry Summers's book "On Strategy," which argued that the Vietnam War was lost because of restrictions on the Army's ability to fight an unrestricted conventional war and served as a popular analysis among American officers in the 1980's.<sup>lxxii</sup> Analysts Max Boot, David Ucko and others similarly condemn General Westmoreland's efforts to fight Vietnam (in their analysis) like World War II, relying on firepower to win.<sup>lxxiii</sup> In contrast, "A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam" by Lewis Sorley emphasizes that focusing on security population and nation building actually militarily won the Vietnam War, but it was given away by foolish political decisions. This analysis and counter history constitute an alternative narrative to the idea that Vietnam was lost simply because the politicians would not let the Army fight unrestricted conventional warfare. This counter narrative is a challenge to conventional warfare advocates because, as Yingling states, a refusal to incorporate nation building and irregular warfare leaves the Army unprepared for future conflicts and could lead to catastrophic military defeat.

While nation building is not the same as counterinsurgency, COIN as practiced in Iraq and Afghanistan incorporates nation building. The narrative COIN proponents have about the American Army's lack of preparation for the Iraq War is therefore relevant. Many analysts believe that the United States Army was unprepared for the challenges of confronting an insurgency at the beginning of the Iraqi occupation. Moyer states that the Army was woefully ignorant about counterinsurgency at the start of an occupation.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Reporter Thomas Ricks gives much the same account in 2006, blaming the Army for deliberately ignoring counterinsurgency operations after the Vietnam War.<sup>lxxv</sup>

These serve as the beginning of many histories of the Iraq War, which culminate in General Petraeus using classic COIN tactics during the surge. This forms what Lt. Col. Gentile acidly describes as a COIN “master narrative.”<sup>lxxvi</sup> COIN advocates see the American inability to defeat the Iraqi insurgency after the invasion as a direct result of the all consuming focus on conventional warfare following Vietnam. The ubiquitous Lt. Col. Nagl comments, “It is not unfair to say that in 2003 most Army officers knew more about the U.S. Civil War than they did about counterinsurgency.”<sup>lxxvii</sup> The rise of COIN advocates as a significant force within the Army establishment parallels the increasing (at least rhetorical) acceptance of nation building as a legitimate role for the Army. COIN advocates accept this version of the Iraq War and the idea that things would have gone better if American soldiers had been trained and prepared for nation building and counterinsurgency. A nation building capability is thus a necessary preparation for future missions to avoid the problems of the past.

### **The Army Likes Nation Building**

A final possibility is that the Army will adapt nation building as a core competency because it likes nation building and the professional ethos of a military officer is changing to meet new circumstances. While there is no poll data to make a definitive statement on Army attitudes and events on the ground are continuing, anecdotal evidence and reports from soldiers suggest that many believe nation building is an important and even enjoyable mission. A company commander in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne regarded building schools, providing health care, and forming relationships with Iraqis as the most important accomplishments of his soldiers during their time in Iraq.<sup>lxxviii</sup> Other soldiers, despite initial confusion and even disappointment with being assigned nation building tasks, adapted quickly and enthusiastically. They even created institutions such as online communities that will institutionalize and share their experiences with other soldiers.<sup>lxxix</sup>

Some soldiers see their job as helping the indigenous population rebuild their country, rather than defeating an enemy force. For example, some Army engineers are using their skills purely in a nation building role, training Afghans to perform basic construction. One Army Sergeant from the task force assigned the mission stated, "After almost fifteen months of being in this country, it feels good to give something back."<sup>lxxx</sup> Captain Traci Earls, commander of a team handing out supplies at a school in Iraq, stated that teaching them to play baseball, donating supplies, and reading to students was the highlight of her deployment. It also showed the Iraqi people that the Americans were "good people."<sup>lxxxi</sup> Soldiers from the New Jersey National Guard that "adopted" a different Iraqi school were similarly enthusiastic. One officer stated that helping the school was "the most rewarding experience I've had here... I feel like I contributed something to this country" whereas a Colonel enthused "this was the best day I've had in Iraq."<sup>lxxxii</sup> Clearly, many soldiers enjoy helping people in the country they are occupying, rather than hunting down foes. More importantly, such comments show that soldiers see themselves as invested in the success of the host society and seeing that success as part of their mission. Rising officers in training back in the United States are more likely to want to perform nation building in some cases than traditional offensive or defensive operations that they see as irrelevant.<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

There is also evidence to suggest that soldiers take it upon themselves to engage in nation building if left to their own devices. In 2003, the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne organized a local government, relying on money from the Coalition Provisional Authority to pay salaries of government workers. The civilian leadership of the CPA refused to distribute the necessary funds or provide guidance, leaving the 101<sup>st</sup> to essentially run its own operation as best it could and try to avoid being seen as occupiers.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> American officers formed relationships with tribal leaders despite the fact that the CPA had essentially sidelined the tribes.<sup>lxxxv</sup> Despite the initial lack of updated COIN and stability operations doctrine in 2003 and despite the lack of training, some Army officers engaged in nation building operations as best they could even though they were actually hindered by civilian leadership.

## Criteria One – Doctrine

The first criteria that will be examined to see if the Army has embraced nation building as a core mission is Army doctrine. Doctrine is a core element of the American army's identity, and dictates how officers and soldiers are supposed to approach various problems.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Doctrine reflects the Army's self image and how it sees its role. While doctrine stating that the Army has embraced nation building as a long term role does not actually make it so, the Army simply could not make such a reform without it being expressed in doctrine. It is the first place to look for actual evidence of reform.

If the Army actually considers stability operations a core Army mission, it would be expected that it would be characterized this way within keystone Army doctrine (namely, in the general *Operations* Field Manual) as well as in new specific doctrine created for stability operations. It would represent a clearly stated departure from previous doctrine as well. This section will cover the recent treatment of counterinsurgency and stability operations in Army doctrine and analyze its significance. It will look for new evidence that the Army is characterizing stability operations as a core mission. It will contrast the current treatment of stability operations with the prior treatment of stability operations within Army doctrine.

The first mention of counterinsurgency, frontier, and nation building experiences in Army doctrine took place in 1940 with the publication of Field Manual 27-5.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> The manual directed the Army to train soldiers specifically to govern occupied territories as well as provide for civic responsibilities such as public works, utilities, and economic reconstruction.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> This represented a clear acceptance of a political role for Army soldiers. The School of Military Government was established in 1942 in Virginia to train civil affairs soldiers, and a consistent plan was executed for implementing military governance in occupied territory.<sup>lxxxix</sup> While nation building was obviously not a core mission of the American Army the same way conventional combat was, this represented a clear

sign that the Army accepted this mission at least as something to which it needed to pay attention, if only temporarily.

After the Vietnam War, Army doctrine reflected a different vision, one in which political considerations were totally banished from consideration. Harry Summers's *On Strategy* became an intellectual guide for the response to the Vietnam War.<sup>xc</sup> The work's Clausewitzian analysis mirrored a larger acceptance of these ideas within American Army doctrine. Clausewitz is quoted in the 1982 edition of FM 100-5 and quoted four times in the 1986 edition of FM 100-5.<sup>xc<sup>i</sup></sup> Melton, who is quite hostile to Clausewitz's incorporation into Army doctrine, bitterly notes that the 1993 FM 100-5 incorporates his work in using concepts of "explanations of centers of gravity, lines of operation, and culminating points" and the 2001 version of FM 3-0 "included 'center of gravity' in fourteen different discussions."<sup>xc<sup>ii</sup></sup>

There was at least some move towards low intensity conflict and nation building during the 1980's. This was motivated by a perception that Soviet backed guerillas in the Third World were dismantling U.S power influence outside Europe during the 1970's and that the American Army needed a response.<sup>xc<sup>iii</sup></sup> Spurred by these events, in 1981, the Army published a doctrinal manual titled *Low Intensity Conflict* (FM 100-20) that covered counterinsurgency. The 1986 edition of *Operations* FM 100-5 mentioned counterinsurgency as one of the operations that the Army needed to master.<sup>xc<sup>iv</sup></sup> The Army also implemented counterinsurgency exercises as part of training and received mandates from both Congress and the Secretary of Defense to plan for counterinsurgency.<sup>xc<sup>v</sup></sup> One analyst stated that the 1980's was a "new counterinsurgency era."<sup>xc<sup>vi</sup></sup> During the 1990's, several doctrinal manuals relevant to stability operations were produced, including FM 100-23 *Peace Operations* in 1994, JP 3-07 *Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)* in 1995, and *Interagency Coordination during Joint Operations* (JP 3-08) in 1996.<sup>xc<sup>vii</sup></sup> To some extent, the lessons of these operations were integrated into scenario

trainings for troops that would perform peacekeeping operations in Somalia, Haiti, and the Balkans during the 1990's.<sup>xcviii</sup>

However, ultimately, this did not represent a change in the Army's priorities. Counterinsurgency was not perceived as a mission that required any kind of painful institutional change, but simply something that could be incorporated into existing doctrine and structures. For example, 1986 FM 100-5 *Operations* stated that "the tenets of [Air Land Battle Doctrine] apply equally to the military operations characteristic of low intensity war."<sup>xcix</sup> The term "low intensity war" was also confusing, as it incorporated strike, counterterrorist, and rescue missions that were not the same thing as counterinsurgency or nation building.<sup>c</sup> Those nonmilitary aspects of stability operations, namely, nation building, were neglected from this doctrine. Less than conventional operations were held to be the purview of Special Forces, rather than conventional troops.<sup>ci</sup> During the 1990's, capstone doctrine *Operations* manuals emphasized overwhelming force and quick victories and treated Military Operations Other Than War as lesser included operations that were not central missions of the Army.<sup>cii</sup>

Many analysts believe that the United States Army was unprepared for the challenges of confronting an insurgency at the beginning of the Iraqi occupation in 2003.<sup>ciii</sup> Nagl judges that one of the primary reasons for this ignorance was the lack of updated doctrine on counterinsurgency, as the Army had not published any material on counterinsurgency since the El Salvador campaign.<sup>civ</sup> In January 2004, the Defense Science Board was instructed to study the "transition to and from hostilities."<sup>cv</sup> As a result of the resulting report, the Defense Department issued Directive 3000.05 in November 2005.

Directive 3000.05 explicitly designated stability operations as equal to combat operations.<sup>cvi</sup> This is a significant departure from prior official guidance on the subject. Furthermore, it also designed the "Land Component Commander" (i.e. the Army) to have the primary responsibility for stabilization

and reconstruction.<sup>cvi</sup> Directive 3000.05 explicitly identifies stability operations, not just counterinsurgency, as an equal mission to offense and defense and gives the Army primary responsibility over these operations. It also instructs the Army to implement this change throughout its organization, training, and doctrine.<sup>cviii</sup> This does represent something different from what the Army held as its official position before the directive and is a real change.

The Army responded by addressing the topic of counterinsurgency in updated doctrine. FMI 3-07.22 *Counterinsurgency Operations*, had been released in October 2004 after five months of drafting. While this was taking place, many Army officers were arguing that soldiers had to adopt “non-military” tasks if they were to succeed in Iraq. Kalev Supp, an Army Special Forces officer who had done four tours in Iraq, wrote an article on “Best Practices in Counterinsurgency” in summer of 2005 for *Military Review*. Major General Peter Chiarelli and Maj. Patrick Michaelis wrote an article on “Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Peace Operations” which coined the acronym SWET (for sewers, water, electricity, and trash) that called for civic reconstruction to be a direct responsibility of the military. Finally, Montgomery McFate, an anthropologist, wrote three articles for *Military Review* in 2005 that urged a primary focus on human intelligence and knowledge of Iraq’s social context.<sup>cix</sup> All of these authors would be tapped as sources for the Army’s new Counterinsurgency Field Manual that would complete the work FMI 3-07.22 had begun.

The person responsible for overseeing the development of the new Army doctrine was General David Petraeus, who was in charge of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, the center responsible for training and educating soldiers. Petraeus published an article of his own in *Military Review* in 2006 entitled, “Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq.”<sup>cx</sup> Petraeus tapped the experiences of former officers who had served and defense intellectuals who had criticized the American occupation and urged counterinsurgency tactics focused on protecting the population

rather than conventional tactics focused on eliminating the enemy. After preparing a draft, Petraeus organized a two day conference chaired by Army historian Conrad Crane to discuss and critique the material. Attendees included military officers, intellectuals, journalists, and human rights specialists, as Petraeus wanted to make a firm break with existing Army doctrine and open up the process to as many inputs as possible. Crane would later remark, “There has never been an Army manual created the way this one was... it was truly a unique process.”<sup>cxix</sup>

The resulting Field Manual, FM 3-24, marked a radical departure from prior Army conceptions about counterinsurgency and military operations in general. Indeed, Sarah Sewell notes in her introduction to the Chicago Press Edition that, “Those who fail to see the manual as radical probably don’t understand it, or at least understand what it’s up against.”<sup>cxii</sup> Charles Dunlap in “The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012 had warned against “U.S. troops... called upon to restore basic services.”<sup>cxiii</sup> He also discouraged a trend that would result in the “U.S. military constituting the de facto government” in foreign countries.<sup>cxiv</sup> In contrast, FM 3-24 stated, “Counterinsurgents take upon themselves responsibility for the people’s well being in all its manifestations.”<sup>cxv</sup> Provision for basic economic needs, water, electricity, sanitation, medical care, key social and cultural institutions, and other aspects that contribute to a society’s basic quality of life were identified as part of the Army’s responsibility if there were no civilian groups to lead such efforts.

The focus on providing basic services makes the rise of counterinsurgency doctrine relevant to stability operations and the thesis. FM 3-24 states, that the United States Army has always taken on tasks beyond pure combat in its history, especially while waging counterinsurgency.<sup>cxvi</sup> FM 3-24 explicitly designates that the center of gravity and the “deciding factor in the struggle” is the civilian population.<sup>cxvii</sup> To secure this population, the primary objective of any counterinsurgency is to create effective governance by a government that is legitimate.<sup>cxviii</sup> This is done through both military and

nonmilitary means and is an inherently political objective, a departure from the apolitical definition of the military that the Army adopted after Vietnam. More significantly, victory in counterinsurgency according to FM 3-24 is secured through stability operations and nonmilitary means, with the destruction of enemy forces seen as a secondary objective.

The doctrinal status of stability operations as a core Army mission was confirmed with the February 2008 release of the new capstone doctrinal manual, FM 3-0 *Operations*. This manual restated that stability and civil support operations were elevated to equal priority with combat operations, essentially creating a new category of warfare for the first time in this history of the Army.<sup>cxxix</sup> More importantly, it recognized the essentially political nature of all forms of warfare, noting that “with the exception of cyberspace, all operations will be conducted ‘among the people’ and outcomes will be measured in terms of effects on populations.”<sup>cxxx</sup> This is also unprecedented in previous Army doctrine.

One of the most important characteristics of *Operations* is the emphasis on unity of effort in nation building operations by all different departments of the government. Rather than the Army limiting itself to exclusively military operations and justifying a separate identity through a professional code, the FM 3-0 emphasizes the Army working in concert with other complementary government agencies.<sup>cxxxi</sup> The model for this is the CORDS program during the Vietnam War, highlighted favorably by Colonel Yingling in contrast to the large scale conventional operations that he perceived as responsible for the missions failure.<sup>cxxii</sup> In this sense, official Army doctrine now reflects the narrative that the Vietnam War was poorly waged by General Westmoreland’s conventional tactics and skillfully waged by General Creighton Abrams’s pacification programs.<sup>cxxiii</sup>

The importance of stability operations to the United States Army was further emphasized by the October 2008 issuance of FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*. This is essentially a guide to nation building, explicitly identifying missions that have no relationship to combat or eliminating enemy as a core

element of the Army's mission.<sup>cxxiv</sup> The manual further blurred the line between soldier and civilian, and created controversy because it implies that nation building would be a core national security concern. This creates a danger that the United States Army becomes the "world's policeman" rather than a force to protect against foreign militaries.<sup>cxxv</sup>

*Stability Operations* was also produced in a non-traditional way for a doctrinal manual. Conferences and discussions were held with different government departments, non-governmental organizations, and allies. Social science and linguistic concerns were a major focus and nonmilitary contributors directly created some of the text of the manual.<sup>cxxvi</sup> The manual itself, though it is technically an Army manual, was essentially created by and for many people outside the Army that must work with the service in any nation building operations.<sup>cxxvii</sup> This serves as a challenge to the professional ethos of the Army, as it becomes integrated in a larger governmental effort with bureaucracies from outside the service impacting and in some cases even writing the doctrine by which the Army defines itself.

The core message of *Stability Operations* is to strive towards a unity of effort, either through a whole of government approach that uses all the sources of the United States Government, or even a comprehensive approach that uses U.S., foreign, private, and multinational groups and resources to achieve a shared goal.<sup>cxxviii</sup> Rather than the elimination of enemy forces, Army doctrine emphasizes "reducing the means and motivations for violent conflict while developing more viable, peaceful alternatives for the competitive pursuit of political and socioeconomic aspirations."<sup>cxxix</sup> *Stability Operations* also makes an attempt at defining legitimacy, and holds that a government can only be legitimate if it reflects the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and abides by human rights treaties that it has signed. It is also premised upon the sovereignty of the people, stating that a government is only legitimate if it respects the will of the people, even if the people want to change that government.<sup>cxxx</sup>

### **Conclusion of Criteria 1 – Doctrine – Evidence is FOR nation building as a core mission**

Defense Department Directive 3000.05, FM 3-24, FM 3-07, and the 2008 update of *Operations 3-0* do represent a significant shift for the United States Army. Prior treatment of counterinsurgency and nation building in Army doctrine regarded these kinds of operations as less important than conventional warfare. This was changed by Directive 3000.05 and followed up by *Operations 3-0*, which essentially created stability operations as a new category of warfare for the United States Army for the first time in its history. Moreover, COIN doctrine as expressed in FM 3-24 held stability operations to be an important part of any counterinsurgency operation, ultimately defining the civilian population as the center of gravity and defining a political objective – establishing the legitimacy of the host government – rather than a military objective as the purpose of any Army effort. The creation of a manual for *Stability Operations* confirm the significance of this transition and firmly establish that the ideal of a military separated from political or “civilian” tasks has been abandoned. The active participation of non-military personnel in preparing and even writing doctrine is unprecedented. The importance given to stability operations, even in the absence of any traditional military role, is genuinely new in Army doctrine and therefore the shift towards nation building is real and significant.

### Criteria 2 -- Training

The second criteria that will be examined is the training of officers and units. The first thing to be expected if nation building was embraced as a core competency is new doctrinal guidance on training specifically for stability operations. A second sign would be a greater emphasis on nation building, cultural sensitivity, and irregular warfare in curriculum and training for officers. A final sign would be greater emphasis on these topics in Army training at the National Training Center. If each of these characteristics is met, it would suggest that the Army is moving to incorporate stability operations as a core element of Army training.

## Training Doctrine –

The Army was directed by Directive 3000.05 to incorporate stability operations throughout the Army, including in training. In December 2008, the Army released FM 7-0, “Training for Full Spectrum Operations.”<sup>cxxxix</sup> The manual changed the name of the previous training manual, which had been “Training the Force” to represent the new priorities of Army training. The first chapter is subtitled, “Changing the Army’s Mindset” and refers to a paradigm shift that incorporates stability operations as equal in importance to offensive and defensive operations.<sup>cxxxix</sup> In contrast, the prior manual on training, the 2002 edition of FM 7-0, though it made a reference to “doing whatever the nation asks it to do,” does not mention stability operations as a core mission of equal importance to offensive and defensive operations. It also made no mention of the new need to change Army culture to incorporate missions beyond offense and defense.

In a video created by the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, CAC Commander Lt. General William Caldwell states, “we will never go back to how we were training before 9/11, we will train differently,” meaning that stability operations will be a permanent part of Army training.<sup>cxxxix</sup> In fact, the manual states that because all military operations are now usually fought “among the people” rather than “around the people,” all military operations are now “full spectrum operations,” meaning that soldiers must be knowledgeable of offensive, defensive and stability operations and capable of shifting to any of them at any time depending on circumstances.<sup>cxxxix</sup> The Army has also created the “Army Training Network,” an online information portal that will allow soldiers and units to share information about tactics and experiences on how to conduct these kinds of missions more effectively.<sup>cxxxix</sup> This capitalizes on the online discussion about full spectrum operations taking place on blogs such as *Small Wars Journal* that are read by Army officers and institutionalizes it within the Army

itself. While the above is rhetoric, it does show that the Army training community feels the need to at least say they are incorporating stability operations into Army training.

### **Curriculum and Training for Officers**

An increase in the number of classes on counterinsurgency and stability operations taught to officers at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, the Captains Career Course, and the Army War College would reflect greater incorporation of nation building within the Army's training system. There is evidence to suggest that the emphasis is still on conventional warfare. Fred Kaplan reported that 70% of the training at the Captains Career Course is for conventional warfare as late as 2007.<sup>cxxxvi</sup> According to a study by Colonel Kevin Reynolds, less than five percent of the hours in the core curriculum at the Army War College dealt directly with counterinsurgency and only two of ninety electives dealt with the subject.<sup>cxxxvii</sup>

However, the trend is for COIN and stability operations instruction to increase. David Ucko reports that in 2007, instruction dedicated to COIN and stability operations at the Army War College doubled from the amount in 2006, still to an admittedly small number, but clearly a significant increase.<sup>cxxxviii</sup> In an email exchange with the author, Colonel Reynolds stated that his study, which has been used by Ucko and others to show that the Army was not adapting to counterinsurgency within military education, was "dated." According to Colonel Reynolds, the Army War College has given even more emphasis to irregular warfare since 2008. It is unclear whether this is because the school is trying to bring training in line with the new doctrinal priorities or if it is simply a response to interest by students. Reynolds himself suspects it is partially both.<sup>cxxxix</sup>

This combination of shifting educational policy from the top because of guidance and intellectual ferment from officers that are irregular war veterans from below has had a similar impact at the Command and General Staff College. The school changed its educational approach following

September 11, 2001. Rather than simply transferring information, the CGSC has changed its policy and focuses on critical reasoning and a Socratic method that emphasizes adaptability rather than familiarity with fixed doctrine.<sup>cxli</sup> This change was made specifically to deal with stability operations and irregular warfare.<sup>cxlii</sup> As a result, younger officers who have returned from Iraq are able to incorporate more of their experience in stability operations into the classroom experience.<sup>cxlii</sup>

The number of course hours dedicated to counterinsurgency also increased from 2004 to 2006.<sup>cxliii</sup> More than one third of the course hours dedicated to the core curriculum are dedicated to COIN, with an additional 40 hours of COIN electives taken by the average student. The core program includes a class explicitly devoted to Stability and Reconstruction Operations.<sup>cxliv</sup> This is an increase of more than six times the amount of time that had been devoted to these topics before recent reforms.<sup>cxlv</sup> The curriculum also emphasizes cultural awareness and aims to utilize the experience of students in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations.<sup>cxlvi</sup> Guest speakers include Iraqi that teach students greater cultural awareness and an understanding of how to wage military operations “among the people.” The civilian faculty at CGSC also increased by six times from academic year 2000-2001 to 2005-2006 and the proportion of civilians is continuing to increase. Students are exposed to more diverse backgrounds, are forced to entertain perspectives from outside the traditional Army culture, and can learn from faculty who have experience in reconstruction operations from outside the Army.<sup>cxlvii</sup>

The Captain’s Career Course has also been redesigned in recent years. In 2008, the Field Artillery Captain’s Career Course (FACCC) was redesigned in order to incorporate COIN doctrine from the FM 3-24. This includes classes on socio-cultural analysis and foreign media interviews, skills that were not part of the education for field artillery captains until recently.<sup>cxlviii</sup> The Infantry Captain’s Career Course (ICCC) also announced recent changes to its curriculum in 2006. These included a detailed study of the principles of counterinsurgency, how they differed from conventional warfare, and how this

would affect the execution of infantry operations.<sup>cxlix</sup> It also included a greater emphasis on cultural considerations and their impact on operations.<sup>cl</sup> The Army has also revised the education system for both officers and NCO's to include stability operations, language proficiency training, and cultural awareness.<sup>cli</sup>

It is clear that there is a major trend towards incorporating counterinsurgency or stability operations specifically within the War College, the Captains Career Courses for the Field Artillery and Infantry, and the Command and General Staff College. The increases in curriculum and class time is both significant and has only taken place in recent years, suggesting that this is at least partially an attempt to follow through on the Army's recently published doctrine on the importance of stability operations. However, in none of these cases can counterinsurgency or stability operations be seen as the primary subject of instruction. The CGSC must continue to have conventional operations as the subject of the bulk of the instruction because its command guidance instructs it to prepare for students for all aspects of full spectrum operations.<sup>clii</sup> Similarly, Colonel Reynolds also notes that the War College continues to cover a wide variety of topics because of the wide ranging nature of its missions.<sup>cliii</sup> Even with a full commitment to full spectrum operations, stability operations can only be one of many topics in the Army's training programs.

### **Training for Soldiers**

The Army's Combat Training Centers (CTCs) also have changed to meet the new doctrine. Until the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the CTCs trained units in high intensity conventional combat operations. However, in recent years, CTC's have emphasized counterinsurgency and civil affairs operations. For example, beginning in 2005, fake villages, tunnels, and mosques were built at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California to create realistic backgrounds for soldiers to be trained in counterinsurgency and stability operations.<sup>cliv</sup> These backgrounds have been continuously

upgraded to simulate sections of an Iraqi city, even using building materials from Iraq.<sup>clv</sup> This emphasis on urban environments where the troops will wage operations among the people is a new focus for the NTC.<sup>clvi</sup>

In line with the new doctrine on stability operations, the training given soldiers emphasizes a whole of government approach.<sup>clvii</sup> Certain participants in the training simulate the roles of civilian government employees. The indigenous population is also covered as part of the role playing. This includes using Iraqi-Americans to play the part of Arab civilians and using student journalists to act as embedded journalists.<sup>clviii</sup> Cultural awareness and interaction with the “locals” is emphasized just as much as combat. Scenarios involve police and diplomatic skills as much as combat, as soldiers must learn to use cultural cues and communications skills to pick apart an al-Qaeda cell. Depending on how the soldiers do in each scenario, the situation can become progressively better or worse. It is far more complex than teaching technical skills to show soldiers how to simply eliminate an enemy force.

The NTC also trains soldiers in purely non-combat tasks. Civil affairs, psychological operations, and public affairs officers can be deployed throughout the simulated community. Each section of the community has its own demographics and power structure. Soldiers also learn how to use money to fund reconstruction projects, give rewards, or pay claims. Finally, soldiers also learn how to perform infrastructure reconstruction and deal with explicitly political questions such as whether to employ simulated Iraqis as laborers on reconstruction projects.<sup>clix</sup>

The training of soldiers as performed by the National Training Center and other Combat Training Centers, has changed dramatically since 2005. Soldiers are learning skills such as how to manage construction projects and how to talk to sheiks in a culturally sensitive manner. This represents a real departure from learning conventional force on force combat. The changes in training for soldiers in the

CTC's since 2005 does seem to indicate that the Army is adjusting for stability operations and following its doctrine.

### **Conclusion of Criteria 2 – Training -- Evidence is FOR nation building as a core mission**

The changes in training doctrine, officer education, and the training of soldiers at the NTC do suggest that the Army is incorporating stability operations part of its long term role. Combined with the doctrinal changes, this would suggest that that Army has embraced nation building and that soldiers are training in it as part of their job. However, an examination of budgetary priorities and force structure will show whether the Army as an institution has reformed itself in order to perform stability operations more effectively. Changes in these categories would mean the Army is not just trying to perform stability operations with a force designed for conventional operations, but has actually changed its organization with stability operations as a priority.

### Criteria 3 -- Budget

The budget outlines the major priorities of the service and shows whether doctrinal priorities are actually getting institutional support. If there was a shift towards stability operations and a lesser emphasis on high intensity conventional warfare, it would be expected that the Army would shift money away from weapons programs that are only useful in the latter. Instead, more money would be put behind Special Forces, language, and cultural training programs. Investment in soldiers, as opposed to weapons systems, would be a sign towards a greater stabilization capacity. Therefore, an expansion of the Army could show that the Army is building its capacity for stabilization operations. (While an expansion of the Army would not necessarily mean that the Army has committed to stability operations, it would be a necessary step.)

### **The Future Combat System and Costs of Modularization**

Even before 9/11 and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, large amounts of money were spent by the Army to radically change and reconfigure the force to wage conventional war more effectively. This was an attempt by the Army to build on the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), a concept which described a vision of future warfare in which information would be the most important resource.<sup>clx</sup> Such a vision of warfare appealed to strategists because it was driven by technology rather than more ethereal social or intellectual developments.<sup>clxi</sup> The American Army has also been extremely receptive to technological solutions to strategic problems, and this concept found a constituency within the force because it meshed with the institutional culture.<sup>clxii</sup> An army powered by the RMA could use long range precision weapons and computer analysis to react quickly and destroy an enemy force. Mobility and superior information could compensate for mass in armor units.

Starting in 1999, the Army attempted to “transform” the entire institution and build what it called the Future Combat System to fight this kind of warfare.<sup>clxiii</sup> The centerpiece of this vision was a new fleet of vehicles and components that would mark a decided shift away from heavy armor in favor of a lighter, more versatile vehicle that was more easily transported to potential conflict zones. It would replace the M1 Abrams tank and Bradley fighting vehicle without any loss of survivability. This system also relied upon a high level of technological advancement, both to develop the new fighting vehicles and the information and processing systems that would allow soldiers to avoid casualties through greater situational awareness.<sup>clxiv</sup>

The thinking behind the Future Combat System is relevant to the current topic because of the strategic goals that the Future Combat System was designed to meet. First, the main objective of the Future Combat System was to make the Army more deployable.<sup>clxv</sup> Army strategists were concerned about the usefulness of the force because of how long it took to deploy and prepare before the first Persian Gulf War and a mission to Kosovo.<sup>clxvi</sup> The FCS would avoid this problem. Secondly, the role of

the Army as the nation's preeminent national security force was under threat in the late 1990's, notably from advocates of air power.<sup>clxvii</sup> The Air Force was able to make this case because of the success of the air campaign against Slobodan Milosevic and a political aversion to casualties. The FCS was a way to rebuild the Army's prominence. Third, it was designed to transform the entire conventional force while seamlessly integrating new technologies in a step by step basis. Existing platforms (such as the Abrams tank) could be improved and new weapons like drones could be utilized until the new ground vehicles were fully developed and the new force could be fielded.<sup>clxviii</sup>

However, these rationales for the FCS do not relate to the current environment for stability operations or even counterinsurgency. First, in counterinsurgency and stability operations, speed in deployment is less crucial than manpower and staying power. Secondly, following the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army is once again seen as the critical service for national security, with the Air Force sidelined from stability operations. Third, manpower and human intelligence are more critical than high tech weapons systems in stability operations, and current COIN and stability operations doctrine emphasizes that soldiers should get out of their vehicles and patrol among the people. Even if the new vehicles lived up to their promise, they were not to be fielded for some time. For all of these reasons, it could be argued that the Future Combat System should not be a priority if the Army was putting the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq first. Furthermore, it would definitely not be a priority for a force that was making stability operations a core operation.

Nonetheless, the FCS was pursued as a priority by the Army even after the invasion of Iraq and was the Army's single largest procurement program.<sup>clxix</sup> In 2004, the budget request for FCS was \$1.7 billion, more than three times the amount of money spent on upgrades to Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles.<sup>clxx</sup> The investment in the combat vehicle of the future was far greater than the combat

vehicles actually being used by soldiers. For fiscal year 2005, the request was even greater, at \$3.198 billion.<sup>clxxi</sup> For 2006, it increased yet again, to \$3.4 billion.<sup>clxxii</sup>

In 2005, Stability Operations was highlighted as a task equivalent to conventional warfare in 2005 by Defense Directive 3000.05. The FCS program also came under increasing scrutiny from Congress.<sup>clxxiii</sup> However, the budget requests for the Future Combat Systems program remained constant. In FY 2007, the request for the FCS was \$3.746 billion.<sup>clxxiv</sup> In FY 2008, the request was very slightly decreased to just over \$3.5 billion, with an additional \$100 million request for advanced procurement.<sup>clxxv</sup> In FY 2009, the request was \$3.227 billion with \$331 million in advance procurement funding.<sup>clxxvi</sup>

More importantly, these expenditures came at the expense of funding for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. By September 2006, Adams notes that the Army had trouble meeting its payroll because of the combined expenses of war and programs like the Future Combat System.<sup>clxxvii</sup> However, the funds were transferred from equipment repair and training rather than transformation, showing what the real priorities were within the service.<sup>clxxviii</sup> In April 2009, Defense Secretary Robert Gates cancelled the FCS program. He argued that the vehicles did not reflect the challenges of irregular warfare that the Army was facing in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>clxxix</sup>

However, the Future Combat System, in modified form, will continue to absorb huge amounts of the Army's resources. The follow up to the FCS, the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) Modernization program, will still receive \$3.2 billion in FY 2011 according to the latest budget request.<sup>clxxx</sup> According to Secretary Gates, the budget is still protected in order to fund the "spin off" programs that will result from the research already done. According to the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, those costs were set to reach \$6 to \$8 billion annually, "about as much as the budgets for all the other ground systems combined."<sup>clxxxi</sup> There is still a constituency within the Army that wants to pursue the

research and continue receiving these amounts of money and a program this large can never fully be eliminated.<sup>clxxxii</sup> Ultimately, the Future Combat System may survive under a different name, but with the same impact on the Army's budget.<sup>clxxxiii</sup>

Another aspect of the Army's plan for transformation is modularization. Units would be reorganized into highly mobile, self-sufficient modular brigades that could be deployed quickly with all of the components needed to fight. The effectiveness of this form of organization for stability operations will be covered later in the paper, but for now, it is important to note that this reorganization also imposed rapidly increasing costs and took away resources from stability operations. In 2004, the transition to the new system organization was estimated to cost \$28 billion through 2011. By the next year, that estimate had increased to \$48 billion.<sup>clxxxiv</sup> This figure also did not include \$27.5 billion in additional costs for personnel and construction.<sup>clxxxv</sup>

The Army's plans for transformation were not significantly changed by the doctrinal shift towards stability operations. The Future Combat System, as confirmed by Secretary Gates, does not have relevance to the challenges the Army is facing today, and has little relevance to stability operations (the case of modularization will be taken up later). The amount of resources dedicated to it shows that the Army has not significantly adjusted its largest budgetary priorities to include stability operations.

### **Force Size**

Stability Operations requires a large number of troops to be physically present in the area that is occupied. A force increase and an investment in soldiers rather than technology would indicate that nation building is becoming a larger priority for the Army. Recruit quality is also a concern, as the quality of troops is especially relevant in counterinsurgency operations. However, in 2006, the Defense Department cut the number of Brigade Combat Teams that were to be deployed. The Congressional Research Service concluded that this cut was made specifically to use the funds for the Future Combat

System.<sup>clxxxvi</sup> This suggests that by 2006, the Army was still counting on a vision of high tech weaponry substituting for a large force.

However, more recently, the Army has increased in size. The budget request for FY 2011 funds a temporary increase in the Army of 22,000 soldiers.<sup>clxxxvii</sup> If the Army's request is met and the recruiting targets are fulfilled, the Army will have increased from 482,400 soldiers in FY 2007 to 547,400 in FY 2011.<sup>clxxxviii</sup> The Army is also pushing to keep soldiers that have skills relevant to counterinsurgency. Many Special Forces soldiers and cryptologist linguists specializing in Arabic or Persian can earn six figure bonuses. Soldiers with an MOS in psychological operations or civil affairs can also receive a smaller bonus.<sup>clxxxix</sup> Finally, investment in medical care for soldiers has increased recently, more than doubling from FY 2008 to FY 2011.<sup>cxc</sup> Pay for the military has also been increased at a rate higher than inflation in recent years, which helps retain members of the force.<sup>cxc</sup>

Perhaps more crucial, funds for the expansion of the Army and for medical care and benefits for soldiers have been moved into the baseline budget, rather than emergency supplemental funding, which gives more institutional protection to these expenditures.<sup>cxcii</sup> This is part of a general plan to "Grow the Force" and would suggest that the Army is modifying itself at least somewhat to reduce the strain on deployed soldiers and enhance its capability for stability operations. However, the increase in size does not mean that the Army has truly restructured itself to fulfill its new tasks – it is a necessary but not sufficient step. About a third of the newly created positions were dedicated to combat brigades that had no relevance to counterinsurgency. While some of the new troops would be pushed into MOS's such as linguistics, engineers, civil affairs, and military police, many are being used for combat teams and support brigades designed for conventional warfare. The pressure on the Army because of the constant rotation of units creates a Catch 22 in which the Army must continue to fund combat

divisions rather than create units for stability that might lessen the need for large occupations in the long term.<sup>cxci</sup>

### **Increases in programs relevant to counterinsurgency**

In recent years, the budget for the Army has been perceived by some observers to be dramatically reformed from the prior emphasis on big ticket weapons systems and conventional warfare. The budget for programs relevant to stability operations has generally increased in recent years. The budget request for FY 2011 for Special Forces is a full 6% increase over the FY 2010 budget request, itself a continuation of earlier increases.<sup>cxci</sup> Money for helicopters and drones for counterinsurgency has also been increased since 2009.<sup>cxci</sup>

However, while these increases are relevant to counterinsurgency, which can incorporate stability operations, it is not quite the same thing and there are few increases in programs that directly relate to stability operations. Secretary Gates is quoted as saying that the FY 2010 budget request, hailed as a dramatic reform budget, is about half dedicated to conventional warfare, 40% dedicated to dual-use systems (things that can be used for both conventional and irregular warfare), and 10% irregular warfare specifically.<sup>cxci</sup> There is no mention of a large scale investment in stability operations or non-combat systems specifically. The latest budget for FY 2011 also does not make many changes beyond what has already been announced. Aside from Army expansion, increased Special Forces, and more unmanned drones, there are no deep changes.<sup>cxci</sup>

There are some programs worth exploring specifically in the new budget. One of the most critical stability operations programs is the Commander's Emergency Response Program. This program allows tactical leaders on the ground to spend money to directly benefit the people in the region they are occupying. If nation building was a core operation of the Army, it would be expected that funding for it has been increased in the budget. This turns out to be the case. From FY 2010 to FY 2011, CERP

has been increased by 100 million dollars to a total amount of \$1.3 billion.<sup>cxviii</sup> This continues a trend, as the FY 2010 funding was itself an increase of more than \$350 million from the previous year's amount.<sup>cxix</sup>

Another critical component to stability operations are linguists and cultural advisors. The FY 2011 budget almost triples the amount designated for linguists and cultural advisors.<sup>cc</sup> This represents a significant investment in the stability operations capability. At the same time, these are contract workers, not soldiers. Though the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been taking place for several years now, the Army still has not developed the capability within the force to deal with cultural and linguistic issues.

The budget for training for overseas operations notes that training at a Combat Training Center will specifically focus on skills relevant to stability operations. The budget includes a program to create more foreign language speakers and create a simulation of complex urban environments. Townspeople, media, NGO and civilian government employees are all portrayed in the scenarios that troops experience. However, funding for unit training is actually decreased for this year, just as the amount budgeted for 2010 was a smaller amount than 2009.<sup>cci</sup> This suggests that this kind of training is only taking place because of the Iraq and Afghanistan War, and that this kind of training may stop being emphasized at the Combat Training Center in the years to come.

### **Conclusion of Criteria 3 – Budget -- Evidence is AGAINST nation building as a core mission**

The Army pursued the Future Combat System even when it was clear that it meant cuts to the actual number of forces in the field. Even though Defense Secretary Robert Gates killed the program, this says more about the opinions of the civilian leadership than the position of the Army itself. The fact that billions are continuing to be spent on the program suggests that the constituency for it within the Army has not diminished. The increase in the size of the Army is relevant to stability operations, but

those troops must actually be assigned to stability operations for it to make a real difference. Though the budget has been reformed in recent years to have more emphasis on Special Forces and counterinsurgency, this again says more about the priorities of civilian leadership than about the Army itself. Most conventional weapons systems will continue to be funded, without any real equivalent funding for stability operations. Finally, though funding for CERP, linguists and cultural advisors has increased and there is funding for training explicitly for nation building operations and irregular warfare, all of this comes out of a supplement to the baseline budget. This suggests that this is a temporary expenditure, not a real change in how the Army does business. An examination of the budget shows that the Army has not made real adjustments to incorporate stability operations.

#### Criteria 4 -- Force Structure

The structure of the force is critical to determining if the Army has actually embraced nation building. Four questions will be examined to determine if the force structure has changed to emphasize stability operations. First is whether the number of troops designated for units relevant for stability operations has increased relative to the number of troops designated for conventional warfare. A second question is whether forces relevant to stability operations, particularly civil affairs units, have been transferred to active duty forces. The third question is whether the modularization of the Army will make the force more capable in stability operations. The final question is whether the Army is receptive to the idea of creating units that are specially designated purely for stability operations.

#### **Troops for stability operations compared to troops for conventional warfare**

A transition to a force that incorporates stability operations would lead to an increase in certain kinds of units with a decrease in other kinds of units. Specifically, it would be expected that heavy armor, field artillery, signal, and air defense units would decrease while civil affairs, military intelligence, psychological operations, military police, medical, and infantry units would increase.

There is evidence that this has occurred. In 2003, the Army began a “rebalancing” initiative intended to relieve pressure on units that were frequently deployed.<sup>ccii</sup> From 2004 to 2011, the Army would shift more than 100,000 soldiers into different kinds of units as part of a transformation from a “Cold War” Army to an Army that could fight the war on terrorism.<sup>cciii</sup> More than a third of field artillery units were cut, with a similar percentage for air defense, and armor.<sup>cciv</sup> 15 new battalions of military intelligence are being created, along with 58 companies of military police, 18 new battalions of infantry, and seven medical companies.<sup>ccv</sup> The increase in military police was the largest, representing an increase of 46%.<sup>ccvi</sup> 20 battalions of field artillery<sup>ccvii</sup>, 10 battalions of armor, 18 air defense battalions, and 28 signal battalions are being converted to new units.<sup>ccviii</sup> By 2006, 57,000 slots had been moved.<sup>ccix</sup>

These conversions have been promoted by the Army as part of a shift towards stability operations. This shift is considerable and could be taken as a deliberate move towards stability operations. However, the initial language surrounding the “rebalancing” initiative focused more on increasing the speed of deployment rather than trying to improve stability operations per se.<sup>ccx</sup> Even with this shift, many of these specialties are still understaffed. The FY 2011 budget has contingency funding for civilian police to take over many of the duties of military police, as “virtually all Active Component Military Police units have deployed.”<sup>ccxi</sup> The Army’s civil affairs units are massively understaffed, with one civil affairs battalion commander stating that the ability to deploy and rotate these forces is “breaking down.”<sup>ccxii</sup> Over 75% of all deployable civil affairs units have been to Iraq and Afghanistan at least once, with the demands on civil affairs soldiers appearing to be even higher when deployments to other countries since 9/11 are considered.<sup>ccxiii</sup>

### **Active Service vs. the Reserve and National Guard**

Troops that would be useful for stability operations are massively concentrated in the Army Reserve and the National Guard. This was the result of a strategic choice made by the Pentagon after

the Vietnam War to compensate for a reduction in the size of the active duty force. Half of the Army's combat units were placed in the reserves as well as almost all of the units that would be used for stabilization, including military police and civil affairs.<sup>ccxiv</sup> This served institutional interests in two ways. First, placing so much of the combat power in the Guard and Reserve would make it difficult for civilians to wage another war like Vietnam in which the entire brunt of the conflict was borne by the active duty Army.<sup>ccxv</sup> Second, the concentration of stability operations in the Reserve and Guard derived from the institutional identity of an Army that wanted to focus purely on warfighting after the Vietnam War, as mentioned in the literature review. Stability operations would be limited to cleaning up after the war and the Guard and Reserve would serve as a strategic reserve in the event of a major conflict.

However, the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan changed this strategic situation drastically as stability operations were no longer a postwar operation, but part of the conduct of the war itself. Despite this, the vast majority of forces relevant to stability operations were in the Reserve and the National Guard. The most relevant of these forces are civil affairs units. Civil affairs units work with civilian populations to ensure that they are not adversely affected by military operations, coordinate aid delivery and infrastructure development, and provide expertise to host nation governments. Civil affairs units also provide unique expertise to military commanders and are "indispensable" to successful stability operations according to American doctrine.<sup>ccxvi</sup>

This is also the unit where the largest disparity existed between the Active Service and the Reserve. As of 2004, there was only one active duty civil affairs battalion in the Army, with six entire brigades stationed in the reserve.<sup>ccxvii</sup> That active duty battalion, the 96<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs, saw heavy duty since September 11, 2001 and was in almost constant rotation. The unit's small resources were also divided, as elements were simultaneously deployed to help with humanitarian relief in the Pacific and in stabilization operations in Iraq.<sup>ccxviii</sup> The reserve units were also heavily strained.<sup>ccxix</sup>

In response, the civil affairs capacity of the Active Service was expanded in 2006, when the 95<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade was created under Special Operations Command.<sup>ccxx</sup> Expanding civil affairs in the active service was also highlighted as a priority in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review.<sup>ccxxi</sup> By 2009, a report to Congress detailed that the 95<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade contained four battalions, with a fifth to be added by 2012. In 2011, an entirely new active duty civil affairs brigade will be formed with 30 companies, to be completed by 2013.<sup>ccxxii</sup> This represents a significant investment in civil affairs units for active duty.

However, the primary focus of civil affairs units will continue to be the Army Reserve. In 2004, the Defense Department released a report that called for easing the pressure on Reserve and National Guard units that were often deployed. Explicitly identified as a target for expansion were Civil Affairs Units.<sup>ccxxiii</sup> By 2009, the Army Reserve contained 8 brigades of civil affairs units, for a combined total of 112 companies. By 2012, this will be expanded by another brigade to bring the force to a total of 132 companies.<sup>ccxxiv</sup>

Although the active duty force for civil affairs expanded and the percentage of active duty troops in Civil Affairs increased by fifteen percent in just a few years, by 2013 the civil affairs force will still consist of 74% reservists.<sup>ccxxv</sup> Once this ratio is established by 2013, the Army foresees current civil affairs needs to have been met and an appropriate proportion of active duty to reservists to have been reached. The Army's satisfaction with this ratio suggests that it is still the intention of the Army to have the primary responsibility for civil affairs under the Army Reserve.<sup>ccxxvi</sup>

The Army's intentions were made somewhat more clear in 2006 when control over all active Civil Affairs units was transferred to U.S. Special Operations Command, but simultaneously all Civil Affairs units in the Army Reserve were transferred to the United States Army Reserve Command.<sup>ccxxvii</sup> Concentrating these units under the Army Reserve opens up certain vulnerabilities, as many Reserve

officers lack linguistic skills and essential skill sets for nation building, as well as the training time needed to remedy these deficiencies.<sup>ccxxviii</sup> This suggests that the Army still does not consider civil affairs, and therefore stability operations, as of equivalent importance to conventional warfare.

Some other kinds of units other kinds of units that have some direct relevance to stability operations are engineers, military police, psychological operations (PSYOPs), and medical units. In each of these units, the majority was concentrated in the reserve and/or the Guard as of 2004. For engineers, there were five combat engineer groups/brigades, compared to three in the Army Reserve and five additional brigades in the National Guard. For Military police, there were five brigades in the active service, with three in the Reserve and three more in the National Guard. For PSYOPS units, there was one group in the Active Service and two in the Reserve. For medical units, there were four brigades in the active component with seven in the Army Reserve.<sup>ccxxix</sup>

While the transformation is not complete and the “rebalancing” is not over, for some of these units the center of gravity is still the reserve. The 4<sup>th</sup> Psychological Operations Group remains the only active duty PSYOPS unit. As of 2009, over seventy percent of the PSYOPS units in the Army remain in the Reserve.<sup>ccxxx</sup> All of the reserve PSYOPS units were transferred to the United States Army Reserve command at the same time the civil affairs units were in 2006, suggesting that the Army sees this as primarily a Reserve role.<sup>ccxxxi</sup> The number of military police has increased more than any other kind of unit, but the majority of military police still serve in the Guard and Reserve. Many of the changes from combat units to military police took place within the Guard itself. In 2004, 2,000 National Guard field artillery soldiers were retrained for military police roles.<sup>ccxxxii</sup> According to the budget for FY 2009, the authorized strength of military police in active service units was 17,892. The amount of military police in the Reserve was slated to be 12,420 with the number in the Guard as 24,164.<sup>ccxxxiii</sup>

It is therefore unclear if the Army's "rebalancing" program between active duty forces and the Reserve and the National Guard actually shows a fundamental restructuring towards stability operations. In the most critical of these cases, civil affairs, the vast majority of soldiers will still remain in the Reserve, as with PSYOPs. In the Military Occupational Specialty that had the largest increase, military police, the majority of soldiers still serve in the Reserve and in the National Guard. The priority in the transfers that has taken place is to limit mobilization and reduce strain on these units, heralding a transformation of the Reserve and the National Guard from a Strategic Reserve to a "part time" military with more predictable deployments.

### **Modularization**

Modularization is one of the most important aspects of Army transformation. Essentially, this is a plan to transform the basic unit of organization of the Army away from corps and divisions into brigades that can be independently deployed with all the components they need to operate. Brigade Combat Teams will be assembled out of existing units into one of three standard fixed designs – Heavy BCT, Infantry BCT, and Stryker BCT. In addition to the base force, the brigade will also contain support units such as artillery, military police, engineers, and other combat support that will be organic to the unit.<sup>CCXXXIV</sup> There will also be five standard multifunctional support brigades: an aviation brigade, a fires brigade, a sustainment brigade, a reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition brigade, and a maneuver enhancement brigade.<sup>CCXXXV</sup>

The purposes of modularization are several. First, a standard design would allow joint interoperability across all Army units and would be able to take advantage of all the network centric developments that the Future Combat System was expected to deliver. Second, it would increase the combat power of the force and allow units to be ready for deployment more quickly. Third, it would allow for greater time between deployments for active units and an easier deployment schedule for

Guard and Reserve units. Finally, it would remove the problems of *ad hoc* organization by allowing additional units to be augmented more easily on a standard design.<sup>ccxxxvi</sup> The Army after modular transformation can deploy quickly, custom tailor forces land forces to meet changing objectives, and work with greater independence of action.

If the Army was fundamentally restructuring itself for nation building operations, several pieces of evidence would be present. First, operational concept behind the modules would be the doctrine that has been produced by FM 3-07 and FM 3-24 – namely, an emphasis on staying power and a capability to work with and among civilian populations. Second, it would be expected that there would be a module that would be designed for stability operations. Third, it would be expected that considering the current engagements of the Army, production of that module would be prioritized.

This is not the case. The modules ultimately are designed for conventional operations, not stability operations. The main operational concept underlying the modules is Rapid Decisive Operations, which emphasizes smaller forces with large amounts of combat power that use superior information technology, precision engagement, and “dominant maneuvers” to quickly close with and destroy enemy forces.<sup>ccxxxvii</sup> Stability operations emphasize larger groups of soldiers, staying power, and patience, rather than quick, violent operations. One army officer engaged in stability operations concluded, “If you look across the structure of the BCT, (brigade combat team, or the modular unit) it is well configured for executing lethal missions, not non-lethal ones.”<sup>ccxxxviii</sup>

Despite the claims that modular units are adaptable to any circumstances in full spectrum operations, the BCT’s lack sufficient forces relevant to stability operations for the units to do their jobs. For example, though the BCT contains military police, combat engineers, and other forces relevant to stability operations, it contains only enough to sustain combat operations, not the far different structure of forces needed to perform nation building operations.<sup>ccxxxix</sup> The multifunctional support brigades are

supposed to be able to take up the slack but of the five possible brigades, only the maneuver enhancement brigade comes close to being able to conduct stability operations because its assigned mission is to “prevent or mitigate the effects of hostile action and ensure the freedom of action of forces” assigned to the unit.<sup>ccxi</sup> While this is somewhat relevant to stability, it is not the same as having a support brigade specifically designated for this mission, particularly when doctrine states that this mission is just as important as conventional operations.

In lieu of a brigade specifically designed for stability operations, the maneuver enhancement brigades (MEB) are the best alternative. The doctrine for the unit states that it can be used for stability operations while still having enough combat power to defend itself.<sup>ccxii</sup> It has combat engineers and military police as an organic part of the unit as well as staff sections for both of those units and a larger headquarters staff than other brigades.<sup>ccxiii</sup> However, only three of these brigades are earmarked for production.<sup>ccxiii</sup> Moreover, infantry, heavy, or Stryker BCT’s receive priority in manning and equipping over an MEB, even if the latter is set to deploy sooner.<sup>ccxiv</sup>

Because of the operation concepts underlying the concept, the lack of a module designated for stability operations, and the relative neglect of the support brigade model that could do best with stability operations, the Army’s modularization program shows that the Army is not reforming itself to adopt nation building as a core priority.

### **A Designated Force for Stability Operations**

A final question to be examined regarding force structure is the Army’s attitude towards a force specifically designated for stability operations. This has been recommended or proposed by several defense intellectuals that are not confident in the Army’s ability to focus on stability operations or counterinsurgency. For example, in May 2005, the Congressional Budget office published a study on restructuring the Army to deal with unconventional missions and proposed a force that would be

dedicated purely to nation building operations.<sup>ccxiv</sup> Another possibility is to establish task forces specifically designed for stability operations and reconstruction that could be inserted into BCT's when the security situation warrants.<sup>ccxvi</sup>

Some organizations with closer ties to the Army have also explored the idea of having a separate force. For example, in 2004, the National Defense University recommended the development of a separate command that would direct a modular force dedicated purely for stability operations, integrating combat, aviation, military police, civil affairs, and other component units that already exist.<sup>ccxvii</sup> However, the university recommended the creation of such units to be a "joint" responsibility rather than the responsibility of the Army as a service, thus undermining the possibility that it would actually be accomplished.<sup>ccxviii</sup> It also specified that ultimate governing responsibility would reside in another, unnamed authority, thus removing the need for the service to actually take responsibility for military governance.<sup>ccxlix</sup> In September of 2006, the Association of the United States Army recognized the need for greater emphasis on stability operations but also called for a joint command rather than a command under the Army. Because of this condition, it is unlikely to be realized.<sup>cccl</sup>

The Army is aware of these plans, although it is not known if there has been a systematic examination of them by the institution itself.<sup>cccli</sup> As a whole, the Army has not been favorable to any of these plans.<sup>ccclii</sup> Instead, the Army has consistently supported a vision of Full Spectrum Operations. For example, the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review states that the ground forces must remain capable of full spectrum operations, including counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorist operations.<sup>cccliii</sup>

Partially the Army's opposition to any kind of a separate force derives from a fear that such a force would take away from the Army's conventional capabilities.<sup>cccliv</sup> Another source of opposition is the idea that stability forces would be unable to properly defend themselves, would inspire opposition from their weakness, and would ultimately need help from conventional forces anyway.<sup>ccclv</sup> The Army believes

that forces capable of Full Spectrum Operations are needed because a firm distinction between war and stability operations cannot be made easily, and any given situation could devolve into combat.<sup>cclvi</sup> This is similar to Marine General Charles Krulak's concept of the "Three Block War" which stated that Marines must be able to operate in an environment in which they are distributing humanitarian aid on one city block, conducting peacekeeping operations on the next block, and trying to kill enemies on the next block. In actuality, this privileges organization for conventional combat and reduces stability operations to a lesser included operation.

#### **Conclusion of Criteria 4 – Force Structure – Evidence is AGAINST adaptation of nation building**

The Army's force structure does not show evidence that it has adopted nation building as a core mission of the Army equivalent to offensive or defensive operations. The evidence is not unanimous in this regard -- the Army has shifted many troops from heavy weapons slots into jobs that are more relevant to counterinsurgency and it has also expanded the number of active duty civil affairs soldiers. However, the "rebalancing" of the force was at least partially justified by a need to speed up deployment rather than restructure for nation building. The Modularization plan that is at the heart of the Army's effort for transformation is structured for high intensity conventional warfare, and even the brigade models that could be used for stability operations are underutilized. Finally, the Army is against any effort to have a separate stabilization force arguing that skills in conventional warfare are needed for force protection even before stability operations. In essence, when it comes to force structure, the Army is arguing that stability operations are a lesser included operation, something it can focus on once it has secured its supremacy in conventional warfare.

#### **Overall Conclusion**

Four factors were examined – doctrine, training, budget, and force structure. The Army has in fact transformed itself in doctrine and the balance of evidence is that they have in training as well. However, the Army has not transformed itself when it comes to budgetary priorities or force structure.

What this means is that the Army is transforming itself as much as it can with a force that is premised upon Full Spectrum Operations. Doctrinal changes and training are in some ways easier than budgetary or structural changes. They can be applied “on top” of existing programs and force structures. While the Army’s traditional culture can be a powerful barrier against regarding stability operations as a core Army mission, experiences in the field can change the opinions of officers and soldiers. New doctrine can be taught and different training programs can give soldiers new skills. However, the baseline identity and capabilities of soldiers and units do not appreciably change and doctrine and training can shift back quickly if circumstances permit.

In contrast, changing the budget or the force structure jeopardizes constituencies both inside and outside the Army. Large budget items like the Future Combat System or force transformation initiatives such as Modularization are extremely important to the identity of the Army. Entire careers have been invested in their success and continuance. Changes to the budget or the force structure challenge the fundamental identity of the Army more than any change in doctrine or training.

Because the force needs to be able to dominate in the full spectrum of operations, conventional war will always be a priority. In contrast, stability operations, whatever their place in doctrine, do not have a real institutional home within the Army yet. Even when the current wars are over, the modularized force and the big ticket weapons systems will remain. The same cannot be said about programs for stability operations if the need for them declines because of new political decisions. For these reasons, changes in budget and force structure are more important than shifts in doctrine and

training. Therefore, this author concludes the Army has not fundamentally reorganized to meet the demands of nation building.

The Army's reform has gone about as far as it is likely to go. Stability operations will be taught to a force that is still largely organized for conventional war and equipped with weaponry that is largely irrelevant to stability operations. Changes to doctrine and training are important as soldiers can adapt to them and apply them to some extent. Underneath these changes, however, the Army has the same budgetary priorities and structure. It is still fundamentally the same Army. If there is a need for a force with nation building at its core, it will need to be a separate organization.

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<sup>i</sup> Mangan, William J. *Army IPB in Support of Nation Building Operations*. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. States Army Command and General Staff College, 2005, p.1

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Department of the Army. FM-3-0. *Operations*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army, 2001, p. 1-15

<sup>iii</sup> U.S. Department of the Army and United States Marine Corps. FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5. *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007, section 2-22

<sup>iv</sup> Katel, Peter. "Rise in Counterinsurgency." *CQ Researcher* 18, No. 30 (September 5, 2008), 701.

<sup>v</sup> Mazarr, Michael. "The Folly of 'Asymmetric War,'" *Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (Summer 2008), 42.

<sup>vi</sup> Pan, Esther. "The Scope of China's Military Threat." Council on Foreign Relations. June 2, 2006.

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/10824/scope\\_of\\_chinas\\_military\\_threat.html#p9](http://www.cfr.org/publication/10824/scope_of_chinas_military_threat.html#p9) (Accessed February 19, 2010).

<sup>vii</sup> Mazarr, "The Folly of 'Asymmetric War,'" *Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (Summer 2008), 41.

([www.twq.com/08summer/docs/08summer\\_mazarr.pdf](http://www.twq.com/08summer/docs/08summer_mazarr.pdf)). Accessed February 19, 2010

<sup>viii</sup> Katel, Peter. "Rise in Counterinsurgency." *CQ Researcher* 18, No. 30 (September 5, 2008)

<sup>ix</sup> Comfort, Kenneth. *Preventing Terrorism Through Nation-Building: A Viable Way?*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2003, P. 8

<sup>x</sup> Katel, Peter. "Rise in Counterinsurgency." *CQ Researcher* 18, No. 30 (September 5, 2008), 702.

<sup>xi</sup> Tyson, Ann Scott. "Standard Warfare May be Eclipsed by Nation Building." *The Washington Post*, October 5, 2008. Accessed online. Available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/04/AR2008100402033.html> (Accessed December 23, 2009.)

<sup>xii</sup> Katel, Peter. "Rise in Counterinsurgency." *CQ Researcher* 18, No. 30 (September 5, 2008), 702.

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