



Bulgarian military police train by detaining and searching U.S. military police forces from 508<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company during Saber Guardian in Slobozia, Romania, May 31, 2023 (U.S. Army/Samuel Hartley)

# The Need for U.S. Stability Policing

By John F. Hussey

Military commanders must plan for, train, and resource an adequate number of military personnel to implement order, protect property, and maintain security to prevent lawlessness. Lawfulness is the foundation of stability. Operational

planners must anticipate that U.S. military forces will likely encounter chaos with a dysfunctional police force. The situation will likely require immediate attention to protect the indigenous people of the area, their property, and their economic livelihood. Successful

planning and execution of a stability police force will enable the U.S. military to achieve or ensure stability during the immediate transition from combat operations to stability operations. Moreover, a stable environment during this transitional period will enable the United States to eventually achieve its strategic endstate.<sup>1</sup>

It is time for the U.S. military to recognize and accept the fact that it must

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Major General John Hussey, USA (Ret.), is the former Commanding General of the 200<sup>th</sup> MP Command. He is currently a Visiting Professor at The Citadel in the Department of Intelligence and Security Studies and an Adjunct Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

establish a stability policing capability. For definitional purposes, *stability policing* is police-related activities intended to reinforce or temporarily replace indigenous police forces (IPF) to contribute to the restoration and/or upholding of public order and security, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights.<sup>2</sup>

Once major combat operations subside, a gap exists in which the host-nation's security establishment has disintegrated or simply does not exist, and some form of stability policing is required to perform direct law enforcement roles and train IPF that can conduct community policing.<sup>3</sup> Establishing security with the military and the police is vital for a variety of reasons, most importantly to consolidate gains by providing security. Conceptually, it will be difficult to achieve other objectives and rebuild the other pillars of society such as political and economic systems without a safe and secure environment. The cost of not fixing this gap will be significant because the population will not feel secure, and the host-nation's government will lose legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens. Nefarious actors will also expand their trade and take full advantage of this gap and in some cases may become the de facto government. In addition, the operational deployment of U.S. military forces on the ground will be extended.

In many postconflict environments, extremist and criminal organizations present a variety of threats. The host-nation government, if present, is trying to establish itself and gain legitimacy in the eyes of the civilian population. Prior to the initiation of Operation *Iraqi Freedom*, RAND conducted a study on nation-building. The report noted that a gap often exists in which the host nation's security establishment is not up to par in the weeks following the arrival of foreign troops or police which are being used to create security and stability. During this time insurgents, organized criminal networks, or random criminals are unorganized and there may still be some form of order that must be exploited to prevent chaos and lawlessness. Military forces can prevent conflict, act as peacekeepers to separate combatants, and


begin disarmament. However, they lack the mandate or the expertise to enforce the local rule of law by law enforcement-specific training or experience.<sup>4</sup>

While the military historically has provided the security in postconflict environments, recent U.S. experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan indicate that the United States has a mixed track record in establishing security, partly because it is the policing component of this force. In Afghanistan, the military's approach to the police assistance mission was to replicate what it was doing to train the Afghan National Army, which has the potential to create a militarized police force.<sup>5</sup> Civilian police have more experience working with the civilian population than do military personnel. Additionally, those with the proper education and experience have the prerequisite police skills to conduct civilian law enforcement duties and to train an IPF.<sup>6</sup>

### Change the Paradigm

The U.S. military did not achieve a decisive victory during the Iraq War for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the foremost reason was the inability to consolidate gains through activities to make enduring any temporary operational success and set the conditions for a stable environment allowing for a transition of control to legitimate authorities.<sup>7</sup> Consolidating gains in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars required the killing or capturing of enemy forces, both regular and irregular. Simultaneously, U.S. forces should be separating the enemy from the population, seizing control of weapons and munitions, and controlling the population in a way that maintains order and security without creating incentives for further resistance.<sup>8</sup> To achieve these goals, the U.S. military would have to provide security through a national police force that would focus on securing the population by reducing the criminal elements.

General Tommy Franks, USA, U.S. Central Command commander when the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began, was responsible for the planning and execution of the war plans in both campaigns. The plans were seriously flawed and



incomplete because the planners ignored phase IV (stabilize) and phase V (enable civil authority). Invading another country with the intention of regime change without a serious strategy for providing security after major combat operations defies logic and falls short of proper professional military standards of competence.<sup>9</sup> The U.S. military often does well at planning and executing major combat operations; conversely, it does poorly at consolidating gains. General Franks and his top commanders believed that upon completion of combat operations, the postwar phase, or phase IV stability operations, would be the responsibility of other U.S. Governmental agencies. While the military had one view, many of the civilians at the Pentagon were sure that U.S. Central Command should have known that they were responsible for postconflict Iraq.<sup>10</sup>





Marines with Kilo Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, partnered with Afghan National Police, patrol Garmsir District, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, June 1, 2012 (U.S. Marine Corps/Kenneth Jasik)

General Franks believed that the United States had sufficient combat forces in Iraq but did not initially have enough civil affairs, military police, and other units that could execute phase IV stabilization operations. He noted that it was not the level of forces but rather their composition. He believed that there were enough military personnel present as far as raw numbers were concerned but that the forces in theater did not have the background or experience necessary to interact with a civilian population and establish order after major combat was over.<sup>11</sup>

### **U.S. Military Training of Civilian Police During Conflict**

During the Vietnam War, South Vietnamese police were expected to procure intelligence, maintain public order, and simultaneously fight the Viet Cong. The

various roles of the police created confusion within the police agency itself, among the population, and with the Viet Cong. The primary mission of the South Vietnamese police was to fight conventional crime; however, they were simultaneously expected to perform a counterinsurgency and counterterrorism role. As a result, they were often targeted by the Viet Cong and had to respond to attacks that many would describe as terrorist or insurgency-like attacks. Numerous South Vietnamese police officers were killed during this conflict.<sup>12</sup>

The U.S. Office of Public Safety provided more than 300 advisors and approximately \$300 million for the training of the South Vietnamese police force during the Vietnam War. During this time, the South Vietnamese police force grew from 16,000 to 122,000. Unfortunately,

the U.S.-trained South Vietnamese police gained a reputation for committing acts of brutality and torture—and for conducting sweeps that included the arrest of seemingly innocent individuals. They became overly “militarized,” and as drug abuse became rampant in Vietnam, anti-narcotics units began to form. Those involved in anti-narcotic law enforcement operations soon were accused of corruption, which then grew to become prevalent within the ranks of the South Vietnamese police force. The force quickly lost credibility with the population and the U.S. advisors who trained them.<sup>13</sup>

Fast-forward to the U.S. role of developing police in Afghanistan. Shortly after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks, the international community assessed that the Afghan police were in a desperate





Massachusetts National Guardsman with 772<sup>nd</sup> Military Police Company fires M26 Modular Accessory Shotgun System during Justified Accord 2024 for less-lethal weapons tactics training at Counter Insurgency Terrorism and Stability Operations Training Centre, Nanyuki, Kenya, February 28, 2024 (DOD/Carter Acton)

state and required extensive international assistance. Initially, the United States did not capitalize on the lessons learned from previous efforts in Haiti, the Balkans, or Iraq, which resulted in a pattern of failing to deal with large-scale breakdowns in public order that occurred after international interventions. The inability to plan for the proper personnel and resources allowed for looting and civil disorder to occur. This created a climate of impunity and encouraged criminal violence and street crime. The lack of security created widespread civil unrest.<sup>14</sup>

The United States failed to conceptualize and plan to deploy the required international civilian police to Afghanistan. The initial internal analysis discovered that the Afghan police lacked the necessary training, uniforms, logistical resources, and infrastructure necessary to function. In essence, according to Ryan

Crocker, then Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, the Afghan police were at “ground zero.” Consider the fact that trainers had to contend with a population that had an 80-percent illiteracy rate.<sup>15</sup> The international community rapidly recognized these deficiencies as well as a major funding deficit. It quickly became apparent that the international community would have to provide training to the nascent Afghan police candidates.<sup>16</sup>

Since the U.S. military responded quickly and with a “light footprint,” the United States did not consider deploying any type of police assistance team.<sup>17</sup> In fairness, this was not an initial concern when one considers that the United States believed it was necessary for a hasty military response to the attacks of September 11. When the United States did respond and consider the necessary

requirements to train, resource, and bolster the Afghan police, the U.S. military-led police assistants trained on “what they knew,” which resulted in an overmilitarized approach to policing. Once again, similar to what occurred in Vietnam, the U.S. military placed more emphasis on training the Afghan police to engage in combat operations against the insurgency waged by the Taliban rather than policing the civilian population. In Iraq, the police were equipped with mortars and machine guns, not tools commonly associated with those trying to build rapport with the local community.<sup>18</sup>

Like what occurred in Vietnam, Afghan police commanders engaged in criminal activities, namely the torture of detainees, corruption, and even extrajudicial killings. Once again, the U.S. military and advisors encountered the quandary of how to balance the U.S. goals of



combating the insurgency with the long-term objectives of creating a professional police force that respected human rights and the rule of law.

The Department of State and Department of Defense (DOD) must accept the fact that the military is not trained, resourced, or prepared to train foreign police forces. Organically, the military does not possess the organizational structure to deploy, on a large scale, trained law enforcement experts familiar with the concepts of community policing. As far as personnel and resources, senior leaders had limited alternatives and had to rely on deployed military personnel with no experience in policing to serve as police advisors. Nearly anyone could conclude that there are two correlating factors that one can observe between U.S. actions in Vietnam and those in Afghanistan and Iraq. In each situation, there was an actual conflict raging, and the training of the host-nation police focused more on the support of military operations, which entailed combating enemy insurgents, as opposed to protecting the civilian population.<sup>19</sup> Deploying military personnel to police a local community should not be the primary option. Simply stated, most military forces are not trained to do civilian police work.<sup>20</sup>

### Military Police Can Assist in Consolidating Gains

The 200<sup>th</sup> Military Police Command (MPC) is one of only two military police commands in the U.S. Army, and it provides the full range of military police (MP) support to large-scale combat operations globally. As the senior MP command of the U.S. Army Reserve, the 200<sup>th</sup> MPC has approximately 14,000 Soldiers and civilians. It conducts mission command for all assigned and attached units conducting or supporting MP operations by integrating capabilities from all three military police disciplines: police operations, detention operations, and security and mobility support.

During a quarterly training brief, with an audience consisting of the deputy commanding general officers, command sergeant major, key members

of staff, and the command teams from 4 brigades and 25 battalions, it seemed evident that this command was unique not only as an MPC, but also many of the Soldiers held key positions within our nation’s criminal justice system. Present in the audience were a judge, a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent, several chiefs of police, senior-ranking police officers, members of the Department of Homeland Security, court administrators, and practicing attorneys. These Soldiers were unique to this unit in that their civilian skills and military skills were in alignment, and they were all assigned to an MPC. The knowledge, skills, and abilities, both military and civilian, had the potential to augment military commanders and military operations in support of the Army and the joint force.<sup>21</sup>

The 200<sup>th</sup> MPC has already or is coordinating with each of the geographic combatant commands and Army Service component commands to initiate and build lasting relationships. The purpose is to provide a strategic vision by geographically aligning the four brigades, building partner relations, and integrating into regional training events while enhancing detention operations into contingency plans and operational plans. Perhaps the most important alignment at the time of writing is the European theater based on a resurgent Russia and the fact that Russian forces were engaged in the invasion of Ukraine.

As part of this strategic concept, key leaders from the 200<sup>th</sup> MPC conducted site visits in the European theater to meet with various commands to synchronize capabilities and planning. It was also important to meet key North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allies to understand their mission and capabilities and see how the MPC could work toward common goals and unity of effort.

The trip included a visit to the NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence in Vicenza, Italy, and a meeting with various leaders from this institution. Members of the 200<sup>th</sup> MPC came to learn the mission of the NATO Stability Police and how that capability could assist U.S. MPs on the battlefield. This meeting was key for a variety of reasons, perhaps most important to differentiate the capabilities and mission set of the U.S. Military Police and that of the NATO Stability Police.

As the meeting with NATO Allies concluded, the leadership of both commands gained an understanding of each organization’s capabilities and how the various MPs with different missions can support each other on the battlefields of the future. More important than understanding each other’s capabilities was the fact that the senior leadership quickly appreciated there were deficiencies and were able to identify gaps. One of the key aspects that is often overlooked that inevitably will affect consolidated gains is that military forces will encounter civilians on the battlefield who will require assistance and, if not dealt with, can potentially disrupt military operations. Military planners also know there will be nefarious actors seeking to take advantage of the absence of the rule of law and proactively applying their criminal trade against a dysfunctional or struggling government and an absent or emerging police force.

### What Does the Future Battlefield Really Look Like?

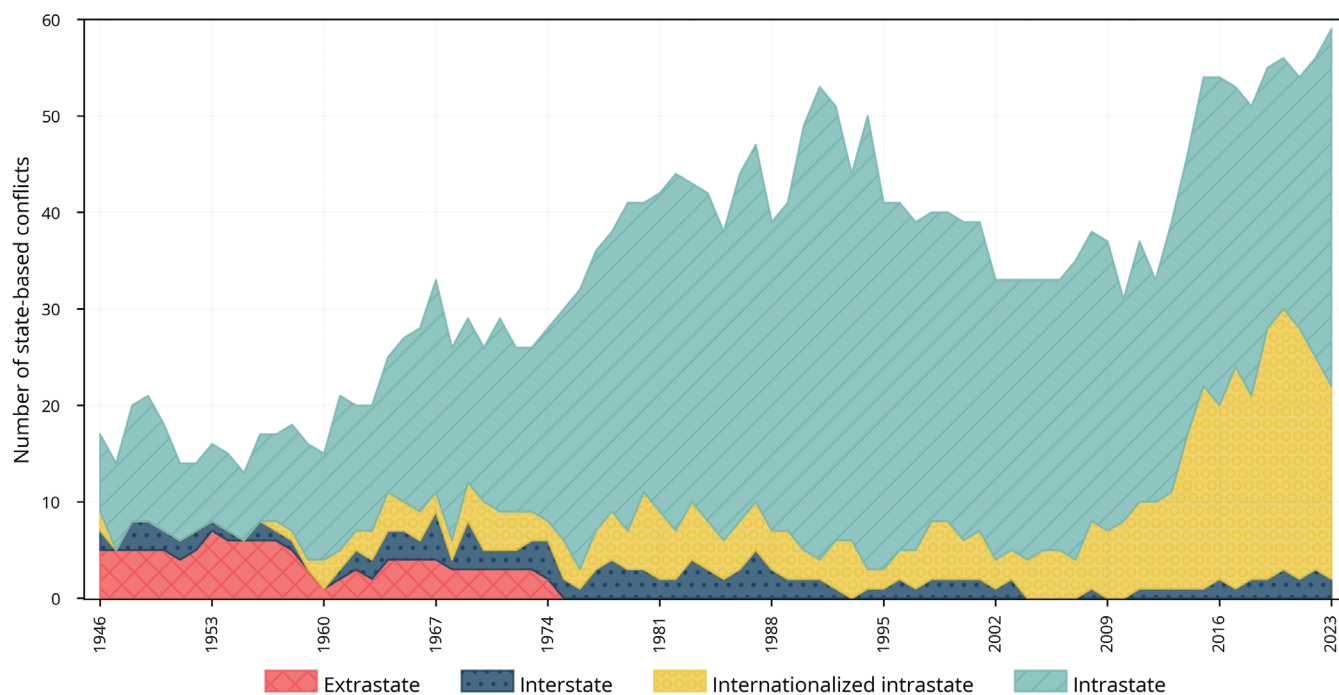
Senior leaders in the U.S. military have a responsibility to monitor the international threat environment, which is becoming increasingly complex. To reduce the anxiety that confronts senior military leaders, the new National Defense Strategy (NDS) has reprioritized the threats facing the United

**Table. U.S. Military Police vs. NATO Stability Police**

| U.S. Military Police  | NATO Stability Police   |
|---|---|
| Designated military forces with the responsibility and authorization for the enforcement of the law and maintaining order, as well as the provision of operational assistance through assigned doctrinal functions. | NATO stability policing activities are intended to reinforce or temporarily replace indigenous police in order to contribute to the restoration and/or upholding of public order and security, rule of law, and the protection of human rights. |



**Figure 1. State-Based Conflicts by Type of Conflict (1946–2023)**



Based on UCDP 24.1 data

Source: Shawn Davies et al., “Organized Violence 1989–2023, and the Prevalence of Organized Crime Groups,” *Journal of Peace Research* 61, no. 4 (2024), <https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/charts/>.

States to a “1 + 1 + 3” construct. According to the Joe Biden administration, the greatest threat comes from China, which the NDS describes as the “most consequential strategic competitor,” followed by “acute threats” from Russia, and then persistent threats from other potential adversaries such as North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations.<sup>22</sup> Regardless of the threat forecast of the NDS, the fact remains that “Politicians, like generals, have a tendency to fight the last war.”<sup>23</sup>

Is the NDS correct? Are the challenges that the United States might encounter likely to come from nation-states, or could they come from elsewhere? Some contend that the very institution of warfare is declining and, in some cases, becoming obsolete.<sup>24</sup> Historians and noted scholars posit that we have witnessed a change in warfare since the post–World War II era.<sup>25</sup> There is no question that warfare is ubiquitous and can be documented in virtually every corner of the globe. However, most of those conflicts have not been large-scale

combat operations, but rather what many would describe as civil war. These internal struggles are often interlaced with social problems, with conflicts stemming from age-old ethnic and religious hostilities, territorial autonomy, political ideologies, reduced resources, limited opportunities, and wealth distribution.<sup>26</sup>

These modern conflicts differ significantly from past interstate conflicts. In previous conflicts, we often saw nations and their militaries engage in traditional warfare to achieve national objectives.<sup>27</sup> Modern conflicts frequently do not consist of a sovereign nation-state in an interstate conflict with a traditional military chain of command. This may result in these conflicts being waged without traditional laws of warfare; thus, they can be more brutal and chaotic. Often, those in charge are more focused on the control of the population. Therefore, civilians are targeted and sometimes preyed on by nefarious actors.<sup>28</sup> These conflicts are typically the result of globalization; populations with limited resources seek greater opportunities and thus erode the sovereignty and capacity of

many states.<sup>29</sup> In many areas of the globe this may result in failed or fragile states or even brown zones, specific neighborhoods or geographic areas where state governments are reluctant to intervene. These areas can be considered “no-man’s-land,” and leaders must anticipate that personnel operating within these areas will likely encounter a failed, broken, destroyed, or simply nonexistent justice apparatus (that is, a lack of effective police, judiciary, and detention operations).<sup>30</sup>

According to Sean McFate, since 1939, only 6 percent of armed conflict has been conventional, while 94 percent has been unconventional. He further contends that conventional warfare no longer wins wars.<sup>31</sup> Regardless, military planners must contend with and plan for the worst-case scenario, which would be conventional war with a nation-state such as China or Russia. Irrespective of the conflict—conventional, unconventional, or hybrid—the U.S. military will encounter a civilian population on the battlefield that must be part of the operational plan, and resources must be dedicated to them.

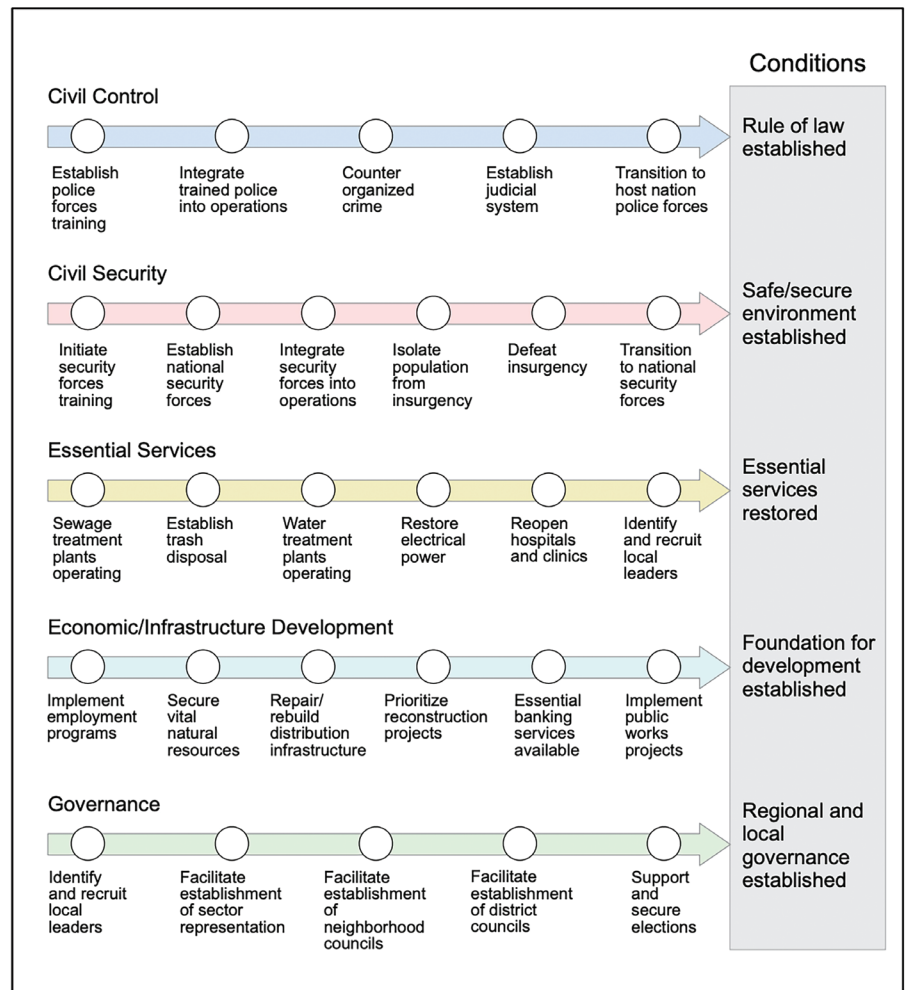


This means that the U.S. military will not be able to consolidate gains and thus score a major combat victory in large-scale combat operations and simply pack up and redeploy. Planners must realize that the U.S. military and allied nations will be involved in some form of stability activities (SA) as the combat portion of the offensive and defensive operations wind down. One may define *stability activities* as the numerous military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside of the continental United States and in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment and bolster host-nation legitimacy by facilitating essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. SA will afford senior commanders the opportunity to consolidate combat success into some form of a political victory and thus set the conditions for a stable environment, allowing for a transition of control to legitimate authorities.<sup>32</sup>

When planners consider lines of effort (LOEs), each operation or line is independent of others, although there may be crossover—thus, a relationship. Planners must consider a variety of factors, including culture, prewar level of the government, infrastructure, economy, and the postwar effects of each of these. While these are only some of the examples, there are obviously many more depending on the theater and nation involved. Planners will have to incorporate a method to evaluate success that can allow commanders and lead civilian agencies to determine when a transition occurs and the next phase can be initiated. Planners will use a tool known as the measurement of performance, which is an indicator used to measure a friendly action that is tied to measuring task accomplishment.<sup>33</sup>

As commanders continue to review their LOEs and apply their measurement of performance, their actual overall measurement of success will be determined by the measurement of effectiveness, which is an indicator used to measure a current system state, with change indicated by comparing multiple observations over time.<sup>34</sup>

**Figure 2. Sample Lines of Effort**



Source: Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Planning* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, December 2020), IV-31.

As noted in Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, for an insurgency (and let us add nefarious criminal actors) to flourish, there must be significant capability gaps in the national government or local allies to provide security for its territory and population.<sup>35</sup> Legitimacy of the host-nation government will be achieved by its perceived ability to provide basic services to the population, one of the most basic of which is to feel safe and secure. If the host-nation government cannot provide security for the population, it will not be able to gain their confidence, and governance will be difficult if not impossible to implement or conduct. Planners must realize that insurgents and nefarious criminal actors also understand this and will therefore target host-nation and allied military

forces security personnel and security of the overall apparatus.<sup>36</sup>

When considering the overall operational plan, those responsible for the transition from combat to SA should consider Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs model. The model can help envision stability and the development of LOEs via the basics that any population will require in a war-ravaged environment in which obtaining life's essentials (namely food, water, and safety) may prove difficult. In most situations, people who do not feel safe will move their families to seek safety and rely on the goodness of others by way of an international or nongovernmental organization. This is why there are so many internally displaced civilians during a time of war. For civilians to return to an area





Army 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Madalynn Long, military police officer from 728<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion, issues orders to her platoon while conducting foot patrol as part of field exercise during multinational United Nations peacekeeping exercise Shanti Doot 4 in Bangladesh, March 1, 2018 (U.S. Marine Corps/Adam Montero)

they vacated, they must feel a sense of security and a sense of justice. This is a basic concept that military planners must recognize during any deliberate or crisis action planning. Without security, the conditions necessary to fulfill the other hierarchy of needs in Maslow's hierarchy will never be met.<sup>37</sup>

There are a variety of LOEs, but unless there is a safe and secure environment, the others are simply concepts. Based on that premise, the population does not focus on elections, construction, and economic development until the basic rule of law and/or security are established. For example, on the International Day of Education, UNICEF reported that the war in Ukraine had jeopardized 5.3 million children who have encountered barriers preventing access to education, including 3.6 million children directly affected by school closures.<sup>38</sup> Leonard Rubenstein, a professor and director of the program on

Human Rights and Conflict and Health at Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health, noted that because travel is dangerous, people often "take their chances without medical care, which leads to more suffering and more death." Women giving birth are often afraid to go to hospitals and are more likely to receive a caesarean section if they do.<sup>39</sup> The civilian sector will not return to normalcy until the population feels secure from the dangers of war and from those nefarious actors often found in combat zones. With the rule of law and/or security absent, the population cannot focus on secondary and tertiary issues such as education, construction, and elections. Planners must ensure security is considered and provided for other LOEs to progress.

At the operational level, this focus may require a planner to consider the police, the judiciary, and corrections to resolve current criminal justice and civil

law requirements and develop a more stable justice system under the control of the government and ultimately the population. The U.S. public and indigenous population must understand that this is a long-term effort that may take years to implement in war-torn nations or failed states. Planners must consider what personnel and resources are necessary and available at the tactical level of war to achieve the goals and move SA forward along the various LOEs.

### **U.S. Military and Stability Policing**

At least 130 insurgent conflicts have occurred since World War II.<sup>40</sup> The 1990s were the first decade in nearly half a century in which the U.S. military was deployed on missions that involved the reconstruction of governments, infrastructure, and economics after quelling the chaos of internecine conflicts.<sup>41</sup> Whether elected officials or



senior military leaders like it, SA have become a main component of U.S. military operations. Commanders and military staffs must be versed in SA because they are simply part of the conundrum of conflict and failed/fragile states. Conceptually, the State Department and DOD realize that host-nation stability is the goal. The ability of State and DOD to provide stabilization via the host nation and its security forces is a key component for U.S. forces to complete the mission and redeploy.<sup>42</sup>

To achieve security during SA, the U.S. military and elements of the State Department have attempted to rebuild host-nation military and security forces, especially police forces and rule-of-law systems. Perhaps one of the most recently noted efforts was in Afghanistan.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, traditional MP and other military forces, except for the NATO Stability Police, did not have the technical capability to train IPF. The training of police personnel requires experience as a civilian law enforcement officer, and military forces often lack the training, experience, and mindset for policing. Planners must understand that military forces are unfamiliar with the concepts of the rule of law and do not have the expertise to administer justice in a non-functioning justice system.

Additionally, those forces may not understand or appreciate the cultural sensitivity of the law in relation to the country or region in which they are deployed.<sup>44</sup> Deployed forces often bring with them an ethnocentric bias that could complicate SA.<sup>45</sup> Military forces do not have the expertise to conduct most law enforcement tasks. They do not routinely perform law enforcement missions and generally lack a law enforcement mindset.<sup>46</sup> More generally, the military force lacks the experience and skills necessary to deal with civilians in a peacetime setting.

The most effective method to achieve operational goals in this area is to deploy individuals who have experience as civilian law enforcement personnel. NATO has this capability in the form of its Stability Police. Stability policing consists of activities aimed at improving

the capacity and capabilities of the law enforcement agencies within a host-nation and/or to police its population temporarily until they or a follow-on force can take over that responsibility.<sup>47</sup> Military planners must understand that the establishment of internal security in stabilization efforts is paramount during the “golden hour” after combat operations conclude to prevent additional unrest. Here the *golden hour* is the short time of several weeks to several months after combat operations when external intervention may enjoy both popular support and legitimacy and the opposition has not had the time to organize.<sup>48</sup>

### A Conceptual Change

RAND researchers concluded that a stability police force (SPF) is an important, even critical, capability for the United States.<sup>49</sup> The paramount task in SA is establishing security. Military forces have a necessary role in security but generally cannot do it on their own. They tend to be a rather blunt instrument, applying overwhelming force to secure victory rather than minimal force to prevent escalation. When the two converge, it can result in an abuse of the civilian population, who will then lose confidence in both the military forces and the police within their nation.<sup>50</sup>

The Iraq Study Group, a group formed to conduct an independent, bipartisan assessment of the situation in Iraq and the implications for U.S. policy, provided several recommendations to improve Iraqi police. One was to suggest that police trainers “should be obtained from among experienced civilian police executives and supervisors from around the world. These officers would replace the military police personnel currently assigned to training teams.”<sup>51</sup>

A report from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Police in Conflict: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, noted in essence that the United States and the international community lack an expeditionary police assistance capability with the number of qualified police assistance personnel required for most stabilization missions in nations suffering from high

levels of conflict. The report recommended that the Secretary of Defense develop a capability that can quickly identify and deploy military personnel who possess the necessary civilian police expertise.<sup>52</sup>

Members of the Army Reserve and Army National Guard often possess these unique civilian skills. The issue is that many of the individuals who possess police expertise serve in key leadership positions within Modified Table of Organization and Equipment units, and it would do more damage to remove a commander, key staff officer, or senior noncommissioned officer from a deploying or deployed unit to conduct police assistance training. It is therefore necessary to create this capability in the Army Reserve or the Army National Guard by establishing a stability MP battalion. The personnel would have to demonstrate key law enforcement capabilities necessary to deploy to a combat zone and train an IPF. This could come from current members of the Reserve components; however, the program must be expanded to capture the best that we have who are currently employed by civilian law enforcement agencies.

Conceptually, U.S. Military Police could adopt the model being used by U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne). In 2019, then-Secretary of Defense Mark Esper directed the Services to use a methodology frequently used by the Army Medical Department for physicians, Chaplain Corps for clergy, and Judge Advocate General for attorneys—namely, a direct commissioning route. The direct commissioning program was incorporated into the existing 38G program, which provides unique civilian-sector expertise in the form of military government specialists.

Traditionally, 38G candidates specialize in one or more of the 18 skill identifiers from a variety of different occupations required to assist in the stabilization of a nation coming out of conflict. Specialties range from emergency management, water, and sanitation to the rule of law. Theoretically, this same program can be tailored to meet the





Major General Marion Garcia, commanding general of 200<sup>th</sup> Military Police Command, talks to her staff in battle update brief during annual training exercise at Fort Knox, Kentucky, April 27, 2018 (U.S. Army Reserve/Elizabeth Taylor)

needs of the MP corps. Candidates can be recruited from a variety of sources, including large metropolitan police forces. There are literally thousands of large, medium, and small urban and rural police agencies that have qualified personnel and trainers who would be eligible for this program. Candidates can come from the retired ranks as well as Federal, state, and local law enforcement academies located throughout the country. It should be noted that those who enter this program must meet the physical and medical requirements, and they would not be eligible to serve in a command or key staff capacity. Rather, their career would be spent in the career field that best uses their civilian police expertise.

This unit would be organically assigned under the 200<sup>th</sup> MPC and could be used as a global asset. While many of these law enforcement personnel could come from the Army Reserve or

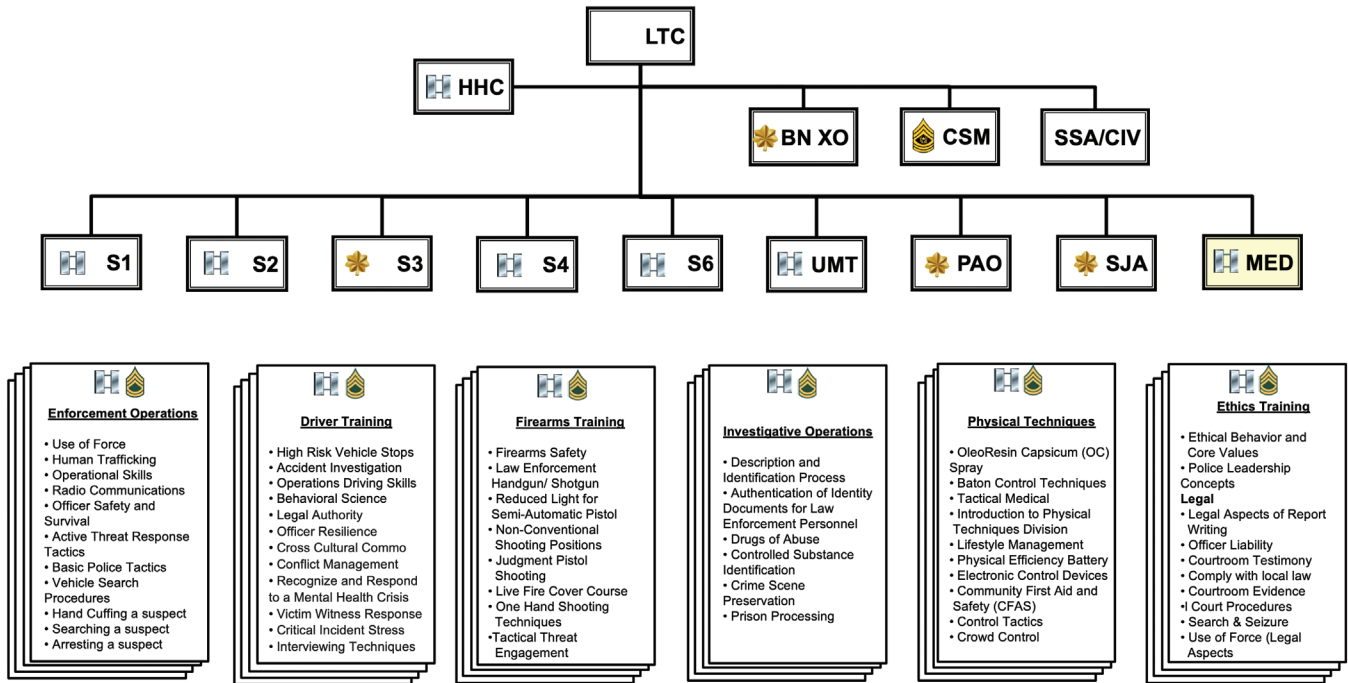
Army National Guard, each of the other Services would have an opportunity to contribute law enforcement specialists to this stability police battalion, thus making it a joint capability. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is a civilian law enforcement agency with a mission focus to investigate and defeat threats to the Navy and Marine Corps. Additionally, the Navy also has a master-at-arms program that is the naval law enforcement military occupational skill. The Coast Guard Police Department is a diverse force of Active-duty law enforcement personnel who would have capabilities that would greatly enhance stabilization operations. The Navy and the Coast Guard also share the unique ability to assist in both maritime and port security. The Marine Corps may be deactivating its three MP battalions, but presently they are still operational, and many Reserve personnel are civilian law enforcement officers.

Like the Navy, the Air Force has security forces whose mission it is to protect, defend, and fight. They are responsible for maintaining missile security, defending air bases around the globe, performing law enforcement on those bases, and handling military working dogs. The Air Force also has an investigative branch, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, which provides professional investigative services to commanders of all Air Force activities. The office identifies, investigates, and neutralizes criminal, terrorist, and espionage threats to Air Force and DOD personnel and resources.

In addition to a joint concept, the United States must consider its allies and the interagency community, both of which will play prominent roles in this venture. NATO has for many years been engaged in this task through its Stability Policing Centre of Excellence, which is



**Figure 3. Military Police Battalion Command Structure**



a multinational collaborative effort to write doctrine, train, and execute stability police functions. The United States must also be prepared to use the interagency assets at its disposal. In the past, the United States has used a variety of interagency law enforcement assets, including the Department of Justice, the State Department’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. These interagency assets must be considered in conjunction with the military. The Military Police Stability Battalion would have the ability to rapidly deploy; however, these missions can extend for many years and will require additional personnel and expertise to be successful.

Naturally, this can be tailored based on the need of the operation and the geographic area in which the military operation is occurring. For example, some locations may require more police personnel who are familiar with drugs, while other areas may have issues with human trafficking or weapons trafficking. This concept would allow police personnel with expertise in burglaries, rapes, latent fingerprints, DNA evidence

collection, crime mapping analysis, and police intelligence, to outline just a few. The stability police force would not be involved in training police in military, counterinsurgency, or counterterrorism. Their force protection and resources will have to be provided by the U.S. military if this concept is to be effective.

**The Strategic Significance of a U.S. Stability MP Battalion**

Police training programs normally fall under the purview of law enforcement organizations, such as the U.S. Department of Justice and United Nations–mandated international police organizations. The issue thus becomes how expeditionary and deployable these agencies are. Regardless of which agency is in the lead, or where these capabilities are located, it is a requirement that is necessary since the United States will absolutely be involved in these types of operations in the future. The United States should not depend on allies to supply these capabilities because each nation has its own interests, some of which might not align with those of the United States. Additionally, if the United States must act

in a region where allies may not deploy or acts unilaterally in its own interests, having this capability will provide greater options for commanders. Based on those factors, the United States must build this organic capability.

Additionally, any geographic combatant command would benefit from having this type of capability to use in a noncombat environment to enhance the security plan. If the United States can train IPF who then gain the confidence of their population, there might be a reduction of failed or fragile states and transnational crime. A small investment during peacetime will be much more cost-effective than a major expenditure during combat operations or those SA that will inevitably occur postcombat.

The U.S. military has the personnel and capability to create a stability force battalion and should make the investment before it is faced with this dilemma. This is a realistic, strategic vision that is necessary and obtainable if there is a will to do so. The policing capabilities that are present in the Army Reserve and Army National Guard are ubiquitous. These individuals also have a network in the civilian law



enforcement community throughout the country, and the structure noted above can be operational within 3 to 5 years. The annual training for this element can include a stability police battalion deploying to parts of Africa and South America for a month at a time—and even longer, if necessary—to work with local police and conduct police training. JFQ

## Notes

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