

# Post Conflict Reconstruction

**Bridging the gap between  
Military and Civilian Affairs  
on the Modern Battlefield**

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by Tobias Ellwood MP



**first defence**

45, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3LT  
[www.firstdefence.org](http://www.firstdefence.org)



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Tobias was born in New York, USA. He grew up in Bonn, Germany and Vienna, Austria, but returned to the UK to complete his first degree at Loughborough University. He spent five years in the Army with The Royal Green Jackets, and served in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Kuwait, Germany, Gibraltar and Bosnia. On leaving the army Tobias worked as a researcher for the former Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Tom King MP (now Lord King).

He returned to university to complete an MBA at City University Business School. Tobias then moved to the London Stock Exchange for two years where he was a Senior Business Development Manager and, following that, to a similar role for the law firm Allen and Overy. Tobias was elected as Member of Parliament for Bournemouth East in May 2005. In January 2006 he was appointed Opposition Whip and in July 2007 was promoted to the post of Shadow Minister for Culture Media and Sport where he is responsible for a portfolio including tourism, gambling and licensing.

Tobias completed the senior executive course in National and International Studies at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University in the summer of 2009 and in his role as an MP, continues to take an interest in military matters, specialising in post-conflict operations, and is a frequent visitor to the Middle East, in particular Iraq and Afghanistan. In October 2002 he lost his brother in Bali bomb attacks.

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Policy Proposal:

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stabilisation can be described as the transformation towards peace from a state of conflict by means of building security, governance, and economic capability of the host nation(s) to withstand internal and external threats and discharge their responsibilities while gaining consent from the local population.

Poor governance, economic breakdown, or erosion of security can lead to a fragile country failing to provide for the basic needs of its population who may then turn to any provider, including adversaries, to meet its basic needs. Stabilisation must therefore be considered as a core objective and not a post conflict after-thought. Failing to act quickly to gain and maintain the initiative with stabilisation efforts not only effects security by allowing the enemy the space to re-group, but also a loss in moral authority as progress towards peace is checked, and an escalation in costs as the road to recovery becomes much longer. If the campaign fails to advance - or indeed deteriorates over time - support back home for continued military involvement will be put to the test.

An early commitment to stabilisation operations is therefore essential and, as recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan illustrate; it is a phase of a campaign that coalition forces including Britain must get better at. As this paper attempts to show, stabilisation operations are in fact a common theme. They are usually conducted by the Army and feature in campaigns dating back over 300 years. However, as military doctrine and training show, up to even a few years ago, stabilisation operations have rarely been seen as integral to the key objective of fighting and defeating the enemy. Lessons learned have been quickly forgotten, and are often prompted by defence cuts which are invariably brought in after a major campaign is completed.

It is no coincidence that past successful stabilisation operations have been the responsibility of the land forces. With their ability to work in hostile environments, a strong logistical chain already in place and the wide skill sets they incorporate (or which can be easily adapted to tackle most tasks), the Army is best placed to lead and to ensure unified effort in co-ordinating the myriad of other organisations and agencies that are now involved in the aftermath of conflict.

The need for strong leadership applies equally to Whitehall, where conflicting and over-lapping agendas, particularly involving the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Department for International Development (DfID), have hindered Britain's stabilisation capability. These two departments have important roles to play in their own right. The FCO should be the lead agency in planning the policy that governs stabilisation operations and DfID, with its remit to tackle poverty, should work hand in glove with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in creating programmes to build a stable economy and infrastructure. It should, however, be the British Army that has responsibility for stabilisation operations until the

security environment is safe enough to hand over to other agencies. The creation of a stabilisation brigade, leaning heavily on reservists, will ensure these skills are both current and relevant, and include a comprehensive understanding of what other agencies such as the UN have to offer.

The cost of creating a permanent stabilisation capability will not be cheap, but its implementation will mean campaigns will be considerably faster and more cost effective. As the act of stabilisation can be considered a form of humanitarian assistance, spending in this area would qualify towards Britain meeting its target of spending 0.7% GDP on humanitarian aid. As this specific responsibility would be passed from DfID to the army, funding for this proposal could therefore be drawn from the existing DfID budget (£7.1bn annually)<sup>1</sup>.

## 1. WINNING THE WAR BUT LOSING THE PEACE

Military engagements are increasingly characterised by the rapid defeat of conventional enemies by relatively small deployments of forces. This is a welcome development which has undoubtedly led to lower casualty rates, but it exposes the absence of robust planning for the post-combat phase. The very forces that have been successful in the combat phase have often been less prepared to address the lawlessness, humanitarian crisis and destruction of civilian infrastructure which follows all major combat operations.

While looting and petty crime is allowed to take place, the enemy is able to re-group into an insurgency or new spoilers are allowed to emerge. Both groups are able to gain support by portraying the intervening force, whether it is UN mandated or not, as an occupying one. As General David Petraeus<sup>2</sup>, the US CENTCOM commander, states in the Army/Marine manual on counter-insurgency, the primary focus of intervention forces should not just be on defeating the enemy but on empowering the local population. In meeting this objective, the removal of the enemy is only half the objective, the other half is to create a stable environment in which reconstruction, the rule of law, and an economy can develop.

The present approach places a growing burden on the intervening troops, delaying their return home. It also leaves the troop-contributing nations to foot a bill which becomes considerably larger than expected. Britain's Helmand deployment was originally calculated to cost only £800 million and now exceeds over £2.6 bn a year<sup>3</sup>. Such a situation risks undermining public support not only for the mission at hand – for example NATO's ISAF operation – but also for future national security missions. This kind of "intervention blues" is now clearly in evidence across Europe, with consequences for the West's force projection.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.DfID.gov.uk](http://www.DfID.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> US Army & Marine Corps Counter Insurgency Field Manual – University of Chicago Press

<sup>3</sup> MoD Annual Report and Accounts 08/09 and Parliamentary Statement Oct 09

Studies have shown that one of the key failings in post-stabilisation operations is that nobody is in charge. Newly established national authorities – like Hamid Karzai’s Afghan government –lack the legitimacy, capacity or resources to lead stabilisation work in the critical window of opportunity which opens at the end of major combat operations. The United Nations and the European Union can and often do take on a co-ordinating role, but their success is limited to low-intensity peace-keeping operations (rather than peace-making) often preceded by a peace agreement which has the buy-in of all interested parties. Where threat levels are higher, the UN, along with any participating NGOs, tends to depart until the security situation has improved. This leaves the original intervention force facing a deteriorating security situation whilst little is done to win over “hearts and minds” in order to improve the livelihoods of ordinary people.

## 2. LESSONS FROM HISTORY

As the examples listed in Annex A show, both Britain and the US have consistently learned and forgotten the lessons of stabilisation operations. The last three hundred years of military conflict are littered with examples of situations where combat troops were obliged to adapt quickly to their new post war environments and responsibilities. From the aftermath of the US Civil war where the Army was placed in almost total control of implementing reconstruction and economic regeneration in most of the secessionist states, to the governance and structures developed by the British Army across Africa and the Indian subcontinent. Following each campaign, armies would fill the vacuum of power, provide emergency humanitarian assistance and begin the process of building the foundations of a society (admittedly in some cases with little intention of handing too much power away). The best example of this would be the post war stabilisation operations, (first designed in 1942) for Japan and Germany. Lessons were quickly forgotten in Vietnam where the creation of a civil operations model five years into the campaign won high acclaim, but came far too late to influence the outcome of the war.

A radical overhaul of how the UK conducts its stabilisation missions is necessary in order to avoid having to re-invent the wheel after each military campaign ends. Britain is often among the first nations to answer the call for international help or stand up to an enemy well beyond our shores. Our intentions are honourable but our efforts, once the fighting has stopped, are often poorly led and lack co-ordination, making them more inefficient and costly than necessary. Levels of international co-operation need to improve and the restructuring of NATO is long overdue, but reforms must begin at home.

Changes are required in a number of areas, including the way the Cabinet Office works and the manner in which strategy is developed, how officials are trained and missions managed, both politically and administratively. Without a well

resourced, promptly executed and realistic plan, undertaken by a specialised unit capable of working in a hostile environment, delays in restoring essential services, establishing a permissive security environment, securing the rule of law and jump-starting the economy are inevitable. We are witnessing the need for a new military stabilisation force which has the ability to bridge the transition from the combat phase to the stabilisation phase, to prevent the enemy from regrouping and expedite the road to recovery.

The failure to establish such a force ultimately means that Britain will always face the choice between withdrawing troops before peace has been restored or committing more forces to a complex, costly and prolonged mission which will invariably expand not only to deal with security concerns, but also to lead the reconstruction effort. This is a job no military force expects or is currently trained and resourced to undertake.

### **3. CURRENT UK AND US CAPABILITY**

The UK has no coherent stabilisation capability at present. In the absence of any other agency, DfID is expected to follow behind our troops and co-ordinate the reconstruction effort. In reality such tasks were never within the remit of DfID, which was established in 1997 to 'manage Britain's aid to poor countries'.<sup>4</sup> DfID should be credited with having a record of successful development projects around the globe, but it is not equipped, trained or tasked by statute to assist in stabilisation in the immediate aftermath of war. Its organizational ethos militates against close co-operation with the MoD and its career structure advances those who work in Africa, not Afghanistan.

An illustration of this is the Iraq invasion of March 2003. UK military forces spent months preparing for their part in the invasion but once initial hostilities were over they were given responsibility for controlling and rebuilding Basra. There was little or no co-ordination with DfID or indeed any other agency about what to do next. Without a plan or shared vision to improve the lives of locals, militias started forming and taking matters into their own hands. Eventually the British military was forced to withdraw from the city to the relative safety of the airport as it became perceived as part of the security problem.

In response to this lacuna, the Government has created the 'Stabilisation Unit' (SU) which is jointly run by the Cabinet Office, DfID, the FCO and the MOD with an annual budget of £269 million<sup>5</sup>. Whilst this unit is developing some expertise in nation-building, its objective is to provide specialist assistance in targeted countries emerging from violent conflict. It therefore advises and does not lead,

<sup>4</sup> Department for International Development website: <http://www.DfID.gov.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/information.html>

having neither the authority, resources nor manpower to conduct post-conflict operations in a 'non permissive' (insecure) environment or on the scale that is now required.

The MOD has itself responded with the establishment of Civil Military Co-operation (CIMIC) protocol established in February 2006<sup>6</sup> where the Joint Force Commander at operational level is now responsible for the coherence of CIMIC. To assist him there is a small but expanding unit of reservists specifically trained in planning for the post conflict environment. These deploy as Military Stabilisation Support Teams (MSST), one per company strength.

British efforts in Helmand Province highlight the lack of command and control that can lead to failure. Turf wars between the MOD, DfID and the FCO mean the UK's Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) has achieved little in the last three years, while the SU was only gradually allowed a role in running the British effort. DfID meanwhile has only slowly come on board the mission, tailoring its objectives to stabilisation rather than the longer-term development originally suggested when British forces moved down to Helmand. Unfortunately, this interregnum has allowed the enemy to re-group, terrorize the population and – from safe-havens in Pakistan - force UK military into a strategic stalemate.

Likewise in the US, recognition of the need for change has not filtered down to the front line. According to the National Security Presidential Directive 44 the Department of State is tasked to be the lead agency for 'inter-agency co-ordinating and planning, to develop strategies and plans for reconstruction and Stabilisation, as well as civilian response capability.' Yet at the same time the Department of Defence, in its last Quadrennial Defence Review, recognises the need for its own formal strategic concept to synchronise civil and military power.<sup>7</sup> Neither explains how to conduct seamless military civilian operations. As Colonel Christopher Holshek, USEUCOM Military Representative to USAID puts it "less than half of one percent of US force structure is dedicated to leveraging civil soft power. Yet it is a low tech solution to a low tech problem."<sup>8</sup> Despite the perceived overlap of responsibility, the US Marine Corps are now pioneering the concept of training a number of Battalions specifically for stabilisation operations.

#### **4. CREATION OF A NEW STABILISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION FORCE**

Upgrading the remit of DfID to include stabilisation in insecure environments would be costly and inefficient. It could also distract from the Department's crucial

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<sup>6</sup> Joint Military Doctrine 3-90

<sup>7</sup> DODD 3000.55

<sup>8</sup> Analysis for Civil Military Transitions by Colonel Christopher Holshek

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work in low-income countries. A fresh approach is therefore needed to deal with this new and dangerous challenge.

With its logistical chain already likely to be in place, and its personnel trained for hostile environments, it is a logical step to allow the military to lead a large scale post-conflict tactical force in hostile environments with a view to immediately initiating the crucial stabilisation that General Petraeus speaks of, and which history has shown the army is able to do.

Learning the lessons (again) of recent engagements, the British and US armies are already looking at developing niche defence capabilities able to conduct so called 'military assistance, security and development tasks' (MASD<sup>9</sup>). However, to date there has been little British political will to pursue this idea due to the overlap of responsibility between the FCO, MOD and DfID, which has led to confusion in managing the strategies of interventions. The creation of a new Stabilisation Force answering to the MOD would provide a solution.

The HQ or elements of such a Stabilisation Force would be comprehensively involved in the design of the initial battle plans. Specialist knowledge can be augmented by civilian staff (for example, from other agencies including the FCO, DfID and even borough councils with expertise in establishing local governance). All civilians would need to be TA trained – or provided with similar/compatible training - so that personnel are capable of operating in a hostile environment and recognising a formal chain of command. Personnel from the security agencies who are civilians but armed and able to operate in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, illustrate that it is not impossible to use civilians.

## 5. OBJECTIVES

To be effective, a Stabilisation Force must have a clear, realistic and achievable political mission, which includes an understanding of what the post-combat setting must look like when combat operations end. Three key areas of focus would include:

### **SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN AID:**

- continued security operations; local policing;
- assistance with delivery of emergency humanitarian relief;
- emergency housing and shelter;
- food and water;
- basic health facilities;

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<sup>9</sup> Speech by General Sir Richard Dannett KCB CBE MC ADC Gen to RUSI – 12 June 2008.

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## **ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE**

- restoration of electrical power;
- labour intensive employment projects;
- repair of basic infrastructure (roads, key buildings, water and electricity supplies etc.);
- repair or construction of education facilities;
- assistance with agricultural projects;

## **LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

- recognition and support to legitimate local power base;
- development of grass roots local governance.

The extent to which advances will be made in each of these areas will, of course, depend on a whole host of factors, but as soon as satisfactory progress is made and the environment is deemed as sufficiently secure, responsibility can be handed over to a more permanent, civilian-based operation, possibly the inter-departmental Stabilisation Unit, which would focus on securing long-term contracts for reconstruction, local and national governance, constitutions and training of the civil service etc.

## **6. SIZE AND MAKE UP OF THE FORCE**

Making advances in the above objectives in the aftermath of any major kinetic engagement will require a well trained, well equipped, versatile and sizable force. Taking into consideration the current size of the UK armed forces and scale of recent commitments, the creation of a brigade sized unit would be the minimum required to dovetail into the type of operational environments we are presently involved in. It would also fit into the 'Three Block War Concept' outlined by General Charles Krulak<sup>10</sup> whereby troops at Battle Group level and below, are required to conduct war fighting, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, within the same village, over a short space of time.

The potential contribution by the TA would be significant. First, to bolster regular units in the usual way; and second, as the vehicle to train selected groups of civilians with key skills who would need to become familiar with working in a hostile environment and working with other military units. For example, developing local governance could be led by local council civil servants from the UK who have completed a TA commission and been given additional training, thus establishing local accountability. Similarly DfID personnel, bankers, accountants, surveyors, bricklayers, linguists etc. and other specialist skills that might be

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<sup>10</sup> Charles C. Krulak (1999). 'The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War

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required as part of the Stabilisation Force would all complete a tailored reservist course so they could adapt to the military environment quicker and protect themselves in the insecure environment. Ex-service personnel also offer a large pool of expertise which could be drawn upon.

CIMIC could easily be expanded to provide the technical skill sets which at present are not found either at the right level or to the appropriate scale. There is also the 'Civil Contingency Response Force' designed to deal with domestic threats, both natural and man made, which could easily have a dual role. Placing the full Stabilisation Force in uniform also reduces costs for extra security arrangements and insurance (each DfID personnel based in Afghanistan costs the tax payer £250,000 a year<sup>11</sup>) and ensures there is no confusion over command and control.

The Corps of Royal Engineers, both regular and territorial, would play a material role in the make-up of a Stabilisation Force, though additional funds would be required in order to allow the Corps to expand. There would need to be an understanding of how UK government works, and how international agencies which are likely to be involved in post conflict operations, such as the UN, (and its related bodies such as UNICEF), EU, IMF, World Bank, USAID and NGOs (International Red Cross, Oxfam) etc. operate. In many cases, the Stabilisation Force would need to have the buy-in of these organisations to act as senior co-ordinator for a specific geographical area/region during the critical first few months of post-combat operations. Expertise in harnessing the opportunities of the private sector (domestic and international) would also need to be included. Development and aid budgets cannot alone create viable autonomous and expanding economies. Commercial involvement, even in the early stages of Stabilisation, can provide much needed resources and expertise from short term needs, such as the provision of commercial helicopters to assist with heavy lift, to identification of micro-finance initiatives, to joint ventures such as the repair and running of transport systems. The importance of command and control cannot be overstated and establishing a Stabilisation Force will ensure there is no ambiguity over the mission, who is in charge, what plan is being pursued or how funds should be spent.

The extent to which the entire brigade might be deployed would depend on the size and objective of the mission. Units or sub units would expect to be deployed as a matter of course with combat formations but the brigade might deploy entirely on its own when the theatre of operations has little need for combat operations.

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<sup>11</sup> Parliamentary Question no: 212455 dated 16th June 2008

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## 7. TRAINING LOCAL SECURITY FORCES

The importance of efficiently developing an effective local security capability warrants underlining. It has been the Achilles heel in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with local militias and insurgents taking advantage of the power vacuum. The so called 'Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams' (OMLTs), where British soldiers train local soldiers, work well but have taken too long to organise and remain too few.

Developing a home-grown policing / national security capability sends a powerful message to all local communities that the presence of an intervention force is a temporary one and should be seen as a liberator on a short-term mission rather than an occupier involved in an open ended commitment.

A Stabilisation Force could include the teams trained to establish the programmes which would recruit and train members of the local army, police and civil service. As already mentioned, the British Army (indeed the armies of many NATO countries) is experienced in running training programmes for local armies. The same cannot be said for the training of the police or civil service. In Afghanistan, the responsibility for building up a police force has been handed around like a hot potato, wasting valuable time.

British police officers (both serving and retired) can presently volunteer as individuals via the FCO run International Secondments Team<sup>12</sup> but this is not geared to provide the scale of instructor capability now needed in the post conflict environment. An expansion of the Royal Military Police (RMP) as part of a Stabilisation Force could offer a solution. Its current remit focuses on policing the British military community worldwide rather than providing assistance and training foreign (possibly newly established) police forces. Recognising the urgency of establishing a localised policing capability after an intervention and the insecure environment that is likely to exist, the RMP is the obvious organisation to expand to accomplish this role. Again, the ability to bring in specialist reservists to bolster a core regular training element would be essential.

Training a new battalion of soldiers or police force takes a minimum of two years, but commencing agreed training programmes and introducing joint patrolling with local forces needs to begin as soon as the kinetic phase of the war is complete.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/working-for-us/whats-it-like/day-in-the-life/secondments/>

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## 8. AN INCREMENTAL APPROACH TO ESTABLISHING A STABILISATION FORCE

Considering the Army's current scale of commitments and pressures on budgets, the first specialist Stabilisation Brigade would need to be established incrementally as skill sets are accumulated and funds are made available. It must however be pre-empted by the political decisions that firstly, stabilisation and reconstruction operations are core military tasks and not an add-on to core fighting skills and secondly, that the Army must be the lead agency and command such operations. Any operation will be on land and by nature it will take place in a dangerous and unstable environment.

Once the concept of a Stabilisation Force is agreed it would be for the MOD to conduct an assessment in order to determine:

- the structure, size and spectrum of skill sets required of the new brigade;
- what skill sets/units are already in existence in the Regular Army and TA, and where the gaps are;
- how current capabilities can be grown to enable a proportion of the Regular Army elements to have early entry capability, with the remainder to be held at an agreed readiness in the TA in new tailored organisations / units;
- how the conflict stage of an operation will merge seamlessly with the post-conflict stage (the introduction of a new force at the wrong time might lead to confused responsibilities);
- what Whitehall departments would need to be included to ensure a comprehensive approach can be implemented efficiently;
- what command and control arrangements need to be established to ensure unity of command and commitment to the mission;
- what shape a specialist military/civilian headquarters with executive authority over peacetime training might take, and which elements would deploy with the regular combat headquarters.

## 9. FUNDING

Given that capitation rate (running costs) for a brigade is around £100m<sup>13</sup> per year, the cost of a new brigade complete with headquarters, additional Royal Engineer units, including training and holding of an expanded TA is likely to exceed £200m a year. However, this figure is put into perspective by the cost of involvement in

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<sup>13</sup> Parliamentary Question No: 234052 dated 10th Nov 08

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Iraq which has averaged £1.5bn a year since 2003 and £1.42bn for Afghanistan since 2006<sup>14</sup> (and now in excess of £3.5bn).

The focus of a Stabilisation Force, though conducted by the military, will essentially be stabilisation work which, in a stable environment, DfID would be expected to do. It is therefore plausible that the cost of running a Stabilisation Force should come from DfID's annual budget of £7 billion.

Redirecting some of these funds would remove the need for DfID to operate in insecure environments (which the recent National Audit Office report<sup>15</sup> states it does not do well) and would mean the overall operation is likely to be concluded months or years sooner than under the current system. These savings are likely to be huge considering the cost of these operations to the taxpayer.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The urgency of improving our stabilisation and reconstruction capability cannot be over-estimated. Historically the Army has not seen the conduct of stability operations as part of its core objective. With an institutional bias towards conventional war - and the inevitable reduction in defence spending that follows an expensive war, lessons learnt about the importance of stabilisation from previous campaigns are quickly forgotten.

As the gulf in present day stabilisation capability is clear for all to see, military doctrines are urgently being revised, to recognise the importance of stabilisation as part of the full spectrum of operations, which in modern parlance is referred to as 'clear; hold and build'.

'Clearing' and 'holding' the ground is something the UK's armed forces do extremely well. It is the 'building' which we fail to deliver. The advent of new organisations such as the UN and the EU and internal organisations such as DfID and USAID which are all expected to play a role in the modern post conflict environment have compounded the question as to who is responsible for stabilisation operations. These relatively new agencies play an invaluable role in the stabilisation process, but as has been proved so often, their contribution is reduced to nothing when the security conditions turn for the worse or cannot be guaranteed. Unable to influence and assist the local population, the security situation further deteriorates as the battle for hearts and minds is lost.

If as a country the UK is willing to step forward when other countries hesitate in order to support democratic values, defend borders and challenge rogue states, then we must have not only the right tools to fight wars but those required to establish and maintain peace as well.

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<sup>14</sup> House of Commons Library: Standard Note No: SN/SG/3139

<sup>15</sup> NAO Report: October 2008: [http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao\\_reports/05-06/05061311-survey.pdf](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/05-06/05061311-survey.pdf)

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The Army is therefore the single agency, with a proven record in delivering an effective stabilisation capability that should take full responsibility for post conflict operations. This responsibility needs to be supported by Government and embraced by the Army, not as an add-on task, but as an integral part of its mission, with a stabilisation force created to execute that mission.

The variety of skill sets available from such a force, coupled with the ability to work in hostile environments, would mean a new stabilisation force (or units of) could also provide short term assistance in places like northern Pakistan or be utilised to help with humanitarian incidents such as after a major tsunami, or indeed flooding in the UK.

In reality, we cannot predict where in the world assistance will be required. What we can say for certain is that we live in an increasingly volatile world and, whether through natural disaster or man made ruin, we urgently need a modern, co-ordinated, efficient and dynamic post war stabilisation capability which is able to meet the challenges of the modern battlefield.

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## **ANNEX A:**

### **EXAMPLES OF POST CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND STABILISATION OPERATIONS**

International agreements following the battle of Solferino (1859), the Hague Convention (1907) and the Geneva Convention (1949) are key landmarks obliging Armed Forces to consider humanitarian factors in the conduct of war. Yet a snap shot of some the more significant military campaigns over the last three hundred years shows a recurring pattern of combat forces rapidly obliged to adapt to their new environment in the aftermath of battle, often led by a single powerful personality empowered to see the process through. In most cases troops go into battle ill-prepared for the prospect of transitioning to stabilisation operations but emerge from the entire campaign with a wealth of knowledge that fails to be passed on.

#### **INDIA**

British military involvement in India is arguably the best example of enduring Stabilisation operations albeit with a colonial twist. At the time of the 1861 Indian census 80,000 mostly British forces along with just 40,000 civilians managed a subcontinent of 200 million, a feat not possible without incorporating the aspirations of the local population. Thanks to the efforts of military leaders such as Major-General Robert Clive (known as Clive of India) the military and political supremacy of the 'East India Company' was firmly established in the 1700's across much of the sub-continent providing the UK with 15% of its total imports. Its skill in defeating colonial competitors with its own army and earning the goodwill of the locals through reconstruction projects, education and employment programmes, roads, irrigation works and eventually railways. The Company's control eventually covered most of modern day India, Pakistan and Bangladesh incorporating Princely states into its structure of governance, on some occasions through costly wars. The Company was taken over by the British Government following a major rebellion in 1857, an event which served to focus British minds on ways to become more culturally aware of the Empire it was now running, beginning with an overhaul of training for the local Indian Armies. Successive British Viceroys (often drawn from ex-military personnel) with the help of over 100,000 British troops would develop an advanced judicial system, extend self-government from towns to country, build schools, universities and hospitals and bring a level of prosperity to the country which, other than a few accretions, was generally appreciated by a very disparate local population up until the country's independence in 1947.

#### **POST US CIVIL WAR 1865**

President Abraham Lincoln established military governments in most occupied secessionist states. Legislation in 1867 put the Army in almost total control of implementing reconstruction. Army officers in occupied areas sought to establish order by creating police forces and civilian judicial systems, though military courts in some areas were compelled to preside over civil affairs. Military officials also supervised elections, collected taxes, regulated economic and business matters and engaged in humanitarian and sanitation efforts to ease the plight of war-torn population. US soldiers played a critical role in developing the country's transportation and communication systems.

#### **CUBA 1898**

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Following the 1898 war with Spain, the US assumed control of Cuba, Puerto Rico. In Cuba Washington imposed a military Government led by General Leonard Wood who served as military governor. He initiated public works, health and sanitation programmes and replaced the Spanish education system with a US model. He reformed the legal system and organised and trained a national military. A constitution was drafted and he helped set up political parties and held elections. The military government ended in 1902 and a combination of a lack of economic competence and possibly a too pro-US approach resulted in renewed instability and consequent re-occupation a few years later.

### **PHILIPPINES 1900**

The post conflict stabilisation tactics used in Cuba were repeated in the Philippines, however the prospect of a Muslim state becoming an American colony triggered a widespread uprising. The Army used to fighting conventional wars had to adapt to counter-guerrilla tactics. General Pershing immersed himself into the local culture and used this awareness to assert US authority through negotiation. By 1913 the islands had been stabilised with legal, economic and social reforms able to take hold. It remained peaceful gaining its independence in 1946.

### **SOUTH AFRICA 1902**

After the second Boer War Britain embarked upon the social, political and economic reconstruction of South Africa. The British Army, in addition to maintaining a fragile peace, was tasked with playing a significant role particularly by the Royal Engineers. Whilst this helped guarantee prosperity and stability in the long term, specific decisions on segregation were arguably the precursor to Apartheid.

### **ETHIOPIA 1941**

The country was initially administered under British Commanders-in-Chief after the defeat of the Italians in 1941. The Emperor was given considerable power over domestic affairs allowing the British to withdraw from an administrative role as soon as the situation allowed. The British military administration covered food and supplies; relief and welfare; public health and safety; evacuation of Italians, both civil and military; custody of enemy property; and long term future planning.<sup>16</sup> There were also military administrations in Eritrea, and British and former Italian Somaliland; with an even wider range of responsibilities including courts, prisons, tax collection, oversight of education and economic policy. In Eritrea, the military administration established an Eritrea Development Commission.

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<sup>16</sup> British Military Administration in Africa, 1941-47 (HMSO, 1948)

### **SICILY 1943**

Pre-planning for the invasion of Sicily commenced in 1943 at the Casablanca Conference. Eisenhower insisted on laying down well in advance a single Allied policy that would establish a joint Military Government. Plans for a military administration were sold to the Sicilian people as a vehicle to move away from the Fascist style of government.

The Allied Military Government of Occupied Territory plan (referred to as the AMGOT plan) was put into place by General Alexander, commander of the invading forces and designated Military Governor. Senior Civil Affairs Officers were placed in charge of the provinces, who in turn had command of a number of Civil Affairs Teams responsible for the general supervision of legal, financial, civilian supply issues, public health and safety. Local Italian police, under the supervision of a large number of allied officers, were retrained.<sup>17</sup> The AMGOT plan became the model for the military administration of successive portions of the Italian mainland as they were liberated.

### **GERMANY 1945**

Long before the liberation of Europe began, President Roosevelt told General Eisenhower that he and the Allied Forces would be responsible for everything encountered for the first six months. Anticipating the defeat of Germany, in 1943, the Allies established the European Advisory Commission to study the post-war political problems and priorities for reconstruction. The Yalta and Potsdam conferences confirmed plans to partition Austria and Germany into four military zones administered by the US, Britain, France and the Soviet Union. US preparations began as far back as 1942 with the US establishing a School of Military Government training officers in civil affairs, who then sat on the headquarter staffs at divisions. Once Allied Forces started entering Germany, US troops began administering towns in rear areas. This process was assisted by civilian UK police officers attached to combat units which liaised with German civilian leaders within 48 hours of a town's capture. When Hitler was finally defeated, it was the allied forces that initially performed the security and humanitarian tasks that the situation urgently demanded, even though they were poorly trained for these functions. These tasks came as a surprise to many allied combat troops who expected to go home rather than carry out such duties.

Only in 1946 was there a specially trained military constabulary force to take over these occupation duties from regular infantry units. Under the guidance of the Allied Control Council run by General Lucius Clay, an ambitious programme of modernisation was launched which focused on democratisation, establishment of political parties and economic and financial reform.

On the British side a new branch to study the question of civil-affairs in occupied countries was opened in March 1943 feeding directly into War Cabinet. The branch looked at solutions to the practical problems of liaison between civil-affairs teams and military units in the field, and between those teams and German local government. As a result of such preparation, civil-affairs (dubbed 'military government') teams, under the leadership of General Robert Templar, moved into German towns in 1945 along with the leading troops, occupied local government offices and swiftly established their authority. No vacuum of anarchy ensued.<sup>18</sup> In 1947 the separate British and US areas were merged into the so called 'Bizone'.

<sup>17</sup> C. Harris, *Allied Military Administration of Italy: 1943-45*

<sup>18</sup> Correlli Barnett, "Post Conquest Civil Affairs: Comparing War's End in Iraq and in Germany", *Foreign Policy Centre*, February 2005

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## **JAPAN 1945**

The success of Germany's Stabilisation operations and nation building was duplicated by General Douglas MacArthur leading the Supreme Command of Allied Powers (SCAP), in the Far East. After Japan agreed an unconditional surrender, General MacArthur implemented a 3 phase plan which firstly involved meeting urgent humanitarian needs and concurrently de – militarizing the country, bringing to trial those responsible for war crimes. The second phase focused on economic, democratic and land reform including reducing the political power of the Emperor. The growth of Communism in neighbouring countries spurred the US to increase Stabilisation funding to ensure the country did not fall under its influence. With its economic future firmly established the final phase covered withdrawal and a formal peace treaty. The advent of war in Korea saw the strategic importance of Japan grow and troops remained in the country as part of a new military pact.

## **MALAYA 1948-1960**

General Sir Gerald Templer was appointed both British High Commissioner and Director of Operations in Malaya in 1952. His directive from Whitehall was more political than military with the country moving as quickly as possible to becoming a full, self-governing democratic nation. Over the next two years, he implemented a vigorous campaign against the Communist insurgents, measures aimed at “winning the hearts and minds” of the local population. These initiatives played an important role in bringing about the eventual end of the insurgency and are now held up as a model for counter-insurgency operations. Measures included a resettlement programme; an extensive public spending programme which focused on healthcare and education and the establishment of elected village councils. As well as measures to give citizenship rights to non-Malay residents (who were the main source of Communist support) and a revamped police force. Templer also set up a jungle warfare training school, run by British forces, to standardise the training of new arrivals in theatre.

## **KOREA 1950**

The invasion of North Korea into South Korea in June 1950 brought a halt to reunification negotiations and prompted the UN and US to intervene on the side of the South. Experiences of WWII were fresh in peoples' minds and the US endorsed a UN recovery force known as UNKRA (United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency) to deliver relief on the ground to support civilians caught up in the war and repair the economic infrastructure that had been destroyed so that the country's agricultural and industrial capability could be restored.

UNKRA was disbanded five years after the Armistice was signed in 1953. The UN regretfully noted the need for a fighting force, overshadowed the need for a stabilisation force and from the mid-fifties onwards, a greater portion of the overall UNKRA budget was spent on training a South Korean National Army rather than much needed stabilisation efforts.

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### **LEBANON 1958**

To prevent unrest from spreading out of Iraq into Lebanon, following the overthrow of the pro-Western Government in Baghdad, President Eisenhower sent a stabilisation force into Lebanon to shore up the friendly Government. Troops arrived anticipating hostility from Syrian forces which were thought to be marching towards the capital. The arrival of such a large US combat force prevented this from happening. The US military not only engaged in peace keeping operations, mounting patrols and manning check points with Lebanese forces which kept the anti-government forces at bay, they also assisted with the political settlement that would eventually be supported by the various religious groups, war lords and militias. When US forces departed four months later stability had been restored for the time being.

### **VIETNAM 1965 - 1973**

Lessons are being learnt from one of America's longest and most divisive wars in history. The arrival of regular North Vietnamese forces prompted the US to move from an advisory role to sending its own troops in, in order to respond to the increasing threat of Communism. The campaign combined all facets of modern warfare: conventional and guerrilla warfare, stability operation and nation building. American troops were most effective when in the conventional rather than in the Counter Insurgency (COIN) role. Huge advances were made in relation to stabilisation ops with the creation of the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) which worked under the US Military Assistance Command Vietnam. The programme is credited with pacifying much of the countryside, but seen as arriving too late to turn the tide. One important consequence that lasted a number of years (and is still evident today) is the perception that the US public will not tolerate the deployment of combat troops or support for stability operations unless there were clear objectives and an exit strategy.

### **PANAMA 1989**

US forces invaded Panama to topple the dictatorial regime of Manuel Noriega. Stability and nation building operations were forced to commence simultaneously with combat operations as large scale looting, which would eventually inflict serious damage on the country's economy had to be contained by US forces, who were ill equipped and unprepared to deal with this challenge. Indeed there was no pre-invasion co-ordination of the conventional war plan and the civil-military operations. The gap in capabilities was recognised and a Military Support Group was established to help the new government gain control, train the police and paramilitary force and assist in reviving the country's economic fortunes.

### **KUWAIT 1991**

During Operation Desert Storm the US fought what can be described as a limited conventional war which resulted in the swift defeat of Saddam Husain's Iraqi forces occupying Kuwait. However, there were no plans for any major post conflict operations and when Shia and Kurdish populations rose up against Saddam at the end of the conflict they were brutally suppressed. This prompted the US and the UK to belatedly launch Operation Provide Comfort which attempted to provide protection with the introduction of no fly zones and humanitarian aid.

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## **BOSNIA 1995**

The Allied involvement in the collapse of former Yugoslavia is a rare example where stabilisation operations followed military engagements in which Allied Forces had no significant role from the beginning. Kinetic forces (mostly airpower) was used to bring the fighting to a conclusion. It was only following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord in 1995, that a NATO force including a substantial British commitment established security and began distribution of humanitarian aid. As the peace agreement held, UK military forces took a lead role in tackling war criminals' support networks, combating the trade in illegal weapons and embarked on major reconstruction projects, including the repair of Bosnia's road infrastructure, particularly bridges.

## **KOSOVO**

The escalation of violence between Serb forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in the late 1990's lead to condemnation by the UN and creation of a NATO led Kosovo Force known as KFOR, responsible for establishing a safe and secure environment. NATO's initial mandate included demilitarising the Kosovo Liberation Army, supporting the international humanitarian effort; assistance with the return or relocation of displaced persons and refugees; support for the establishment of civilian institutions, law and order, the judicial and penal system, the electoral process and other aspects of the political, economic and social life of the province. As the security situation stabilised, many of these tasks were handed over to international agencies, mostly from the EU.

## **SOMALIA 1992**

The scale of the civil war and famine in Somalia which lead to over 300,000 deaths prompted the UN in 1992 to authorize a limited peacekeeping operation, United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I). Its use of force was limited to self-defence and consequently was ignored by all the the warring factions. The US responded by leading a coalition force (operation Restore Hope) into southern Somalia with a view to create a secure environment away from most of the fighting. This achieved its principle aim of preventing the spread of chaos and halting the famine. In 1993 US troops withdrew to be replaced by United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II).

However, the rebel leader, Mohamed Farrah Aidid saw the new UN force as a threat to his power and in June 1993 his militia attacked the UN (Pakistani) troops in Mogadishu inflicting over 80 casualties. A controversial attempt to capture Aidid a few months later resulted in 19 American troops and more than 1,000 Somali deaths prompting a major reversal of policy towards Somalia by President Clinton. The wrong conventional tactics leading to huge casualties not only brought the operation to a premature end, but the ramifications were said to have influenced the decision not to intervene in Rwanda and to delay involvement in the Balkans.

