providing humanitarian and development assistance, blur the line between the military and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Instead, it has been argued, they should focus on stabilization functions—security sector reform, presence patrols, and force multiplication—and limit their engagement on reconstruction to large-scale projects or government infrastructure.

Through engagement with the UN, the Afghan government, and the NGO community, the PRT concept evolved and expanded, although differences among individual commanders, lead-country approaches, and areas of operation mean variations in PRTs’ respective approaches. Nonetheless, even proponents of the use of PRTs in insecure regions concede that PRT activities are not always the most appropriate, and that willingness to enter dangerous areas is not a substitute for prior experience in development. Some civilian officials, while recognizing that such projects are important, argue that there should be greater oversight over how this money is spent. In particular, there is a continual risk that embarking on development projects without an understanding of the local market or political context—and thus of the potential impact of the project—can undermine, rather than support, local stability. The Afghan government has leveled criticism that PRT projects often fail to address government-identified commu-