No Guts No Glory:

Essential Elements For Post-War Reconstruction

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Joint forces commanders have successfully contributed to the formation of democratic nations in the aftermath of modern wars.¹ Where joint force commanders and governments focused on the four essential elements of long-term U.S. commitment, education, rearmament and reindustrialization, democracies have been produced. This is proven true by a century of United States joint and combined post-war operations in Germany, Japan, and Korea. Today, joint and combined forces in Iraq and Afghanistan are contributing to the U.S. goals of bringing freedom and democracy to those nations. By focusing its efforts in the areas of long-term U.S. commitment, education, rearmament and reindustrialization, U.S. forces can bring about democracy and economic strength in future post-war operations.

Long-term U.S. Commitment

A faithful friend is a strong defense: and he that hath found such an one hath found a treasure.

Ecclesiasticus 6:14

Long-term U.S. commitment is critical to producing post-war democracies. If the U.S.

commitment is weak, democracy will fail. A case in point was the U.S. occupation of Cuba following the Spanish-American War. The U.S. occupied Cuba briefly from 1898 to 1902.² After elections in 1902, U.S. forces left Cuba, returning only briefly in the following years to quell revolts.³ Lacking a long-term U.S. presence, democratic traditions failed to take root. Moreover, industrialization failed to take place. Eventually, repressive military regimes took power, ultimately abdicating to Castro and his comrades in 1959.⁴ Without a long-term U.S. commitment, as reflected by boots on the ground, democracy failed in Cuba.

The two occupations of Germany offer a contrast to Cuba in the effects of U.S. commitment and boots on the ground. The U.S. occupied Germany briefly after World War I. After U.S. troops departed, the German economy declined and society degenerated to the point that the weak Weimar government succumbed to Hitler.⁵ In contrast, the second U.S. occupation, with a longer troop commitment, after World War II, yielded better results. That occupation lasted approximately

seven years. During that time, the American military government purged Nazis from power, fed the hungry, secured West Germany against Russian attack, and poured in millions of dollars for reconstruction.⁶ Under the umbrella of U.S. protection, Germans formed a democratic federal government, rebuilt heavy industries, and rejoined the community of European nations as an equal and peaceful partner. Boots on the ground produced democracy.⁷

U.S. commitment also produced democracy in South Korea. After the Korean War, U.S. forces remained in South Korea to provide a security umbrella against North Korean, Chinese, and Russian aggression. Under that U.S. security umbrella, South Koreans built a new nation. Although power changed hands between a number of regimes, including both elected leaders and military strongmen, the stabilizing presence of U.S. forces ultimately produced democracy.⁸ By their own sweat and blood, the Korean people transformed their nearly illiterate agrarian society into an international economic power during a span of forty years.⁹ Today, South Korea's educated citizens lead powerful world-class corporations in heavy industries, as well as in cutting-edge information technologies.¹⁰

U.S. commitment also pushed Japan on its way toward the democratic economic superpower that Japan is today. In the aftermath of World War II, Japan's industry was destroyed and its army defeated.¹¹ Japan also faced Communist giants China and Russia across the straits. However, instead of devoting men and money to rebuild a large standing army, the U.S. security umbrella allowed Japan to focus on rebuilding its infrastructure and industry.¹² The partnership with the U.S. allowed the Japanese to focus on rebuilding their economy and society. Long-term U.S. commitment produced democratic institutions and a world-class industrialized nation.

Democracy in Iraq requires long-term U.S. commitment. History teaches us

that a long-term substantial commitment of U.S. forces is necessary to produce a post-war democratic society. Historically, U.S. commitment has entailed multiple combat divisions as occupation forces. Development of Iraq requires such a commitment. U.S. forces provide a stabilizing force in southwest Asia. The U.S. security umbrella allows Iraqis to build democratic institutions. Iraqis can also rebuild their armed forces and industries. U.S. forces can provide doctrine and tactical assistance to the new Iraqi army and conduct exercises with those forces. Long-term contact with U.S. personnel will also lead to a better understanding between our cultures.

Rearmament

A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

U.S. Constitution, Second Amendment

Rearmament is the second essential element for post-war democracy. The U.S. experience in Germany, Japan, Italy and Korea shows that a strong army is essential for the rebirth of a free nation. In each of those cases, after an initial hesitation, the U.S. promoted rearmament as a means of self-defense for the new nations.¹³ In doing so, the U.S. entered into formal defense alliances, equipped the new armies, and also trained with them. Such actions produced strong military ties between the U.S. and the new post-war democracies.¹⁴ Ultimately, the strong defense forces in Germany, Japan, Italy and Korea and their strong U.S. alliances deterred Soviet and Chinese aggression.¹⁵

Military service also benefits the work forces of post-war countries and contributes to reindustrialization. Compulsory military service provides discipline to youths. In countries striving for industrialization, military service provides youths with discipline, as well as work experience inside a large modern organization, giving them familiarity with procedures and chains of command.¹⁶ In the armed forces, soldiers learn small-unit leadership skills and gain experiences

American soldiers are attempting to engage with local communities

in working toward organizational goals. These experiences build self-confidence in youths and prepare them to succeed in large business organizations. As a case in point, at the end of the Korean War, South Korea began as an agricultural nation with only a 22 percent literacy rate.¹⁷ After the war and in alliance with the U.S., Korea built a highly trained and complex defense force. In a parallel transformation, Korea moved from an agricultural economy, transitioned through light and heavy industries, and now plays a leading role today in computer products and internet services.¹⁸ The disciplined and determined work force that made the Korean economic miracle possible was the officer corps created in the armed forces, as well as the draft soldiers who were trained in technical skills in the armed forces.¹⁹

Military service also builds national unity. Military service, either voluntary or compulsory, brings together individuals from all parts of a country, crossing racial, religious, cultural, and perhaps class lines.²⁰ In the armed forces, the training cadre then breaks down the differences between recruits and rebuilds them into cohesive military units. Soldiers train together and learn about the merits of each other's cultures through first-person experiences, instead of through prejudice

and propaganda. They build friendships and confidence in each other for success on today's training field and tomorrow's battlefield. After training, soldiers may also be stationed in parts of the country other than their native/tribal lands, providing additional opportunities to learn about the diversity of their nations. Thus, travel benefits youths and military service builds national unity.

Admittedly, rearmament brings risks of military dictatorship and repression. However, such fears are misplaced. Some of the most notorious dictators in modern times were civilian politicians, such as Hitler and Castro. In contrast, where U.S. alliances and U.S. forces were present, military coups were tempered. In Korea, successive coups under Generals Park and Chun did take place in the presence of U.S. forces.²¹ Democracy and free economics ultimately prevailed after those military regimes lost credibility and the population demanded change.²² The powerful U.S. military presence tempered any military crackdown and lent credibility to U.S. calls for peaceful regime change. In contrast, where there is no U.S. military presence, such as in Burma today, the U.S. has little leverage against military regimes and less hope exists for economic growth or political freedom.

Rearmament contributes to the attainment of U.S. goals of freedom and democracy in Iraq. In Iraq, rearmament is necessary to protect against external threats. Military service also benefits Iraqi youths by exposing them to other cultures coexisting within their nation. Most importantly, military service produces a cadre of disciplined leaders for a stronger future Iraq.

Education

Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern but impossible to enslave.

Baron Brougham and Vaux

Education is the third essential element for post-war democracy. In order to successfully compete on the world market, nations must upgrade their citizens' education

to world-class levels. Otherwise, market forces bypass nations, just like individuals, in seeking the best qualified candidates. Nations that provide modern education to their workforces succeed in building world class economies and democratic governments. For example, after World War II, Japan decided that education was the key to modernization.²³ The Japanese distributed educational opportunities in accordance with merit through demanding nation-wide college admissions tests.²⁴ They also provided funding for Japanese youths to study at U.S. and European universities at government expense.²⁵ The Japanese commitment to education and the improvement of human capital paid off in the form of their world-class economy today.

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Education gives students confidence in their own ideas. Education exposes students to ideas outside of their own culture and provides students with opportunities to test out such ideas. The results are not always pleasing, for example when students stand up and fight for their ideas. Japan endured a number of student riots from their universities in the 1960s, but ultimately, Japan was strengthened, not weakened, by education.²⁶ In less than fifty years, through education, hard work, and the imagination of its citizens, Japan pulled itself up by the bootstraps to become the second largest industrial power in the world.

Education also strengthens democracy. As shown in Korea, students are a force for political change. After the war, South Korea possessed no natural resources and its population had only a 22 percent literacy rate.²⁷ Koreans were cognizant of the fact that for their small resource-poor country to make its way in the world, they had to work

long hours, as well as meet global standards in education. Just as in Japan, Korea instituted a harsh nation-wide college admission test to assign prestigious educational opportunities based on merit.²⁸ Korea also paid for its top students to study in the U.S. for graduate school.²⁹ Certainly, Korean military regimes also encountered student resistance. The power of education was demonstrated during those confrontations. Although South Korean military regimes cracked down on student protesters, the students ultimately pushed the last military government to its collapse in 1987.³⁰ The pen proved to be mightier than the sword. Education made Korea a strong nation, both militarily and economically.

The power of students to force political change was also demonstrated in Cuba. After the Spanish American war, the U.S. military government, led by General Leonard Wood, built schools and modernized the university before quickly returning the government back to Cubans in 1902.³¹ Succeeding Cuban governments failed to develop education and failed to raise literacy above 30%.³² Despite that pathetic education effort, students brought about political change by force. The political student movement, in a coalition with soldiers under Batista, overthrew the U.S.-backed government.³³

A renewed emphasis on education in Iraq will also yield benefits by producing trained business leaders, as well as future political leaders. Iraqi culture places a high value on education. Pre-war Iraq had a growing class of professionals.³⁴ Education was a reliable route for upward social mobility in pre-war Iraq.³⁵ During that era, college students were accorded privileges, such as exemptions from the draft during the murderous Iraq-Iran War. Accordingly, U.S. efforts toward reeducation would be welcomed by Iraqi society.

Reindustrialization

*Seest thou a man diligent in his business?
He shall stand before kings.*

Proverbs 22:29

Reindustrialization is the fourth

essential element for post-war democracy. Without industrialization, post-war countries are weak and easy prey for dictatorship. With industrialization, even former totalitarian countries grow into democratic societies.

Germany provides a contrast between one government that promoted industrialization and others that did not. The Weimar and the East German regimes collapsed after failing to achieve post-war reindustrialization to compete on the world market.^{36,37} In contrast, in post-war West Germany, the government and the people committed to reindustrialization, and to working long hours at low wages to achieve it. The government promoted exports to drive national recovery and reindustrialization.³⁸ The government also provided large subsidies to promote growth in heavy industries, such as ship and aircraft manufacturing.³⁹ Through its central bank, the government controlled inflation and provided economic stability.⁴⁰ Through these commitments and hard work, Germany attained world-class economic status and a democratic society.

The Japanese and Korean “economic miracles” are additional examples of successful post-war reindustrialization that produced democracy. In the aftermath of the war, half of Japan’s heavy industries laid in ruins.⁴¹ During the U.S. occupation, the Japanese vowed to reindustrialize and to rebuild their nation’s wealth and power, in order to guarantee their survival as a sovereign nation.⁴² They committed to the education of their youths. They committed to reinvestment and accepted substandard living conditions in order to plow savings into investments in heavy industries.⁴³ Japanese companies competed for greater market share in the world market through aggressively price-cutting.⁴⁴ The Japanese government also provided tax exemptions and other subsidies to heavy industries.⁴⁵ The government pushed businesses to

move from medium to heavy industries, then ultimately into knowledge industries. By the 1980s, Japan succeeded in attaining the status of the second largest economy in the world, as well as becoming a leading democratic nation.

Korea’s rise to world-class status though reindustrialization is also inspirational. After the Korean War armistice, South Korea was a nation of illiterate peasants. It had neither natural resources nor industry; North Korea controlled those assets on its side of the demilitarized zone.⁴⁶ Yet South Koreans committed to the survival of their nation as an independent state and to the attainment of world-class economic power. They educated their workforce through military training and university instruction.⁴⁷ Like the Japanese, they also accepted lower standards of living to pour savings into investments in heavy industries. The Korean government provided tax benefits, contracts, and subsidies to encourage heavy industries and exports.⁴⁸ Today, Korea has attained leadership status in heavy industries, as well as in knowledge industries. Moreover, they have overcome repeated military coups and enjoy a stable civilian elected government.

Cuba is an example of what happens where there is no post-war industrialization. After the Spanish American War, Cuba was complacent in economic development and chose to continue with legacy sugar plantations as its main industry.⁴⁹ Without its own medium and heavy industries, Cuba relied on imports from the U.S. for more sophisticated goods and services. The Cuban government and businesses did not aim for world-class industrialization. Ultimately, the government was toppled by military strongman Batista, who was later succeeded later by Castro.

Reindustrialization is essential for post-war democracy in Iraq. Development

of its heavy industries will provide Iraq with independence and stability. Iraq has the ability to achieve reindustrialization. Pre-war Iraq had a growing class of professionals.⁵⁰ Iraq started development of heavy industries, such as steel and aluminum manufacturing, in the 1980s.⁵¹ Iraq also produced its own main battle tanks and AWACs.⁵² The launching of a 48-ton three-stage rocket, capable of putting satellites and warheads into orbit, demonstrated Iraq's pre-war technical sophistication.⁵³ Iraq has the assets and the ability to achieve industrialization once the appropriate environment exists. Just as historical

examples demonstrate, reindustrialization is essential to bring democracy and freedom to Iraq.

Joint forces commanders successfully contributed to the formation of democratic nations in the aftermath of modern wars, including operations in Germany, Japan, and Korea. By focusing efforts in the four essential areas of long-term U.S. commitment, education, rearmament and reindustrialization, U.S. forces can successfully contribute to bringing about democracy and economic strength in Iraq, Afghanistan and future post-war operations.

Endnotes

- 1 Military governments in Cuba, Germany and Japan have been run by Army Generals, with overall guidance from the joint staff in Washington. For example, Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive 1067 controlled General Lucius Clay's government of post-war Germany. Clay at 7.
 - 2 Hudson, Rex A. (Ed.). (2002). *Cuba: a country study* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Library of Congress.
 - 3 (Hudson, 2002, p. 33)
 - 4 (Hudson, 2002, p. 53)
 - 5 Ozment, Steven. (2004). *A Mighty Fortress*. New York, New York: HarperCollins.
 - 6 Bark, Dennis L., & Gress, David R. (1989). *A History of West Germany*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.
 - 7 (Bark, 1989, p. 345, 392)
 - 8 (Cumings, 1997, p. 186, 200)
 - 9 Savada, Andrea Mattes, & Shaw, William (Eds.). (1992). *South Korea: a country study* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Library of Congress., p. 120
 - 10 (Cumings, 1997, p. 322)
 - 11 Cohen, Theodore. (1987). *Remaking Japan: the American Occupation as New Deal*. New York, New York: Free Press., p. 4
 - 12 (Cohen, 1987, p. 456)
 - 13 Dower, John W. (1999). *Embracing Defeat*. New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Company. p. 23
 - 14 (Bark, 1989, p. 345)
 - 15 Solsten, Eric (Ed.). (1996). *Germany: a country study* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Library of Congress. p. 440
 - 16 (Cumings, 1997, p. 311)
 - 17 (Savada, 1992, p. 115)
 - 18 (Cumings, 1997, p. 318)
 - 19 (Savada, 1992, p. 35)
 - 20 Metz, Helen C. (Ed.). (1990). *Iraq: a country study* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Library of Congress., p. 244
 - 21 (Savada, 1992, p. 38)
 - 22 (Savada, 1992, p. 62)
 - 23 Dolan, Ronald E., & Worden, Robert L. (Eds.). (1992). *Japan: a country study* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Library of Congress. p. 136
 - 24 (Dolan, 1992, p. 136)
 - 25 (Dolan, 1992, p. 198)
 - 26 (Dolan, 1992, p. 136)
 - 27 (Cumings, 1997, p. 300)
 - 28 (Savada, 1992, p. 120)
 - 29 (Savada, 1992, p. 192)
 - 30 (Savada, 1992, p. 62)
 - 31 (Hudson, 2002, p. 33)
 - 32 (Hudson, 2002, p. 65)
 - 33 (Hudson, 2002, p. 45)
 - 34 (Metz, 1990, p. 108)
 - 35 (Metz, 1990, p. 114)
 - 36 (Solsten, 1996, p. 75)
 - 37 (Ozment, 2004, p. 152)
 - 38 (Bark, 1989, p. 392)
 - 39 (Solsten, 1996, p. 338)
 - 40 (Solsten, 1996, p. 248)
 - 41 (Cohen, 1989, p. 4)
 - 42 (Dolan, 1992, p. 198)
 - 43 (Dolan, 1992, p. 201)
 - 44 (Dolan, 1992, p. 202)
 - 45 (Dolan, 1992, p. 206)
 - 46 (Savada, 1992, p. 29)
 - 47 (Cumings, 1997, p. 311)
 - 48 (Savada, 1992, p. 43)
 - 49 (Hudson, 2002, p. 53)
 - 50 (Metz, 1990, p. 108)
 - 51 (Metz, 1990, p. 152)
 - 52 (Metz, 1990, p. xxix)
 - 53 (Metz, 1990, p. xxix)
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 "Provincial Reconstruction Team, Panjshir, Afghanistan." Wikimedia Commons. 3 April 2010. http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/37/Provincial_Reconstruction_Team_Panjshir_Afghanistan.jpg&imgrefurl=http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Provincial_Reconstruction_Team_Panjshir_Afghanistan.jpg&usq=...iUbBditDDaRTybmAnGaEsRSjvLY-&h=1993&w=3000&sz=2948&hl=en&start=1&um=1&itbs=1&tbnid=u-LJIUOKg8a3M:&tbnh=100&tbnw=150&prev=/images%3Fq%3Da%26reconstruction%2Bwikimedia%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dfirefox-a%26rls%3Dorg.mozila:en-US:official%26tbs%3Disch:1