

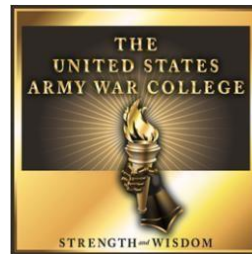
Strategy Research Project

Add "S" to Meet U.S. 21st Century Security Challenge

by

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Abstract

Solving the United States’ 21st century “failed state” problem necessitates modifying the Cold War era national security solution set. Adding “S” to the U.S. Instruments of Power (IOP) paradigm (Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic) elevates social stability to its appropriate position. Doing so reduces the overreliance on the military to build institutional capacity within failed states. Transitioning to “DIMES” broadens the national IOP aperture and operationalizes disperse resources that are aptly suited to solve the failed state dilemma. Shifting to a DIMES paradigm expands the policymakers’ toolbox in the strategy development process. The DIMES acronym is aptly suited for the national security lexicon because it is simple, unexpected, credible, concrete, and emotionally connective, thus helping policymakers tell the U.S. national security strategy story. The DIMES acronym is also easy for policymakers to retain, recall, repeat and research.

Add “S” to Meet U.S. 21st Century Security Challenge

In his January 12, 2016 State of the Union Address, United States President Barack Obama stated, “The United States of America is the most powerful nation on Earth. Period... It’s not even close... We spend more on our military than the next eight nations combined. Our troops are the finest fighting force in the history of the world. No nation attacks us directly, or our allies, because they know that’s the path to ruin...I know this is a dangerous time. But that’s not primarily because of some looming superpower out there, and certainly not because of diminished American strength. In today’s world, we’re threatened less by evil empires and more by failing states.”¹

The greatest 20th century threat to the international community and a global world-order favorable to the United States’ national security was the Soviet Union (formerly known as the United Soviet Socialist Republics) and the spread of communism. In order to meet and effectively defeat this 20th century challenge, the U.S. employed instruments of national power (IOP) construct that harnessed its diplomatic, informational, military and economic (DIME) resources. The U.S. military application served as the foundation of the U.S. IOP implementation.

Accepting President Obama’s aforementioned assessment as accurate, the major challenge to the U. S. in the 21st century are threats that failed states pose to the stability of the international community. This global community was primarily led and shaped by U.S. interests during the previous century. Although the failed state threat to the global community is clear, the solution to address this 21st century problem remains uncertain. Similar to its actions in the 20th century, the U.S has overly depended on the military instrument within the U.S. DIME national security paradigm. Unfortunately, the current U.S. construct and its over-reliance on the military apparatus has experienced

negligible success. Addressing the 21st century “failed state” problem requires a modification of the U.S. 20th century national security DIME solution set.

The U.S. should expand its IOP paradigm by elevating the societal component to its DIME IOP structure and reduce the military’s role in institutional capacity building within failed states. Adding social stability to the Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic paradigm will appropriately broaden the U.S. assessment of the systemic causes of state failure, thus prompting a more comprehensive and effective policy approach to strengthening those states. This research paper offers a position about why societal stability is an IOP and why it should be elevated to the same level as other elements that make up the U.S. IOP structure, in order to effectively deal with failed states. The paper explains the origins of the U.S. IOPs and defines a failed state.

Furthermore, the research paper explains the social stability concept and its need for inclusion in the policymaker’s DIME IOP tool bag. Additionally, the paper will review other U.S. IOP expansion efforts and explain why social stability is a better solution. Finally, the paper describes the importance of terminology when making an idea stick and the reason the social stability lexicon stands a better chance of sticking as a suggested terminology. In order to make the case for making social stability a recognized U.S. IOP to deal with failed states, the IOP origins and failed states requires an explanation.

Instruments of Power

The IOP terminology and concept can be traced back to Hans J. Morgenthau in his book *Politics Among Nations*. Although Morgenthau was not the first scholar to talk about State power, his book introduced the term “elements of national power” as an approach to power analysis between states.² This approach described power as

possessions or property of the state.³ Therefore, power or instruments of national power “refers to the tools a country uses to influence other countries or international organizations or even non-state actors.”⁴ In the book *The Future of Power*, Joseph Nye expounds on the concepts of State powers in his efforts to explain power in global affairs. Nye divides power into two categories: resources and behavioral outcomes (see fig 1).⁵ The focus of this paper deals with the category of IOPs defined as resources. Power defined as resources (state’s property or possessions) is a result of resources converted into strategies to achieve preferred outcomes ⁶

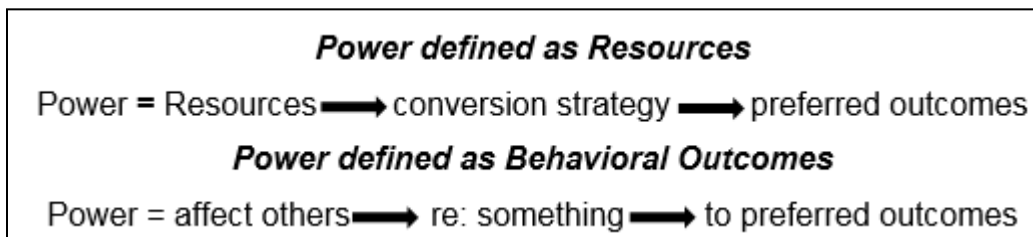


Figure 1: Power Conversion Chart⁷

In today’s lexicon, the term instruments or elements are interchangeable when used in the context of a state’s national power. The widely accepted U.S. IOP paradigm finds its origin in the Cold War era when bureaucrats used the DIME acronym as shorthand for the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments of U.S. national power.⁸ The DIME construct and verbiage carried forward and is used in current U.S. strategy and operational documents such as the 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) and Department of Defense Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces (DOD JP 1). The 2015 NSS states the U.S. “... will lead with all the instruments of U.S. power.”⁹ The document goes on to express that U.S. military will remain ready to defend U.S. national interests and provide an advantage for U.S. diplomacy while simultaneously leveraging a strong economy and protecting the international financial

system.¹⁰ The NSS further contends that the above IOPs are more effective with information tools such as analyzed intelligence.¹¹ DOD JP 1 describes the essential linkage between advancing U.S. national interests through the active utilization of the U.S. IOPs when it states, “The ability of the U.S. to advance its national interests is dependent on the effectiveness of the United States Government (USG) in employing the instruments of national power to achieve national strategic objectives.”¹² DOD JP 1 further explains the U.S. strategy for “waging war should involve the use of all instruments of national power that one group can bring to bear against another (diplomatic, informational, military, and economic).”¹³ The DIME IOP construct is listed throughout various U.S. strategy and security documents and applying the DIME to advance U.S. National interest is an accepted approach. Now that the origins of IOPs and the usage of DIME in the U.S.’ strategy development is established, we will turn to defining the 21st century threat known as a failed state.

Failed State

A failed state is a state that cannot accomplish basic civil service functions (education, security, utilities, governance etc.) for its population.¹⁴ The reason behind a state’s failure is typically due to factional violence or extreme poverty.¹⁵ Failed states create a power vacuum that competing factions and crime organizations fill to victimize populations.¹⁶ Internal actors or foreign governments looking to subvert a state’s governance by fueling ethnic warfare or dissident forces cause state failure.¹⁷

The book *Governance in Post Conflict Societies*, describes three key characteristics of a failed state as:

- 1) Breakdown of law and order where state institutions lose their monopoly on the legitimate use of force and are unable to protect their citizens or those institutions oppress and terrorize citizens.

2) Weak or disintegrated capacity to respond to citizens' needs and desires, provide basic public services, assure citizens' welfare, or support normal economic.

3) Lack of a credible entity that represents that state beyond its borders.¹⁸

The degree to which states display the aforementioned characteristics determines when they are labeled a fragile or failed state. Normally states need to experience an extreme collapse in order to be identified as a failed state. There is a wide range on the continuum between a failed state and a stable state as noted in The Fragile State Index.

The Fragile State Index (formally known as the Failed State Index) annually ranks 178 nations based on their level of stability.¹⁹ The 2015 Fragile State Index organizes the 178 countries into 11 categories ranging from "Very Sustainable" to "Very High Alert." The index provides each country a composite score based on 12 key political, social and economic indicators and over 100 sub-indicators. The lower the composite score the more stable the country Finland's score is 17.8 and is the only country listed in the best rating category of "Very Sustainable." Sudan, Central African Republic, Somalia and South Sudan are on the other end of the scale listed in the worst category of "Very High Alert." Their scores range from 110.8 to 114.5. In comparison, the United States is listed in the third best category of "Very Stable" with a composite score of 35.3. The point at which a state transition from a fragile to a completely failed state may be debatable, however, its impact on the international community is not.

Failed states' governmental power void poses a dangerous challenge to international order. Failed states' inability to establish governmental authority, monopolize violence, and exert power within their respective territory is disruptive to the

current international system.²⁰ An report by the Council on Foreign Relations, titled “Failed States in a World of Terror,” described the international community’s view on failed states as “breeding grounds of instability, mass migration, and murder” (in the words of political scientist Stephen Walt), as well as reservoirs and exporters of terror.” The author goes on to infer that a failed state’s instability threatens its own citizens as well as jeopardizes global peace.²¹

Failed states challenge international order because the international community depends on states and their governments to serve as the principal entity to maintain order within their recognized borders.²² A state’s ability to safeguard its citizens from bedlam and prevent tumultuous lawlessness from spreading beyond its boundaries interlinks with international security. The accepted international norm is for states to provide public goods to its population. While at the same time, mediate constraints and challenges posed by the international community as well as their internal political, economic and societal realities.²³ In order to maintain the current system of positively competing states, it is in the best interest of the global community to ensure fragile or failed states become successful governing entities and can meet the needs of their populations.²⁴ The tragic terrorist attacks inflicted on the United States on September 11, 2001 (9/11) provided Americans a sobering reality concerning the dangers of a failed state.

Military’s Role in Failed States

Approximately one year after the U.S. 9/11 terrorist attacks which were launched from the failed state of Afghanistan, U.S. President George W. Bush released the United States National Security Strategy (NSS) in which he stated “America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones. We are menaced less

by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few.²⁵ The 2002 NSS was the first in many strategic documents to identify failed states as a major threat to U.S. security and national interest.

In order to deal with the failed state challenge, the U.S. utilized its IOP construct in which the “M” (military) played the lead role for the US response. However, after 15 years of a U.S. military led engagement and a \$1 trillion price tag, Afghanistan and Iraq remain identified as “High Alert” on the 2015 Fragile Index list with, respective scores of 104.5 and 107.9.²⁶ The countries’ high instability scores place them merely 6 and 3 points higher than the index’s worst category of “Very High Alert.”²⁷ Neither Iraq nor Afghanistan are in a better position to meet the requirements of providing their population basic civil service and security functions within its borders. The military’s failure to bring sustainable stability to Afghanistan and Iraq is more about a failure of U.S. policymakers to understand the fundamental requirements needed to stabilize a failed state. Policymakers’ dearth of understanding is linked to the limited DIME IOP toolbox construct they had available to decide how to deal with the complex failed state challenge.

If all you have in your toolbox is hammer, then most of your problems appear as if they were nails. This metaphor applies to the U.S. approach to dealing with complex international security problems. The U.S. military’s enormous capacity and capability makes it an enticing lead option within the DIME apparatus to solve the failed state predicament. However, two of the three overarching requirements needed to rebuild a failed state are not naturally nested in the U.S military. In its framework for rebuilding failed states, the book *Governance in Post Conflict Societies*, lists security governance,

administrative-economic governance and political governance as three necessary requirements to rebuild a failed state.²⁸ It explains these requirements as follows:

Security governance upholds the social contract between state and citizen, protects people and property, and deals with crime and illegal activity while exercising oversight of security forces to ensure legitimate application of coercive force, curbing of abuses and maintenance of the rule of law.

Administrative-Economic governance achieves effective provision of services and economic opportunity through rules-driven and transparent policymaking, regulation, fiscal arrangements, partnerships and civil service systems.

Political governance guides societal decision-making and public policy and generates legitimacy through separation of powers, responsive and accountable government, representation and inclusiveness, and protection of basic rights for all citizens.²⁹

Accepting the above requirements as accurate, the U.S. military, to include Landpower, is not the ideal IOP to address all the ailments that torment a failed state. Based on U.S. Landpower core functions, it is not naturally suited to fulfill all the necessary requirements of security governance. Dealing with crime, illegal activity and maintaining the rule of law in its full spectrum is not something that Landpower has the extensive training nor experience required for a long duration, as evidenced by its performance during recent attempts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, Unified Land Operations, lists Landpower functions

- Impose the Nation's will on an enemy, by force if necessary.
- Engage to influence, shape, prevent, and deter in an operational environment.
- Establish and maintain a stable environment that sets the conditions for political and economic development.

- Address the consequences of catastrophic events; both natural and man-made, to restore infrastructure and reestablish basic civil services.
- Support and provide a base from which joint forces can influence and dominate the air and maritime domains of an operational environment.

However, it is one thing to write a requirement in a document and it is a completely different story to execute the task effectively. The Army did not emphasize stability operations doctrinally until 4-5 years after its initial combat operations in Afghanistan. It failed to recognize and harness social stability resources early in its campaign operations, which severely degraded U.S. national interests in this area.

Social Stability

Every 4-8 years Americans experience a peaceful transition of the most powerful position in the world from one person to another without violence, military intervention or anarchy. Americans enjoy government institutions at the local, state and federal levels organized to provide checks and balances so no one branch becomes too powerful to override the other branches of government. Americans are accustomed to freely electing their government leaders. They enjoy functioning legal systems that allow them to peacefully resolve their grievances. Americans are used to civil services that provide working water, electricity, fuel, food, education, sanitation, etc. Finally, Americans enjoy a stable financial system that allows them to earn, save and invest their monies without the fear of overt corruption or pillage. Americans are able to enjoy all the aforementioned things and more because we enjoy a concept known as social stability.

Social stability is a concrete concept as well as an ever-evolving idealistic aspiration. In its real sense, social stability allows individuals to express their concerns and interests in a non-destructive manner.³⁰ The idea of social stability is very subjective and definitive boundaries are nonexistent. Effectively defining social stability is similar to how U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart described obscenity in a Supreme Court case he ruled upon in 1964. Justice Stewart stated "...I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material [obscenity] I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description, and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it..."³¹ Thus a state's population or the international community may not be able to agree upon a single social stability definition, but they all can agree on what social stability is and is not when they see it. Another concept that is synonymous and directly associated with social stability is the term human security.

Human security "focuses on "individual freedom from want and freedom from fear."³² The fears referenced in human security are analogous with failed states. The human security concept origins coincide with the end of the Cold War.³³ The United Nations introduced the term to the international community through this UN Commission on Human Security definition

...to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.³⁴

Human security combines the human elements of security, rights and development.³⁵

The concept is interdisciplinary and focuses on people-centered, multi-sectoral,

comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented characteristics. The chart below shows the different elements of human security and types of threats that challenge them:

Types of Security	Examples of Main Threats
Economic Security	Persistent poverty, unemployment
Food Security	Hunger, Famine
Health Security	Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care
Environmental Security	Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution
Personal Security	Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor
Community Security	Inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions
Political Security	Political repression, human rights abuses

Figure 2: Types of Human Security Threats³⁶

According to Dr. Harry Yarger, Senior Fellow at the Joint Special Operations University, states achieve human security when “all [its] citizens are safe from chronic threats of hunger, disease, and repression, and are protected from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life at home, at the workplace, or within the community.”³⁷ Policymakers that recognize and comprehensively address all the human security factors provide the population with social stability. Social stability creates an atmosphere that prevents a country from spiraling into a failed state. In addition, accurate consideration of the elements that create social stability is critical during the initial stages of policy and strategy formulation. For this reason, U.S. policymakers should elevate the social stability domain alongside its current IOP DIME construct.

Elevating social stability to its appropriate level beside the other elements of national power would allow policymakers to recognize it as an equally important domain. Ensuring social stability is an expression of U.S. national power and it requires equal attention in strategy formulation, to deliver the desired effects to counter failed states. Additionally, social stability needs its own domain along with codified doctrine, intellectual guardians and advocates focused on coalescing the resources, capacity and capabilities needed to bring the full force of social stability to bear.

As earlier stated, Joseph Nye defined one aspect of a state's power as the amount of resources a state has that can produce outcomes.³⁸ He goes on to list large populations, natural resources, territory, military strength and social stability as examples of a state's resources.³⁹ However, employment of a state's resources do not guarantee the intended outcome. Nye refers to this as a state's ability to convert its resource power into behavioral outcomes.⁴⁰ In this sense, the U.S. overall social stability and the intellectual capacity resident within its civil service institutions are definite power resources that are amongst the best globally. However, because U.S. policymakers have not accurately recognized social stability as a power resource and placed it on equal footing with other DIME power resources, they are unable to convert social stability's capacity and capabilities into the behavioral outcomes they seek when engaging a failed state. Converting power resources into preferred behavioral outcomes requires sound strategy.⁴¹

Social Stability Incorrectly Embedded in other DIME IOPs

Failure to recognize and harness U.S. social stability as a resource power, leads policymakers to intuitively and myopically focus on the traditional DIME IOPs to develop a strategy. U.S. DIME IOPs are very formidable. Defense is one of the strongest U.S.

IOPs with its ability to achieve immediate outcomes. However, the current DIME configuration is not suited for policymakers to devise an effective failed state strategy. Nye once again notes that an abundance or overwhelming advantage in power resources does not guarantee success if the power resources are irrelevant or misapplied to a problem.⁴² U.S. policymakers use the heuristic convenience of the DIME IOP model to help frame complex strategic problems. Not having social stability on the top rung with the other IOP elements makes social stability importance and relevance a secondary consideration at best or not even a consideration at all. Plainly put, if social stability does not have a seat at the U.S. IOP “big table,” the domain will constantly struggle to gain the capacity and capability to effectively deal with failed states. Fortunately, social stability and the human security elements required to bring it about are not new concepts to U.S. policymakers. U.S. bureaucrats, government agencies and think tanks are advocating for social stability and human security to play a larger role in solving the failed state dilemma. Unfortunately, to date, their recommendations fall below the threshold required to bring about a change that policymakers can effectively digest.

There is broad recognition that U.S. IOP elements extend beyond the DIME construct developed during the Cold War era. Four years after the U.S. 9/11 attacks, the Department of Defense (DOD) issued a directive titled Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) operations. SSTR operations were defined as activities supporting U.S. Government stabilization, security, reconstruction and transition operation plans that advance U.S. interests and lead to sustainable peace.⁴³ The SSTR directive also identified stability operations as a core U.S. military

mission and defined the term as “Military and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish or maintain order in states and regions.”⁴⁴

DOD reinforced stability operations mission importance by positioning stability operations on par with other major combat operations within the DOD.⁴⁵ Although DOD identified stability operations as a core mission, it also conceded U.S., foreign and indigenous civilian professionals are better suited to accomplish the numerous tasks required in stability operations.⁴⁶ The 2006 DOD Quadrennial Defense Review amplified the SSTR directive and reinforced the admission that DOD is ill suited to sustain stability operations. The Army was the DOD lead for SSTR and Stability Operations.

The Army’s Peacekeeping Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) issued a Field Manual (FM) 3-07 Stability doctrine to codify stability operations intent and tasks. FM 3-07’s definition of stability operations is closely aligned with social stability and human security factors, stating that stability operations “aims to establish conditions the local populace regards as legitimate, acceptable, and predictable...Stability tasks focus on identifying and targeting the root causes of instability and building the capacity of local institutions.⁴⁷” Similar to social stability and human security functions, FM 3-07 lists stability operations’ primary task as:

- Establish civil security.
- Establish civil control.
- Restore essential services.
- Support governance.
- Support economic and infrastructure development.⁴⁸

SSTR and stability operations are a militarized version of the social stability domain. Policymakers did not have the social stability element as part of their original IOP strategy construct, thus they failed to consider or oversimplified the social stability ramifications of their decisions. The error exacerbated the Afghanistan and Iraq failed state problem and delayed a strategy solution. It took the U.S. four years to codify some type of social stability strategy. Policymakers chose the military as the lead instrument in these engagements since no other DIME IOP had harnessed the required capacity and capability needed to mitigate the immediate challenges. Accurately identifying that the “M” option could not succeed in isolation, policymakers leveraged diplomacy to pursue social stability challenge.

In 2010 (nine years after the 9/11 attacks) the U.S. Department of State (DOS) released its first ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), *Leading through Civilian Power*. It was the “D” IOP’s attempt to codify required social stability actions to solve the failed state problem. The document advocated, “...elevating civilian power alongside military power as equal pillars of U.S. foreign policy.”⁴⁹ The QDDR elevated the importance of development alongside diplomacy. The QDDR identified United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as the lead development component within DOS. DOS focused development areas were:

- Food security
- Global health
- Global climate change
- Sustainable economic growth
- Democracy and governance

- Humanitarian assistance⁵⁰

DOS identified development areas share synergies and similarities with DOD's SSTR and Stability Operations elements. Both, DOS and DOD failed state strategies are firmly nested in human security factors, which in turn promote social stability. In 2012, USAID published the Diplomacy, Development Defense (3D) Guidance that furthered the social stability discussion.

Although issued twelve years after the 9/11 attacks, the 3D guidance highlighted development as an equally important factor for promoting and defending U.S. national security interests abroad.⁵¹ 3D advocated diplomacy, development and defense as parallel foundational pillars in achieving America's security interests. 3D identified DOS, USAID and DOD as co-equal entities charged with solving the failed state development issue. This co-equal declaration was in spite of DOS retaining its authority to provide "general direction, overall foreign policy guidance, and U.S. cabinet representation from the Secretary of State."⁵² The 3D planning guide emphasized DOS, USAID and DOD respective planning processes that each organization used to address the failed state problem.⁵³ Additionally, the 3D guide called for collaboration among the agencies in order to capitalize on potential synergies and opportunities among the organizations.⁵⁴ The M and D IOPs advocated development and stability as critical factors that successfully counter a failed state dilemma. However, both IOPs chose to embed these elements within their institutions. The U.S. Special Forces community, on the other hand, advocated expanding the U.S. DIME IOP construct to address unconventional warfare.

Army Special Operations Forces (SOF) Unconventional Warfare 2008 doctrine (FM 3-05.130) added Finance, Intelligence and Law Enforcement to the DIME IOPs to form what is known as DIMEFIL or MIDLIFE. The doctrine views finance, intelligence and law enforcement as national IOPs. The document separates intelligence and finance away from the information and economics IOPs. The guidance explains that the information national power resource projects information to shape the environment.⁵⁵ Information conveys messaging themes to selected target audiences, even if the U.S. government does or does not intentionally focus or control those messaging themes⁵⁶. SOF professionals describe intelligence, as a more specific tool with a deliberate emphasis to gather information to understand the environment and inform U.S officials' decision-making.⁵⁷ SOF sees intelligence's primary role as answering specific questions.⁵⁸ SOF disconnected finance from economics as well.

According to SOF doctrine, economics offered measured and concentrated opportunities via incentives and disincentives, at all operational levels, towards friendlies, allies and adversaries in order to control behavior. SOF deemed finance as focused more on the financial institutions and the flow of currency between states, organizations and individuals. SOF viewed these "gaps and seams" as exploitation opportunity areas to succeed in unconventional warfare.⁵⁹ SOF noted the law enforcement IOP provided certain investigative skill sets and processes that were concurrent with SOF operations. Skill sets such as intelligence gathering, critical assessment of human activity, sharply focused target discrimination and sensitivity to deadly threats. The DIMEFIL concept has garnered minimal acceptability as a viable

IOP construct, especially outside of the U.S. SOF community. Adding Social Stability to the DIME IOP construct is a better alternative to solve the failed state problem.

Social Stability a Better IOP Fit

Social stability provides a better alternative than the aforementioned policy actions and concepts. Social stability as a separate IOP domain enables institutional focus in order to harness the full capacity and capability provided by human security resources. A social stability U.S. IOP provides decision makers timely policy options to address pending failed state problems. Additionally, social stability verbiage provides “stickiness” as a name by including the letter “S” to the already established DIME acronym.

Effective grand strategy requires the deliberate employment of all the country’s assets.⁶⁰ The U.S. institutions have massive social stability resources dispersed throughout the local, state and federal levels. Establishing social stability as its own domain enhances the imagination needed to contribute in solving complex problems. Creativity thrives when domains, fields and individuals organize as an interrelated system.⁶¹ Recognizing social stability as a separate discipline allows the operationalization of concepts and resources.⁶² Disciplines organized by fields, have individuals who serve as guardians and the guardians decide what concepts or products that are adequate for inclusion into the domain.⁶³ The current U.S. security apparatus has social stability and human security elements distributed throughout the D and M IOPs. DOD and DOS recognize social stability’s importance to establish and maintain a stable state. However, their biased inclination towards their core functions of security and diplomacy as well as their institutional parochialism limits social stability from reaching its full capacity and capability potential. Lacking a concentrated social stability

domain also delays a timely enactment of effective options, which are critical to post-conflict success.

One of the major critics of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars was the U.S. failure to have a well-developed plan to capitalize on the swift combat victories created by the military. Policymakers lacked a post-conflict reconstruction plan and were unprepared to deal with the enormous task of bringing social stability to both countries. The delayed strategy to deal with rebuilding and stabilizing the respective societies squandered the advantages created by the swift military victories.⁶⁴ It took the U.S. IOP elements 4-12 years, after the initial start of combat operations, to develop a semblance of a coherent strategy to address the failed state. FM 3-07, Stability doctrine, repeatedly identifies the importance of having timely developed plans that focus on social stability and human security factors.⁶⁵ A delay in incorporating these factors into operations, to address the population's social stability needs, inspires the adversary, which ultimately delays or prevents mission success.⁶⁶ Social stability's absence from the DIME IOP construct poses a challenge for policymakers to understand its capacities, mobilize its resources and operationalize its capabilities. Policymakers' lack of understanding increases the amount of time, to accurately identify the entire problem and develop an effective solution. The other benefit of adding social stability to the DIME IOP construct is because the DIMES naming simplicity gives it an advantage of actually sticking.

Another reason why the DIME is a dominant IOP construct is that the acronym has stickiness. The acronym is very easy to remember for American policymakers because the DIME concept namesake is identical to a type of U.S. currency. Policymakers can quickly relate to the name because it is one they have heard since

they began learning about the U.S. currency during their early child. In the book, titled *Made to Stick*, authors use the following acronym SUCCESS to explain why some ideas survive and others die:

- Simplicity: stripping the ideas to their core
- Unexpectedness: sticky ideas involve mystery and encourage exploration
- Credible ideas are more likely to stick
- Concreteness helps to break down abstract ideas into smaller concrete units
- Emotions are the bridge to connectivity: sticky ideas are good at connecting to what people care about
- Stories give ideas a personality⁶⁷

DIMES meets all the aforementioned “stickiness” criteria whereas others have fallen short. Adding “S” to represent social stability provides simplicity because it identifies the definitive policy goal decision makers are attempting to solve as it pertains to failed states. Social stability’s broad aspect and multiple facets encourage policymakers and experts to refine and codify the concept in order to give it applicability in the field. This provides the necessary mystery and curiosity identified in unexpectedness. Social stability as a required requisite to meet the failed state challenge is credible and the need is no longer a debate. Experts and bureaucrats across various disciplines all agree about the importance social stability plays in solving ailments associated with failed states. Social stability is an abstract idea easily divided into concrete units, which human security factors, stability operations⁶⁷ tasks, and social development elements have already done. DIMES also meets the criteria of emotions and stories because Americans have a subconscious emotional connection to the term DIME or DIMES

because it represents a unit of U.S. currency. The DIMES acronym allows the storytelling of how the U.S. protects its national interests and projects power internationally. Policymakers routinely display bias toward these last two elements. The 4Rs approach to developing a memorable acronym offers additional support that DIMES is a worthwhile contender.

In a marketing website article entitled, “How to Build Acronyms That Spread Your Ideas like Wildfire,” the article explains how the following 4Rs can make your acronym memorable, thus giving it staying power:

- Retain- Is your message simplified so the audience can retain it?
- Recall- Can your audience recall your message in 2 minutes, 2 hours, 2 days, 2 weeks or two martinis later?
- Repeat- Can they repeat it?
- Research- If they cannot do any of the above do they at least know what the acronym is so they can research [it]...?⁶⁸

The DIMES acronym resoundingly meets the 4R requirements whereas other proposals have fallen woefully short of the SUCCESS and/or 4R criteria. The military’s acronyms SSTR, DIMEFIL and MIDLIFE are confusing and/or uninspiring. SSTR is confusing and hard to retain because the letters appear random and absent a word or normal idea connection. DIMEFIL and MIDLIFE suffer from the inability to consistently separate finance, and intelligence away from their core elements of information and economics. Additionally, Law enforcement is not strategic enough to warrant its own domain and it is better suited under the social stability domain. Furthermore, the term MIDLIFE is not an inspiring term in American culture. Lastly, DOS and USAID’s 3D concept meets the

above stickiness criteria. However, the 3D acronym does not include the equally important information and economic IOPs. The DIMES provides a familiar memorable and concise term that encompasses all the strategic level domains in which policymakers continuously operate.

Simply adding the letter “S” to the DIME acronym is not the catchall panacea to solving the failed state problem. There is more work needed to operationalize a concept that has resources embedded throughout every level of the U.S. Government. In explaining the challenges, the U.S. has with blending hard power (DIME) with soft power (S), Joseph S. Nye, American political scientist, Harvard professor, author and acknowledged expert on the various elements of power, suggests elevating and strengthening civilian capacities that enhance development.⁶⁹ Nye sees this element as being just as essential as a strong defense. He correctly notes that the U.S. lacks an overarching integration entity to pull all the social stability resources under one umbrella to maximize effectiveness.⁷⁰ USAID provides an excellent foundation to coalesce and organize this undertaking. Yet, the domain must be elevated to the strategic level alongside its other DIME IOP counterparts. U.S. Democratic Presidential Candidate and former Maryland governor Martin O’Malley suggested that USAID should be a cabinet level position on the U.S. president’s staff versus its current positioning under the DOS.⁷¹ Governor O’Malley’s appropriate suggestion would support the foundational groundwork required to operationalize the social stability domain.

Conclusion

In 2002, then U.S. President George W. Bush explained the threat failed states posed to U.S. national interest. He stated, “The events of September 11, 2001, taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national

interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders.”⁷² The factors that President’s Bush identified 14 years earlier are the factors that are addressed within social stability concept. The question of whether or not there are other IOPs outside of the DIME IOP construct has already been answered. DOD, DOS and other U.S. security document all concede that other social stability elements outside of the core DIME paradigm address the failed state challenge.

Solving the U.S. 21st century “failed state” problem necessitates modifying the Cold War era national security solution set. Adding “S” to the U.S. DIME IOP paradigm elevates societal stability to its correct position amongst the other U.S. national IOPs. Doing so also reduces the U.S. overreliance of the military to build institutional capacity within failed states. Transitioning to DIMES would appropriately broaden the national IOP aperture and operationalize disperse resources that are aptly suited to solve the failed state dilemma. Shifting to a DIMES paradigm expands policymakers’ toolbox in the strategy development process.

Finally, the DIMES acronym is aptly suited to take hold and stick within the national security lexicon because it is simple, unexpected, credible, concrete, and emotionally connective and it helps policymakers tell the U.S. national security strategy story. The DIMES acronym is also easy for policymakers to retain, recall, repeat and research. For the many reasons described above, policymakers should add “S” to meet U.S. 21st century security challenges.

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