

U.S. Military Civil Affairs Assessments

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ABSTRACT

There are significant and entirely natural external and internal pressures within a military deployment of United States civil affairs forces to quickly and accurately measure the accomplishments of the civil-military operation. This is not unique to the U.S. military, and in fact reflects a universal military propensity to attach traditional wartime labels of victory or defeat to even the most complex of contingency operations. Added external political and internal military motives promote the inherent value of declaring victory, thus enabling a rapid withdrawal of forces. But what is that elusive measure of a victory, and when is it timely to declare it achieved, in a civil-military operation associated with a peace enforcement, peacekeeping or nation-building mission?

The author urges that both civilian and military leaders recognize that traditional military measurements and self-imposed standards based upon somewhat artificial “red-amber-green” and “point-scoring and accumulation” methodologies, are particularly inappropriate for civil-military operations in complex contingencies. The American military has long since recognized itself as a “profession of arms,” now it must extend that recognition to the extraordinarily competent and professional civil affairs soldiers in today’s U.S. Army. Thus, it is time to establish and implement some new and more relevant rules, and some new and more useful tools, for measuring progress. Among the more basic observations are that:

- Applicable professional standards for determining the extent of progress in a given field of civil-military endeavor must be conceived, adopted and utilized;

- The newly applied measures should be compatible with international norms, but also must recognize the preeminent importance of local standards and norms;
- The adoption of such standards and measures should have the support of as many interested constituencies as possible;
- The identification of “end states” or ultimate goals may never be practical or useful in some subject areas -- often it is more important to identify the current status of a situation or sector, and to pragmatically describe potential improvements, costs, time frames and likely achievements and shortfalls;
- Practical priorities must be established to discern what are the *critical* requirements for civil-military mission accomplishment, and what are mere *enhancements* to civil-military mission objectives;
- Civil affairs reports and civil-military observations and opinions must be presented in professional, concise and lucid prose rather than in military jargon; and,
- The key customers of such assessments must include not only the relevant military hierarchy but also should extend to the external audiences of politicians, media representatives, financiers, commercial and business entities, international and non-governmental organizations, and civil populaces.

The author also examines practical means of implementing such comprehensive civil affairs assessments at the critical time periods within a military peace intervention. By moving in this direction, civil affairs units and personnel will begin to enhance and promote the substantive debate regarding when “victory” actually has been achieved in a particular civil-military peace operation — a debate that has never been, and will never be, exclusively within the purview of the military force tasked with the “peace mission.”

THE SOMEWHAT ARTLESS STATE OF THE CURRENT ART OF CIVIL-MILITARY ASSESSMENTS

The following scenario arises with disconcerting frequency. It is a scenario which is not dependent upon whether the deployed military force in a peace operation or peacekeeping mission consists of a single U.S. military service, such as the Army, whether it is a U.S. joint service mission, or whether it is an international coalition mission.

THE ASSESSMENT TASKER

Well into the deployment, a military staff officer is appointed the duty of creating a system and methodology for summarizing and briefing the achievement of designated or assumed civil-military goals and objectives. The requirement is transmitted with urgency from a

combat arms command or task force commanding officer (usually with infantry, armor, field artillery career background and qualifications), often because the overarching importance of the “civil-military” component of the military mission is just being recognized at the local, tactical or operational level of the mission. Moreover, the uncertain, somewhat ephemeral and rapidly evolving conditions within the civil government, economy and society may simply not be well understood by a military commander who has received little formal education or practical training within his military career on the civil aspects of such “other-than-war” contingency operations.

The designated staff officer may, or may not, be a civil affairs trained officer. One methodology familiar to the combat arms officer in the U.S. military, however, is the standard targeting process: Decide, detect, deliver and assess. Indeed, the Commander’s guidance for the mission is followed by target development, weaponry assessment, force application planning, execution of the mission, and combat assessment of the impact on the target. A loose comparison to the civil-military mission is apparent, with the Commander’s guidance followed by an application of military forces and resources. The “payoff” should, under standard logic, then be subject to assessment. Further, such assessment should be accomplished prior to the extension of additional military resources, which would enable an “economy of force” — and provide legitimate progress towards an “end-state.” Thus, the task of measuring the accomplishments of the civil-military mission does not appear at the outset either misplaced or difficult.

Moreover, often the intent of the directed assessment is to reflect, in part, the accomplishments and contributions of the military component civil affairs force; thus, a “detached and independent” evaluation may be preferred. The task may fall to a planning or operational element of the staff, or to a designated “assessment team.” Even if a civil affairs designated staff team is chosen to perform the assessment, a number of those civil affairs personnel bearing the military qualification designation of “civil affairs” may be lacking entirely in professional credentials for conducting assessments within a given field or sector.

Nonetheless, reflecting the flexibility and “can do” attitude of any good military staff officer, team or section, the assignment is accepted ... albeit with trepidation. This is because, inevitably, the staff tackling the problem of conducting the assessment is accompanied by unrealistic deadlines regarding the mandated time frame for completing the tasker, which have been or are then established and imposed by the commander.

SWALLOWING THE ELEPHANT WHOLE

From the outset, the scope of the assessment task is daunting to the military staff element. The prospective civil-military areas of interest may indeed span every facet of the lifestyle, economy, society, culture, government and traditions of the country or region of interest. Individuals, institutions, customs and religions are included as potentially relevant to the assessment process, but without any direction as to how such areas may be measured, scored and evaluated. Every identified topic or sector has many sub-topics and sub-sectors. Available information may either be sparse, or may be overwhelming in scope. Little staff support is available, as all other missions continue unabated. No readily available military manuals or treatises describe adequately how this specific job is to be accomplished.

Moreover, the pressure of early results is looming as that initial deadline for completing the assessment nears.

SOME AVAILABLE MILITARY TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

Certainly, for the staff component tasked with making the overarching civil-military assessment, there are levels of experience and existing directives as to how to conduct various types of generic military assessments. These also go well beyond the limited scope of the “post-targeting” type of assessment discussed previously.

The U.S. military is accustomed to mission analyses using the methods identified with the acronym “METT-T,” standing for mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops available, and time available. Recent doctrinal changes have extended this mission analysis concept to “METT-TC,” adding the component of civil considerations. The “civil considerations” component, often the direct responsibility of the civil affairs force, may include first-hand observation of events, personal reconnaissance of the area of operations, research of appropriate data sources, and necessary interaction with civilians. This limited guidance, however, does not begin to address the broad ramifications of the requested civil-military assessment.

A more detailed look at traditional military techniques of analysis for a specific purpose does not provide much help. U.S. military leaders use the mnemonic “OCOKA” when analyzing an area of operations for terrain and weather considerations. OCOKA stands for obstacles, cover and concealment, observation and fields of fire, key terrain, and avenues of approach. The concept provides for a systemized approach to the terrain and weather issues which may be exercised by soldiers of all ranks and levels of experience.

The “civil considerations” equivalent of this type of mission analysis utilizes the mnemonic “CA-SCOPE.” The specific subjects of interest involving CA-SCOPE methodology are civil areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people and events. While detailed guidance is available in civil affairs publications and treatises regarding the types of information which should be sought out in each of these broad subject areas of interest, this “menu” simply does not lend itself to a helpful or practical mode for reaching any conclusions about the overarching state of civil-military operations, or the achievement of conditions for any specific purpose.

Further, unlike most other military missions, experience reflects that in civil-military mission performance very little relevant and timely information is available from the command or task force traditional intelligence (S-2, G-2, J-2, CJ-2, national or international) sources.

Other than some off-the-shelf historical summaries of the national and regional governmental organization, statistical summaries of (usually) pre-conflict economic production, limited information regarding domestic criminal activity, and miscellaneous facts regarding weather, climate, geography and topography, most areas to be covered by the assessment fall far outside the traditional scope of military intelligence activities. Although techniques exist for a command-directed review of civil issues through intelligence resources through directed collections and evaluations of Essential Elements of Information (“EEP”),

the prospects for a rapid and comprehensive overview of civil sector information are limited by all of the following: a lack of technical resources; the brevity of current information from a stable government or societal construct (including, for example, university studies, media analyses, and scientific publications); and insufficiently developed “humint” (human intelligence) collection sources.

THE INADEQUACY OF TRADITIONAL CIVIL AFFAIRS ASSESSMENTS

Unfortunately, even traditional civil affairs assessments occur within self-defined constraints. For example, three specific types of such civil affairs assessments are recognized; all of which have inherent shortcomings for the job at hand.

A “preliminary assessment” utilizes best-known data at an early stage of an operation, often gathered from published sources. The preliminary assessment then applies such data into a civil affairs area assessment format set forth in Army Field Manual 41-10, including the METT-TC principles. While a useful snapshot of a given sector of prospective civil-military operations, problems with accuracy, reliability and timeliness of the underlying sources limit the practical value of such assessments for higher-level decision-making.

“Initial assessments” (also called “hasty assessments”) performed by civil affairs forces evaluate general conditions within an area of operations. The focus usually is on emergency services (food, water and shelter), public health and safety, public works and utilities, and civil information. While providing information closer to the overarching assessment needed for a full civil-military evaluation, the initial assessment rarely provides insight into the adequacy of the observed situation, resources required for improvements, or prospects for achieving any measure of success.

The most detailed form of civil affairs analysis is the “detailed assessment,” or survey. Unfortunately, however, these are accomplished pursuant to applicable military doctrine only as time permits. Too often at the mercy of exigent circumstances, resources are rarely directed to accomplishing such surveys in a timely or comprehensive manner. As a result, rarely do they provide an “off-the-shelf” solution to the staff dilemma depicted in our scenario. In fact, too often the “detailed assessment” occurs only *following* the enunciation of a need to find and depict measures of success.

Additionally, and of significant importance, by the point of a mission at which accomplishment of a “detailed civil affairs assessment” or survey is directed, civil affairs experts on the ground already are engaged fully in specific project work. Further, the introduction of supplemental personnel resources into the area is hindered by imposed limitations on numbers of deployed military personnel, particularly the Reserve personnel necessary to conduct the majority of civil assessments. In essence, the lack of an anticipated need for the assessments is compounded by the lack of adequate civil affairs resources when the need finally is recognized.

The bottom line reached by the staff following a quick review of the available information reveals that nothing is available which meets the requirements of timeliness, comprehension and sophistication adequate for transmitting the requested information to the commander for accomplishing the designated task.

LACK OF ESTABLISHED OR EXPRESSED PRIORITY AREAS OF CONCERN

Perhaps most importantly, too often no guidance is provided, and no standardized rules are evident, with respect to the highest priority areas of concern. If the commander has issued such guidance, it often may be instinctive and perceived, rather than based upon a concrete methodology or pattern of relevant assessment. Guidance from higher headquarters, if available at all, is too often vague, incomplete or stale — not by design or neglect but often simply because of a lack of consensus as to the ultimate objectives to be reached, or merely through the passage of time or circumstances since preliminary mission objectives and guidance initially were issued. Regardless of the reason, the staff is unable to glean the important areas of concern from those of lesser importance, the wheat from the chaff.

Moreover, such priorities as do exist are not necessarily categorized or explained further. For example, while a priority may be established within the context of a factor affecting the continuing presence or size of the military force, standards for achieving such a force removal or reduction are not adequately defined. Too often such priorities consist only of a listing of various segments of the entire civil sector.

THE TRADITIONAL STAFF SOLUTION

When finally able to piece together a set of somewhat obvious “subject areas” for the assessment, the military staff officer is uncertain as to how to depict the status of such sectors — much less how to plot or reflect accomplishments or improvements over time. Striving to apply the lessons of past staff assessment missions and his or her mid-level military educational tools, the staff officer identifies each sector or sub-sector topic as being “red” (unsatisfactory), “green” (satisfactory), or “amber” (in the process of becoming satisfactory or unsatisfactory). The spectrum is sometimes expanded to include “black” (a failed state) and other rainbow-tinted views.

Limited and ad hoc background information, usually statistically or numerically based, supports rudimentary observations and opinions. Because the staff officer recognizes that some potentially relevant subjects are simply too hard to depict in this manner (for example, the presence or success of local implementation of democratic principles of government), such subjects are omitted from the briefing slides in favor of certain facts more convenient to statistical depiction (*e.g.*, serious crime rates, numbers of hospitals open, miles of roads open, bridges rebuilt, and similar facts).

THE EFFECT OF THE EFFORT

The commander, having little or no historical points of comparison or experience, gets a generalized “feel” for the civil-military missions from the first, or snapshot, briefing from the staff. Subsequent briefings, however, more clearly establish trends, as red areas reflect progress into amber, and amber into green. Alternatively, utilizing a numerical depiction reflecting some predetermined range of assessments (0-4, 1-5, etc., with the higher number

establishing a higher standard of achievement), this staff methodology accomplishes the same purposes as the multi-color bar charts. Progress on the civil-military mission front is achieved visibly, but through a potentially flawed trending of colors or numbers.

At some subsequent point, however, the requirement to forward such assessment information to higher headquarters inevitably arises. Alternatively, a representative from the civilian community or visiting IO/NGO representative requests or receives a briefing from the military component. The charts (or, more likely, power-point audio visual depictions) are produced, and the information is disseminated in the form in which it was generated. Palpably, the senior military or civilian audience is disappointed or, worse yet, disturbed as to the lack of sophistication and understanding displayed by the military operational command level. Whatever else the information elicits, it is clear that important military or civilian decisions cannot be based upon the information and assessments gathered in this manner, and depicted in the rudimentary and short-hand fashion presented.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

While not intending this rather simplistic depiction to denigrate the typical well-trained, highly motivated and professionally competent military commanders and staff officers of any U.S. military service, or allied international military force, the description of the manner in which civil-military operational assessments are conducted is neither overly exaggerated nor limited to third-world military establishments. Just as importantly, however, even the most professional, comprehensive and accurate underlying military analysis will appear inadequate and out of place if the ultimate presentation of the civil sector status uses terms, images and symbols more appropriate to a tank's mechanical condition than the evolving and complex aspects of a civil-military environment.

It need not happen this way. Civil affairs personnel in the future should lead the military force into a much more useful and sophisticated form of civil analysis and assessment, and military commanders at all levels should permit such analyses and assessments to occur -- and use it wisely. Moreover, civilian authorities may come to credit such improved analyses with substance and merit, as they move forward with the ultimate decisions affecting the role of the military in civil-military missions. As importantly, the assessments may then truly assist in evaluating the bases for reducing or releasing the military from further commitments to those missions.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL AFFAIRS ASSESSMENTS AMONG POST-CONFLICT PRIORITIES

Any military intervention in a peacemaking or peacekeeping context certainly occurs within the context of a much wider vista of political, economic, humanitarian, social and media developments. To examine properly the role of military assessments, and particularly to focus on civil affairs assessments within the context of the evolving civil-military operational missions, it is necessary to isolate the traditional requirements placed on the military force, to extend those requirements into the realm of civil-military operations, and to depict from a military perspective a hierarchy of post-conflict priorities and sequencing.

For this purpose it is imperative to shun traditional U.S. doctrinal military approaches and instead capture the experiences of a decade of intensive, challenging and diverse civil-military deployments. The following description of military post-conflict priorities and the order in which they may most practically be addressed is not unique, and certainly may not be applicable in all circumstances. It does reflect, however, a practical set of observations with respect to several civil-military operations conducted by U.S. civil affairs forces since 1989.

Although pre-operational planning and coordination may (or should) be assumed to have been accomplished in every instance of the application of force in a peacemaking or peacekeeping context, the optimum scenario is not always the prevailing one. The infrequent actual instances of effective and comprehensive prior planning and coordination, unfortunately, obviate making any such assumptions or observations — particularly at the international level. A detailed discussion of this phenomenon would warrant an entirely separate treatise. For purposes of this discussion, however, the sequence flows only from the period following the international or unilateral decision to employ the military force.

Thus, proceeding in order of approximate priority:

1. The first requirement of the military element, whether U.S. or multinational, is to *apply force (and forces) to achieve a safe, secure and stable environment*. While the adequacy of the results of the military intervention certainly may be debated in individual applications, the intended objective is clear and manifest, and mutually understood among soldiers and civilians.
2. Within the civil-military arena, the next priority for the civil affairs component of the force would be to *locate, identify and establish linkages to host nation civilian leaders, international organizations (IO), non-governmental organizations (NGO) and private volunteer organizations (PVO) operating within the area, and other military components with a presence in the area of operations*. Although the civil affairs traditional or doctrinal approach to this requirement is through the establishment of a civil-military operations center (CMOC), the accomplishment of the coordination mechanism far outweighs the name attributed to the forum.
3. Next, or contemporaneously with respect to other early-identified actions, the military civil affairs component should identify and establish liaison with host nation or international institutions or individuals *who represent or are in the process of furthering established civil functions requiring support in humanitarian affairs, emergency relief, civil administration and reconstruction areas*. Simply put, this group will most often define the most relevant cast of actors with whom civil-military operations must be coordinated. Not surprisingly, these organizations and individuals (which, by definition, may include IOs and NGOs), also may well comprise the most experienced, expert and knowledgeable personnel on the ground with respect to recommendations regarding productive areas of active civil-military operations.
4. The military force then must *identify specific military tasks within the various civil functional areas which would lend support to the accomplishment of*

military or civil/political goals and objectives. This role, of course, far supersedes the identification of tasks which may be performed by just the civil affairs personnel of the military force. Such tasks must be assumed and integrated with all of the capabilities of the force. While civil affairs personnel should aid in the identification of such missions, and should accomplish the calculus of the benefits to be accomplished by assuming a military role in a particular civil-military functional mission, it is up to the senior military commander to determine whether such allocation of military resources best serves the overall objectives of the command. A primary consideration of the allocation of military resources to a task are the potentially competing military interests and priorities.

5. Prior to engagement of the force in a civil-military functional role, the military force commander must *establish rules or principles of military support.* Such determinations must take into account flexibility in addressing anticipated and unknown mission contingencies, potentially frequent adjustments to civilian and political objectives, ubiquitous social and cultural factors and evident economic ramifications. Additionally, the commander must assess such rules and principles within the context of the impact on the military force, host nation government and population of such factors as application of force against civilians, rules of engagement, and requirements for military force protection. Finally, the senior commander and staff must identify, examine and evaluate whether there are legal, political, financial or practical constraints with respect to a particular assumption by a military component of a civil-military mission. While the civil affairs element may contribute greatly to these determinations and assessments, the overarching effect on the entire military force presence clearly will govern the outcomes and final courses of action.
6. At this stage of a civil-military operation or force intervention, if not earlier, it is critical that the military force *establish priorities for accomplishment or contributions among critical and enhancing civil-military missions.* For purposes of definition, “critical” civil-military missions may be defined as those which must be accomplished prior to the completion of the primary military mission; “enhancing” civil-military missions support or supplement overall humanitarian, governmental, economic or social objectives. The merits of identifying at an early stage those absolute requirements of the civil-military mission prior to achievement of the mandated military purpose of intervention are clear.

Obviously, it would be advantageous to identify and plan for the accomplishment of the highest priority civil-military missions as an element of initial military planning, well prior to the deployment of military forces. Unfortunately, however, such planning is too often set aside because of the uncertainties of the deployment environment, the fluid or even competing interests of coalition force providers, and the lack of expertise (or desire) within the military force for addressing at an early stage what will be essentially civilian political and governmental goals and objectives. Thus, too often the initial designated mission of the military force, including the civil affairs component, goes only to the achievement of the necessary safe, secure

and stable environment (“step 1” above) — while it is left to the military force on the ground to identify, carve out and attempt to accomplish subsequent specific steps for perpetuating such stability.

The resulting scenario is that these subsequent central planning functions, and the establishment of civil-military priorities, are addressed in situations of highly pressurized internal (host nation) and international political considerations; competing economic, social and cultural interests among participants; uncertain physical security and criminal justice system conditions; and against a natural backdrop of the desire of the military force (and its civilian leadership) to accomplish quickly the military missions and objectives, declare victory, and re-deploy home.

7. Following this designation of priorities, the military force may then *allocate resources (personnel, materiel, information and time) to address assumed civil-military roles and missions*. Often, within the civil affairs community, these roles and missions may be focused on “targets of opportunity” across the entire landscape of humanitarian relief, human rights, civil administration, administration of justice, public health, social services, transportation, communications, utilities services, agriculture, financial and economic stabilization, to name just a few of the capabilities of the modern civil affairs force.
8. For military purposes, there then develops a tremendous and compelling interest to *identify and evaluate measures of success, with determination of supporting resource requirements, timelines for accomplishment, and standards for achievement of a self-defining satisfactory “end-state.”* Again, optimally, the establishment of measures of success, and the enunciation of accompanying standards for achieving such success, would be set forth and defined at the outset of the mission planning, contemporaneously with the designation of critical and enhancing civil-military operational missions. Because of the lack of clarity and civil definition of the ultimate objectives to be accomplished in the peace mission, however, the military force tends to “back into” the requirement for identifying and defining standards for success once the military mission is well underway.

In essence, the mounting pressure to identify the requirements for mission success and completion eventually dictate the need to identify the critical priorities for the civil-military mission; the achievement of these priorities then becomes the “exit strategy” for the military force. Other priorities then become lesser, often resulting in abandonment at a key stage of development, or on the verge of success. It is the practical process of applying this evolving scenario to the civil affairs force and the civil-military set of missions that is the primary focus of further discussion.

9. The next step in the process is the *completion of a timely, effective and efficient transition from the military peacekeeping and civil affairs forces to other civilian or military authorities* for those remaining civil-military tasks upon which the civil affairs forces, in coordination with the entire military force, have become or remain engaged. Such transition may occur to a permanent

military peacekeeping force or, as in most deployments, to the recognized civil government or appropriate international organization. *From a military force and military civil affairs perspective, the measure and declaration of success for the accomplishment of a civil-military goal may go no further than the accomplishment of such transition to civil authority.* In such circumstances, the pragmatic and optimal transfer of accompanying information from the military component, usually the civil affairs forces, to the civil government or IO may provide significant opportunities for the enhanced likelihood of subsequent success by the entity assuming the task.

10. Finally, the peace enforcement or peacekeeping transfer of functions would, ideally, lead to the *ultimate withdrawal or subsequent and timely minimization of the military presence.* Again, the mere act of withdrawal of forces may signify the accomplishment by the civil-military component of the force of the goals and objectives of the mission tasks. That would, of course, be the ultimate short-sighted evaluation, especially should the peace left behind ultimately fail — leading to a required re-engagement of a subsequent military peace force. There are, of course, well known instances in which the military force presence and obligations do not lead to such transition, and the practical realities of the deployment do not lend to productive speculation as to an eventual transition of the military duties to civil authority.

An example of such “permanent” or “semi-permanent” peacekeeping duties would include the Sinai military presence, now over forty years in continuance. In a somewhat comparable scenario, the departing military force may leave in place certain plans and options for re-engagement of military forces should the parties in a prior conflict resume hostilities. Even taking such exceptional military force deployments into account, and whether a military presence is totally terminated, seen as minimal and continuing, or remains only a contingent possibility, the identity and designation of civil-military missions and the sequence of steps which have been taken historically by military forces in such situations reflect a continuing reality in peace deployments.

As is evident from this discussion, the establishment and definition of standards of success for the civil-military component of peace operations usually occurs following, or at best contemporaneously with, a number of other critical civil-military mission events occurring within the force. Only in the rare and largely unanticipated event that the military peace force will be deployed with prior identification and allocation of detailed and comprehensively defined civil-military objectives. Moreover, only should those objectives be held and retained throughout the tenure of the peace deployment, is it likely that the identification, establishment, and definition of standards or measures of success for the deployment will be known by civil affairs forces in advance of such deployment.

More likely, the history of the ad hoc recognition of the need for such standards and measures will continue well past the initial deployment. Further, the establishment and adjustment of areas of focus and implementation of measures of civil-military operational success will likely continue to be accomplished in the midst of the mission performance. This practical reality gives further emphasis to the importance of establishing a set of parameters for identifying the areas of likely civil-military mission emphasis and priority.

Further, it is critical to set forth some preliminary guidelines for addressing properly measurements of success, and to determine an improved systemic approach for assuming and accomplishing such requirements.

TOWARDS A NEW SET OF PARAMETERS FOR MEASURING CIVIL-MILITARY MISSION SUCCESS

The emerging realization is that U.S. and multinational military force civil affairs assessments currently are directed inward, for limited internal military purposes at the local field operations level. The assessments are too often lacking in both sophistication of form and materiality of content. Measures of success are immature, if attempted at all. As a result, such assessments are, in most instances, simply not useful for senior leader decision-making, whether by civilian or military officials. By no means are they capable of priority placement within a serious process of determining the ultimate success of the civil-military mission, nor are they useful for evaluating the appropriateness of a reduction or removal of the military peace force presence.

While civil affairs doctrine contemplates that a comprehensive “survey” is potentially useful, the process of a military peace deployment and the assumption of day-to-day civil-military operational tasks too often pushes the accomplishment of such a survey onto the back-burner. In fact, however, the need to perform a thorough, accurate and timely comprehensive survey regarding accomplishment of civil-military objectives, coupled with a prioritization of essential civil-military objectives, may be the single most important task of the military intervention following the initial achievement of an end to open hostilities and establishment of a cease fire (the “step 1” requirement for achieving a safe, secure and stable environment). Such surveys, if done properly at the outset and improved over time, could contribute immeasurably to the eventual determinations regarding sizing, withdrawal or removal of the military peace force.

It is the ultimate purpose of this essay to identify and suggest methods of improving the performance and usefulness of military civil affairs assessments. Moreover, the approach should incorporate not only the “snapshots” of conditions observed within each identified sector, but also should include a cost-benefit analysis of prospective improvements, timelines for achieving additional objectives, a discussion of military and civilian accomplishments and shortfalls, and the relationship of the results of the survey and assessment observations towards achieving the “reduction, withdrawal and/or exit strategy” potentially affecting the entire military force.

Prior to setting forth specific recommendations for improvement and necessary expansion of the civil affairs assessment process, two additional points should be addressed.

First, the U.S. military has been considering the need for improved evaluations and measures of success in peace and emergency relief contingency operations for a significant portion of the past decade of such deployments. Too often, however, a countervailing reluctance of the military force to move deeply into areas of civil-military activities has been identified with the derogatory assertion of “mission creep.” In this regard, it is wise to refer back to an earlier comment on this ill-conceived red herring of mission creep.

This deepening involvement of U.S. forces in combat operations during UNOSOM II has been criticized as “mission creep,” despite the fact that these changes in both mission and direction clearly resulted from specific decisions reached by the national command authorities. However, the important lesson for future planners that can be derived from this experience is the best way to avoid mission creep is to analyze what the mission really calls for; this means constantly measuring the mission against milestones that best indicate its success or failure. The choice of milestones is especially important. In peace operations, these measures should not normally be expressed in terms of enemy killed and wounded or kilometers of ground taken; if they are, this is itself an indicator that the peace operation has changed in ways that should call into question both the mission and the mandate. In fact, the best measures of success may well be those that signal reductions in the level of violence. Other important indicators may be expressed in terms of the numbers of children being fed, gallons of potable water being pumped, or weapons being turned in. While specific criteria will depend upon the mission, all must be capable of answering one basic question: “How will we know when we have won?”

(Institute for National Strategic Studies: Operational Lessons Learned — Somalia Operations (Operation Restore Hope, 1992, Operation Continue Hope, 1993).)

Simply put, “mission creep” is not a bad thing, if the identification and expansion of the tasks to be performed actually accomplishes the mission. Often, in civil-military operations, that is precisely the case. In any event, the ability of the civil affairs element to evaluate effectively those civil sector conditions which may contribute significantly to the declaration of an elusive “victory” should, in and of itself, disarm internal military or external civilian criticism of the effort. Such improved civil affairs evaluations and assessments, if done properly, serve not as an end, but as a means to an end.

Secondly, it is highly appropriate to recognize that in recent years significant strides have been made in certain academic and institutional arenas towards the development of analytical tools to enable precisely the type of detailed and productive post-intervention assessments espoused in this paper. Foremost among the contributors to such efforts are the annual Cornwallis Group workshops hosted by the Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre, with the five previously published proceedings of these annual forums devoted to treatises exploring various analytical aspects of peace making, peace building and peace support.

Thus, in the publication *The Cornwallis Group III: Analysis for Peace Operations* (The Canadian Peacekeeping Press: 1998), Dr. Alexander E.R. Woodcock and Vincent P. Roske, Jr., discuss the need for future sophisticated modeling constructs for peace operations; Dr. Paul N. Chouinard and Professor David F. Davis assess analytical methods of force structuring for peace support operations; Warren K. Olson identifies and describes several peacekeeping technologies under development by the U.S. Department of Defense; Dayton Maxwell led a highly accomplished team of experts through various methodologies comprising an analytical framework for assessing peace building goals, missions, principles of intervention, and requisite tasks; the second version of the Graph Model for Conflict Resolution (GMCR II) is discussed with applicability to IFOR (Implementation Force) and SFOR (Stabilization Force) peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia; and Nicholas J. Lambert presents

the work of the Operational Analysis Branch (OAB) of the Headquarters Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC) as part of the NATO-led Implementation Force in Bosnia, which incorporated a methodology for assessing developments in civil sector areas which was, in the opinion of this observer, the most sophisticated and useful to date.

Cornwallis Group IV and V workshops and publications have continued to strive for greater development of analytical tools, and have continued to track remarkable progress in such areas as analytical operational assessments conducted in Kosovo (M.R. Neighbour, "Restoring Peace and Stability, The OA Contribution: Kosovo June - October 1999," *The Cornwallis Group V: Analysis for Crisis Response and Societal Reconstruction*, The Canadian Peacekeeping Press: 2000). Other articles included in this publication devoted to the results of the Cornwallis Group VI workshop continue to build upon this increasingly more sophisticated body of knowledge in the field of analytical assessments.

ADOPTION OF PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT STANDARDS AND A COMPREHENSIVE (ALL AVAILABLE PERSONNEL RESOURCES) APPROACH TO ASSESSMENTS

U.S. Army civil affairs personnel serve in both Active Duty (AD) and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) components, with the Reserve units and soldiers constituting 97% of the force. A typical unit structure consists of an even distribution of officers and enlisted personnel. The primary benefit of the Reserve element of the force structure is the existence and active utilization of senior and mid-level civilian-acquired skills for application to the broad range of civil-military missions. The average age and civilian education of U.S. Army civil affairs soldiers is higher than most other military forces.

While U.S. Marine civil affairs personnel are limited to two Reserve Component Civil Affairs Groups, the higher rank structure, age, civilian experience-based skills and civilian educational levels of Marine civil affairs personnel also is above that of their peers within the force.

The designated civilian-related skills of civil affairs soldiers and marines include legal, public administration, public education, public health, public safety, economic development, civilian supply, property control, food and agriculture, public communications, public transportation, public works and utilities, cultural relations, civil information, emergency services, and environmental management.

Certainly, the force is capable of professional assessments which go well beyond the green-amber-red short-hand matrix, and which incorporate substantive evaluations which equal or exceed pre-conflict data. Some examples may prove helpful.

Civil road transportation experts and horizontal engineers may not only measure the extent and nature of existing damage to specific roads and bridges within a geographical sector, but also may identify primary, secondary and tertiary road networks and conditions; may assess commercial transport limitations; may perform costs-benefit analyses of actual, projected and prospective road network improvements, with further analyses of the time frames for accomplishing such network improvements; may compare various civil transportation options (railways and air transport capacity) with road or bridgeworks; and

may assess the overall impact of road transport on civilian “freedom of movement.” Civil affairs personnel, working with appropriate civil authorities and possibly supplemented by military engineer resources, should strive for the most comprehensive assessments possible.

Similarly, civil affairs agricultural experts may not only evaluate the current production and adequacy of food (animals, fisheries, vegetables and fruits), but may assist in determining prospects for vertical integration or horizontal coordination of segments of the commercial agricultural sector. Reviews of industrial or mineral production may either be conducted with statistical output the only measure considered, or may incorporate international trade and investment ramifications, capacity for sustained operations and growth, and impact on the social sector.

Civil affairs power (public works and utilities) experts may not only assist in technical advice for restoring electricity to a civilian neighborhood or urban area, but may evaluate the necessity of system improvements to stabilize the power grid across a region or a country, or recommend modifications to the pricing structure for electrical energy to enhance enunciated industrial, commercial or social goals.

City and town evaluations performed by civil affairs personnel can incorporate not only basic identification of required emergency services, but also can be expanded to evaluate the prospects of such locales for the reintroduction of civilian refugees and displaced persons by incorporating a review of available housing, food supplies, job markets, transportation assets, adequacy of utilities services, presence of safety and crime controls, and availability of social services (including schools and medical service).

A review of the host nation national governmental structure can extend well beyond looking at the evident capacity for sustained self-rule and the comparative roles of prospective executive, legislative and judicial functions, and may look also at more complex issues such as the income generation which may be anticipated from a productive and efficient customs service, or the benefits of expedited establishment of international trade protocols. A review of applicable domestic laws and regulations may be tailored to encompass only the criminal justice system, or may look also at the impact of more complex issues such as the necessary revision of real property laws to enable the establishment of a mortgage banking system.

This discussion of the need for more complex and comprehensive civil-military assessment process must also recognize the invaluable contributions of non-civil affairs military personnel from skill groups with civilian relevance. These contributions may be made either by U.S. personnel from the joint services (for example, Naval port engineers, Army water purification or chemical decontamination specialists, Air National Guard international lawyers, or Marine civil affairs units or personnel), or by foreign military personnel. Certainly, evaluations of European railroads by Italian Army rail experts, utilization of French military civil aviation experts for airport operations, and incorporation of German military financial personnel and Canadian Land Force environmental experts would significantly expand upon the capabilities of U.S. civil affairs units and personnel to conduct a comprehensive evaluation effort.

Clearly, each of these expanded forms of civil-military assessment will require greater coordination and consultation with host nation governmental experts; civilian industrial, commercial and financial sources; academic institutions and sources; and concerned or

knowledgeable international, non-governmental and private volunteer organizations. Just as clearly, however, such assessments — if performed well initially and updated as required — will contribute to a much more thorough understanding of the actual capacity of the total environment for sustaining peace, with or without the existing military peace presence.

Assessment in these instances, of course, cannot imply either interference or resource assistance to resolving the problems encountered. The likelihood of identifying reasonably quick and cost-effective solutions certainly is benefited by accurate and comprehensive evaluations of requirements. In many instances, information developed in this manner merely needs to be passed along to the host nation governmental officials, international organizations, multinational or bilateral aid donors, or appropriate military or civilian authorities in order to expedite accomplishment of subsequent material improvements.

Also, certain sector and issue assessments clearly must be addressed with sensitivity to domestic concerns and national sensibilities. Nonetheless, it is axiomatic to recognize that more can be achieved with knowledge of the problems, than with the lack of such knowledge.

USE MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS (MOES) COMPATIBLE WITH BOTH INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND APPLICABLE LOCAL STANDARDS

The most rapid means of ensuring irrelevance within a comprehensive assessment of a civil-military peace environment is to apply unilaterally United States or international norms or standards as a measure of success, thereby ignoring the regional or local standards which may prevail.

Certainly, there are times when the international norm should be adopted as a means of “raising the target” for achievement. In other instances, the prescription of such standards ensures falling short of the target: International construction codes relating to key elements of safety may be imposed as a condition to the granting of construction aid, but such standards may fail in the absence of an adequate and trained force of inspectors who also possess the necessary technical tools to measure the constructed facility to standard. Imposition of external sanitation or health standards may be appropriate for some communities, but may be less imperative when a segment of the native population has acquired generalized immunities, or when cultural taboos render the external standards unacceptable.

Similarly, the adoption and application of fully democratic principles to governmental operations has a greater likelihood of long-term success when there is a history of Western democratic ideals and institutions. In the alternative scenario, some adjustment of the optimum solution may be required. The same observation may be made with respect to the prospects for full coalition governmental integration of certain formerly warring parties, or establishing entirely peaceful communities incorporating persistent ethnic combatants. In each instance, the balance must be drawn between the desired accomplishments of the peace intervention, and the eventual costs of setting an internationally-based standard which may not be viable absent extraordinary efforts.

Unrealistic or inappropriate standards for measuring achievements and successes simply may ensure that the evaluation process is likely to reflect the failure to achieve such standards.

ADOPTION OF STANDARDS AND MEASURES WITH MAXIMUM CONSTITUENCY SUPPORT

Although related to the concept of considering localized standards and norms, the effort to enlist all available and interested constituencies in the establishment of applicable standards and measures of success extends into a full panoply of contacts with local, regional and international interested parties.

While local, regional and national-level politicians are an obvious consideration, often neglected are equally influential and knowledgeable academicians from universities, professional institutes and secondary schools. For medical and public health issues, hospital administrators and non-profit organization leaders, as well as public health officials, should be consulted. For legal issues, interview the leadership of national or local bar associations; for financial or lending issues, banking officials from the private sector as well as international financing organization regional experts are critical for establishment of appropriate standards and performance of effective evaluations.

Cultural and religious leaders may have critical insights on prevailing standards and measurements of public education and health, while industrial sector managers may have entirely different perspectives on the adequacy of national transportation networks and utility services than other consumers.

The benefits to be gained through survey of constituencies which will be affected directly by both the areas of assessment and the prospective outcomes should be apparent. Particularly where the civil-military objective is to transition (or recognize) the assumption of all authority and responsibility for civil implementation by such constituencies, coordination of the conditions requiring such transition is best tackled early, and often. The comprehensive civil affairs survey provides a good means of establishing commonly accepted goals and objectives.

DO NOT INAPPROPRIATELY RELY ON PREORDAINED "END STATES," IT MAY BE MORE IMPORTANT TO PROPERLY IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE MORE PRACTICAL ISSUES FOR MISSION SUCCESS

The overriding desire of either civilian or military leaders for achieving an environment in which victory may be declared may indeed create situations where "end states" are the only professed goals. Indeed, perhaps only the first objective of the introduction of a peace force, the initial attainment of a cessation or control over open hostilities and creation of a comparative measure of peace and stability, is susceptible to being called an "end state." Even that, as has often been seen, is subject to rapid and unanticipated change.

Unfortunately, the status of a populous, a government, an economy, a society and a culture rarely can be categorized as an “end state.” The military’s declared victory may enable some measure of decisive unilateral action by the military force, but such declaration and subsequent action is *in the midst of* -- rather than following -- achievement of civil-military objectives. The seizure of a civil end state simply may be one target which the military cannot acquire.

Further, while it may be useful to define an end state with the accomplishment of an event (for example, the institution of a democratic government being presumed through the conduct of an election, or a series of elections), too often the end state is more fragile and elusive than the earmarked event.

It clearly is more helpful and relevant to the purposes of a comprehensive civil affairs assessment to recognize the dynamics of the evolving state and its relevant civil sectors. The snapshot evaluation process must, therefore, be supplemented with the realistic identification of achievements and shortfalls, and astute observations of applicable trends, projections of potential improvements over specified time frames, and presentation of actual historical and estimated future costs.

Ultimately, the decision as to when and how to withdraw a military peace force, or whether to plan for a sustained presence of such force, requires the adoption of a wide range of assumptions and projections. The civil affairs assessment process, particularly if performed in the comprehensive manner presented herein, may provide a significantly improved basis for adoption of such assumptions and projections. If the military or civil leadership persists in searching for accomplishment of an end state, however, the likelihood is strong that the search will be more frustrating and arduous.

CRITICAL PRIORITIES DIFFER FROM ENHANCEMENTS TO CIVIL-MILITARY MISSION OBJECTIVES, AND WILL DETERMINE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OR FAILURE

The establishment of priorities as addressed herein particularly is targeted towards the identification of civil-military objectives which must be achieved prior to effecting change in the military peace enforcement or peacekeeping presence. Those civil-military objectives which will have a material or significant effect on decisions for the withdrawal (in part or in whole) or continuation of the military presence should be identified and categorized at an early stage of the deployment (or, better yet, in pre-deployment planning) as Critical Priorities. All other civil-military objectives are, therefore, missions which enhance the accomplishment of other purposes.

It is improper to assume that the categorization of priorities by the military force will necessarily be matched by the civil sector, or the host nation governing elements. Only if the key military decisions for the continued presence of the peace force require the consensus and agreement of such civil sector or host nation governing elements will there be a precise matching of priorities. Nonetheless, it is critical for the civil affairs assessment team to both know the priorities established for the accomplishment of certain civil-military objectives, and to understand why such priorities are considered either critical or enhancing.

EVALUATION ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTS MUST BE PROFESSIONALLY WRITTEN, CONCISE AND LUCID

While green-amber-red categorizations may seem an attractive (and even colorful) manner of shorthand communication, such presentation undercuts the professional foundations upon which the assessments are made.

The sooner that an assessment may be reduced to narrative prose utilizing professionally recognized measures within the appropriate sector being analyzed, the sooner that such assessment will be given professional credence.

KEY CUSTOMERS MUST INCLUDE EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

Key customers of fully professional and comprehensive civil-military assessments must include not only the relevant military hierarchy, but also should extend to the external audiences of politicians, media representatives, financiers, commercial and business entities, international and non-governmental organizations, and civil populaces.

It often is the external audience that is the long-term stakeholder in the observations, assessments, and projections of the comprehensive civil affairs assessment process. The reporting process, therefore, must anticipate the interests, concerns and continuing involvement of such audience from the outset.

While there may be military and civilian sector sensitivities in certain components of the civil affairs assessment report, the requirements for confidentiality can be met satisfactorily through the inclusion of classified or restricted access annexes, or the production of expurgated and unexpurgated versions of the final products. Moreover, the briefings conducted should be prepared for both internal and public purposes, with a high expectation of sustained interest in the results from a variety of viewers.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

There are not enough military civil affairs personnel, particularly in the critically relevant Reserve forces which possess the necessary civilian-acquired professional level skills, to maintain the standing capability to conduct the types of comprehensive civil-military assessments proposed in this paper.

Instead, there should be identified for each peace mission essential points at which the civil affairs force (preferably, a joint and international military force) should conduct the recommended survey. The planning for these assessments should begin at the outset of mission planning, and must involve the senior military civil affairs leadership available. For the U.S. military, that would be the commanding general of the civil affairs command with geographical responsibility for civil affairs activities within a combatant commander-in-chief (CINC) operational area. Such planning should identify the civil-military sector areas to be addressed; the established priorities of each such sector; the size and composition of the civil

affairs force responsible for the assessments; the points of necessary coordination; command and control of the force; the logistics, communications and transportation support required; the overall costs of the mission; and the time frame for the conduct of the assessment. Some sense of the necessity and timing of follow-up assessments also should be established.

It also is imperative, particularly where the use of Reserve civil affairs personnel is contemplated (presumed to be in almost all circumstances), that realistic and wise schedules be established which permit the assessment team to maximize their time commitments. This may be done by advance research to be conducted at the home station of the force, rapid mobilization and expedited deployment to the area of operation, and curtailment of the tour of active duty upon completion of the task. Whether the team members subsequently are utilized for other purposes within the peacekeeping mission, or whether brought on duty for the limited purposes of the assessment, the military leadership must be attuned to and somewhat accommodating to the needs of such personnel to limit the period of deployment. It is far better to bring such Reserve civil affairs experts on duty for thirty days to perform a required comprehensive survey, then permit them to return to their homes until subsequently called for a follow-up survey, than to require them to continue the active duty tour until they are needed again.

In this manner, both the needs of the military force and the needs of the individual Reservist may be met.