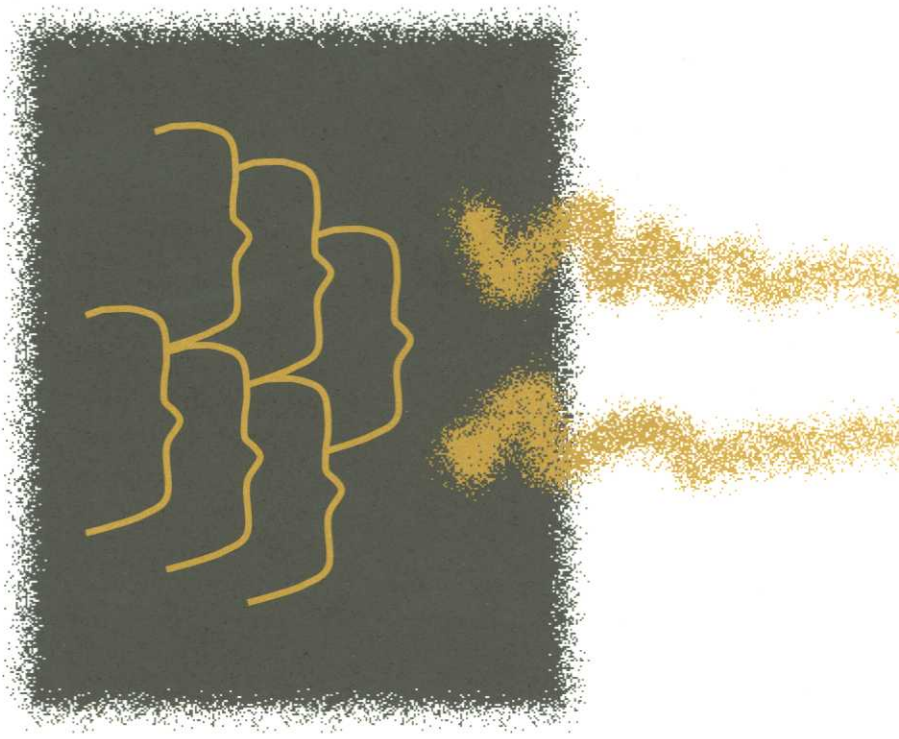


KEYNOTE SPEAKER

LtGen. Zinni's Twenty Lessons Learned for Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations

Drawing on his experience in complex humanitarian emergencies, Lieutenant General Anthony Zinni took practice to the level of policy by outlining twenty lessons learned. Although these lessons are universal, they are not abstract. Indeed, General Zinni illustrated each with concrete examples drawn from operations in which he has participated. These lessons resonated throughout the conference, as evidenced by the fact that participants in each session, humanitarians as well as military officers, referred to General Zinni's speech—a testament to the respect General Zinni has earned in both communities and of the truths these lessons hold for both.

General Zinni prefaced his remarks with a pair of caveats concerning humanitarian operations:

- **Each operation is unique.** We must be careful what lessons we draw from a single experience. In Somalia, for example, the UN and Washington were tempted to apply "the model of forced disarmament" of the population. What worked, said Zinni, was a voluntary approach coupled with increasing regulations on weapons.

These twenty lessons are drawn from the keynote address presented by Lieutenant General Anthony Zinni. Currently the Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, General Zinni commanded the Combined Task Force for Operation United Shield, protecting the withdrawal of UN forces from Somalia. He also served as the director for operations for the Unified Task Force Somalia for Operation Restore Hope in 1992 and 1993.

- **Each operation has two key aspects:** (1) the degree of complexity of the political, humanitarian, social, and economic dimensions and how they are intertwined and (2) the degree of consent for the intervention.

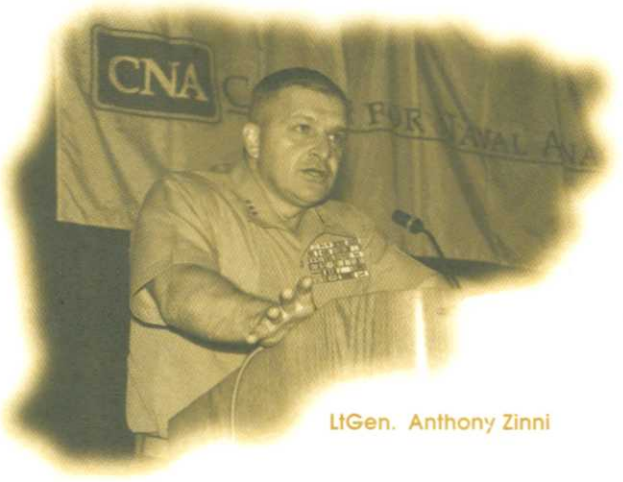
Twenty Lessons

1. **The earlier the involvement, the better the chances for success.** The situation will not improve with time.

2. **Start planning as early as possible, and include everyone in the planning process.** You will always discover new players and a need for new forms of coordination.

3. **If possible, make a thorough assessment before deployment.** Many organizations send assessment teams to the crisis area, creating many stovepipes of information. Perceptions in each will differ for good reasons. The military can be out of step. Commanders must know of and account for differences.

4. **In the planning, do a thorough mission analysis. Determine the center of gravity, end state, commander's intent, measures of effectiveness, exit strategy, cost-capturing procedures, and estimated duration.** According to Zinni, in a complex humanitarian emergency this process differs from a traditional military operation because "the estimate of the situation is a continuous process. You will have to make changes, but you need a point of departure." Although traditional missions also must be evaluated continuously, Zinni stated that the fundamental objectives of the operation are much less likely to change in traditional warfighting than in complex emergencies. In complex emergencies, evolutions both on the ground and in the political context of the crisis could lead to unexpected—but perhaps entirely appropriate—changes in the role of the military forces. Further, in traditional warfighting, success usually can be fairly well defined at the outset. This is not necessarily the case in responses to complex emergencies.



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5. **Stay focused on the mission and keep the mission focused. Line up military tasks with political objectives. Avoid mission creep; allow for mission shift.** General Zinni defined mission shift as a conscious evolution that responds to the changing situation. In Operation Provide Comfort, mission shifts resulted from a deliberate process that included the commander on the ground, the regional commander-in-chief (CINC), and decision-makers in Washington.

By contrast, in Somalia mission creep resulted when the UN did not come in when expected to begin the recovery process and U.S. forces had to assume policing roles.

6. **Centralize planning and decentralize execution during the operation.** Political and physical conditions will differ from one part of the theater of operations to another. Intervening organizations and forces must be allowed to adjust appropriately where they are.

7. **Coordinate everything with everybody. Set up the coordination mechanisms.** With its organizational and technical skills and special equipment, the military may be able to establish the mechanisms for coordination. But coordination should be a responsibility shared with all players.

8. **Know the culture and the issues.** Who makes the decisions? Who has high status? We must be careful not to allow our own biases to take us to the intellectuals and the academics—the "darlings of the intelligence community"—who are likely to manipulate us. Often, the real decision-makers are "at the back of the tent." We must go to them. Furthermore, we cannot hope to impose our concept of Jeffersonian democracy in other cultures. Jefferson, Locke, and Rousseau are "three dead white guys, as far they're concerned."

9. **Start or restart the key institutions early.** Coordinate the emergency phase with the rehabilitation phase, and be careful not to overwhelm the local capacity with capabilities that will leave with us—for example, providing elective surgery in northern Iraq. Rather, start by rebuilding a security institution, such as the police.

10. **Don't lose the initiative/momentum.** Initial hopes can give way to disappointment and despair.

11. **Don't make enemies. If you do, don't treat them gently. Avoid mind-sets.** If you make an enemy, be clear in acknowledging the choice and act accordingly. Or "swallow hard" and back down. Don't create mind-sets or use words that might come back to haunt you. "One man's 'warlord' is another man's George Washington."

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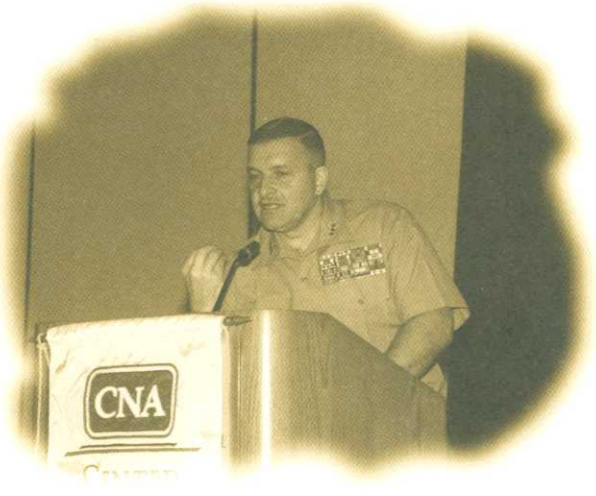
12. **Seek unity of effort/command. Create the fewest possible seams.** Out of all the different interests and motivations that drive the many players, allow as few seams as possible.

13. **Open a dialogue with everyone. Establish a forum for each individual/group involved.** Ambassador Oakley's coordination committee served this purpose in Somalia. UNOSOM II and Continue Hope did not include this forum. General Zinni believes that it could have prevented the attack on the Pakistanis.

14. **Encourage innovation and nontraditional approaches.** The military, in particular, needs to learn to be flexible or it will fail. Its partners in complex humanitarian emergencies "don't buy into rigid, hierarchical structures."

15. **Personalities often are more important than processes.** Established processes are not innovative—they do not integrate different cultures. You need the right people in the right places.



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16. **Be careful whom you empower.** Think carefully about whom you invite to the table, use as a go-between, or contract with. You are giving them influence.

17. **Decide on the image you want to portray, and stay focused on it.** Are you there as humanitarians? Firm but well-intentioned agents of change? Whatever the message, make the troops aware of it so that they can conduct themselves accordingly.

18. **Centralize information management.** Be sure that the media and psychological operations (PSYOP) campaigns are coordinated, accurate, and consistent. Establish feedback mechanisms, forums that allow key observers, such as the media, to talk to you about your progress. Sometimes the media will tell the military commander when he is fooling himself about the progress of the operation. The commander needs this other perspective.

19. **Seek compatibility in all coalition operations: political compatibility, cultural compatibility, and military interoperability are crucial to success.** The interests, cultures, capabilities, and motivations of all parties may not be uniform, but they cannot be allowed to work against each other. Greeks and Turks, Indians and Pakistanis have overcome tremendous cultural and historical tensions to work alongside each other in these operations.

20. **Senior commanders and their staffs need the most education and training for nontraditional roles. The troops need awareness and understanding.** Sometimes the military will directly apply traditional skills. Sometimes troops will have to adapt those skills—urban patrolling as it's done in Belfast, not Stalingrad, for example. Senior commanders and their staffs will also need to develop and apply new skills, such as negotiating, supporting humanitarian organizations effectively and appropriately, and building coordinating agencies with humanitarian goals.