

It is often said that war is the absence of diplomacy, or at least a signal of when diplomacy fails. From observation and personal experience, I feel that not to be the case. In fact, I would assert that war, or a state of operations similar in nature to war, is to be regarded just as much an instrument of diplomacy as formal talks or economic sanctions are. These instruments should not be represented as a continuum either, from one extreme to the other, but in truth each with merit are to stand alone to be used exclusively or in conjunction in order to bring weight to the desired outcome of diplomacy.

From observation I would look as to how the Bush administration has tried to address the “Axis of Evil”—Iraq, Iran and North Korea respectively, during the post-9/11 era. Through military engagement, economic sanctions and UN resolutions, and multi-party talks, the White House has employed various diplomatic strategies to mitigate the global and U.S. national risks that these nation-states have or did represent on the world stage. While some could question to which varying degrees of success these initiatives have been, it is to be acknowledged that the Bush administration has been far reaching in its efforts to leverage its assets to advance U.S. foreign policy.

Drawing to a microcosm on the war in Iraq, I speak from experience as the wide range of initiatives that my unit in Iraq was willing to utilize to advance the fight. Though current attitudes seem to have shifted otherwise, in 2005 during Operation Iraqi Freedom III the overall emphasis was more geared towards lowering the number of attacks against Coalition Forces. This belief led many to fall prey to a more unilateral approach to ground operations, largely aggressive cordon and searches in an attempt to flush out terrorists for kill or capture. While certainly addressing a symptom, such an operation plan was unsatisfying as it didn’t address the underlying root cause, the lack of national consensus existing in Iraq.

Emphasis on institutional building, institutions meaning local governments, trained Army and police forces, burgeoning economies, rule of law, etc. forced our squadron to adopt a broader, multilateral approach to operations. While cordon and searches, raids, mounted and dismounted patrols, and sniper sets all existed within our operative template, we were quick to understand their limitations in reaching the people in our area and addressing their needs. Non-lethal means we incorporated included:

- 1) Creating a local town government
- 2) Training an Iraqi Army company
- 3) Rebuilding infrastructure such as roads and schools
- 4) Distributing humanitarian aid food bags
- 5) Providing medical aid through our medics and doctors
- 6) Hiring townspeople for localized clean-up projects

Through the use of these methods, as opposed to solely relying on purely offensive kinetic operations, we were able to gain greater acceptance amongst the local populace for Coalition Forces and goals.

As demonstrated in both examples, one can see that for a true diplomatic effort to have a chance of success, it needs to incorporate all means and methods available to bear. The U.S. Army finally codified this into doctrine in its latest version of FM 3-0: Operations as Effects Based Operations (EBO) or Effects Based Approach (EBA) to

Operations. This has been the first time in the U.S. Army's history since the publication of its first doctrine that the full spectrum of operations has been formally recognized.

Despite lessons learned from WWII and Vietnam, the advent of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has finally seen a closing gap and more of a cooperative spirit between the Department of Defense and the Department of State. Though long rivals, both in funding and jurisdiction, the War on Terror has shown that whether fighting nation-states or rogue organizations, it is important that all the methods of diplomacy as synced in order to bring about a swift and advantageous resolution to trans-national quarrels. To not do so would be at the peril of not only the men and women in uniform but also to our nation whom they serve.

I request this Essay to be published on the Lint Center for National Security Studies, Inc website with my name published.