**Name of Student**: CDR James Lembo

**Subject of the paper**:

The case will be presented for the military to be more proactive and involved in developing and implementing strategic, long-term nation building plans that pick up where the campaign plan stops.

**Background**:

Contrary to the great American successes in nation building in the aftermath of World War II, the last 20 years has seen overwhelming military victory in Afghanistan and Iraq fall to chaos as the transition to peace failed.

The United States (US) exerted significant effort and influence to ensure that recently defeated Germany and Japan were able to stabilize and start marching towards prosperity. Recent failures indicate that the US is either incapable or unwilling to devote the required resources and capital to do in the battlegrounds of the 21st Century what was done in the battlegrounds of the 20th.

**The goal of the work**:

1. To analyze the transition and nation building processes in the above listed countries to determine common themes for, and reasons behind, success and failure.

2. State the case for not just increased presence in the nation building role, but actually the primacy of the military as the most important piece of reconstruction efforts.

**The research question**:

What caused the relevance gap between the US military’s ability to achieve decisive military victory, and its inability to convert this into a lasting peace.

**The research claim**:

1. The US military has abdicated its role in securing the victory and ensuring peace and stability following combat operations. The warrior ethos and desire for kinetic operations has hampered the ability of the Army to win the peace.

2. The desire by Western powers generically, and the United States specifically, to not be seen as empires searching for colonies has degraded the ability to instill sound and functioning democracies in the relatively short time frames allotted to them by the international community.

**The limits of this paper**:

This paper will examine the successes and failures in the nation building processes used following World War II and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to identify common themes of success and failure. The political backdrop, international politics and relations, and domestic issues and their affects will also be examined as to their effect on reconstruction efforts.

Method of presenting ideas of the study

1. Introduction – presenting the subject
2. General analysis of the successes and failures in Germany and Japan.
3. General analysis of the successes and failures in Afghanistan and Iraq.
4. If relevant, analysis of US engagements in other countries such as Haiti, Panama, and Korea.
5. Analysis of bureaucratic, military, political, organizational culture, ethical, and other differences between the success group and the failure group.
6. Proposal for the way ahead, how to reconcile the differences and prevent US involvement in wars the country is not prepared and willing to see to completion, as well as recommendations on ways to develop the necessary conditions to achieve this aim.

**The importance of the work**:

The failures in Afghanistan and Iraq harmed the prestige and image of the United States, as well as endangered the national security of the United States, other Western nations, and Afghanistan’s and Iraq’s neighbors in the region. Closing the gap between what needs to be done, and what can be done will help to restore US standing in the world.

This is also a precursor piece to a larger body of work that will include a framework for peace, that is the process of developing a “peace plan” in the framework of an operational campaign plan designed to be developed, updated, and implemented by US forces following armed conflict.

**Author’s link to the work**:

I spent a year in Afghanistan from February 2006 to February 2007 working for the U.S. Army as a Civil Affairs team leader. During my time there I witnessed the results of a lack of vision and coordination in the region and the negative effects of the lack of a coherent strategy. Since my return, through conversations with other military personnel deployed to both Afghanistan and Iraq, I have come to the conclusion that my experience is not unique and is indicative of a larger issue.