

Model Planning Mistakes



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Planning for the Post-Hostilities Phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2001-2004): An Analysis

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"In March and April 2003, OIF began as a traditional, though very bold, conventional military offensive directed toward defeating Iraq's military forces and removing the Saddam regime from power. Following the accomplishment of this goal, most commanders and units expected to transition to a new phase of the conflict in which stability and support operations would briefly dominate and would resemble recent experiences in Bosnia and Kosovo. This phase of the conflict would require only a limited commitment by the US military and would be relatively peaceful and short, as Iraqis quickly assumed responsibility."[1]

This quote perfectly illustrates the expectations informing the planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The assumption that only a short military presence, involving a small number of forces, would be required was soon proved wrong. Catherine Dale's assessment that Phase IV planning was far less meticulous than that for Phases I - III must therefore be concurred with.[2] By itself, this statement is not enough, however. Far more interesting is the question whether and how planning mistakes led to Phase IV failure, and whether this could have been avoided.[3]

Already in 1998, in their book *Nations at War. A Scientific Study of International Conflict*, D.S. Geller and J.D. Singer pointed out that in a group setting "individual-level ego-defensive mechanisms" are reinforced in decision-making situations and generate the following dysfunctional symptoms in crisis decision-making:

- "Gross omissions in surveying alternatives (=alternatives),
- Gross omissions in surveying objectives (=objectives),
- Failure to examine major costs and risks of the preferred choice (=costs),
- Poor information search (=information search),
- Selective bias in processing information at hand (=information processing),
- Failure to reconsider originally rejected alternatives (=reconsideration),
- Failure to work out detailed implementation, monitoring, and contingency plans (=detailed planning)."[4]

Investigating Phase IV planning with regard to these dysfunctional symptoms also appears relevant because of an additional question, namely that of *cognitive biases*. These closely interact with the dysfunctional symptoms and have been investigated from various angles, especially concerning their influence on the decision to start the war against Iraq in 2003.

Just as many decisions in everyday life are only taken quasi-rationally, politicians and military planners are subject to cognitive biases in their daily decisions, most of the time without being aware of the fact. Steve A. Yetiv saw the following cognitive biases exhibited in the OIF planning phase: "overconfidence, seeing what we expect to see, and focusing excessively on one factor to the neglect of others when making decisions"[5] There were also indications of "over-optimism" and "planning fallacy bias" ("a tendency to underestimate task completion times"), all of which were given an additional boost among the decision takers by: information problems, the weak role of national media in the USA, the awareness of the USA's global dominance after the Cold War, flawed analogies (comparisons to the 1991 Iraq campaign) and, finally, the President's disposition and style of decision-making.[6] These disparities applied above all to the fundamental decision to go to war; they should, however, also serve as a starting point for an investigation of civilian and military Phase IV planning.

Scope of the Investigation

Additionally, this paper also analyses possible reasons for planning mistakes in structural/organisational, cultural, and political fields. This is to determine whether Geller, Singer, and Yetiv were right in their assessments, and to raise awareness of dysfunctional symptoms and "cognitive biases" in similar planning processes. In this, the paper will, for the most part, follow the chronology of the planning. Planning prior to the beginning and the end of major combat operations for Phase IV (Post Hostilities) including responsibilities for planning are described, together with scrutiny as to whether the planning of the follow-on operation was already constitutive and integrative for major combat operation planning. Furthermore, the planning after the conclusion of major combat operations for Phase IV (Post Hostilities) will be addressed.

It is not the aim to condense actual *lessons identified* and *lessons learned* which make concrete derivations possible. The US armed forces have derived and implemented at least one lesson from OIF planning mistakes. In order to frustrate or curtail any cognitive biases, they employ so-called *Red Teams*. Apart from improving processes, these external observers are tasked with addressing the question of fallacies and biases in planning teams.[7]

The primary sources for the planning process of the US armed forces at strategic and operations levels are exclusively American in origin. It is noticeable that in *ex post* accounts individual planning purviews are often distorted in a tendentious manner. People still living, who were involved in the planning process, are interested in a positive account. There is also, given the mass of American papers, US hegemony as regards opinion shaping. Original planning documents in connection with secondary sources, however, make it possible to reconstruct the planning to such an extent that general conclusions with regard to military-strategic/operational level planning can be drawn. Many sources which might illustrate the logic behind certain decisions are not yet available, which is why personal and organisational reasons cannot really be delineated. In such cases, the conscious decision was taken not to engage in speculations. For this paper, however, the current state of source materials is sufficient.

There will also be no description of the reasons behind the Bush Administration's decision to bring about regime change in Iraq through the open use of armed forces. Events are so recent that it is assumed that the knowledge required for an understanding of this paper is still common.[8]

Planning Prior to the Start of the Offensive

US armed forces doctrines defined four general phases for *Operation Iraqi Freedom* (OIF): Phase I Deter/Engage (crisis defined), Phase II Seize Initiative (*inter alia* access theatre infrastructure), Phase III Decisive Operation (*inter alia* achieve full spectrum dominance), Phase IV Transition (*inter alia* establish civil control and rule of law).[9] For OIF in particular these were:

- Phase I Preparation,
- Phase II Shaping the Battlespace,
- Phase III Decisive Offensive Operations,
- Phase IV Post Hostilities Operations.[10]

The focus was on Phase III. True, Phase IV was dealt with, it was, however, of lesser importance.

The two strategic goals of the whole campaign were (1) regime change, i.e. the fall of Saddam Hussein, and (2) the creation of a "stable, democratic, prosperous, nonthreatening Iraq"[11] As a strategic goal, the creation of a *stable, democratic, prosperous, nonthreatening Iraq* would have required the strategic echelon to pay special attention to Phase IV. Despite the Bush Administration's reservations *vis-à-vis* nation building, making Iraq a democratic country was certainly an important goal for George W. Bush. The previous Administration under President Clinton had already attempted to bring about regime change by strengthening the Iraqi opposition.[12] During the planning phase, however, creating a democratic Iraq was increasingly put on the back burner.

In the context of planning, Dick Cheney, the driving force in the Bush Administration and the CIA held differing positions. There was dissent between the Vice President and the CIA concerning the assessments of Iraq's connections to Al-Qaeda and its possession of WMDs. Cheney also believed that the Iraqi population would welcome US forces enthusiastically.[13] Cheney's political clout subsequently had a negative effect on certain decisions and frustrated any critical review of assumptions made and decisions taken.

Colin Powell, however, has since stated that he had, already before the war, drawn attention to the fact that a fast transition towards a stable and democratic Iraq was unrealistic. "According to plans being confidently put forward, Iraq was expected to somehow transform itself into a stable country with democratic leaders 90 days after we took Baghdad. I believed such hopes were unrealistic. I was sure we would be in for a longer struggle." [14] As regards content, it was Cheney and Rumsfeld who ran the show and hampered the emergence of alternative points of view. The dysfunctional symptoms *alternatives, objectives, costs* and *information processing* are already evident at this level.

Allocation of Responsibilities by the Strategic Level

In view of the complexity of tasks which, given the two goals, were to be expected and eventually coped with in Iraq, it could be taken as a given that the US Government would not entrust the DoD with all the planning necessary for Phase IV. In May 1997, the Clinton Administration issued *Presidential Decision Directive PDD/NSC 56 (Managing Complex Contingency Operations)* which stipulated integrated planning by all ministries:

"The PDD requires that a political-military implementation plan (or "pol-mil plan") be developed as an integrated planning tool for coordinating U.S. government actions in a complex contingency operation. The pol-mil plan will include a comprehensive situation assessment, mission statement, agency objectives, and desired endstate. It will outline an integrated concept of operations to synchronize agency efforts." [15]

The intention behind this *pol-mil plan* was to create a basis for the further military planning of such an operation. *De facto*, however, there were no established structures to fall back on, which may have been the reason why the decision was taken to entrust the military with the leading role concerning Phase IV (NSPD-24 of 20 January 2003 [!]). It stipulated that basic services and infrastructure be ensured, as well as the Iraqi security services reorganised. For a long time, the military command had assumed that the civilian authorities would be in charge of Phase IV.[16] At the end of 2001, the Joint Staff's *initial guidance* declared: "[...] control of Phase IV operations in Iraq would fall to the leadership of either the U.S. State Department or Iraq's exiled government (the Iraqi National Congress, or INC)." This was changed in-house by the Joint Staff already in June 2002 (!) and the military subsequently designated as being in charge of all Phases.[17] The reasons for this decision are not really clear. The ongoing Afghanistan operation was just being reviewed and not yet so far developed in the field of civil-military cooperation to serve as a role model.

In his autobiography, however, General Tommy Franks, the Commander of US CENTCOM, still insisted that post-war Iraq would be the main responsibility of civilians, not his.[18] Pursuant to regulations in force at the time, the armed forces could provide support for civilian authorities in Phase IV.[19] In this, responsibility would lie with the military, however. One explanation for Frank's point of view might be that planning was dominated by the assumption of a stable security situation in Phase IV, and opposing views stated by experts from the field of academia, but also by the intelligence community could not establish themselves in the mainstream. A possible reason was the *overoptimism bias*, which leads to negative points being ignored more easily.[20] Assuming a stable security situation would, in military understanding, rather point towards *military operations other than war* (MOOTW), for which, in most cases, the Department of State is regarded as the lead agency.[21] This makes General Franks' assumption at least comprehensible. The conflicting statements made in the various autobiographies make it impossible precisely to establish any concrete discussions of responsibilities which took place between Franks and his superiors. Sources today do not allow for this inconsistency to be clarified; it, however, affects fundamental questions of Phase IV planning.

Interagency Planning at Ministerial Level and the Creation of Further Structures

So as to be able to better coordinate (military)strategic planning between the various agencies at ministerial and subordinated levels, the Joint Staff initiated a so-called *Executive Steering Group* in the summer of 2002, to provide the organisational framework for planning at the political level. It was staffed, *inter alia*, by the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the Central Intelligence Agency. Various working groups were subordinated and had to deal with individual questions relating to Phases III and IV.[22]

The working group *Iraq Relief and Reconstruction* (IR+R) focused on Phase IV; however, the assumption of a safe and secure environment after Phase III (more below) made guidance concerning reconstruction and stabilisation only very vague, being based on the assumption of functioning Iraqi structures, which was to some extent mooted by the Bush Administration (see below).[23]

To speed up OIF planning, a new organisation was created in the DoD, the so-called *Office of Special Plans* (OSP). It was tasked with developing policy recommendations. These included such diverse fields as coalition building, troop deployment, reorganisation of the Iraqi government, de-Baathification, measures to maintain the running of the oil industry, training an Iraqi police force, and the prosecution of war criminals. This organisation was formed by adding to the personnel of an earlier organisation. However, given its lack of both interconnectedness and well-trained communication with the subordinated commands (CENTCOM, Combined Forces Land Component Command [CFLCC]), it had no effect. The planning at this level therefore met with little response from planners at lower levels.[24]

Pursuant to NSPD-24, Donald Rumsfeld created a civilian organisation named *Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance* (ORHA), which was responsible for civilian aspects of Phase IV planning within the DoD. Retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner was made head of this organisation at the end of January 2003. In less than three months the personnel would have to be recruited, a suitable infrastructure created, and the organisation set up. In addition, Phase IV planning would have to be effected and the implementation of these measures initiated. All this in the face of a conspicuous lack of the most basic resources as regarded materiel and personnel. In order to accomplish these tasks, Jay Garner relied heavily on his military contacts.[25] Garner assumed that his task would primarily be humanitarian help and limited reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure.[26]

In the end, ORHA consisted of retired generals and other high-ranking officers who were at least experienced in stabilising operations in other areas of operation. Additional staff members were provided by the Department of State, and other civilian organisation of the Bush Administration. Despite this make-up, the command level of ORHA lacked personnel with diplomatic experience and a satisfactory understanding of the Middle East.[27]

The original ORHA structure, imposed from above, inadequately reflected the required close coordination between military (security) and civilian issues (reconstruction).[28] In addition, ORHA was briefed on the military plans for attack only shortly before Phase III was initiated. They made large parts of ORHA's planning obsolete, as it was based on the assumption that an ordered, relatively slow advance on Baghdad would take place, including both the required security for rear areas and the requisite force strength.[29] However, no adequate measures had been taken for the security of rear areas, as ORHA had assumed in its plans.

The structural and time-related conditions at the strategic level made it difficult to take into consideration external expertise and hampered a realistic assessment of the challenges posed by Phase IV. This was a dilemma the planners at the lower levels also had to contend with. As the organisational framework conditions regarding planning coordination were only established later, a timely exchange of important information - albeit unwanted, as it was regarded as negative and thus detrimental - was not really possible. If the political level is extrapolated here, the results point to the dysfunctional symptoms *costs*, *information search*, *information processing* and *detailed planning*.

Planning the Operation: CENTCOM and Subordinated Commands

On 27 November 2001, the Secretary of Defense ordered CENTCOM, the combatant command[30] responsible for the Middle East, to develop a campaign plan for the military-strategic/operational level planning of OIF. In a first step, General Tommy Franks, the combatant commander, was to develop a strategic direction and thus ensure the interface between strategic and operational level planning.[31] In December 2001, General Franks presented a first plan (concept of operations) to the Defense Secretary, who rejected it. Rumsfeld demanded its complete revision.[32] The instruction to begin with military planning stood at the very beginning of the political discussion. To some extent, military planners therefore had to work in the political field with assumptions they regularly presented to the political echelon, in the hope of confirmation or redefinition.[33]

Already the Clinton Administration had defined regime change in Iraq as a goal in the *Iraq Liberation Act* of October 1998. This, however, was not to be achieved through military means. The political discussions preceding this act took months[34] and were obviously taken by Lieutenant General Anthony Zinni, Commander CENTCOM at the time, as a motivating factor to have a plan (1003-98) for an attack on Iraq drawn up that same year. In addition to this generic plan, he ordered that a seminar on post-war/post-Saddam Iraq be conducted in June 1999, which was based on the assumption of internal regime change and laid open some of the problems which appeared later in Phase IV. The planners of 2001-2003, however, did not know about these results, mainly because there was not enough continuity in personnel as well as insufficient information made available. A central outcome of the seminar was the demand that planning for a pol-mil plan should begin as early as in 1999, something that was not implemented in 2001-2003.[35]

The different plans drafted by CENTCOM following the November 2001 order considerably diverged from the 1998 plan. Altogether, CENTCOM developed three OPLANs, which, given the political demands, had to be routinely redrafted.[36]

After numerous revisions, the Secretary of Defense finally assented in December 2002. He also assumed that the forces would withdraw soon after the fall of the regime in Baghdad. The strength of US forces proposed by the military planners was reduced by the politicians to a size they deemed acceptable. It also served as the basis for further military plans. In a Senate hearing a few months prior to the start of the war, General Eric Shinseki, the acting Army Chief of Staff at the time, stated that Phase IV required hundreds of thousands of soldiers.[37] As likely as not, Donald Rumsfeld had side-lined him for similar statements he had previously uttered internally. Rumsfeld had appointed his successor 18 months before the end of Shinseki's tenure and had thus turned the latter into a lame duck.[38]

At that time, and later on, the focus of the planning was on Phases I – III; Phase IV was only tentatively considered.[39] Doctrine lays down that post-conflict operations planning has to start as early as possible. The military share in this phase was assessed as high, especially during the initial stage, and thus a *de facto* lead in operations by the military was assumed.[40] During the Elaborate Crossbow (EC) I Seminar of 18 - 20 March 2003, the Joint Staff, Services and Combatant Commanders finally analysed Phase IV requirements and troop composition.[41]

CENTCOM used the following strategic objective, developed from the strategic goals as defined by politicians, as the starting point for further planning: "*A stable Iraq, with its territorial integrity intact and a broad-based government that renounces WMD development and use, and no longer supports terrorism or threatens its neighbours.*"[42] The military-strategic/operational level received almost no guidelines from the strategic echelon, although post-conflict measures and objectives would have to be defined already for the theatre strategic concept, so as to ensure that provisions could be made early.[43] CENTCOM also did not subject Phase IV to any exhaustive war game.[44]

In order to support Phase IV planning, the Joint Staff formed a new command in December 2002, the Combined Joint Task Force-IV (CJTF-IV), commanded by a Brigadier General. Until it was disbanded in April 2003, the responsibilities and chains of command between CENTCOM and CJTF-IV remained matters of contention and were never completely resolved. Partly, this was because a Brigadier had to work together with General Franks, outside the clear chain of command, but refused subordination. This is why this new organisation hampered possible Phase IV planning more than it facilitated it.[45]

The political advisers to the Defense Secretary, specifically Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, assumed that Phase IV did not require more - and thus any other - troops than Phase III.[46] The final version of OPLAN 1003V of February 2003, however, still assumed that additional US troops would be moved to the area of operations also after Phase III. By his own admission, General Franks repeatedly addressed the necessity of higher troop numbers for Phase IV. This makes it even more surprising that in April 2003, following the fall of the Iraqi regime, he halted the deployment of already designated troops into the AOO. Rather, it must be assumed that he wanted to deliver a result which would meet with political approval.[47] As regarded force strength, CFLCC was more realistic and assumed that there would be no reinforcements.[48]

Already at that point in time, numerous studies and analyses provided by civilian GOs and military departments assumed that Phase IV would be the central challenge for the forces and that a possible debacle in this Phase would have far-reaching consequences for the entire region. This notion, however, neither found favour with Dick Cheney, the Vice President, nor with Donald Rumsfeld.[49] A pivotal factor concerning their stances was the trust they placed in the two central tenets:

1. The security situation following Phase III would be so stable that only two divisions would have to remain in the country.
2. The Iraqi population would welcome the coalition forces as liberators.[50]

The planners of CENTCOM and the subordinated CFLCC were well aware that the time after the collapse of the Iraqi regime might witness a spell of internecine carnage along political, religious, and ethnic lines, and that in some areas a period marked by a lack of governmental control would lead to considerable problems. An organised insurgency movement, however, was not expected.[51] Presuming endemic violence and anarchy in some areas, however, would have necessitated planning regarding training, equipment, and force strength. It must be added, however, that the military expected, to a much higher degree than was finally the case, to be able to fall back on the Iraqi security forces, especially the police and other functioning Iraqi institutions.[52]

CENTCOM and CFLCC assumed three sub-phases to Phase IV.[53] For Phase IV, CENTCOM developed the following actions:

- support the establishment of a stable democratic Iraqi government,
- establish a secure environment and assist in recovery and reconstruction;
- support the establishment of Iraqi Self-Defense forces,
- ensure the territorial integrity of Iraq,
- transition civil-military activities to international organizations/non-governmental organizations/host nation;
- ensure WMD capability destroyed;
- gather intelligence, detain terrorists and war criminals, free individuals unjustly detained;
- re-deploy forces.[54]

In all this, a force strength of 270,000 was assumed for the beginning of Phase IV, to be quickly reduced, already after two or three months, to 165,000. Overall, worst case scenarios presumed a presence of major troop contingents for a further 44 months.[55]

On the basis of the CENTCOM blueprint, CFLCC developed OPLAN COBRA.[56] The CFLCC mission statement can be found in this plan, a statement which remained unchanged from September 2002 to May 2003. "*When directed, CFLCC attacks to defeat Iraqi forces, to control the zone of action and to secure and exploit designated sites, and removes the current Iraqi regime. On order, CFLCC conducts post-hostilities stability and support operations; transitions to CJTF-4.*"[57]

The wording of this mission statement points to the fact that, initially, Phase IV was not assessed in any great detail ("*on order*"). Most military objectives would only have been achievable in Phase IV.[58] Numerous war games conducted by the CFLCC in mid-February 2003 drew attention to the fact that it was especially the transition from Phase III to Phase IV which could carry within it the danger of a collapse of the entire operation, following initial successes during the offensive (so-called *mission creep*). It was recognised that due to new, unplanned tasks - and even due to planned ones - the disposition and even the strength of the forces following the conclusion of major combat operations were not suitable regarding an orderly transition to Phase IV. Lieutenant General McKiernan, Commander CFLCC, however, decided against initiating a change of the plan (COBRA II) in order to facilitate the transition to Phase IV. McKiernan did permit the development of a follow-on plan (referred to as a *segue*), in case the decisive conditions for a transition from Phase III to Phase IV could not be achieved. This was the first time that the necessity of detailed Phase IV planning was addressed clearly. However, since the adaptation of the Phase III plan was rejected, especially as regards force deployment, any renewed Phase IV planning was ill-starred from the beginning.

Planning Prior to the Major Combat Operation: An Assessment

The events and decisions listed make it clear that planning was only rudimentary up to the beginning of the major combat operation (November 2001 to the middle of March 2003) for Phase IV. The following issues can be cited:

1. the decision to have the military in charge of planning, yet not entrusting planning responsibility to the DoD until the beginning of 2003;
2. the decision to have civilian aspects planned by an organisation (ORHA) which had to organise itself first, and did not have the required expertise;
3. scant integration of expertise provided by civilian authorities (interagency planning) in the military plans;
4. assuming not only a stable security situation following the end of Phase III but also a positive reception of coalition forces by the Iraqi population, without sufficiently considering other analyses;
5. the decision derived from this, i.e. not to plan for additional troops for the stabilisation operation following the end of Phase III.

Cooperation between the various working groups and between ORHA and the military planners of CENTCOM and CFLCC was poor. Many correct premises were thus not included in military planning.^[59]

The answer to the question whether the planning of the follow-on operation (Phase IV) was constitutive and integrative for Phase III planning can only be a firm 'No'. The first strategic goal (regime change) was decisive for all plans. The focus was therefore on Phase III, on which all parameters regarding troops (personnel, materiel, training) were based. The fact that at the end of Phase III troop deployment did not correspond with what was required by Phase IV shows that the coordination was not based on Phase IV requirements, but on those of Phase III. The special demands made on troops in Phase IV were not incorporated soon enough for the necessary training, equipment, and deployment to be realized prior to the start of Phase IV. However, given the second strategic goal (see above), a reorientation of priorities before the conclusion of Phase III would have had to be considered.^[60] Closer coordination between the planning for both phases would have had to take place in order to ensure that the strategic goals of Phase III were continued and consolidated in Phase IV.^[61]

Planning during the Major Combat Operations

CFLCC's sequel plan was called OPLAN ECLIPSE II and issued as the final coordinating draft on 12 April 2003 (!), i.e. at a time when coalition forces were already standing in Baghdad. For CFLCC, the plan's mission statement stipulated: "*When directed, CFLCC controls Iraq through stability and support operations to establish conditions for mission transition to CJTF-7.*"^[62] Short and simple as this mission statement may be, but compared with OPLAN COBRA II, there is no discernible improvement. The central question of 'what' was certainly not answered.

OPLAN ECLIPSE II could only serve as a starting point for further planning. It was too general to be implemented and did not provide the tactical commanders with enough guidance for a timely start to Phase IV plans.^[63]

The goals formulated for CFLCC in OPLAN ECLIPSE II only incompletely reflect the actual challenges.^[64] It was mainly a repeat of the goals defined in OPLAN COBRA II and of old assumptions: (1) local and regional essential services guaranteed by Iraqi civil authorities; (2) order and security can be maintained, also by Iraqi security forces. The result was a plan "*based upon a fundamentally flawed view of both the friendly and enemy situations that would exist during the transition from Phase III to Phase IV.*"^[65]

This problem can be clearly illustrated using maintenance of security as an example. A troop-to-task analysis was carried out, which, however, was limited by three factors: (1) the assumption that there would be a functioning and effective local police, (2) the condition that the number of available troops would correspond to that of Phase III, and (3) unclear instructions, what tasks would really have to be discharged in Phase IV. The condition of a maximum number of troops being regarded as a political stipulation will play an effective role during many planning processes. The fact is that no analysis was carried out in the sense of it being a real troop-to-task analysis taking into account the actually required forces without any constrictions; any analysis was restricted simply to relative force deployment using a fixed, quantitative framework as its basis.^[66]

The findings of the war games in February 2003 as likely as not led to further Phase IV plans by CENTCOM. A detailed CENTCOM plan for Phase IV (OPLAN IRAQI RECONSTRUCTION) defined seven focus areas.

1. Maintain the rule of law,
2. Provide security,
3. Support civil administration,
4. Provide necessary assistance to civilian governance,
5. Maintain and enlarge the coalition,
6. Provide emergency humanitarian assistance as required,
7. Assist in the assessment, restoration, and repair of critical life support infrastructure.

This plan largely corresponds to that of CFLCC. This does not mean, however, that it would have been possible to implement these plans. The CENTCOM plan had a number of serious shortcomings. The biggest must have been the completion date, the end of April 2003, i.e. after the fall of Baghdad and the destruction of parts of the Iraqi infrastructure. The plan furthermore stipulated no additional or other forces than those for Phase III. This plan additionally assumed that the military would only play a supporting role in the reconstruction of Iraq. As no other players were available, however, the military finally had to assume the main role.^[67]

Assessment of the Military Plans During the Major Combat Operation

The listed details of the CENTCOM and CFLCC plans show that planning after the beginning of major combat operations for Phase IV was still marked by shortcomings and too little adaptation. These are some of the reasons:

1. maintaining Phase III troop deployment;
2. the decision not to request other and/or additional forces for the security tasks;
3. maintaining the assumption of a stable security situation after the end of Phase III and of an Iraqi population who would welcome coalition forces as liberators;
4. insufficient task detailing and a total lack of task allocation to the troops.

No adaptation was carried out. The consistency and consensus evident in CENTCOM and CFLCC plans (maintaining assumptions) illustrates the close coordination between the two levels. Any scrutiny and remedy which should have been ensured by the cooperation between these levels was not achieved.

Transition to Phase IV

Transition from ORHA to CPA

After Jay Garner's arrival in Baghdad on 19 April, ORHA was not able to build on any Iraqi civil service that might still have been in place. The organisation also had no possibility to set up a new administration, as Garner himself was replaced two weeks later, without any reason given. On 24 April, Garner was given notice of his impending removal, only a few days after he had arrived in Baghdad.[68] It therefore seems evident that this decision, just like many others at that time, was inspired more by political considerations rather than the reality in the area of operations.[69]

The assumption of responsibility by *Coalition Provisional Authority* (CPA), which had not been involved in the planning and was headed by the US career diplomat Paul Bremer, clearly showed that in addition to certain blind spots on the part of the military, which had at least developed rudimentary plans for Phase IV, there were misguided assumptions within the political leadership in Washington.

The CPA required some time to organise itself. This flying start meant that the CPA could not issue any informed guidelines while the Phase transition took place. This situation was also aggravated by two decisions taken by Paul Bremer, still in May 2003: *CPA Order No. 1 De-Baathification of Iraqi Society* (16 May 2003) and *CPA Order No. 2 Dissolution of Entities* (23 May 2003). *CPA Order No. 1* stipulated that Baath Party members at the first four levels of the party hierarchy, and individuals at a lower level of importance who were playing an important role in the civil service were to be removed from public life. *CPA Order No. 2* decreed, *inter alia*, that the Iraqi security forces and the Ministry of Defence be dissolved.[70]

In his later elaboration of his role in the Iraq War, Colin Powell pointed out that these two CPA directives did not comply with the President's plans: "*When we went in, we had a plan, which the president approved. We would not break up and disband the Iraqi Army. We would use the reconstituted Army with purged leadership to help us secure and maintain order throughout the country. We would dissolve the Baath Party, the ruling political party, but we would not throw every party member out on the street.*"[71] The fact that Paul Bremer, (according to Powell) in concert with Donald Rumsfeld, took such a far-reaching decision without the President's express approval and even against his intentions is remarkable. This decision finally made all assumptions for Phase IV obsolete.

Assessment of Civilian Planning during the Transition to Phase IV

The following decisions can be regarded as negative regarding planning during the transition to Phase IV:

1. the decision - after major combat operations had been concluded - to replace the organisation which had been responsible until then (ORHA);
2. the decision to take far-reaching political-strategic decisions (CPA Order No. 1 and 2), which decisively influenced the military-strategic /operational level command echelon, without requisite coordination and authorisation.

Rolling Phase IV Transition

In the areas where major combat operations against Iraqi forces had already been completed, regionally restricted, smooth transitions to Phase IV were implemented - so-called *Rolling Phase IV*. In this, troops were faced with a problem they had not expected: "*More than just assisting in providing humanitarian aid, virtually every element of Iraqi civil society - from police to fire to basic utilities and food distribution - dissolved with the defeat of the Iraqi army and paramilitary forces.*"[72] In some areas, in addition to these unexpected tasks, transition to Phase IV took place immediately after the conclusion of hostilities, sometimes only a few street corners away from ongoing battles.

Individual commanders and coalition forces may have attempted to install forms of local administration and to ensure the provision of basic life support services (sanitation, food and energy). Because the plans had not allocated any resources for this, however, the commanders had to decide individually which tasks were important for the accomplishment of their mission. In this, the success of the entire mission as well as the requirements of the civilian population became part of the equation. As the superior levels had not issued any clear instructions, no uniformity of decisions on site could be achieved.

There was, for example, no order to combat pillaging, which was becoming ever more prevalent. The ROEs also did not plan for the use of force against looters. Thus, the commanders' hands were tied. At the same time, the troops had no training which would have enabled them to manage such security tasks. This meant that parts of Iraq witnessed the destruction and looting of public infrastructure, which was to have a long-term effect.[73] At the beginning of Phase IV, brigade level had received no orders from the superior echelons, which was why there was no uniform approach.[74]

Confrontations with the civilian population showed that the strength of the coalition forces was both too big as well as too small: "[...] *there in numbers sufficient to be resented as occupiers but insufficient to impose order.*"[75] In the north, the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk witnessed large scale eruptions of violence, fuelled by the collapse of public order, which necessitated an unplanned for deployment of US forces to the area. ~~The previously mentioned fact that the plan for the end of Phase III did not envision any redeployment of forces which would have made an orderly transfer to Phase IV possible meant that there would have to be large scale troop movements after the completion of major combat operations, before the forces could take over their areas of responsibility.~~[76]

The collapse of organised military resistance following the fall of Baghdad meant that ground forces as a whole were moving to Phase IV. Their tasks were patrol duty, showing presence, supporting other organisations (civil/military), as well as securing and reconstructing essential, civilian infrastructure. This meant that, for a certain time, public order could, at least partially, be restored.[77]

Military Planning during the Transition to Phase IV: An Assessment

For the planning during the transition to Phase IV the following decisions can be regarded as negative:

1. A lack of instructions on the part of CENTCOM and CFLCC meant that there were no uniform guidelines concerning the actions of the troops.
2. Inadequate training, equipment and ROE-sets made any adaptation by the tactical echelons even more difficult.
3. Inadequate resources required decisions by the commanders concerning the employment of their forces which proved to be detrimental to the success of the Operation as a whole.

Further Planning within the Framework of the Stabilisation Operation

Transition from CFLCC to CJTF-7

Given the success of the ground troops, a quick redeployment of forces out of the area of operations was already envisioned by the middle of April. The original plan was that the 3rd US Army, which formed CFLCC, would assume responsibility for Phase IV, which was finally to be transferred to a CJTF in Phase IVb. Because General Franks, as Commander CENTCOM, pushed for the 3rd US Army to be withdrawn as soon as possible, the decision was taken that V Corps would form the core of CJTF, by now referred to as CJTF-7.[78] The transition from CFLCC to CJTF was planned for Phase IVb. Even though not all Phase IVa goals had been achieved - when compared with the original guidelines none actually had - General Franks decided to carry out the military Phase transfer concurrently with the assumption of civilian responsibility by CPA. The handover of responsibility formally took place on 12 June 2003.[79]

CFLCC (at that time already officially referred to as CJTF-7) pursued six lines of operation: *Security, Rule of Law, Governance and Administration, Infrastructure/Recovery, Perception* (= Information Operations), as well as *Humanitarian Relief and Assistance*.[80] The lines of operation reflect the CENTCOM focus areas (see above). This plan was adapted in July by the new Commander CJTF-7, Lieutenant General Sanchez (see below).

CJTF-7 had OPCON of almost all military forces employed in the area of operations. The organisation can be found in fig. 2. What is remarkable is the fact that the CPA, which bore responsibility as the occupation authority, had no authority over CJTF-7; the CPA was only to be supported by the military.

This transition in the C2 structure during the critical time of adapting to the new challenges presented by Phase IV meant that the subordinated positions did not receive enough guidance from the operational echelon.[81]

In addition, this meant that responsibility for operational level planning and synchronisation was transferred to a corps staff, neither trained for this task nor in possession of enough personnel, and which, furthermore, had to coordinate and command execution of Phase IVa for V Corps. The demands of reorganising an operational level command during an ongoing operation by transforming a tactical command meant that during the summer of 2003 only limited guidance could be issued to the tactical level.

CJTF-7 Planning for the Execution of Phase IV in 2003

In July 2003, Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, who in the meantime had assumed command of V Corps and thus CJTF-7, issued guidance for the tactical echelon in the shape of a mission statement:

“Conduct offensive operations to defeat remaining noncompliant forces and neutralize destabilizing influences in the AO in order to create a secure environment in direct support of the Coalition Provisional Authority. Concurrently conduct stability operations to support the establishment of government and economic development in order to set the conditions for a transfer of operations to designated follow-on military or civilian authorities.”[82]

In principle, this meant that two quintessentially different operations had to be conducted in parallel: (1) an offensive operation against more or less individual adversaries, and (2) a stabilisation operation to support the creation of political and economic structures. With a view to a possible handover to other authorities, the stabilisation operation had a clear time limit from the start.

In July 2003 the CJTF-7 J-5 Division drafted the preliminary plans for Phase IV. These included five lines of operation:[83]

1. Security (combat operations and training missions for the - to be newly set up - Iraqi security forces).
2. Governance.
3. Economy.
4. Essential services (esp. oil industry, energy, sanitation).
5. Information operations.

These lines of operation corresponded to the *core foundations* which the CPA had defined in July 2003: *security, governance, economy, essential services*, and - added later - *strategic communications*.[84] The military was chiefly responsible for the line of operation *security*, and it contributed to the other *lines* as well.[85] At that time, the armed forces were trained and equipped for only a few *lines of operation*.

The adoption of the *core foundations* implies that, despite limited guidance regarding the cooperation between these two institutions, CPA and CJTF-7 coordinated efforts with each other. The planners' biggest problem must have been that CJTF-7 had to develop a plan for an ongoing operation. Permanent changes and increasing awareness of the insurgency therefore made the adaptation cycles very short. At the same time, parts of the CFLCC plan were taken on board, due to the assumption that the insurgency was carried by persons still loyal to Saddam Hussein.[86]

A comparison of the *lines of operation* for CJTF-7, as developed by CFLCC, and those by CJTF-7 of July 2003 makes two things clear: (1) almost the entire content remained the same, with the exception of the focus on the search for Iraqi WMDs, and (2) due to the adoption of the CPA's *lines of operation* the specifically military share is less clearly discernible than had previously been the case. A necessary integration of civilian and military planning could have been the crucial factor in this decision. Despite this, it is clear that only adaptations were made, and not a complete replanning, which would have been required.

The mission statement itself left a great deal of leeway to the commanders, which was crucial given the differing situations in the various areas of responsibility. In summer 2003 there were no indications of the escalation to come. In general, the commanders at the tactical level who had independently begun rudimentary forms of nation building at the local and regional levels assumed that the resistance would quickly subside. In July, however, General John Abizaid, the new Commander CENTCOM, officially spoke about the development of an organised resistance movement.[87]

The preliminary CJTF-7 OPLAN, signed by Lieutenant Sanchez in July 2003, was used as the basis for the further planning of the divisions. Following minor adaptations of the OPLAN - Sanchez subsequently also prevented major offensive operations - the tactical level could again proceed in a coordinated manner, beginning in September 2003. This, however, meant that at least four months had passed in which the insurgency, which had been growing slowly, could have been isolated and combated.[88]

At the tactical level, the attempt was made to satisfy the demands of the population through the restoration of infrastructure, financed via the *Commander's Emergency Response Program* (CERP), and thereby confront the insurgency indirectly. This produced local successes; casualty numbers due to terrorism continued to rise, however, and the security situation deteriorated.^[89] For a short time towards the end of the year it looked as if the methods adapted by the tactical commanders would be successful. Attacks by insurgents noticeably decreased. In this, many commanders could fall back on lessons they had learned in earlier operations in Panama, Bosnia, Kosovo or Haiti. These may have reflected the challenges of a stabilisation operation in a permissive environment, they could not, however, do justice to the special circumstances as presented by Iraq and its insurgents. In order to meet this shortcoming, commanders also could not fall back on any earlier, adequate planning and training.^[90]

Assessment of the Planning After the Completion of the Major Combat Operation

The events and decisions cited show that there was only a limited possibility of adapting to the altered circumstances after the completion of the major combat operation. These are some of the reasons:

1. the decision to transfer responsibility to a corps staff, which was only capable of meeting this responsibility after a reorganisation and augmentations;
2. clinging to old assumptions (CENTCOM and CFLCC plans);
3. the decision taken by CPA, which had grave effects on the security situation;
4. no guidance concerning civil-military cooperation at the CPA-CJTF-7 level;
5. underestimating the insurgency, and hence no supra-regional solutions.

Summary

Looking at Geller's and Singer's dysfunctional symptoms, the following assumptions can be clearly confirmed as regards planning:

- *Gross omissions in surveying objectives*: no consequences, no necessary measures and means were derived from the strategic goal ("stable and democratic Iraq")
- *Failure to examine major costs and risks of the preferred choice*: information concerning possible frictions in Phase IV and higher personnel requirements for any long-term success was ignored; planning did not reflect the opportunity costs arising from the dissolution of the Iraqi Army.
- *Poor information search*: Information which was available outside of, and within, the institutions was only insufficiently used for planning.
- *Selective bias in processing information at hand*: information which supported individual planning assumptions was increasingly used, other information was ignored.
- *Failure to work out detailed implementation, monitoring, and contingency plans*: Phase IV planning was only inadequately implemented and only intensified at a later date.

In addition to the dysfunctional symptoms, there were organisational conflicts, unclear allocations of responsibilities as well as ambiguous hierarchies, which aggravated planning mistakes. Apart from the persisting dysfunctional symptoms at higher levels, also at lower levels there were causes of planning mistakes in individual areas as well as fundamental mistakes in decisions taken. These are:

- Structural reasons for planning deficiencies were, on the one hand, obvious in the lack of any guidance concerning civil/military responsibilities. This was an area characterised for a long time by an unclear allocation of responsibilities between CENTCOM and ORHA. Additionally, a further Command was created in the shape of CJTF-IV, which hampered proceedings more than it helped. The result was that the planners regarded Phase IV as being of minor importance. There was a lack of coordination between the planners (civil/military, at the various echelons). On the one hand, in Phase IV itself, these structural problems become visible in the change of command between CFLCC and CJTF-7. Especially at the beginning of Phase IV, when it became absolutely clear that the planning assumptions would not hold, there was the change from CFLCC to CJTF-7, resulting in delays and the loss of experience-based knowledge. On the other hand, the unclear hierarchical relationship with CPA meant that CJTF-7 chiefly adapted to CPA plans and not to the situation at hand.
- Cultural reasons resulted from the conservative attitude shown by the members of the armed forces, and the lack of any open-minded scrutiny of civilian expertise. This led to assumptions being maintained and the decisions of superior echelons not reviewed critically enough. The result was that adaptations happened only very slowly and that completed plans were not looked at again, even though it had become clear that adapting them had become necessary. The military's love of major combat operations also meant that Phase IV and its concomitant 'soft' problems were pushed into the background. As a consequence, the meagre significance of Phase IV continued in planning even when it had become obvious that a paradigm shift would be necessary.
- Political reasons were the result of the strong influence certain members of the Bush Administration exerted on security-relevant assumptions (Cheney) and the favouritism shown to planning variants which would require no long-term measures in Iraq. The cognitive bias of over-optimism certainly played a role in this.

This analysis makes clear that Geller's and Singer's dysfunctional symptoms are still relevant as categories of planning and decision-making mistakes and that they should serve as a warning to future planners.

[1] Donald P. Wright et al, *The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom, May 2003-January 2005. On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign*, Fort Leavenworth 2008, p.3.

[2] cf. Catherine Dale, *Operation Iraqi Freedom. Strategies, Approaches, Results, and Issues for Congress*, Washington, 2008 (*CRS Report for Congress*), p.13, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL34387.pdf> [25 March 2015].

[3] I would like to thank LTC Dirk Heinzmann, the German liaison officer serving at the Austrian National Defence Academy for his support.

[4] D. S. Geller and J. D. Singer, *Nations at War. A Scientific Study of International Conflict*, Cambridge, 1998, p. 35f.

[5] Steve A. Yetiv, *National Security Through a Cockeyed Lens. How Cognitive Bias Impacts U.S. Foreign Policy*, Baltimore, 2013, p. 1.

[6] cf. Yetiv, *Security*, p. 5.

[7] cf. Brendan S. Mulvaney, 'Don't box in the red team', in, *Armed Forces Journal*, 1 November 2002; <http://armed.forcesjournal.com/dont-box-in-the-red-team/> [28 March 2016].

- [8] For a concise description of the events cf. Stephan Bierling, *Geschichte des Irakkriegs. Der Sturz Saddams und Amerikas Albraum im Mittleren Osten*, Munich, 2010.
- [9] cf. Joint Chiefs of Staff (eds.), *Joint Publication 3-0. Doctrine for Joint Operations*, Washington, 2001, p.III-19.
- [10] "Preparation secured regional and international support, degraded the Iraqi regime's ability to resist, established the air bridge and secure lines of communications (LOCs) to the theater, sought to interdict tactical ballistic missiles (TBM) and weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and alerted, deployed, and postured American forces. Shaping the Battlespace included posturing coalition forces to conduct sustained combat operations, beginning initial operations to degrade Iraqi command and control and security forces, and seizing key pieces of terrain. These actions were in addition to the ongoing diplomatic and counter-TBM/WMD operations. Decisive Offensive Operations marked the beginning of conventional combat operations. It included the air campaign, preparatory ground operations, and the attack north to Baghdad. This phase culminated with securing Baghdad and removing Saddam Hussein and the Ba'athist regime from power. Post Hostilities operations encompass the transition from combat to stability operations and support operations, including humanitarian assistance and reconstruction." (Gregory Fontenont et alii: *On Point. The United States Army in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM*, Fort Leavenworth, 2004, p xxiii). The CENTCOM briefing uses slightly different terms for Phases II and III: *Attack the Regime* and *Complete Regime Destruction*, cf. briefing *Five Phased Operation*, <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB214> [25 March 2015].
- [11] cf. Fontenont, *Point*, p.340. These two goals can also be found in George W. Bush's *Address to the Nation* of 17 March 2003, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archiveS.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html> [25 March 2015].
- [12] cf. Steve A. Yetiv, *The Absence of Grand Strategy. The United States in the Persian Gulf, 1972-2005*, Baltimore, 2008, p.111.
- [13] cf. Yetiv, *Security*, pp.55 and 57.
- [14] Colin Powell, 'On the Bush Administration's Iraq War Mistakes', in, *Newsweek*, 5 March 2012, <http://europe.newsweek.com/colin-powell-bush-administrations-iraq-war-mistakes-65023?rm=eu> [28 March 2016].
- [15] download: <https://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd56.htm> [20 February 2015].
- [16] cf. Nora Bensahel et alii, *After Saddam. Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq*, (RAND Corporation), Santa Monica, 2008, pp.xviii, xxi and 2.
- [17] cf. Isaiah Wilson, 'America's Anabasis', in, Thomas G. Mahnken and Thomas A. Keaney, eds., *War in Iraq. Planning and Execution*, New York, 2007, p.14 (quote); cf also for changed Joint Staff guidelines of June 2002.
- [18] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p.70.
- [19] cf. *Joint Publication 3-0: Doctrine for Joint Operations*, p.III-21.
- [20] cf. Yetiv, *Security*, p.61f. and 69.
- [21] cf. *Joint Publication 3-0: Doctrine for Joint Operations*, p.V-1.
- [22] In a Post-War Strategy Brief of George W. Bush on 28 October 2002 the DoD was established as the "lead agency for Post-War effort"; cf. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) History Brief*, Slide 6, <https://nsarchives.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/oif-history.pdf> [25 March 2015]. At that time, however, this was still to be regarded as an informal decision.
- [23] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, pp. xix and 21-23.
- [24] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.24-28.
- [25] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p.13.
- [26] cf. Bierling, *Geschichte*, p.128/Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. xx/Wright, *Transition*, p. 71. The four most likely scenarios the ORHA prepared for were: "oil field fires, large numbers of refugees, food shortages, and the outbreak of epidemics".
- [27] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 13. What this official campaign history, provided by the US *Center for Military History*, fails to mention is the fact that the group of Middle East experts from the State Department had its wings clipped at the insistence of the Vice President, as they were regarded as politically unreliable.
- [28] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 55f.
- [29] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. xxii. However, cf. Kevin Benson, "'Phase IV" CFLCC Stability Operations Planning', in, Brian M. De Toy, ed., *Turning Victory into Success, Military Operations after the Campaign*, Fort Leavenworth, 2004, p. 189: "We also included in the development process the people who worked for LTG (Ret) Garner's ORHA." Benson, as C/J-5 in CFLCC, may have had a different perspective here.
- [30] In this, US doctrine uses the term *theater strategic planning*. cf. US Army Field Manual 3-0, *Operations, Washington 2008*, p. 7-2: *Combatant commanders base their theater strategic planning on this end state. To ensure their military strategy aligns with national interests and policy, combatant commanders participate in strategic discourse with the President, Secretary of Defense (through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), and multinational partners.* In the case of a "combatant commander with a geographic AOR assigned by the NCA [i.e. national command authorities]" the term *geographic combatant commander* is used, cf. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, p. I-8.
- [31] cf. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, p. I-9 & II-2. Ibid., p. III-2: "When directed by the NCA to conduct military operations, the combatant commanders refine peacetime strategies and modify existing plans or develop campaign plans as appropriate. The result, expressed in terms of military objectives, military concepts, and resources (ends, ways, and means), provides guidance for a broad range of activities."
- [32] cf. Dale, *Operation*, p. 11.
- [33] cf. Dale, *Operation*, p. 16.
- [34] cf. Yetiv, *Absence*, p. 111-113.
- [35] On the seminar DESERT CROSSING in general, cf. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB207/index.htm>. After action review: http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB207/Desert%20Crossing%20After%20Action%20Report_1999-06-28.pdf. [25 March 2015].
- [36] cf. Gregory Hooker, *Shaping the Plan for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Role of Military Intelligence Assessments, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Military Research Paper No. 4*, Washington, 2005, pp. 3f. & 32f.
- [37] cf. Yetiv, *Security*, p. 58.
- [38] cf. Peter J. Boyer, 'A Different War. Is the Army becoming irrelevant?', in, *The New Yorker*, 1 July 2002. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/07/01/a-different-war> [28 March 2016].
- [39] cf. Bierling, *Geschichte*, p. 113-116 & Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. xviii. Concerning the question of force strength also cf.: 'A War Examined: Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003. A Discussion with Kevin Benson, Col (USA Retired)', in, *Parameters* 43/Winter 2013-14, p. 120 http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/Parameters/issues/Winter_2013/12_Benson.pdf [20 February 2015]: "We faced a constant tension regarding the means in terms of how many troops we would be allowed for execution. [...] We had not yet started the campaign and we were engaged in justifying the necessity of follow-on forces." At the time of planning, Col Kevin Benson was C/J-5 of CFLCC. The maximum number of US forces in Iraq was 250,000 during Phase III, cf. Dale, *Operation*, p. 30.
- [40] cf. *Joint Publication 3-0: Doctrine for Joint Operations*, p. V-5.
- [41] cf. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *History Brief*, slide 8, <https://nsarchives.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/oif-history.pdf> [23 March 2015].
- [42] as cited by Dale, *Operation*, p. 9.
- [43] cf. *Joint Publication 3-0: Doctrine for Joint Operations*, p. III-3f.
- [44] cf. Hooker, *Shaping*, p. 31.
- [45] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 41-51.
- [46] cf. Bierling, *Geschichte*, p. 123.
- [47] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 8. General John Keane, Army Vice Chief of Staff at the time of planning: "People attacked it as Rumsfeld's troop list and he kept the size of the force down. It was Tommy's [Franks] plan and the Army supported it. That is the truth of it." (Wright, *Transition*, p. 68). On halting the deployment see below.
- [48] cf. 'A War Examined: Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003. A Discussion with Kevin Benson, Col (USA Retired)', in, *Parameters*, 43/Winter 2013-14, p. 120.
- [49] cf. Bierling, *Geschichte*, p. 127 & Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. xvii.
- [50] cf. Milan N. Vegom, *Joint Operational Warfare. Theory and Practice*, Newport, 2009, p. IX-34. The intelligence community also did not question these assumptions enough. cf. Hooker, *Shaping*, p. 36-38.
- [51] cf. Hooker, *Shaping*, p. 89-93.
- [52] cf. 'A War Examined: Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003. A Discussion with Kevin Benson, Col (USA Retired)', in, *Parameters*, 43/Winter 2013-14, p. 121; also cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 9.

- [53] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 81.
- [54] Briefing CENTCOM: *1003V Full Force - Force Disposition*, slide 9 (briefed on 5 August 2002), <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB214/Tab%20K.pdf> [25 March 2015].
- [55] *ibid.*, slide 10.
- [56] The names *COBRA II* and *ECLIPSE II* allude to the planning of/participation in operations by the 3rd US Army in 1944/45; cf. Benson, *Phase IV*, p. 193, note 2.
- [57] Benson, *Phase IV*, p.181.
- [58] These were adopted by CENTCOM, cf. Dale, *Operation*, p.10; cf. Col Kevin Benson (C/J-5 of CFLCC), in, 'A War Examined: Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003. A Discussion with Kevin Benson, Col (USA Retired)', in, *Parameters*, 43/Winter 2013-14, p.120 http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/Parameters/issues/Winter_2013/12_Benson.pdf [20 February 2015].
- [59] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.15. Some assumptions of civilian authorities were adopted, given the complexity of the problem, however, this was too little. cf. Dale, *Operation*, p.15.
- [60] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.12f.: "*Although members of the planning staff recognized that forces would have to conduct major repositioning at the end of major combat to be in place for their assigned Phase IV missions, their first priority remained the destruction of Iraqi forces, and they believed that the existing plan offered the best way to accomplish this objective.*"
- [61] cf. Vego, *Warfare*, p.IX-71 & XIII-39: "[...] war is ultimately won or lost in the posthostilities phase".
- [62] Benson, *Phase IV*, p.185.
- [63] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p.77.
- [64] Benson, *Phase IV*, p.186.
- [65] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.12f.
- [66] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.16 ("*In effect, planners took the forces that they had available and spread them throughout Iraq, even though the number of forces was insufficient for simultaneous combat and stabilization operations during the transitions from Phase III to Phase IV.*"); also cf. *ibid.* on the focus areas. On the question of tasks/forces cf. Dale, *Operation*, p.14. Kevin Benson, co-responsible for these plans describes this somewhat differently, cf. Benson, *Phase IV*, S.186f.
- [67] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.10.
- [68] cf. Bierling, *Geschichte*, p. 113.
- [69] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 19: "*At this point, policy formulated in Washington, DC, and in London began to shape operations far more than plans made by CENTCOM or even the actual conditions on the ground in Iraq.*"
- [70] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 26 & Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. xxvi.
- [71] Colin Powell, 'On the Bush Administration's Iraq War Mistakes', in, *Newsweek*, 5 March 2012. <http://europe.newsweek.com/colin-powell-bush-administrations-iraq-war-mistakes-65023?rm=eu> [29 March 2016].
- [72] Fontenont, *Point*, p. 254.
- [73] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p.25 & Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.88. An after action review published by the US 3rd Infantry Division states that in addition to "*lack[ing] a plan for Phase IV operations*" the Division also had undergone no training in this field of close civil-military cooperation; cf. Matthew R. Hover, 'The occupation of Iraq: a military perspective on lessons learned', in, *International Review of the Red Cross*, 94/2012, p. 342.
- [74] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p.77.
- [75] Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.xxvii.
- [76] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p.85f.
- [77] cf. Fontenont, *Point*, p.339.
- [78] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 27f. & 144-149.
- [79] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 93.
- [80] cf. Benson, *Phase IV*, p. 188 fig. 8.
- [81] Wright, *Transition*, p. 28: "*It [CFLCC] provided only limited guidance to the tactical units that fanned out across Iraq. Even without a detailed mission and guidelines on how to conduct the next phase, by the beginning of May US Army divisions took positions across the country and began executing a variety of operations.*"
- [82] Wright, *Transition*, p. 30.
- [83] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 31.
- [84] cf. Bensahel, *Saddam*, p. 104. None of these lines of operation could be fully implemented by June 2004, cf. Dale, *Operation*, p. 44.
- [85] cf. Dale, *Operation*, p. 41f.
- [86] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 162f.
- [87] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 116f. & 32. General Abizaid is quoted in an article by Brian Knowlton (Top U.S. General in Iraq Sees "Classical Guerrilla-Type" War, in, *International Herald Tribune*, 16 July 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/16/international/worldspecial/16CND-POLI.html> [20 February 2015].
- [88] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 120f. & 89f. The OPLAN was only promulgated in January 2004, cf. *ibid.*, p. 162.
- [89] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 33.
- [90] cf. Wright, *Transition*, p. 36 & 62.