

Book Reviews

Complex Peace Operations and Civil-Military Relations: Winning the Peace

By Robert Egnell

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REVIEWED BY SCOTT W. LYONS

With the failure of the U.S. military and Coalition Provisional Authority to stabilize Iraq after the successful 2003 invasion, military analysts have noted that a lesson learned is a need for better coordination between the civilian and military powers. This book by Robert Egnell explains how civil-military integration improves both military effectiveness and operational success.

The book rejects Samuel Huntington's theory of complete separation between military and civilian affairs to maximize effectiveness, as espoused in his seminal work *The Soldier and the State*. While Huntington proposes military autonomy to protect domestic powers and military capabilities to conduct conventional warfare, his nonintegrated approach has limitations when the Armed Forces are tasked with counterinsurgency, stabilization, democratization, and economic development. If the mission goal requires an approach to win the "hearts and minds" of the population, unity of effort with

the civilian components is essential for military effectiveness. The hearts and minds approach requires demonstration to the local community that the military is going to provide stability and security, and rout opposing forces. However, these military goals must be combined with minimum force, flexibility, and civil tools.

Egnell conveys his theory by contrasting British and U.S. civil-military relations, their methods of conducting warfare, and their Iraq operational failures. As he points out, the British experience in Iraq cannot serve as a complete comparison to the U.S. experience because the United Kingdom (UK) served as the junior coalition partner, was only in the Shiite south, and was not part of the main postconflict planning failures. However, Egnell's lessons learned are useful. The British military was successful fighting counterinsurgency in the colony of Malaya and establishing stability in Sierra Leone due to strong civilian-military cooperation on the ground and within UK central ministries. In Iraq, the British civil-military structures had insufficient cooperation for the military to properly work with local dynamics and politics in order to fulfill long-term stability goals. Furthermore, Egnell notes that the British military was constrained with Iraq by the failure of the interagency process to facilitate coordination at the highest levels, despite a British system designed to encourage this process.

When examining the U.S. civil-military system—founded on checks and balances and with the military largely independent from civilian influence—Egnell suggests that tensions created through the divided system prevent interagency cooperation. Only at the highest levels, with the President as Commander in

Scott W. Lyons is a Democracy Specialist and Anticorruption Advisor with the Active Component of the Civilian Response Corps at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Chief and Secretary of Defense providing civilian oversight of the Department of Defense (DOD), does integration occur. Numerous task forces, working groups, and the National Security Council have all failed to create interagency coordination. The divides even exist within DOD itself, with the structural divide between the civilian and military staffing. These divisions prevent the sharing of expertise and directly harm the conduct of nontraditional military operations.

One of Egnell's fundamental principles for increased effectiveness is the establishment of process-based trust. Interpersonal trust stems from social similarities, shared values, and persistent relationships. Military, development, and diplomacy personnel each develop strong interpersonal trust within their own institutions, while maintaining different organizational cultures and interests that conflict with those of the other institutions. Thus, trust must come from process-based interactions, reciprocity, mutual understanding, and respect across organizational boundaries. When this is not possible, institutional trust and common goals must exist to prevent tension, conflicting decisionmaking, and turf wars. The process-based trust develops through structural solutions, which encourage cross-exposure and cooperation through integration of officers and civil servants to overcome any civilian-military divides.

An example of how trust can overcome cultural divides is the British and U.S. armored divisions' cooperation in Iraq because of strong professional connections. The military cooperation contrasts with the isolation of the U.S. State Department from DOD postconflict planning and the refusal of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (later the Coalition Provisional Authority) to share headquarters with the U.S. military command in Baghdad.

Egnell accurately captures an important issue: The U.S. military and U.S. State Department have begun to recognize the need for integration both at the highest levels of command and at the mission level. The civilian-military partnership is shown through the promulgation of the "3 Ds" (diplomacy, development, and defense) in the U.S. national security strategy and in the planned integration of civilian and military capabilities at U.S. Africa Command. If the military is going to continue with complex peace operations and "military operations other than war," Egnell correctly suggests that there must be a coordinated role with civilian capacities for the effective planning and implementation of postconflict operations.

Egnell's goal is to develop Armed Forces fit for the purpose assigned to them, especially when these functions increasingly involve threats to society stemming from asymmetric warfare, failed or failing states, and transnational criminality. While institutional culture is entrenched in the U.S. military and policy structures, Egnell's recommendations for better integration, more complete contextual understanding, and increased exchange of knowledge and ideas between the civilian and military components are essential to confront the threats of the future. Egnell's work should be well received by U.S. military and civilian personnel seeking to improve military effectiveness in complex operations. **PRISM**