

From the Chairman *Brave Enough Not to Lead*

THE PROPER ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN FOREIGN POLICY

The use of military means to achieve political ends evokes a thread of a rich discussion, one that reaches back through the ages. It was certainly so even in the winter of 1775, as Edmund Burke spoke on the floor of Parliament, at a time when England decided to send an army and a navy to put down the American rebellion.

Although Burke wasn't exactly espousing our independence in his speech, he did question his government's reliance upon military force in preventing it:

Those who wield the thunder of the state may have more confidence in the efficacy of arms. But . . . my opinion is much more in favor of prudent management than of force; considering force not as an odious, but a feeble instrument in preserving a people as spirited as this.

So I can only imagine Burke's surprise—if he were alive today—to hear our Secretary of Defense calling for more assets for the Foreign Service, U.S. Agency for International Development, Departments of Agriculture, Justice, and Commerce, and other nonuni-

formed implements of power and influence. Surprise as well, perhaps, to hear someone wearing the uniform, telling you the same thing—much as I did back in 2005, as the head of our Navy.

My profession has taken me in and around countries all over the world, where I learned the critical value of a great Ambassador and a great Country Team, a team that is inclusive of so many of our Federal agencies—and in that teamwork, the possibilities were, and are, endless.

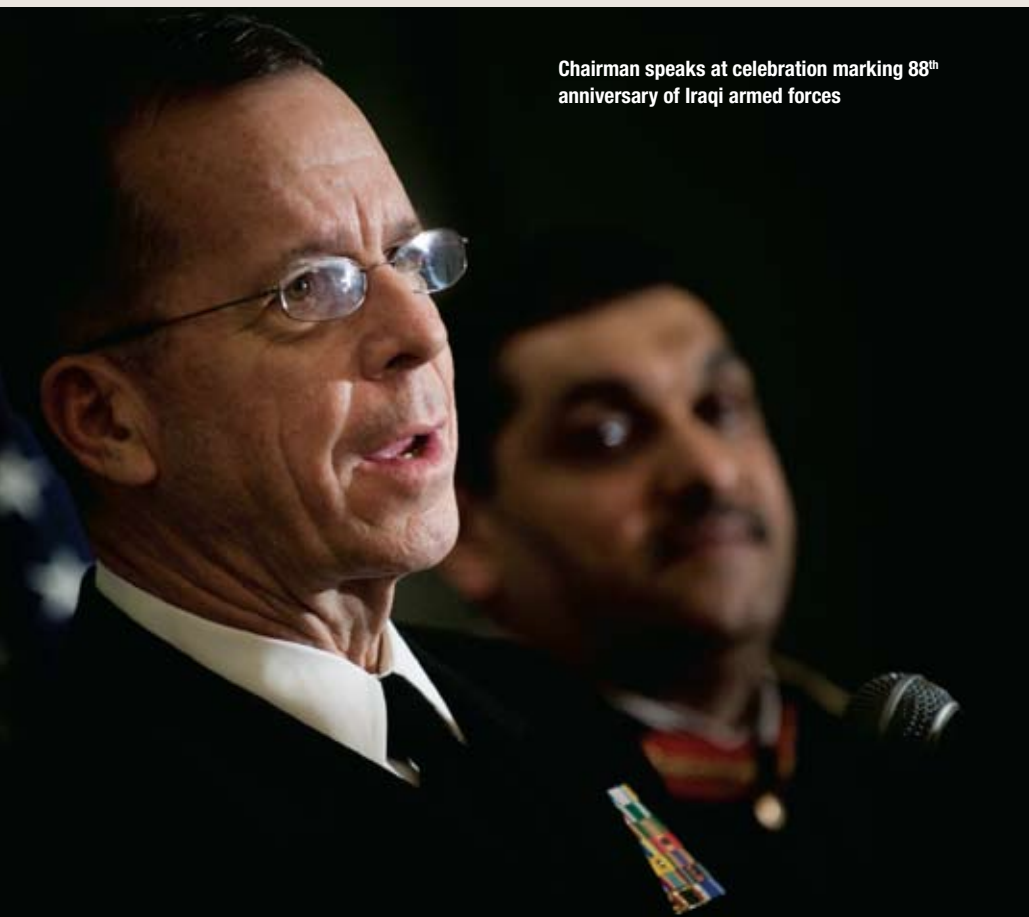
There is no question that we need a whole-of-government approach to solving modern problems, and we need to reallocate roles and resources in a way that places our military as an equal among many in government—as an enabler, a true partner. On those points, I think most people already agree. But I think it's worth thinking about what we can do about it.

First, when asking why our instruments of national power may be unbalanced, we, the ones wearing uniforms, need to look in the mirror.

Yes, our military is flexible. Well funded. Designed to take risk. We respond well to orders from civilian authorities. It's what we do. It's in our DNA. And so, when we are willing to pitch in, as we usually are, we tend to receive more resources. And then get asked to do more. And so on.

I believe we should be more willing to break this cycle, and say when our Armed Forces may not always be the best choice to take the lead. We must be just as bold in providing options when they don't involve our participation or our leadership, or even when those options aren't popular—*especially* when they are not popular.

Although there are many situations where we should not take the lead—in most cases, we could be one great supporting



Chairman speaks at celebration marking 88th anniversary of Iraqi armed forces

DOD (Chad J. McNeelley)

partner. It's not that others aren't willing to lead. I know for a fact that they are. But in many cases, they are just not able.

That brings me to my second point. As an equal partner in government, I want to be able to transfer resources to my other partners when they need them. In fact, I think those partners should have the resources they need to begin with.

Too often, we in the Pentagon talk about the "interagency" as if it were some alien being. That's a bit unkind, because if we are truly to cut oxygen from the fire of violent extremism, we must leverage every single aspect of national power—soft and hard.

The way we approach these issues is critical; it requires a comprehensive approach, from diplomacy, to foreign assistance and aid,

And in my travels here at home, as I meet with young people, Servicemembers and civilians alike, I sense a hunger for the opportunity, and the dignity, of public service.

I believe we have a great opportunity, right now, to seize this moment in history, by enabling all aspects of our power and influence, as a force for peace by fully leveraging the spirit and diverse talents of all



Texas Army National Guard officers discuss support to Hurricane Gustav humanitarian assistance operations

Because options without resources aren't options at all—especially in times of crisis. And our diversity of engagement and response can suffer as a result. We must also acknowledge that it would be a crime to waste the precious resource of experience our military has gained while executing elements of foreign policy throughout the world.

There truly are no more expensive lessons than these, as the families of our wounded and fallen know all too well.

We must expand our interaction with other departments and agencies, conveying those lessons through training and consultation where and when needed.

Finally, there is a great deal for us in the military to learn about, and from, what many of us call the "interagency"—not just at the senior levels, but also throughout our entire institution.

to building partnerships—an approach both informed and sustained by the capabilities of the whole of our government.

As Henry Kissinger once wrote, "Diplomacy is the art of restraining the exercise of power." When called, our military has served the role of ambassador extremely well. But our most effective ambassadors of peace in the future will not be those who wear uniforms or bear arms. They will be our civilians. And the Nation's greatest strength, at home and abroad, is not the arms we bear, but the example we set, the values we share. It is our citizenry. I think Edmund Burke, gazing at America from across the ocean, would have agreed.

Today, in my travels abroad, I hear one message that rings clear: Most of the world wants a stronger relationship, and a deeper mutual understanding, with the United States.

Americans, by empowering them to go out and make a difference—whether they wear a uniform or not.

Sometimes, we have to be brave enough not to lead.

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