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Galula on Adapting to Insurgency Environments

"…At some point in the counterinsurgency process, the static units that took part initially in large-scale military operations in their area will find themselves confronted with a huge variety of nonmilitary tasks which have to be performed in order to get the support of the population, and which can be performed only by military personnel, because of the shortage of reliable civilian political and administrative personnel. Making a thorough census, enforcing new regulations on movements of persons and goods, informing the population, conducting person-to-person propaganda, gathering intelligence on the insurgent's political agents, implementing the various economic and social reforms, etc.—all these will become their primary activity. They have to be organized, equipped, and supported accordingly. Thus, a mimeograph machine may turn out to be more useful than a machine gun, a soldier trained as a pediatrician more important than a mortar expert, cement more wanted than barbed wire, clerks more in demand than riflemen."

—David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2006), 66.

PHOTO: U.S. Army SGT Lucas Murray, right, leads a group of Iraqis in the construction of a playground set at a school in Abraham Jaffas, Iraq, 16 April 2006. The American company Big Toys, Inc., shipped the playground set to Iraq after Murray, a landscape architect, contacted them requesting a donation. To advance the political objectives of counterinsurgency, military forces in Iraq have been involved in a wide variety of construction projects, including new schools, irrigation systems, and housing developments. (DoD)

Preface

This volume complements the new Army/Marine Corps field manual on counterinsurgency operations. As the new doctrine explains, the conduct of counterinsurgency operations is a "graduate level" endeavor, full of paradoxes and challenges and different in many ways from conventional military combat. It is important, then, that leaders develop a solid appreciation of the nature of irregular warfare and an understanding of the types of operations the U.S. military is conducting in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and elsewhere. These are, after all, the types of operations in which we are likely to be involved in the years ahead, as few of our nation's enemies appear eager to challenge our forces on a conventional battlefield.

The editors have designed this collection of selected articles from *Military Review* to help leaders develop the understanding needed to prepare for the responsibilities they will shoulder leading America's sons and daughters in counterinsurgency operations. In fact, where the counterinsurgency field manual discusses first principles, these articles provide specific lessons and observations about ongoing operations "downrange" in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as historical insights from other locations. The new field manual helps leaders to ask the right questions; these articles will help them arrive at the right answers for a given time and place.

Counterinsurgency operations are exceedingly complex and demanding. This reader can help leaders prepare for the challenges of such operations.



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Military Review

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Winning the War of the Flea

Lessons from Guerrilla Warfare

Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. Cassidy, U.S. Army

Analogically, the guerrilla fights the war of the flea, and his military enemy suffers the dog's disadvantages: too much to defend; too small, ubiquitous, and agile an enemy to come to grips with. If the war continues long enough—this is the theory—the dog succumbs to exhaustion and anemia without ever having found anything on which to close its jaws or to rake with its claws.

—Robert Taber[1]

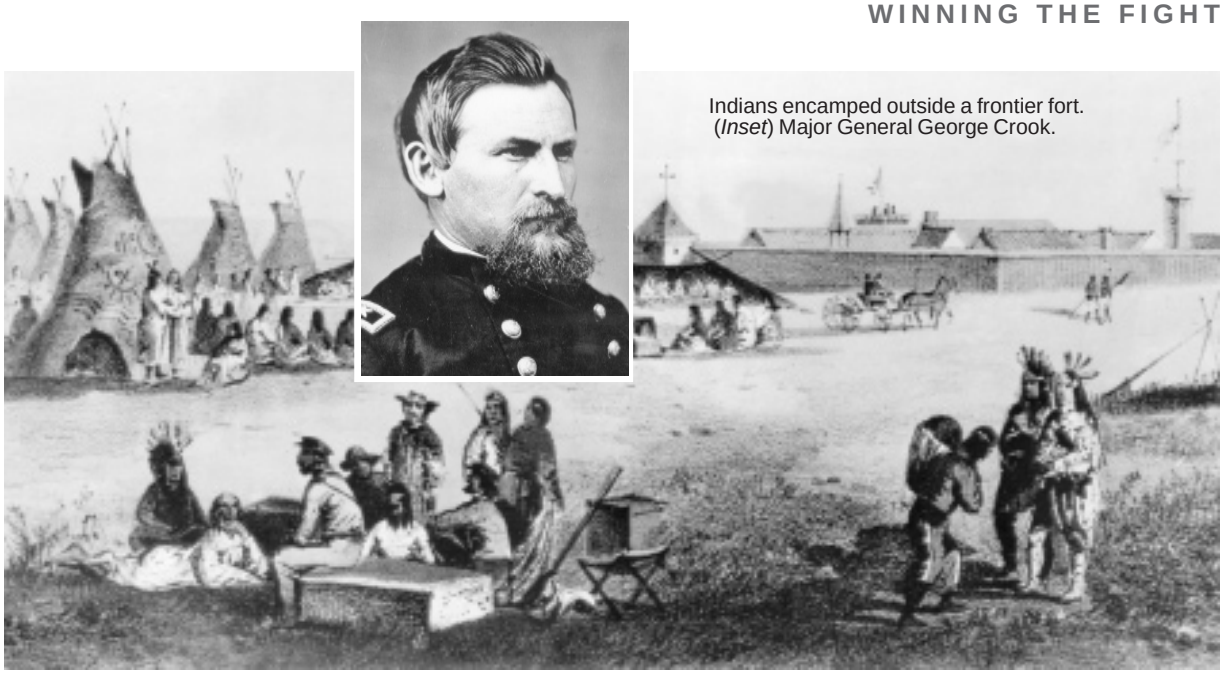
COUNTERGUERRILLA warfare, or the "war against the flea," is more difficult than operations against enemies who fight according to the conventional paradigm. America's enemies in the Global War on Terrorism, including those connected to "the base" (al-Qaeda), are fighting the war of the flea in Iraq and Afghanistan. Employing terror to attack the United States at home and abroad, they strive to disrupt coalition efforts by using guerrilla tactics and bombings to protract the war in Iraq and elsewhere and to erode America's will to persevere.

The war on al-Qaeda and its surrogates can be viewed as a global counterinsurgency in which the United States and its coalition partners endeavor to isolate and eradicate the base and other networked terrorist groups who seek sanctuary, support, and recruits in ungoverned or poorly governed areas where the humiliated and the have-nots struggle to survive. The U.S. military's preference for the big-war paradigm has heretofore impeded the Army from seriously studying counterinsurgency operations. As a result, the Army has failed to incorporate many lessons from successful counterinsurgency operations. Because countering insurgents and terrorists remains a central mission of the U.S. military for the foreseeable future, it is better to incorporate lessons learned than to relearn lessons during combat.

With the right mindset and with a broader, deeper knowledge of lessons from previous successes, the war against the flea can be won. The Army has successfully fought counterguerrilla wars. However, the contradiction emanating from America's unsuccessful expedition in Vietnam is that, because the experience was perceived as anathema to the U.S. military's core culture, hard lessons learned there about fighting guerrillas were not preserved or rooted in the Army's institutional memory. The U.S. military culture's efforts to exorcise the specter of Vietnam, epitomized by the shibboleth "No More Vietnams," also precluded the Army, as an institution, from actually learning from those lessons.

The Army's intellectual renaissance after Vietnam has focused almost exclusively on the culturally preferred, conventional big-war paradigm.[2] Army doctrine conceals the term "counterinsurgency" under the innocuous categories of stability operations and foreign internal defense. Many lessons exist in the U.S. military's historical experience with small wars, but the lessons from Vietnam are the most voluminous—and the least read. The end of the Cold War has made it improbable that conventional or symmetric war will ever again be the norm, and the Army is making genuine efforts to transform its culture and mindset. Senior civilian and military leaders of the Army and the Office of the Secretary of Defense realized a change in military culture was a precondition for innovative approaches to a more complex security landscape in which adversaries adopt unorthodox strategies and tactics to undermine U.S. technological superiority in an orthodox or conventional war.

Military culture is the sum total of embedded beliefs and attitudes within a military organization that shape that organization's preference on when and how military force should be used. Cultural



Indians encamped outside a frontier fort. (*Inset*) Major General George Crook.

US Army

propensities can block innovation in ways of warfare that are outside perceived central or core roles. A preference for a big-war paradigm has hitherto been an obstacle to learning how to fight guerrillas.[3] The Army must analyze U.S. involvement in, and the nature of, small wars, insurgencies, and counterinsurgencies. Without some sense of historical continuity, American soldiers will have to relearn the lessons of history each time they face a new small war.[4]

The Indian Wars and Beating Guerrillas

The Indian wars of the 19th century provide some counterinsurgency lessons and demonstrate that the guiding principles for fighting insurgents can endure the test of time. Without codified doctrine and little institutional memory for fighting guerrillas, the late-19th century Army had to adapt to Indian tactics on the fly. A loose body of principles for fighting an unorthodox enemy emerged from the Indian wars, including the following:

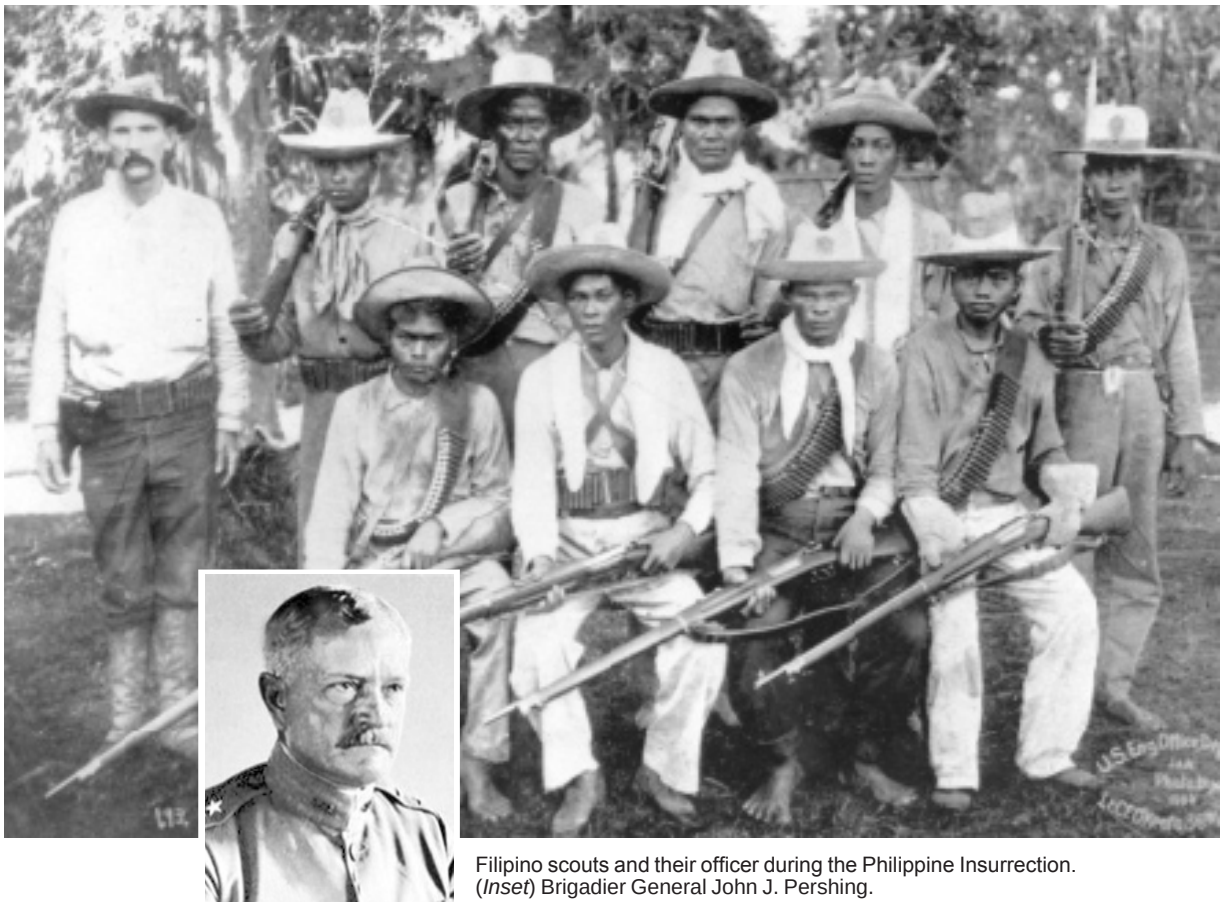
- Ensure close civil-military coordination of the pacification effort.
- Provide firm but fair paternalistic governance.
- Reform the economic and educational spheres.

Good treatment of prisoners, attention to Indian grievances, and avoiding killing women and children (a lesson learned by trial and error) were also regarded as fundamental to any long-term solution. The Army's most skilled Indian fighter, General George Crook, developed the tactic of inserting small teams from friendly Apache tribes into insurgent Apache groups to neutralize and psychologically unhinge them and to sap their will. This technique emerged in one form or another in the Philippines, during the Banana Wars, and during the Vietnam war.

Andrew J. Birtle's *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860-1941*, one of the better books on the Army's role in the Indian wars, describes Captain Randolph B. Marcy's *The Prairie Traveler: A Handbook for Overland Expeditions* as "perhaps the single most important work on the conduct of frontier expeditions published under the aegis of the War Department."[5] In essence, Marcy's book was a how-to manual for packing, traveling, tracking, and bivouacking on the plains and a primer on fighting the Indians. In formulating pacification principles, Marcy looked at his own experiences on the frontier as well as Turkish and French experiences pacifying North Africa. He arrived at the following conclusions:

- Over-dispersion strips the counterinsurgent force of initiative, increases its vulnerability, and saps its morale.
- Mobility is imperative. (Mounting infantry on mules was one way of increasing mobility during that era.)
- Surprise is paramount. Employing mobile mounted forces at night to surprise the enemy at dawn was the best way to counter the elusive Indians. *The Prairie Traveler* conveys one principal message that is still relevant: soldiers must possess the self-reliance, the individuality, and the rapid mobility of the insurgent, along with conventional military discipline.[6]

US Army



Filipino scouts and their officer during the Philippine Insurrection. (*Inset*) Brigadier General John J. Pershing.

The Philippine Insurgency

During the Philippine Insurgency from 1899 to 1902, the U.S. military achieved victory and established the foundation for an amicable future between the United States and the Philippines. Guerrilla war scholar Anthony James Joes notes, "There were no screaming jets accidentally bombing helpless villages, no B-52s, no napalm, no artillery barrages, no collateral damage. Instead, the Americans conducted a decentralized war of small mobile units armed mainly with rifles and aided by native Filipinos, hunting guerrillas who were increasingly isolated both by the indifference or hostility of much of the population and by the concentration of scattered peasant groups into larger settlements."[7]

The U.S. military learned to—

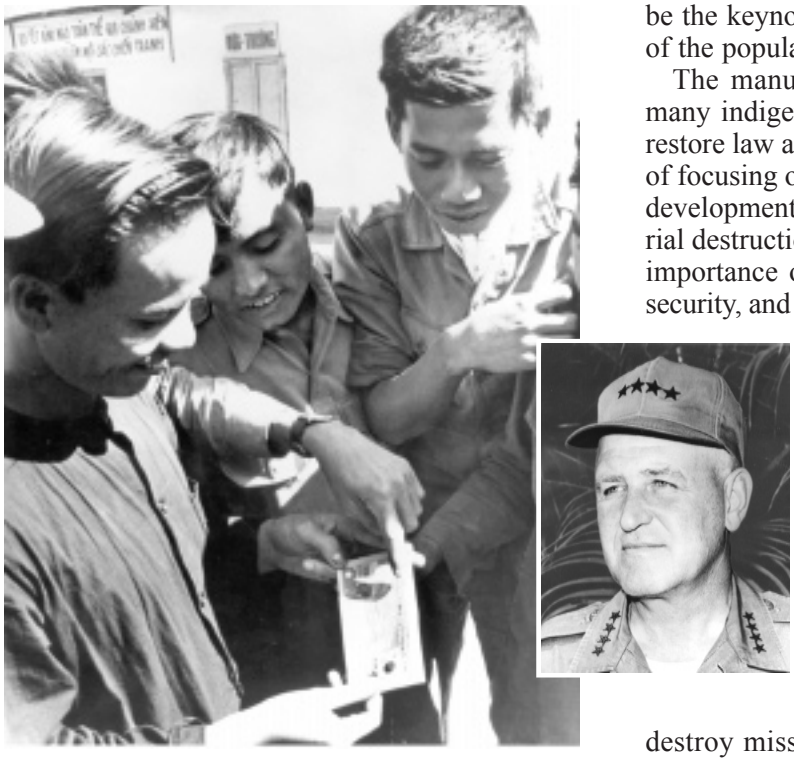
- Avoid big-unit search-and-destroy missions because they were counterproductive in a counterinsurgency context.
- Maximize the use of indigenous scouts and paramilitary forces to increase and sustain decentralized patrolling.
- Mobilize popular support by focusing on the improvement of hospitals, schools, and infrastructure.

The U.S. military enhanced the legitimacy of the Filipino regime it supported by allowing former insurgents to organize antiregime political parties. In an award-winning study, Max Boot ascribes U.S. success in the Philippines to a measured application of incentives and disincentives: the U.S. military used aggressive patrolling and force to pursue and crush insurgents, but it treated captured rebels well and generated goodwill among the population by running schools and hospitals and improving sanitation.[8]

Brigadier General John J. Pershing returned to the Philippines to serve as military governor of the Moro Province from 1909 to 1913. To pacify the Moros, he applied the lessons he had learned as a captain during the Philippine Insurrection. He established a Philippine constabulary of loyal indigenous troops and did not attempt to apply military force by itself. He "felt that an understanding of Moro customs and habits was essential in successfully dealing with them, and he went to extraordinary lengths to understand Moro society and culture."[9]

Pershing also comprehended the need to have U.S. forces involved at the grassroots level. He understood the sociopolitical aspects, and he

NVA defectors read one of the 15 million safe-conduct passes dropped over areas where North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces were operating. (*Inset*) General Creighton Abrams.



US Army

realized military goals sometimes had to be subordinated to them. Boot says, "He scattered small detachments of soldiers throughout the interior, to guarantee peaceful existence of those tribes that wanted to raise hemp, produce timber, or farm."[10] During Pershing's first tour in the Philippines as a captain, he was allowed inside the Forbidden Kingdom, and the Moros made him a Moro Datu, an honor not granted to any other white man.[11]

Latin America and the Caribbean

While the Army has had to relearn how to fight every new insurgency, the U.S. Marine Corps captured its guerrilla warfare experiences and distilled them in its 1940 *Small Wars Manual*.[12] The lessons Marines learned leading Nicaragua Guardia Nacional patrols against Augusto "Cesar" Sandino's guerrillas might well have served as the foundation for the Marines' counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam.

From experience in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua during the first part of the 20th century, the Marines learned that, unlike conventional war, a small war presents no defined or linear battle area or theater of operations. The manual maintains that delay in the use of force might be interpreted as weakness, but the brutal use of force is not appropriate either: "In small wars, tolerance, sympathy, and kindness should be the keynote to our relationship with the mass of the population."[13]

The manual urges U.S. forces to employ as many indigenous troops as practical early on to restore law and order and stresses the importance of focusing on the social, economic, and political development of the people more than on material destruction. The manual also underscores the importance of aggressive patrolling, population security, and denial of sanctuary to the insurgents. An overarching principle, though, is not to fight small wars with big-war methods. The goal is to gain results with the least application of force and minimum loss of civilian (noncombatant) life.

Lessons from Vietnam

When most Americans reflect on Vietnam, they probably think of General William C. Westmoreland, the Americanization of the war, large-scale search-and-destroy missions, and battles of attrition. There was another war, however, a war of counterinsurgency and pacification in which many Special Forces (SF), Marines, and other advisers employed small-war methods with some degree of success.

When General Creighton Abrams became the commander of U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) in 1968, he put an end to the two-war approach by adopting a one-war focus on pacification, although it was too late by then to recover the political support for the war squandered during the Westmoreland years. Still, Abrams' unified strategy to clear and hold the countryside by pacifying and securing the population met with much success. Abrams based his approach on *A Program for the Pacification and Long-Term Development of South Vietnam,* a study prepared by the Army staff in 1966.[14] The Special Forces' experiences in organizing Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG), the Combined Action Program (CAP), and Abrams' expansion of the Civil Operations and Revolutionary (later Rural) Development and Support (CORDS) pacification effort offer valuable lessons for current and future counterinsurgency operations.

For much of the Vietnam war, the 5th SF Group trained and led CIDG mobile strike forces and reconnaissance companies manned by indigenous ethnic minority tribes from mountain and border regions. These forces conducted small-unit reconnaissance patrols and defended their home bases in the border

areas from Viet Cong (VC) and regular North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units.

From 1966 to 1967, U.S. field commanders increasingly employed SF-led units in long-range reconnaissance missions or as economy-of-force security elements for regular units. Other CIDG-type forces, called mobile guerrilla forces, raided enemy base areas and employed hit-and-run guerrilla tactics against regular enemy units. The SF also recruited extensively among Nung tribes for the Delta, Sigma, and Omega units, which were SF-led reconnaissance and reaction forces.

The CIDG program made a significant contribution to the war effort. The approximately 2,500 soldiers assigned to the 5th SF Group essentially raised and led an army of 50,000 tribal fighters to operate in some of the most difficult and dangerous terrain in Vietnam. CIDG patrols of border infiltration areas provided reliable tactical intelligence, and the CIDG secured populations in areas that might have been otherwise conceded to the enemy.[15]

The Marine Corps' CAP was another initiative that significantly improved the U.S. military's capacity to secure the population and to acquire better tactical intelligence. Under CAP, a Marine rifle squad assisted a platoon of local indigenous forces. This combined Marine and indigenous platoon trained, patrolled, defended, and lived together in the platoon's village. CAP's missions were to—

- Destroy VC infrastructure within the village or hamlet area of responsibility.
- Provide public security and help maintain law and order.
- Protect friendly infrastructure.
- Protect bases and communications within the villages and hamlets.
- Organize indigenous intelligence nets.
- Participate in civic action and conduct propaganda against the VC.

Civic action played an important role in efforts to destroy the VC because it brought important intelligence about enemy activity from the local population. Because CAP protected the villagers from reprisals, it was ideal for acquiring intelligence from locals. The Marines' focus on pacifying highly populated areas prevented guerrillas from coercing the local population into providing rice, intelligence, and sanctuary. The Marines would clear and hold a village in this way and then expand the secured area.

CAP units accounted for 7.6 percent of the enemy killed while representing only 1.5 percent of the Marines in Vietnam. CAP employed U.S. troops and leadership in an economy of force while maximizing the use of indigenous troops. A modest investment of U.S. forces at the village level yielded major improvements in local security and intelligence.[16]

Even though CORDS was integrated under MACV in 1967, Abrams and William Colby, Director of CORDS, expanded the program and invested it with good people and resources. Under Abrams' one-war approach to Vietnam, CORDS provided oversight of the pacification effort. After 1968, Abrams and Colby made CORDS and pacification the principal effort. A rejuvenated civil and rural development program provided increased support, advisers, and fundings to police and territorial forces (regional forces and popular forces). The new emphasis on rural development allowed military and civilian advisers from the U.S. Agency for International Development to work better with their Vietnamese counterparts at the provincial and village levels to improve local security and develop infrastructure.

Eliminating the VC infrastructure was critical to pacification. Colby's approach—the Accelerated Pacification Campaign—included the Phoenix (Phuong Hoang) program to neutralize VC infrastructure. Although the program received some bad press, its use of former VC and indigenous Provisional Reconnaissance Units to root out the enemy's secret underground network was quite effective. The CORDS Accelerated Pacification Campaign focused on territorial security, neutralizing VC infrastructure, and supporting self-defense and self-government at the local level.[17]

Begun in November 1968, the Accelerated Pacification Campaign helped the Government of Vietnam (GVN) control most of the countryside by late 1970. The "other war"—pacification—had been practically won. The four million members of the People's Self-Defense Force, armed with some 600,000 weapons, were examples of the population's commitment to the GVN. Regional and popular forces also experienced significant improvements. Under CORDS, these forces provided close-in security for the rural population. Although imperfect and quantitative, MACV's Hamlet Evaluation System showed that between 1969 and 1970 CORDS efforts contributed to the pacification of 2,600 hamlets (three million people).

Other more practical measures of the Accelerated Pacification Campaign's success were a reduction in VC extortion and recruitment in South Vietnam and a decrease in food provisions taken from the villagers. To be fair, however, other factors also

contributed to GVN control of the countryside. The Tet Offensive in January 1968 and Mini-Tet in May 1968 resulted in devastating losses to VC forces in the south, allowing MACV/CORDS to intensify pacification. Moreover, the enemy's brutal methods (including mass murder in Hue) during Tet shocked South Vietnam's civilian population and created a willingness to accept more aggressive conscription. Ho Chi Minh's death in September 1969 might have also had an effect on the quality and direction of NVA leadership.[18]

CIDG, CAP, and CORDS expanded the quality and quantity of the forces available to conduct counterinsurgency, improved small-unit patrolling, and consequently improved the content, scope, and quality of intelligence. One can only speculate how the war might have gone if CAP and CIDG had been integrated under MACV and CORDS in 1964, with Abrams and Colby in the lead. The lessons of these programs are relevant today. Improving the quantity and capabilities of indigenous forces; establishing an integrated and unified civil-military approach; and increasing the security of the population continue to be central goals in Afghanistan and Iraq.[19]

These Vietnam-era programs were not without flaws, however. Two persistent problems plagued the CIDG program. Hostility between the South Vietnamese and ethnic minority groups comprising the CIDG strike forces impeded U.S. efforts to have Republic of Vietnam Special Forces take over the program. As a result, the 5th SF Group failed to develop an effective counterpart organization.

Even the Marines' CAPs were not completely effective. In some instances the effects of CAPs were transitory at best because the villagers became dependent on them for security. In other cases, especially before Abrams emphasized training popular forces, poor equipment and training made them miserably incapable of defending the villages without the Marines. What's more, until 1967, CORDS was not integrated under MACV, which seriously undermined any prospect of actually achieving unity of effort and purpose. Abrams' influence resolved this by allowing MACV to oversee CORDS as well as regular military formations.[20]

Staving Off Defeat

Today, the Army is prosecuting three counterinsurgencies and learning to adapt to insurgency and counterinsurgency in contact. This is a genuinely compelling reason to expand the Army's depth and breadth of knowledge about counterinsurgency operations. The U.S. military, particularly the Army, must develop a culture that emphasizes stability operations and counterinsurgency among its core missions.

The global war against the flea will be protracted, but it will be won. The rule of law, democracy, and civilization will prevail over chaos, theocracy, and barbarism. As Mao Tse Tung said, "Although guerrilla operations are the cosmic trap of military strategy, the muck, the quicksand in which a technologically superior military machine bogs down in time-consuming futility, they cannot in and of themselves win wars. Like mud, they can stave off defeat, but, like mud, they cannot bring victory."[21] ***MR***

NOTES

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3. For a short discussion on military culture and big-war preferences, see Cassidy, *Russia in Afghanistan and Chechnya: Military Strategic Culture and the Paradoxes of Asymmetric Conflict* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 8, 54-60.
4. Sam C. Sarkesian, *America's Forgotten Wars: The Counterrevolutionary Past and Lessons for the Future* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 245.
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6. Birtle, 64-65.
7. Anthony James Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 120-23.
8. Max Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 126.
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16. Frank Pelli, "Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, and the Marines in Vietnam," unpublished paper, USMC Command and Staff College, Quantico, VA, 1990, 13-16; Brooks R. Brewington, "Combined Action Platoons: A Strategy for Peace Enforcement," unpublished paper, USMC Command and Staff College, Quantico, VA, 1996, 13-19.
17. Sorley, 22-23, 64-67.
18. Ibid., 64-67, 72-73, and 217-24.
19. Ibid., 1.
20. Clarke, 207; Keith F. Kopets, "The Combined Action Program: Vietnam," *Military Review* (July-August 2002): 78-79.
21. Mao Tse-Tung, cited in E.L. Katzenbach, Jr., "Time, Space, and Will: The Political-Military Views of Mao Tse-Tung" in *The Guerrilla and How to Fight Him*, ed. T.N. Greene (New York: Praeger, 1962), 17.

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Best Practices in Counterinsurgency

Kalev I. Sepp, Ph.D.

It is fashionable in some quarters to say that the problems in Southeast Asia are primarily political and economic rather than military. I do not agree. The essence of the problem in Vietnam is military.—General Earle Wheeler, 1962[1]

WE CAN DISCERN "best practices" common to successful counterinsurgencies by studying the past century's insurgent wars. Historical analysis helps us understand the nature and continuities of insurgencies over time and in various cultural, political, and geographic settings. While this does not produce a template solution to civil wars and insurrections, the sum of these experiences, judiciously and appropriately applied, might help Iraq defeat its insurgency.

Nations on every continent have experienced or intervened in insurgencies. Not counting military coups and territorially defined civil wars, there are 17 insurgencies we can study closely and 36 others that include aspects we can consider. (See chart 1.) Assessment reveals which counterinsurgency practices were successful and which failed. A strategic victory does not validate all the victor's operational and tactical methods or make them universally applicable, as America's defeat in Vietnam and its success in El Salvador demonstrate. In both cases, "learning more from one's mistakes than one's achievements" is a valid axiom. If we were to combine all the successful operational practices from a century of counterinsurgent warfare, the summary would suggest a campaign outline to combat the insurgency in present-day Iraq. (See chart 2.)

Chart 1. Selected 20th-Century Insurgencies

Second Anglo-Boer War (United Kingdom [U.K.] vs. Boer separatists, 1899-1902).

Philippine Insurrection (United States [U.S.] vs. Filipino nationalists, 1899-1902 [1916]).

Arab Revolt (Ottoman Turkey vs. Arab rebels, 1916-1918).

Iraq 1920 (U.K. vs. Iraqi rebels, 1920).

China (Nationalist Party [KMT] vs. Communists, 1922-1949).

Nicaraguan Intervention (U.S. and Government of Nicaragua [GoN] vs. Sandinistas, 1925-1932).

France, World War II (Germany vs. French resistance and Special Operations Executive [SOE]/Office of Strategic Services [OSS], 1940-1945).

Balkans, World War II (Germany vs. Tito's partisans and SOE/OSS, 1940-1945).

Greek Civil War (U.K., then U.S. and Government of Greece [GoG], vs. National Liberation Army [ELAS], 1944-1949).

Indonesian Revolt (Netherlands vs. Indonesian rebels, 1945-1949).

French Indochina (France vs. Viet Minh, 1945-1954).

Palestine (U.K. vs. Jewish separatists, 1945-1948).

Hukbalahap Rebellion (Philippine Islands [P.I.] vs. Hukbalahap, 1946-1954).

Malayan Emergency (U.K. vs. Malayan Communist Party [MPC]/Malayan Races Liberation Army [MRLA], 1948-1960).

Kenyan Emergency (U.K. vs. Mau Mau, 1952-1956).

Algerian Revolt (France vs. National Liberation Front [FLN], 1954-1962).

Cyprus (U.K. vs. Ethniki Organosis Kyprios Agoniston [EOKA] (a Greek terrorist organization), 1954-1959).

Aden (U.K. and Aden vs. Yemeni insurgents, 1955-1967).

Cuban Revolution (Cuba's Batista regime vs. Castro, 1956-1959).

France (France vs. Secret Army Organization [OAS], 1958-1962).

Venezuela (Venezuela vs. urban-based Armed Forces for National Liberation [FALN], 1958-1963).

Vietnam War (U.S. and Government of Vietnam [GoVN] vs. National Liberation Front [NLF] and Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam [DPRVN], 1958-1975).

Guatemalan Civil War (Guatemala vs. Marxist rebels, 1961-1996).

Angola (Portugal vs. Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola [MPLA], 1961-1974).

Guinea-Bissau (Portugal vs. Marxist rebels, 1963-1974).

Successful Operational Practices

The focus of all civil and military plans and operations must be on the center of gravity in any conflict—the country's people and their belief in and support of their government. Winning their hearts and minds must be the objective of the government's efforts.[2] Because this is a policy objective, it must be directed by the country's political leaders. Colombian President Alvaro Uribe pursued this course and gained broad support of the populace in the struggle against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and National Liberation Army narcoterrorists. His government is weakening the insurgents' hold on their traditional zones of control and threatening their financial and recruiting base.[3]

Human rights. The security of the people must be assured as a basic need, along with food, water, shelter, health care, and a means of living. These are human rights, along with freedom of worship, access to education, and equal rights for women.[4] The failure of counterinsurgencies and the root cause of the insurgencies themselves can often be traced to government disregard of these basic rights, as in Kuomintung, China; French Indochina; Batista's Cuba; Somoza's Nicaragua; and Soviet-occupied Afghanistan, among others. Recognition and assurance of these rights by the government has been essential to turning a population away from insurgents and their promises.

During the 1950s Malaya Emergency, British High Commissioner Sir Gerald Templer—a declared antiracist—strived for political and social equality of all Malays. He granted Malay citizenship en masse to over a million Indians and Chinese; required Britons to register as Malay citizens; elevated the public role of women; constructed schools, clinics, and police stations; electrified rural villages; continued a 700-percent increase in the number of police and military troops; and gave arms to militia guards to protect their own communities. In this environment, insurgent terrorism only drove the people further from the rebels and closer to the government.[5]

Law enforcement. Intelligence operations that help detect terrorist insurgents for arrest and prosecution are the single most important practice to protect a population from threats to its security. Honest, trained, robust police forces responsible for security can gather intelligence at the community level. Historically, robustness in wartime requires a ratio of 20 police and auxiliaries for each 1,000 civilians.[6]

In turn, an incorrupt, functioning judiciary must support the police. During a major urban insurgency from 1968 to 1973, the Venezuelan Government appointed the head of military intelligence as the senior police chief in Caracas. He centralized command of all Venezuelan police and

Uruguay (Uruguay vs. Tupamaros, 1963-1972).

Mozambique (Portugal vs. Front for the Liberation of Mozambique [FRELIMO], 1964-1974).

Colombian Civil War (U.S. and Government of Colombia [GoC] vs. Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] and National Liberation Army [ELN], 1964-present).

Northern Ireland (U.K. vs. Irish Republican Army [IRA], 1968-present).

Weather Underground (WU) (U.S. vs. Students for a Democratic Society [SDS]/WU, Black Panthers, Symbionese Liberation Army [SLA] et al., 1968-1980).

Spain (Spain vs. Basque Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna [ETA] (Basque fatherland and liberty), 1968-present).

Oman (U.K. and Oman vs. Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf [PFLOAG], 1969-1976).

Germany (Germany vs. Baader-Meinhof/Red Army Faction [RAF], 1970-1992).

Philippines (P.I. vs. New People's Army [NPA] and Moro National Liberation Front [MNLF]/Moro Islamic Liberation Front [MILF], 1970-present).

Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka vs. Tamil New Tigers [TNT], 1972-present).

Palestine (Israel vs. Palestine Liberation Front [PLF] et al., 1973-present).

Rhodesia (Rhodesia vs. Zimbabwe African People's Union [ZAPU] and Zimbabwe African National Union [ZANU], 1974-1980).

Western Sahara (Morocco vs. Western Sahara Freedom Movement [POLISARIO], 1975-1991).

Soviet-Afghan War (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [USSR] and Government of Afghanistan [GoA] vs. Mujahideen, 1979-1988).

Salvadoran Civil War (U.S. and Government of El Salvador [GoES] vs. Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN], 1979-1991).

Senderista Insurgency (Peru vs. Sendero Luminoso, 1980-1995; vs. Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement [MRTA], 1996-1997).

Nicaragua (Frente Sandinista Deliberacion Nacional [FSLN] vs. National Guard [GN]/Contras, 1980-1990).

Kashmir (India vs. Kashmiri Muslim separatists, 1988-present).

Algeria (Algeria/National Liberation Front [FLN] vs. Islamic Salvation Front [FIS]/Armed Islamic Group [GIA], 1992-present).

Somalia Humanitarian Relief Mission (U.S. and UN vs. armed factions, 1992-1994).

Chechnya (Russia vs. Chechen separatists, 1994-present).

Nepal (Nepal vs. Maoists, 1996-present).

Afghanistan (U.S. and GoA vs. Taliban, 2001-present).

Iraq (Government of Iraq [GoI] and U.S.-led coalition vs. jihadists and insurgents, 2003-present).

reorganized, retrained, and reformed them. They fought and eventually defeated the terrorists.[7]

As necessary, military and paramilitary forces can support the police in the performance of their law-enforcement duties. From 1968 to 1972, Vietnamese police and intelligence services, with military support, carried out project Phung Hoang, arresting and trying over 18,000 members of the nationwide Viet Cong command and intelligence infrastructure.[8]

Population control. Insurgents rely on members of the population for concealment, sustenance, and recruits, so they must be isolated from the people by all means possible. Among the most effective means are such population-control measures as vehicle and personnel checkpoints and national identity cards. In Malaya, the requirement to carry an I.D. card with a photo and thumbprint forced the communists to abandon their original three-phase political-military strategy and caused divisive infighting among their leaders over how to respond to this effective population-control measure.[9]

Political process. Informational campaigns explain to the population what they can do to help their government make them secure from terrorist insurgents; encourage participation in the political process by voting in local and national elections; and convince insurgents they can best meet their personal interests and avoid the risk of imprisonment or death by reintegrating themselves into the population through amnesty, rehabilitation, or by simply not fighting. The Philippine Government's psychological warfare branch was able to focus its messages on individual villages and specific Huk guerrilla bands because it employed locals and surrendered insurgents on its staffs.[10]

After the police and supporting forces secure a neighborhood, village, township, or infrastructure facility from terrorist insurgent activity, the government can apply resources to expand the secure area to an adjacent zone and expand the secure area again when that zone is completely secure. In Malaya, the government designated secure, contested, and enemy zones by white, gray, and black colors (a technique that mirrored that of the rebels) and promised rewards of services and aid to persons who helped purge an area of insurgents. Attaining the status of a secure "white zone," with the attendant government benefits, was in the people's best interest.[11]

Counterinsurgent warfare. Allied military forces and advisory teams, organized to support police forces and fight insurgents, can bolster security until indigenous security forces are competent to perform these tasks without allied assistance. In the U.S. Armed Forces, only the Special Forces (SF) are expressly organized and trained for counterinsurgent warfare and advising indigenous forces. During the 12-year-long Salvadoran Civil War, 25 SF field advisers and 30 staff advisers were the core of the effort that trained the 50,000-man Salvadoran Army that battled insurgents to a draw and forced them to accept a negotiated end to the war. In post-Taliban Afghanistan, SF detachments manage the operations of groups of hundreds

Chart 2. Successful and Unsuccessful Counterinsurgency Practices.

Successful	Unsuccessful
• Emphasis on intelligence.	• Primacy of military direction of counter-insurgency.
• Focus on population, their needs, and security.	• Priority to "kill-capture" enemy, not on engaging population.
• Secure areas established, expanded.	• Battalion-size operations as the norm.
• Insurgents isolated from population (population control).	• Military units concentrated on large bases for protection.
• Single authority (charismatic/dynamic leader).	• Special Forces focused on raiding.
• Effective, pervasive psychological operations (PSYOP) campaigns.	• Adviser effort a low priority in personnel assignment.
• Amnesty and rehabilitation for insurgents.	• Building, training indigenous army in image of U.S. Army.
• Police in lead; military supporting.	• Peacetime government processes.
• Police force expanded, diversified.	• Open borders, airspace, coastlines.
• Conventional military forces reoriented for counterinsurgency.	
• Special Forces, advisers embedded with indigenous forces.	
• Insurgent sanctuaries denied.	

of regular and paramilitary fighters. British and Australian Special Air Service regiments have similar creditable records because of long-term associations with the leaders and soldiers of the indigenous units they have trained.[12]

Constant patrolling by government forces establishes an official presence that enhances security and builds confidence in the government. Patrolling is a basic tenet of policing, and in the last 100 years all successful counterinsurgencies have employed this fundamental security practice. Other more creative methods also have been used against insurgents, such as the infiltration of Mau Mau gangs in Kenya by British-trained "pseudo-gangs" posing as collaborators, a tactic also employed by the Filipino "Force X" against Huk guerrillas.[13]

Securing borders. Border crossings must be restricted to deny terrorist insurgents a sanctuary and to enhance national sovereignty. Police and military rapid-reaction units can respond to or spoil major insurgent attacks. Special-mission units can perform direct-action operations to rescue hostages, and select infantrymen can conduct raids. To seal off National Liberation Front bases in Tunisia, the French built a 320-kilometer-long barrier on the eastern Algerian border, and helicopter-borne infantry attacked guerrillas attempting to breach the barrier. The Morice Line completely stopped insurgent infiltration.[14]

Executive authority. Emergency conditions dictate that a government needs a single, fully empowered executive to direct and coordinate counter-insurgency efforts. Power-sharing among political bodies, while appropriate and necessary in peacetime, presents wartime vulnerabilities and gaps in coordination that insurgents can exploit. For example, one person—a civil servant with the rank of secretary of state—is responsible for all British Government political and military activity in Northern Ireland. In another example, in 1992, when Peru was on the verge of falling to the Shining Path insurgents, newly elected President Alberto Fujimori gave himself exceptional executive authority to fight terrorists. With overwhelming popular support, Fujimori unified the counterinsurgency effort and within 3 years wiped out the Maoists. In 1997, he crushed another violent insurgent group.[15]

The requirement for exceptional leadership during an internal war calls for a leader with dynamism and imagination. To ensure long-term success, this leader must remain in authority after the insurgency ends, while advisers continue to move the government and its agencies toward independence. Ramon Magsaysay, the civilian defense minister of the Philippines during the Hukbalahap insurrection, was renowned for his charisma, optimism, and persistence. His equally inspiring and energetic U.S. adviser, Major General Edward Lansdale, kept himself in the background throughout the war. Magsaysay's and Lansdale's personalities contributed as much to the success of the Filipino counterinsurgency as the programs they instituted.[16] U.S. advisers James A. Van Fleet in Greece and Mark Hamilton in El Salvador likewise helped significantly in ending those countries' wars.[17]

Operational Practices

Failed counterinsurgencies reveal unsuccessful operational practices. The American intervention in Vietnam and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan are examples of these malpractices. In the critical early periods of these wars, military staffs rather than civil governments guided operations, which were typified by large-unit sweeps that cleared but then abandoned communities and terrain. Emphasis was on killing and capturing enemy combatants rather than on engaging the population.[18] In particular, Americans and Soviets employed massive artillery and aerial firepower with the intent to defeat enemy forces by attriting them to a point of collapse, an objective which was never reached.[19]

Indigenous regular armies, although fighting in their own country and more numerous than foreign forces, were subordinate to them. Conventional forces trained indigenous units in their image—with historically poor results.[20] Special operations forces committed most of their units to raids and reconnaissance missions, with successful but narrow results. The Americans further marginalized their Special Forces by economy-of-force assignments to sparsely populated hinterlands.[21] Later, Spetznaziki roamed the Afghan mountains at will but with little effect.

In the Republic of Vietnam, the Saigon Government's leadership was unsettled. Leadership was unequally divided in the allied ranks between the U.S. Ambassador, the CIA Chief of Station, and the senior U.S. military commander.[22] Impatience, masked as aggressiveness and "offensive-mindedness," drove the Americans to apply counterinsurgency methods learned from conflicts in Greece and Malaya, but without taking into account the differences in the lands and people. The Americans also ignored the French experience in Indochina, particularly the general ineffectiveness of large-unit operations.[23] Later, the Soviets did not consider the American experience in Vietnam when their occupation of Afghanistan became protracted. The Soviet command in Afghanistan was unified but wholly militarized, and the Afghan government they established was perfunctory.[24]

Disengagement from an unresolved counterinsurgency can doom an indigenous government. When the United States and the Soviet Union withdrew their forces from Vietnam and Afghanistan, the remaining indigenous governments were not vigorous or competent enough to maintain themselves without significant assistance. After the Soviet regime in Moscow fell, the Taliban readily deposed the puppet government in Kabul. In Vietnam, the U.S. Congress sharply curtailed military aid after the withdrawal of U.S. forces. With no other source of support, South Vietnam was vulnerable to the invasion from the North that deposed its regime.[25]

Over time, the Americans improved their counterinsurgency practices in Vietnam, which resulted in viable combined and interagency efforts such as the Vietnamese-led Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support; the Vietnamese Civilian Irregular Defense Groups and Provisional Reconnaissance Units; the U.S. Marine Corps Combined Action Platoons; and U.S. military adviser training and employment. These practices, and other Vietnamese-directed programs, came too late to overcome the early "Americanization" of the counterinsurgency and its initially military-dominant strategy focused on enemy forces rather than the Vietnamese people and their government.[26]

It is still possible for Iraqi and coalition governments to adopt proven counterinsurgency practices and abandon schemes that have no record of success. Any campaign plan to prosecute the counterinsurgency in Iraq should be submitted to a test of historical feasibility in addition to customary methods of analysis. ***MR***

NOTES

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Winning the Peace

The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations

Major General Peter W. Chiarelli, U.S. Army
Major Patrick R. Michaelis, U.S. Army

You [military professionals] must know something about strategy and tactics and logistics, but also economics and politics and diplomacy and history. You must know everything you can know about military power, and you must also understand the limits of military power. You must understand that few of the important problems of our time have, in the final analysis, been finally solved by military power alone.—John F. Kennedy[1]

FOR THE LAST 3 decades serving as an Army officer, the traditional military training model prepared me to win our Nation's wars on the plains of Europe, or the deserts of the Middle East. I envisioned large, sweeping formations; coordinating and synchronizing the battlefield functions to create that "point of penetration;" and rapidly exploiting the initiative of that penetration to achieve a decisive maneuver against the armies that threatened the sovereignty of my country. But in Baghdad, that envisioned 3-decade-old concept of reality was replaced by a far greater sense of purpose and cause. Synchronization and coordination of the battlespace was not to win the war, but to win the peace. Penetration did not occur merely through synchronization of the battlefield functions, but that and more: local infrastructure improvement; training of security forces, understanding and educating the fundamentals of democracy; creating long-lasting jobs that would carry beyond short-term infrastructure improvement; and, an information operations (IO) campaign that supported the cultural realities of the area of operations.

The proverbial "point of penetration" for the 1st Cavalry Division and the coalition occurred on 30 January 2005. Millions of eligible Iraqi citizens, from across the sectarian divides, triumphed over a fractured insurgency and terrorist threat in a show of defiance never before seen across the Middle East. The purple index finger, proudly displayed, became a symbol of defiance and hope. The Iraqi people proved to the world their willingness to try democracy in whatever unique form evolves.

Task Force Baghdad's campaign to "win the peace" in Iraq has forced us, as an instrument of national power, to change the very nature of what it means to fight.[2] Although trained in the controlled application of combat power, we quickly became fluent in the controlled application of national power. We witnessed in Baghdad that it was no longer adequate as a military force to accept classic military modes of thought. Our own mentality of a phased approach to operations boxed our potential into neat piles the insurgent and terrorist initially exploited.

We found that if we concentrated solely on establishing a large security force and targeted counterinsurgent combat operations—and only after that was accomplished, worked toward establishing a sustainable infrastructure supported by a strong government developing a free-market system—we would have waited too long. The outcome of a sequential plan allowed insurgent leaders to gain a competitive advantage through solidifying the psychological and structural support of the populace.

Further, those who viewed the attainment of security solely as a function of military action alone were mistaken. A gun on every street corner, although visually appealing, provides only a short-term solution and does not equate to long-term security grounded in a democratic process. Our observation was born not from idealism, but because it creates the essence of true security, protecting not only our soldiers, but Iraq, the region, and, consequently, our homeland.

On 3 August 2004, following a tenuous cease-fire agreement between Task Force Baghdad and the forces of Muqtada Al Sadr in Shi'a-dominated Sadr City, over 18,000 city residents went to work for the first time earning sustaining wages by rebuilding the decrepit infrastructure that characterized the 6- by 8-kilometer overpopulated area located on the northeast corner of Baghdad.

For the first time, visible signs of the future emerged with clear movement toward a functioning

sewage system, a functioning fresh water system, electricity being wired to every house, and trash being picked up out of the streets. Those performing the projects were residents from Sadr City. The extraordinary effort by the leaders and soldiers of Task Force Baghdad to synchronize the elements needed to implement the "first mile" projects within Sadr City were to pay big dividends not only to the people of Sadr City, but to the force protection of the soldiers of Task Force Baghdad.

But on 5 August 2004, 72 hours after an entire city had been mobilized to improve their infrastructure, Muqtada Al Sadr's forces attacked. He broke the fragile 6-week-old cease fire and mounted an offensive against coalition forces.

The jobs in the northern two-thirds of Sadr City stopped. The repair to infrastructure stopped. The question is: why?

Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B), Task Force Baghdad, at its zenith a 39,000-soldier, 62-battalion coalition task force centered in and around Baghdad, conducted a relief in place with the 1st Armored Division on 15 April 2004. This relief in place was midstride of an unforeseen 11-day-old multiparty insurgent uprising that left many soldiers injured or killed and rocked the foundation of Task Force Baghdad's campaign to achieve decisive results in the influential center of gravity of Iraq.

But the task force, through adherence to an overall thematically based commander's intent, maintained orientation on a well-founded operational campaign plan balanced across five integrated conceptual lines of operations (LOOs). Each LOO was tied to a robust IO capability (equating to a sixth LOO), moving incrementally and cumulatively toward decisively accomplishing the ultimate goal of shifting Baghdad away from instability and a fertile recruiting ground for insurgents, to a thriving modern city encompassing one-third of Iraq's population. Baghdad had to be secure not only in its sense of self-preservation, but its economic future had to be led by a legitimate government that radiated democratic ideals across Iraq. This article examines Task Force Baghdad's approach and methodology in implementing full-spectrum operations.

Operational Art in an Urban Environment–Baghdad

With the mass migration of humanity to cities and the inability of developing nations to keep abreast of basic city services relative to growth, discontent erupts. Such conditions create advantageous conditions ripe for fundamentalist ideologue recruitment.

Baghdad, a city about the size of Chicago in population density, and Austin, Texas, in landmass, divided through the center by the Tigris River, is, like many overpopulated yet underdeveloped cities, subdivided into neighborhoods with distinct demographic divergences, reliant on a social system of governance based on tribal and religious affiliations, and interconnected by modern lines of communications and technology. The neglect by Saddam Hussein and the gray period following initial coalition combat operations created those "ripe" conditions in Baghdad.

The Demographic Battlespace

In accurately defining the contextual and cultural population of the task force battlespace, it became rapidly apparent that we needed to develop a keen understanding of demographics as well as the cultural intricacies that drive the Iraqi population.[3] Although tactically distinct in scope, density, and challenges, we operationally divided the populace into three categories that help define the battlespace: anti-Iraqi forces, supporters, and fence-sitters.

Anti-Iraqi forces. The first group defined as insurgents (and terrorists) were those who cannot be changed, who cannot be influenced, and who, although politically and ethnically different in scope, had essentially the same desired end-state—to perceptually delegitimize the current Iraqi Government and drive a wedge between the Iraqi populace and coalition forces.[4] Through forcing a demonstration of the inability of the government to bring security, projects, hope, and prosperity to the city of Baghdad and greater Iraq and increasing the psychological distance between coalition forces and the Iraqi populace through increased limited use of force, they turn the populace to accept their message.[5] Their aim is disruption for political gain; their organization is cellular based and organized crime-like in terms of its rapid ability to take advantage of tactical and operational gaps. Iraqi insurgents take full advantage of the Arab Bedouin-based tribal culture so important to understanding the battlespace. They target the disenfranchised neighborhoods that see little to no progress, recruiting from those who see, through the insurgent, basic services being fulfilled, societal leadership, safety being provided, and ultimately, direction given.

When the insurgent achieves his goal, the methods of resistance among the populace take a spectrum of forms ranging from avoidance to sympathetic obliviousness or passing of information to direct attacks against coalition forces. Intimidation of the people, in particular, those who work for the

coalition, public sector employees, and government officials is a technique used quite effectively. The insurgents are small in relative size and cellular in design operating normally off of intent, but their effect can and does achieve tactical and operational significance. It takes few insurgents specifically targeting a small group of select individuals to achieve resonance across a large portion of the population.

In an effort to describe the effect, a corollary would be the effect the D.C. Sniper had on the Capital and Nation in 2002. Fear gripped the city and the Nation, producing a paralysis that had a quantifiable effect on the economy**.** Every white van was suspect. People feared stopping at gas stations and parking at retail establishments because they could be the next victims. Multiply this 100-fold and you can understand the effect and role anti-Iraqi forces have from an intimidation perspective on the populace.

What made our challenge completely different from any other our military has endured is the unique variable of international terrorism. Terrorist aims do not lie with the interests of the Iraqi populace but, rather, global objectives played out on the world stage through manipulation of media and the resonance associated with a "spectacular event."

Direct-action killing or capturing the terrorist was (and is) the only option to immediately mitigate their strategic effect. We also chose an indirect approach, through co-option of the populace using information operations, to deny the terrorist physical and psychological sanctuary in an effort to thwart their objectives.

Supporters. The second demographic consisted of supporters who represented the coalition force base of support throughout neighborhoods, districts, and the government. The supporters see the future of Iraq through cooperation with the currently established Iraqi Government and coalition forces. The reality is that, when queried, most supporters preferred the removal of coalition forces from Baghdad and Iraq, but they simultaneously recognized the relative importance of the security provided and the flow of funding from these contributing nations to the short- and long-term future of Iraq.

While a large majority of Iraqis do not like the presence of coalition forces, during a February 2005 Baghdad survey, the question was posed as to when coalition forces should leave Iraq. In the Task Force Baghdad area of operations, 72 percent of those polled stated that only after certain security and economic conditions were met would it be appropriate for coalition forces to leave. This clearly demonstrated to the task force that although the Iraqi populace inherently did not like the presence of coalition forces in their country, they understood the value of that presence and the need to first establish certain conditions before withdrawal began.

Fence-sitters. Finally, we had those on the proverbial fence. We considered the fence-sitters as the operational center of gravity for both Task Force Baghdad and insurgent forces. They are the bulk of the populace, and they are waiting to decide who will get their support. From the intelligentsia to the poor and uneducated who have little or no hope, the fence-sitters are waiting on clear signs of progress and direction before casting their support.

The fence-sitters become the base from which power is derived. Strong evidence exists that suggests Muqtada Al Sadr's attacks against coalition forces in early August 2004 were initiated because of the visible signs of progress manifested by the number of projects and local labor force hires that threatened his scope of power and ability to recruit fighters within the Shi'a population.

Insurgents can clearly influence the fence-sitters by attacking visible symbols of government services and provoking government repression, both of which discredit the legitimacy of the government. In a further demonstration of potency, the insurgents then step in and provide a shadow government.[6]

In one example, insurgents attacked electrical distribution nodes outside the city of Baghdad and severely limited the already overworked electrical grid, knowing the Iraqi populace abhorred attacks on infrastructure. The insurgents deftly placed blame for the "lack of power" squarely on the impotence of the fledgling Iraqi Government and supporting coalition forces, citing the historical truth of power always being available under the Saddam regime.[7]

During the coordinated insurgent uprising in April 2004, Muqtada Al Sadr, as one of his first acts, gained control of the electrical substations in Sadr City. By providing uninterrupted power, something not seen since the fall of Saddam Hussein, he was able to sway support. A shadow government able to provide services, with governance by religious decree and enforcement by Sharia courts, Muqtada Al Sadr was able to provide a viable, attractive alternative to the coalition. Together, the Iraqi Government and the coalition must send clear signals of their own, directly targeting those waiting for direction through a full-spectrum campaign that mitigates the insurgent base with visible and tangible signs of progress within a legitimate context.

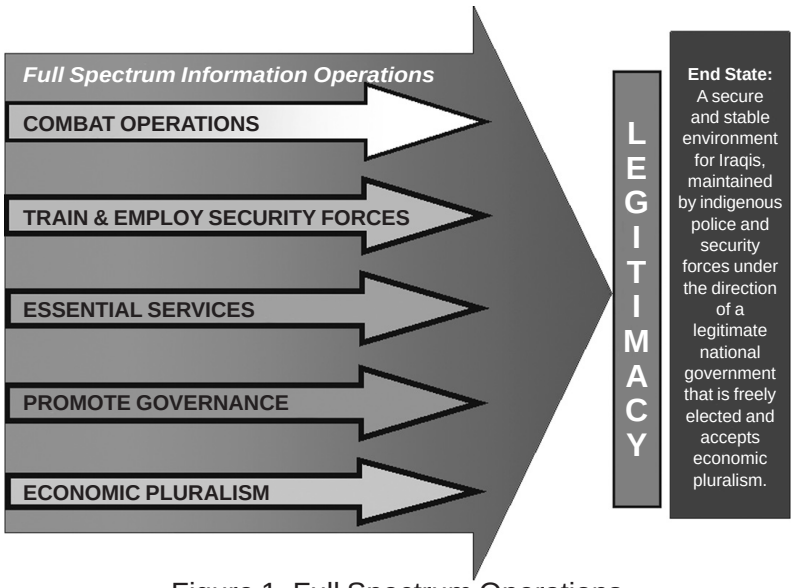


Figure 1. Full Spectrum Operations

Right or wrong, the fence-sitters (and the population as a whole) believe that because America put a man on the moon, it can do anything—and do it quickly. When we fail to produce because of lack of authority, shortage of resources, or bureaucratic inefficiencies, they believe it is because we, as a coalition, do not want to fix it. Therefore the alternative becomes clear.

From Task Force Baghdad's perspective it was clear: shape operations for decisive results by optimizing the support of those who see through the coalition a future; kill, capture, or disrupt the insurgents and terrorists by denying influence and sanctuary; and, finally, decisively engage the operational center of gravity for insurgents and coalition forces—those on the fence—through promotion of essential infrastructure services; establishing a capable, legitimate government; and creating opportunities for economic independence through a free market system.

The Balanced Approach: Full-Spectrum Operations

Tackling the task of executing multiple operational themes into a full campaign plan, the task force defined through contemporary, historical, cultural, and doctrinal analysis and through observation and collaboration with the 1st Armored Division, critical conceptual lines of operations oriented on truly demonstrating in Baghdad, as the coalition center of gravity, viable results to achieve the campaign objective.[8] What became clear to the task force during mission analysis and mission preparation was that to achieve the operational goal the task force had to simultaneously work along all five equally balanced, interconnected lines of operations. What also became clear was that the traditional phased approach, grounded in U.S. doctrine, might not be the answer; rather, an event-driven "transitional" approach might be more appropriate based on a robust set of metrics and analysis.[9]

Combat operations. Combat operations, the foundation of our skill set, was oriented on targeting, defeating, and denying influence to the insurgent base throughout the area of responsibility through lethal use of force. Precision analysis of insurgent networks, logistics, financing, and support, integrated with tactical human intelligence and national-level collection and exploitation assets, helped shape the effect desired by disrupting insurgent and terrorist capabilities across the task force.

The tenaciousness of U.S. soldiers in taking the fight to the enemy cannot be emphasized enough. One hundred sixty-nine soldiers from the task force lost their lives, and over 1,900 were seriously injured in moving Baghdad toward sovereignty. But even in the execution of combat operations, they balanced the effect across the other lines of operations and cultural empathy. Understanding the role of our actions through the eyes of the populace was a critical planning, preparation, and execution factor.

Train and employ Iraqi security forces (military and police). The migration of training and equipping foreign internal security forces from the unconventional to the conventional force presented challenges and opportunities to task force leaders. Following the April 2004 uprisings, the task force had to create a police force of about 13,000 men and a military security force approaching two brigades, and provide the requisite staff and resources to assume areas of responsibility. The task force then had to integrate these forces into planning and executing full-spectrum operations.[10]

Over 500,000 hours of dedicated training by an embedded advisory staff, who lived, ate, and trained with the Iraqi Army, resulted in over 3,000 Iraqi missions executed independent of coalition presence in and around Baghdad. This critical step in the progress toward establishing full independence was accomplished through a robust advisory system where the division embedded over 70 full-time military advisory teams per Iraqi battalion

over the course of the deployment. Resourced down to the platoon level, the advisers leveraged the cultural importance of relationships to the Arab people to build trust and rapport and to create momentum toward a truly professional military force. These forces were trained to conduct counterinsurgency operations 24 hours a day, as opposed to the culturally desirable strike-force model.

A critical step toward validation of this training and equipping strategy (which continues today) manifested itself through transfer of authority of large swaths of the most contentious neighborhoods of downtown Baghdad to an Iraqi Army brigade in early February 2005.[11] Under the watchful eye of task force leaders, the brigade operated as an integral team member contributing to the battlespace situational understanding through integration into the task force C2 system.

In addition to training and equipping Iraqi Army forces, the task force also conducted task training and resourced the Iraqi Police Service (IPS).[12] Although still lacking in sheer numbers and throughput for training (basic estimate is that about 23,000 are needed to properly police the streets of Baghdad), the symbolic and practical importance of a robust police force to the people of Baghdad was abundantly clear: 72 percent of the local populace stated there was a direct correlation between their sense of security and the presence of the IPS.[13]

One of the challenges associated with training and equipping the Iraqi Police Service centered on the Ministry of Interior's view toward application of police forces. There have always been traditional Middle East tensions between defense and interior ministries, and Iraq is no different. If given leeway, the propensity is to establish police "strike forces" that conduct blitz operations rather than operate as the "cop on the beat." Although coalition vetting and recruitment of Iraqi police throughout the deployment was on par to achieving the level needed to support a city of from 6 to 7 million, the reality was that many of those recruits, after graduating from one of the two academies, were siphoned off to support strike-force operations or into an already over-populated police bureaucracy. This practice severely hindered the desired need of the Baghdad populace for established local security. The complexity of managing and resourcing the Iraqi Army and, to a greater extent, the Iraqi Police Service, both of which exist within an Arab-style chain of command, operationally under task force control yet subject to the whims of the ministries who own them, presented numerous leadership and engagement challenges for those tasked with overwatch.

The previous two LOOs (Combat Operations and Train and Equip Iraqi Security Forces) are two missions that we, as a military force, are extremely comfortable conducting. Our training and doctrine reinforce the simple, direct-action approach to accomplishing military objectives. With a firm grasp of the complexity of the Arab culture and the value placed on extreme concepts of "honor above all," the task force concluded that erosion of enemy influence through direct action and training of Iraqi security forces *only* led to one confirmable conclusion—you ultimately pushed those on the fence into the insurgent category rather than the supporter category. In effect, you offered no viable alternative. Kinetic operations would provide the definable short-term wins we are comfortable with as an Army but, ultimately, would be our undoing. In the best case, we would cause the insurgency to grow. In the worst case, although we would never lose a tactical or operational engagement, the migration of fence-sitters to the insurgent cause would be so pronounced the coalition loss in soldiers and support would reach unacceptable levels.

To understand how this limited view of operations will never contribute to a total solution, it is important to understand that the Arab and Iraqi culture is grounded in extreme concepts of the importance of honor above all, so much so that "lying" to defend one's honor is a cultural norm—something that we, with our Western value set, cannot comprehend, is accepted.

One prime example that demonstrates this concept, which has been repeated numerous times over

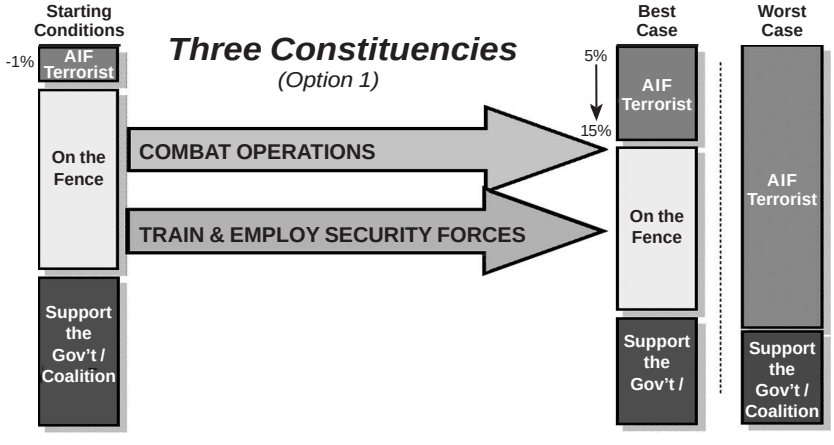


Figure 2. The Three Constituencies – Option 1

Percentages are for illustrative purposes only and do not constitute the size of opposition.

How You Breed Insurgents

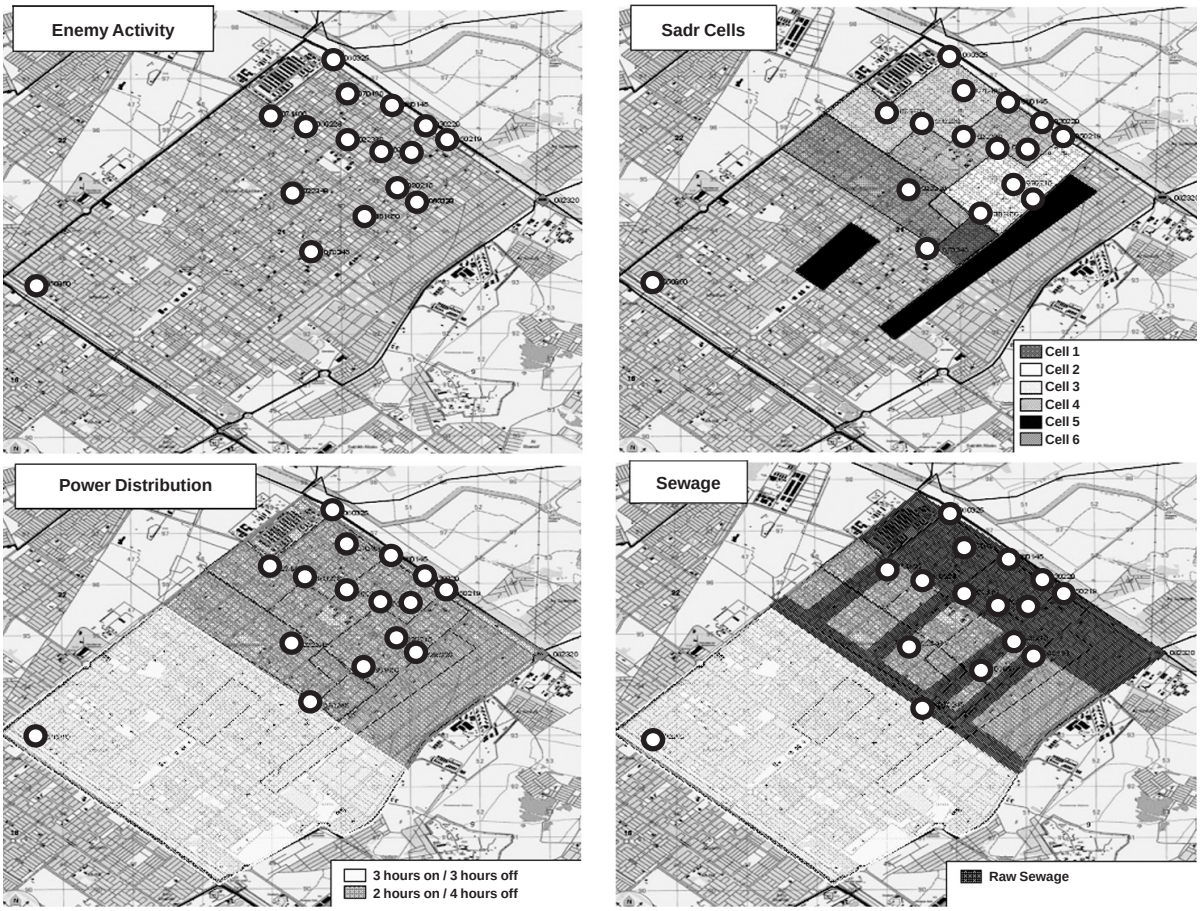


Figure 3.

Sadr City is an example of the direct correlation between enemy actions against Coalition forces and lack of basic services.

the last 12+ months, occurred in the southern Al Rasheed district of Baghdad. In May 2004, on the death of approximately 100 potential IPS recruits at a police station targeted by terrorists using a car laden with explosives, an amazing thing happened: on the following day there were over 300 potential recruits standing tall, ready to join the Iraqi Police Service—not out of nationalistic feelings, but to "honor those who have fallen." Tribal, religious, and familial honor drove a new batch of recruits to defend the honor of those killed—and this was not an isolated occurrence. This clear understanding of cultural norms directly applied to our actions when planning, preparing, and executing *all* operations.

We operated many times on limited intelligence in order to defeat insurgent activity and exercised extreme moral judgment when targeting potential insurgent sanctuary. By integrating the Iraqi Police Service and Iraqi Army into all of these operations, we put Iraqis front and center as a clear indicator that Iraq is in charge of Iraq. But the cultural reality is that no matter what the outcome of a combat operation, for every insurgent put down, the potential exists to grow many more if cultural mitigation is not practiced. If there is nothing else done other than kill bad guys and train others to kill bad guys, the only thing accomplished is moving more people from the fence to the insurgent category—there remains no opportunity to grow the supporter base.

Cultural awareness and an empathetic understanding of the impact of Western actions on a Middle East society were constantly at the forefront of all operational considerations, regardless of the complexity. Clearly, traditional methods of achieving ends in Baghdad, as the Iraqi center of gravity, were severely lacking. The situation was much more complex. The task force could win engagements by killing or capturing an insurgent emplacing an improvised explosive device, and it could win battles by targeting, disrupting, and killing off insurgent cells. But it could only win the campaign if the local populace revealed insurgent and terrorist cells and, accordingly, denied sanctuary.

Cultural awareness and understanding how insurgents gain support from the center of gravity

became the important campaign consideration. From this, the task force adopted the next three nontraditional lines of operation to achieve sustainable gains across Baghdad and greater Iraq.

Essential services. When U.S. forces liberated Baghdad, it was a city with virtually no traditionally functional city services, although there had been far-reaching plans dating back to the early 1980s to update decrepit city services (relative to projected growth). But Saddam Hussein's orientation on Iran during the 1980s and Kuwait during the early 1990s, followed by U.N.-imposed economic sanctions and his propensity to build self-serving monolithic creations to himself, caused Baghdad to become a city lacking basic services even as the population grew.

As the "first among equals" line of operation, opportunities for direct infusion of visible and tangible signs of progress with repair (or creation) of basic first-mile city services through use of local contractors and labor (creating jobs) became a critical component of the task force campaign plan to deny the insurgent a base of support, thereby leading to enhanced force protection. Creating symbols of true progress by establishing basic local services and providing employment within neighborhoods ripe for insurgent recruitment directly attacked the insurgent base of support.

The task force's understanding of the importance of establishing essential city services came from analysis of enemy actions in relation to current infrastructure. Cell congregations, red zones, and anticoalition, antigovernment religious rhetoric originated from those areas of Baghdad characterized by low electrical distribution, sewage running raw through the streets, little to no potable water distribution, and no solid waste pickup. Concurrently, unemployment rates rocketed in these extremely impoverished areas and health care was almost nonexistent. A direct correlation existed between the level of local infrastructure status, unemployment figures, and attacks on U.S. soldiers. The findings were an epiphany to the task force—this was about force protection. These were breeding grounds for anti-Iraqi forces. The choice was to continue to attrit through direct action or shape the populace to deny sanctuary to the insurgents by giving the populace positive options through clear improvement in quality of life.

The division dedicated the expertise of the engineer corps (enhanced by a robust preparation phase of training with the Texas cities of Austin and Killeen) and established a cooperative effort with the University of Baghdad to identify, fund, and work with local government officials, contractors, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to provide the essential services critical to demonstrating those visible first-mile signs of progress in areas most likely to produce insurgent activity.[14]

Most of the task force commander's actions were weighted toward shaping funding to support the tactical commander's desired infrastructure-repair effort. The U.N. had estimated the total bill for rebuilding the infrastructure of Iraq at about $60 billion. In late 2003, the administration signed into law an $18.4 billion supplemental dedicated to infrastructure improvement for Iraq. The distribution of monies was heavily weighted toward large capital projects, such as landfills, sewage and water treatment plants, and electrical-generation plants, and relied on other donor nations to fund projects that connected large-capital projects to local neighborhoods.

The failure for these funds to be immediately provided created the need to reprogram portions of the $18.4 billion supplemental to affect the immediate signs of progress at the local level, or what we considered the "first mile." Concentrating on local-level infrastructure repair led to an abrupt realization of the complex interconnectedness

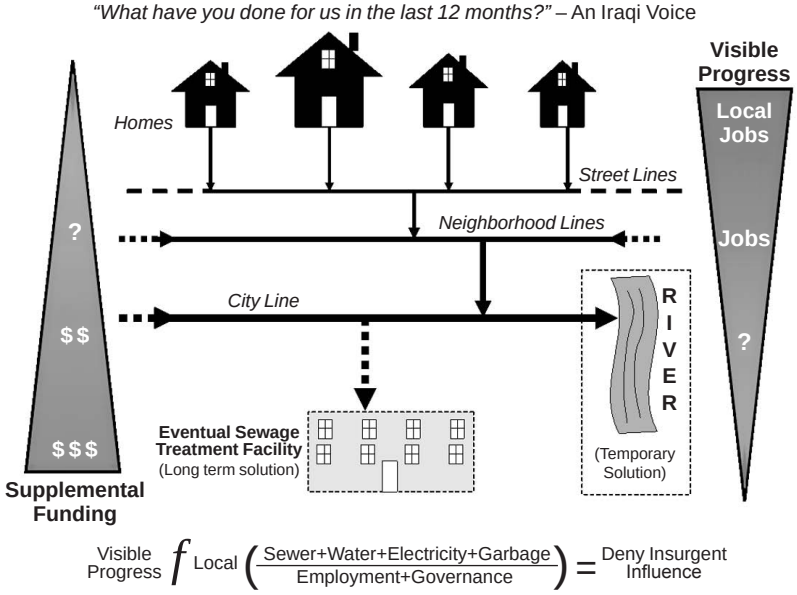
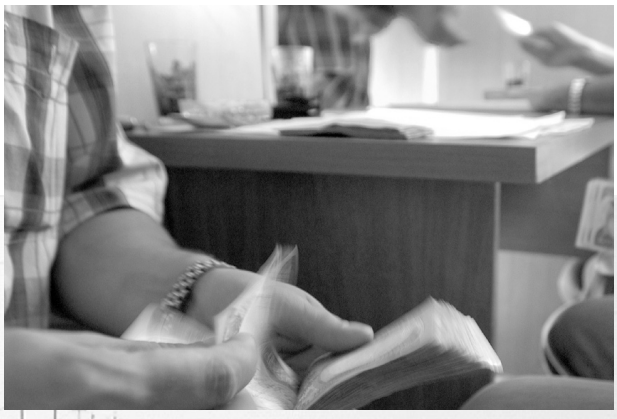
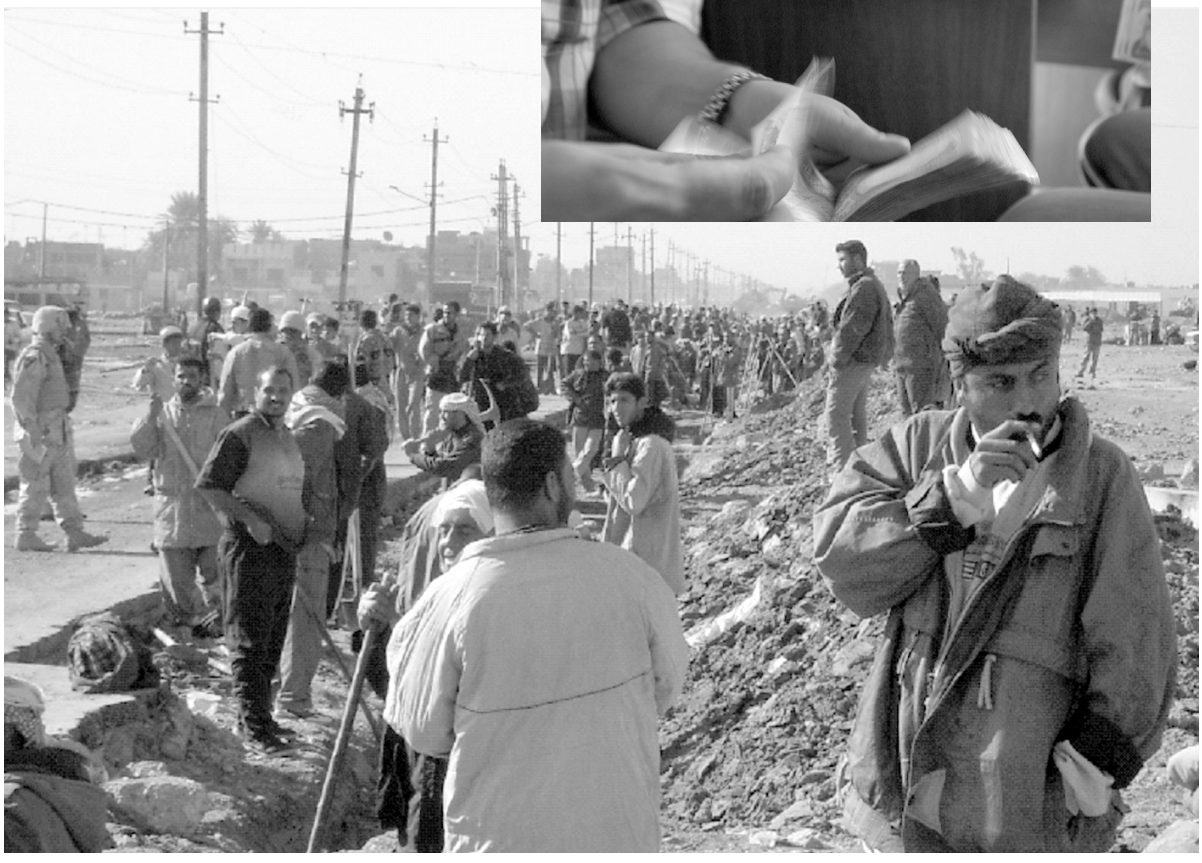


Figure 4. The First Mile.

(Below) The sudden emergence of large numbers of infrastructure rebuilding jobs when funding came available denied the insurgents their power base in Sadr City. (*Inset*) The accounting office of Baghdad's southeastern landfils distributes pay to its workers, July 2004.



US Air Force



US Army

and balancing act of maintaining a functioning city system. Sewage, water, electricity, and solid waste removal all exist below the noise level of normal city life.[15] In reality, there is a vast city-planning effort that keeps services flowing and balanced. Many areas of Baghdad never had these basic services to begin with. This compounded the dilapidated nature of the already existing but un-maintained and un-synchronized systems. If solid waste was not removed, it would clog the sewage lines, which would back up and taint the water supply. Further, that same sewage would probably have no place to go if the sewage lift stations were not working because the electrical grid was not functioning. Large swaths of Baghdad were left with raw sewage running freely through the streets, piles of garbage, a polluted water system (where there was any at all), and intermittent electricity.

The restructuring effort of already programmed funding moved swiftly to effect immediate local results across the most desperate areas of Baghdad, coupled with hiring local labor. This effort achieved a two-pronged result: it provided a job alternative to the locals who had no job, and it produced visible signs of progress in their neighborhoods. Earning from $5 to $7 a day to feed your family became a viable alternative to $300 a month, payable at the end of the month, to fire rocket-propelled grenades at U.S. forces. And, there is no sewage running through the streets of your neighborhood.

In Al Rasheed, a capital-level project became a local labor success. In building the southern Baghdad landfill, we saw a hiring opportunity. Instead of using advanced machinery to dig the landfill, employing a minimal number of workers, the task force worked closely with the firm designated to manage the project to mobilize the local economy. Working through local tribal leaders, the project hired up to 4,000 local laborers at from $5 to $7 per day, using handheld tools, to help create the landfill. This meant that the approximately 4,000

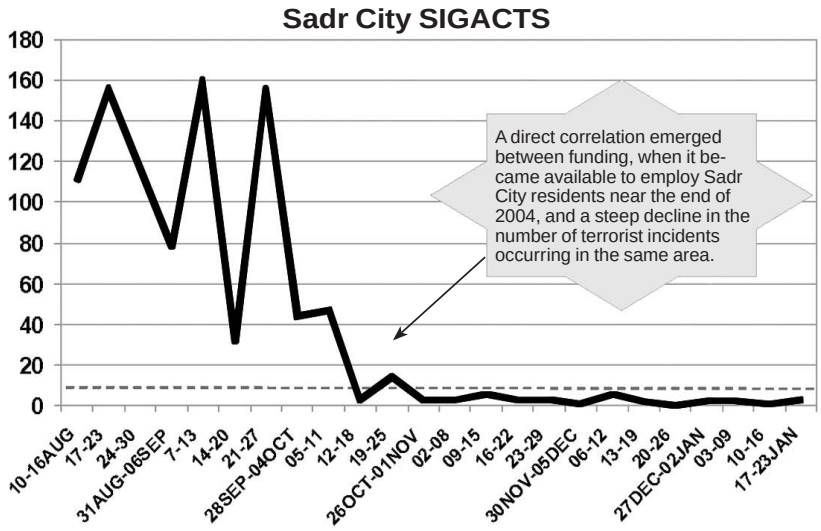


Figure 5.
Some level of criminal activity will always exist, so not all can be attributed to AIF/MM incidents.

people, who on average supported a household of from 10 to 15 people, factoring in the additional 0.5 more service-oriented jobs per job created as economists proclaim, potentially took out of the insurgent base a pool of about 60,000 men.

It took another 10 weeks of intense fighting to bring Muqtada's forces to the concession table in Sadr City. By the time he conceded, he had dug deep into the well of the local populace for a fighting force. Average approximate ages of fighters had sunk to 13-15 years.

But rather than 6 weeks to completely mobilize and begin local-level infrastructure projects, the division had prepared by coordinating with local- and national-level contractors, local government, and the U.S. mission to implement an event-driven plan that would have up and running, within 72 hours of a cease-fire being implemented, over 22,000 jobs oriented on local infrastructure repair within the most lacking areas of the city that correlated to the power base of Muqtada's lieutenants. The quickness of execution and the visible infrastructure projects that were immediately recognized by the local populace took away the power base from the insurgents.

The task force had given the populace another option. During the 10-week period of fighting from early August to mid-October 2004, attacks against the coalition topped out at 160 a week. From the week following the cease-fire until the present, they averaged fewer than 10.

In mid-February 2005, over 200,000 residents of Sadr City awoke to the first running water system the city had ever seen. Built by local labor, the system created a psychological divide between the insurgents and the fence-sitters. It created another option, and it gave hope. Across Baghdad, infrastructure repair became the immediate impact theme that set conditions for long-term security.

Will Muqtada Al Sadr or his lieutenants attack again? Probably. But the support for the attacks will be waning at best and will not last if infrastructure improvements continue and progress is matched alongside the other LOOs. He will have to go elsewhere to find true support. The people just will not support a resumption of large-scale violence in the face of clear signs of progress.

Governance. Integral to infrastructure improvement was the promotion of both the legitimacy and capacity of the Iraqi Government to govern on behalf of the populace. The government's ability to "secure and provide" targeted the shadow-government attempts of the insurgent.

In Baghdad, tribal and religious influences date back thousands of years and are coupled with the subjugation of the Iraqi populace over the previous 35 years and the inherent Middle East culture of corruption (by Western standards). Each presented a unique set of challenges in educating and transitioning to a government reliant on democratic ideals.

The method set in motion to create an ability for the local and national government to govern and to develop legitimacy within the eyes of Iraqi citizens, was through reinforcement of the Coalition Provisional Authority-emplaced neighborhood, district, and city advisory councils. Project funding provided by the $18.4 billion supplemental was conditionally approved by local government representatives as part of a full-fledged effort to force legitimacy and build local government capacity with assistance and guidance from the coalition and the U.S. mission in handling the administration of government.

Advisory assistance from the task force internally created the governance support team (GST). Under the leadership of the division's chief engineer, and created from an array of city planning and contracting expertise within the task force, the GST provided the connecting tissue between the U.S. mission; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); task force leaders; and local, city, and



The 1st Cavalry Division and Baghdad government restored the Abu Nuwas Park along the Tigris River in order to demonstrate a return to normalcy in the city and spur business activity in the area, August 2004.

US Army

national Iraqi Government entities. The Amanat and Baghdad Governate were forced to expand to develop the capacity to manage and resource the project process, subsequently developing legitimacy in the eyes of the populace.[16]

All levels of command were intimately involved in educating and mentoring the emerging Iraqi federalist-based, democratic system. In many instances there was a degree of unlearning that needed to occur. Although the population despised the rule of law under Saddam Hussein, it was the only model they knew, and they were prone to fall into patterns of governance reminiscent of that regime. Careful structuring, checks and balances, training, and funding help instill democratic, rather than autocratic, ideals.

Economic pluralism. We cannot create a sustained economic model by creating essential service jobs alone—these last only as long as the contract is open, and although they create spinoff, they are not enough to promote a mature economy. This line of operation—economic pluralism—with the previous four, is the most sequential in terms of execution. We created "economic incubators" in each neighborhood, with heavy investment in goods and services where we helped provide (through coordination with the government) the physical space, funding, and education on how to create a business plan. We brought together those who needed loans with those who gave loans and located spaces where businesses could be situated. In this manner, we launched the process of creating the conditions for a true free market.

Most large metropolitan areas are concerned with bringing in investment and opportunity by "gentrifying" city centers and creating business parks. One example of successful investment was Abu Nuwas, a district of Baghdad along the Tigris River across from the International Zone. The area, formerly a park district, was closed by Saddam Hussein in the 1990s and later used as a forward operating base during Operation Iraqi Freedom I. The mayor of Baghdad asked for help in restoring Abu Nuwas as a symbol of the return of Baghdad to normalcy. His secondary goal was to use the area as an incubator for business generation. The division, coupled with the local Iraqi Government, began restoring the park, which resulted in some amazing consequences. Within the first month of restoration, local fish restaurants and markets began to populate areas adjacent to the riverside park, which sparked other service-oriented business endeavors to spring up in support of the park and local restaurants. This one example of an incubator was a model in helping create conditions for long-term growth across all neighborhoods in Baghdad.

Another example is the agricultural facet of the Iraqi economy. Our estimate was that the area around Baghdad, if resourced and irrigated, could

easily feed all of Iraq. But the antiquated farming methods were only providing for 25 percent of the country's needs, forcing imports of most foodstuffs. Although the $18.4 billion Iraqi supplemental did not provide for any agricultural improvements, we were able to import, through reprogrammed funding, over 2,000 tons of grain, fertilizer, and feed. Immunizations, coupled with rejuvenating the irrigation apparatus around Baghdad, created conditions for economic independence.

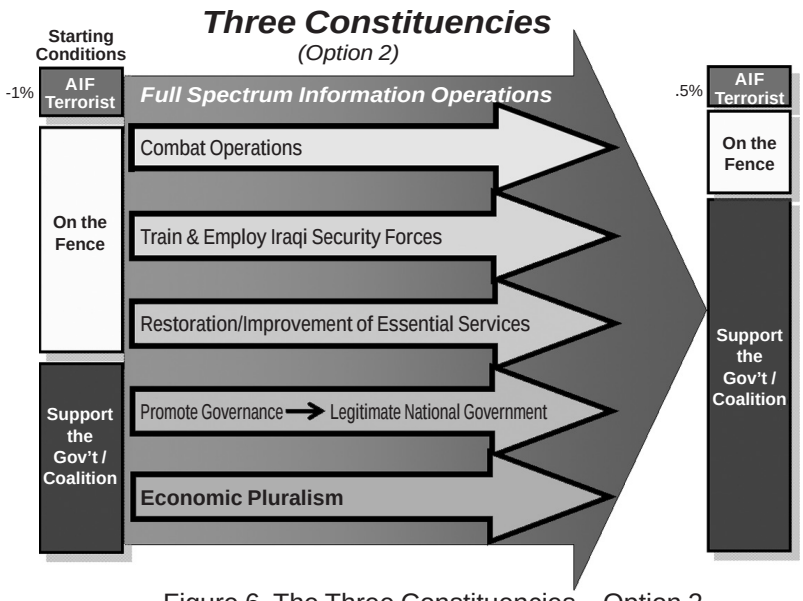


Figure 6. The Three Constituencies – Option 2
Percentages are for illustrative purposes only and do not constitute the size of opposition.

Promoting economic pluralism by working closely with NGOs and through the local government's identification of potential areas of exploitation (simultaneously working toward achieving the objective for the governance LOO, legitimizing their purpose) and basic business practices and methods, we helped local and city governments create business centers and warehouse districts and develop the capacity for the city to sustain economic development with limited foreign investment well beyond our departure.

One of the looming indicators of economic progress (and the inability of the fledgling government to keep pace) was the length of the wait at gas pumps. There were only about 109 gas stations within Baghdad, and normally, only a fourth to a half of the pumps were actually operational at any one time. Lines of people waiting for fuel were relatively short in the early stages of the task force campaign, but by the time we conducted our relief-in-place with the 3d Infantry Division, waiting lines had grown to unmanageable lengths and people were waiting for hours to purchase fuel. Paradoxically, the increase in wait times was a positive sign of economic growth: it indicated that the purchasing power of the common Iraqi had grown. Conversely, it was a troubling sign that the Iraqi-controlled distribution mechanisms could not keep pace with growth. The result was long lines and an entrepreneurial (or contraband) system of gas being sold on the street.

We tracked closely the price of goods and services throughout Baghdad and looked hard at average wages. If there was a demand for higher wages based on basic supply and demand, it was a definite sign of economic progress.

The last three lines of operations—essential services, governance, and economic pluralism—coupled with aggressive counterinsurgent operations and training and equipping Baghdad's police and security force, produced an integrated, synergistic approach to accomplishing objectives within the Task Force Baghdad Campaign Plan. We restructured the staffing functions and headquarters to achieve a capacity that equally weighted each line of operation against the other. The importance of an economic engagement could trump a combat engagement if it was deemed more important to achieving the division's ultimate campaign objective. This became an education process across the division in mentally shifting from that which we were comfortable with (combat operations and training) to a far broader set of critical tasks.

A robust set of measures of effectiveness, relying on the Balanced-Scorecard approach, allowed the division to gauge, through each line of operation, whether we were meeting campaign objectives or, based on environmental reality, needed to shift or change to reflect current reality. This allowed a transitional rather than a phased approach to the campaign plan that allowed nontraditional approaches to campaign accomplishment to have the same weight as traditional methodologies.

Information operations. A significant reality of the task force campaign is that it is fought on the local, national, and international stages. The actions of soldiers and leaders and their efforts on the ground can resonate at a strategic level in an instant. Shaping the message and tying that message to operations is as important, if not more so, to the desired individual effect as the previous five lines of operations. Understanding the effect of operations as seen through the lens of the Iraqi culture

and psyche is a foremost planning consideration for every operation.

The speed of understanding the media cycle is as important at the local level as it is on a global scale. On the night before the successful elections of 30 January 2005, a crudely fabricated rocket landed in the international zone, killing two U.S. citizens. The news rapidly moved across the media landscape and created an impression of instability toward the election within Baghdad, greater Iraq, and the world at large. (From our polling data we knew over 90 percent of Baghdad's citizens got their news about the election from television.)

Moving swiftly and using targeting-pattern analysis, the task force was in the right place at the right time to observe the launch of the rockets on tape. Detaining the insurgents, quickly declassifying the footage, and releasing it to the media outlets within hours of the event helped calm local and global fears—an IO event that leveraged a successful combat operation through integration of the public affairs apparatus designed to counteract the exact effect the insurgents were attempting to achieve.

In many ways, the manifestation of the five lines of operations by enhancing information operations became the indirect approach to targeting the terrorist threat. We knew visible signs of progress, an understanding of the uniqueness of governance through democracy and a federalist system, and the creation of jobs in concert with training Iraqi security forces and directly combating insurgent activity could in essence reduce and freeze insurgent influence and recruitment by creating an irreversible momentum. But, only through co-option of the people of Baghdad and Iraq could we defeat the international terrorist threat.

Through use of our IO venues we not only radiated the accomplishments of the fledgling Iraqi Government but also provided causal proof of the inability of the Iraqi populace to move forward toward democracy because of terrorist actions. In addition, we provided an anonymous venue to give information to the coalition through which to directly target terrorist, insurgent, and criminal activity in the face of intimidation.[17]

The full spectrum of information operations within the task force ranged from consequence management before and after conducting direct action to the education of the intricate complexities of a democracy, local safety announcements, and infrastructure status, to a Command Information Program. What was the message? How would it be received? How can we influence and shape the message to support the action? And vice versa: how can we influence and shape the action to support the message?

To target the operational center of gravity, information operations, in concert with actions, rose to a level of importance never before deemed necessary, and it was well known that the insurgents knew the value of an information operation executed at the right opportunity. Unless coalition-initiated projects were methodically thought through and publicized, insurgents would claim credit for the results, using posters, graffiti, or even sermons to inform the people they were the ones responsible for improvements.

Our Changing Role from an Operational Perspective

It is no longer sufficient to think in purely kinetic terms. Executing traditionally focused combat operations and concentrating on training local security forces works, but only for the short term. In the long term, doing so hinders true progress and, in reality, promotes the growth of insurgent forces working against campaign objectives. It is a lopsided approach.

The reality is that there are cultural mechanisms at play that demand a more integrated plan. No longer is it acceptable to think sequentially through stability operations and support operations by believing that if you first establish the security environment, you can work sequentially toward establishing critical infrastructure and governmental legitimacy then drive toward economic independence.

From an organizational perspective, the Army has successfully created the most modern, effective set of systems for rapid execution of combat operations on the planet. We can achieve immediate effects through command and control of our organic systems. What we have not been able to do is create the systems and processes to execute the nonlethal side as effortlessly as combat operations. Our own regulations, bureaucratic processes, staff relationships, and culture complicate the ability of our soldiers and leaders to achieve synchronized nonlethal effects across the battlespace. Our traditional training model, still shuddering from the echo of our Cold War mentality, has infused our organization to think in only kinetic terms. This demands new modalities of thinking and a renewed sense of importance to the education of our officer corps.

Critical thinking, professionally grounded in the controlled application of violence, yet exposed to a broad array of expertise not normally considered as a part of traditional military functions, will help create the capacity to rapidly shift cognitively to a new environment. We must create an organization built for change, beginning with the education of our officer corps.

Our strategic environment has forever changed. It demands a realignment of the critical tasks needed to be successful as a military force. Those

critical tasks must be matched to how we execute the tools of national power from a structural and cultural perspective.

The move toward modularity is of prime importance to the future of our force, yet advocating radical surgery to mission requirements might not be the optimal solution. The 1st Cavalry Division was able to rapidly make the change from a traditional armored force and focus quickly on a new environment because of the adaptability of soldiers and leaders who had developed the necessary leader skills and team comfort based on training fewer, rather than more, training tasks. Concern arises when you diffuse the valuable, nonreturnable resource of time by increasing the number of tasks to be trained. In the case of an uncertain future, less might be more.

From the perspective of asset allocation, this same move toward modularity, without considering its full effects, could hinder the immediate operational resource needs of a unit of employment (UEx) headquarters. The full-spectrum campaign approach forces the imperative of achieving balance across multiple lines of operations. This predictably will cause shifts in the main effort, but the force multipliers, traditionally located at the division (now the UEx), are no longer readily available and, instead, are committed Unit of Action (UA) assets. The friction of reallocation through mission analysis then slows the tempo needed to achieve operational balance.

Our joint doctrine requires phased operations, which leads us to believe there is and always will be a distinct demarcation between major combat operations and stability operations. It would be helpful if the insurgents and terrorists we encounter would follow the same doctrine, but they have not in Iraq, and they will not in the future. Transitional indicators associated with the full spectrum of operations weighed against a campaign plan tailored for the environment might be a better method of conflict evolution. We should consider paraphrasing Clausewitz: full-spectrum operations are the continuation of major combat operations by other means.

This campaign's outcome, as the outcomes of future similar endeavors will be, was determined by the level of adaptation displayed and the intense preparation by the small-unit leader. Field grade and general officers became a supporting cast who existed to provide guidance and to resource the needs of small-unit leaders. Whether it was money, training, intelligence, or access to information in a usable format, our junior leaders could win engagements that, collectively, could offset the goals of adversaries who were comfortable operating within our decision cycle based on their flat organizational structure and communications methods.

Even our own C2 systems and process, oriented on providing clarity above, had to be turned upside down to focus on providing the tip of the spear with the information and actionable knowledge needed to determine the best course of action within the commander's intent, guidance, rules of engagement, and law of land warfare. Doing this was effective in mitigating and offsetting—on a collective scale—the consequences of our own anachronistic cultural hierarchy against the networked, flat, viral nature of insurgents and terrorists.

Although arming small-unit leaders with knowledge so they can determine the right course of action is the correct procedure, there was rarely (if ever) one decisive operation that would unequivocally shift the currents of change toward certain victory. Rather, it was the net effect of many microdecisive actions performed along all interconnected lines of operation that left the indelible mark of true progress. Transition along the interconnected lines of operations began with acknowledging that it was a battle with multiple indicators and multiple conceptual fronts.

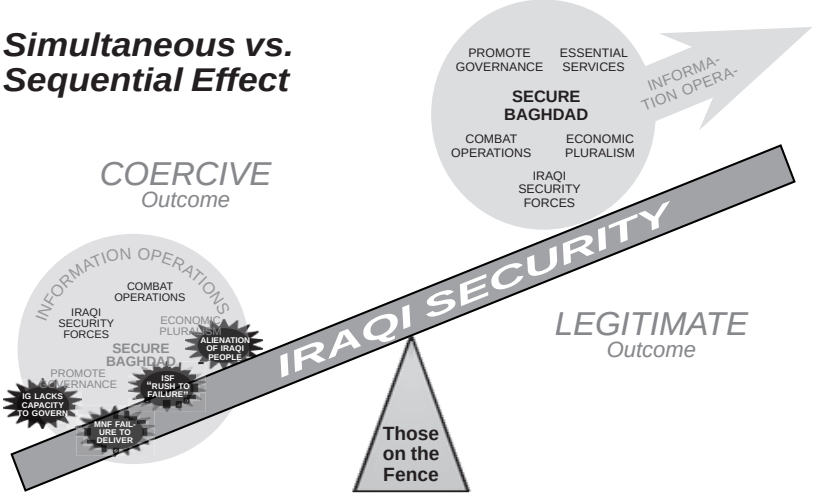


Figure 7. The Lopsided Approach.

A decisive, exhilarating "win" along one of the lines of operations would only create a salient to be predictably eroded by the insurgent. The broad collection of small, decisive victories along all the lines of operations, supporting each other in a delicate balance of perception and purpose, would move the campaign toward positive results.

The campaign plan executed by Task Force Baghdad created the conditions to keep our soldiers safe and our homeland sound. Although we train and are comfortable executing wide sweeps through the desert, warfare as we know it has changed. The demographic progression toward large urban areas and the inability of local governments to keep abreast of basic services breeds cesspools for fundamentalist ideologues to take advantage of the disenfranchised. Using our economic strength as an instrument of national power balances the process of achieving long-term, sustainable success.

Exploitation

The election of 30 January 2005 was the "point of penetration" in accomplishing U.S. objectives in Iraq. Accurately expressing in words alone the culmination of emotions that rippled throughout Task Force Baghdad that incredible day is simply impossible. Every soldier in the task force who witnessed democracy in action will forever look at the simple act of voting in a different way. But, as I reflect on the last year, I am concerned about the "exploitation" phase through the shaping and immediate targeting of the remaining funds associated with the $18.4 billion supplemental and other donor-nation contributions. How you target that funding is just as important as getting the funding. Within Task Force Baghdad, we were still short funding of approximately $400 million to accomplish what was needed to achieve the same effect encountered in Sadr City, Haifa Street, Al Rasheed, Al Soweib, and other areas across all of Baghdad to completely isolate insurgent influence.

Many people question why a military force is concerned with infrastructure repair, governance, and economic pluralism: why not rely on the state, USAID, and NGOs? It comes down to a simple answer of capacity relative to the situation. The U.S. military is built to create secure conditions. But true long-term security does not come from the end of a gun in this culture; it comes from a balanced application of all five lines of operations within a robust IO apparatus.

It is easy to advocate a lopsided approach of physical security before infusing projects, economic incentives, and governance for short-term political gain or bureaucratic positioning. But true progress, in the face of an insurgent threat that does not recognize spans of control or legalistic precedence (yet takes advantages of those same inefficiencies of organizations designed for another era), should be weighed against accomplishing the mission and protecting the force by using a more balanced, full-spectrum, transitional approach.

It is time we recognize with renewed clarity the words of President Kennedy, who understood "that few of the important problems of our time have, in the final analysis, been finally solved by military power alone."[18] ***MR***

NOTES

1. President John F. Kennedy (remarks to the graduating class of the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, 7 June 1961), on-line at <www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/publicpapers/1961/jfk232_61.html>, accessed 18 July 2005.
2. Mayor Tamimmi, discussion with MG Peter W. Chiarelli, Abu Nuwas District, Baghdad, July 2004.
3. During the deployment to Baghdad, over 22,000 soldiers went through training on cultural awareness, which became an integral part of any operation. During the ramp-up to Ramadan, the division enacted a full-spectrum command information operations campaign to create understanding and empathy for the religious event.
4. Bard O'Neil, *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's Inc., 1990). O'Neil defines categories of insurgents across seven objectives: anarchist, egalitarian, traditionalist, pluralist, secessionist, reformist, and preservationist. When talking of insurgents, we run the spectrum from anarchist to pluralist. The current foreign terrorist element in Iraq can be characterized through an anarchist objective. Anarchists do not necessarily fit the traditional description of insurgent as we discuss them. Although in size and scope they are relatively small, the effects they achieve resonate on a strategic scale.
5. A clear example of limited use of force is the vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, or suicide car bomb. Limited use causes citywide suspicion. Coalition forces are forced to interact with the Iraqi populace from a defensive posture, effectively driving a psychological wedge between the people and the protectors.
6. O'Neil, 82.
7. Saddam Hussein routed all power in Iraq toward the capital. During the early days of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), equity became the mantra across Iraq, cutting back normally accepted electrical expectations across Baghdad.
8. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 2001), 5-33.
9. Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton, *The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School, 1 September 1996). The task force implemented Kaplan and Norton's balanced-scorecard methodology to track and update multiple LOO-specific metrics as a way to analytically gauge by LOO where the task force lay along the spectrum of operational success criteria.
10. Iraqi Armed Forces work for the Minister of Defense; Iraqi Police Service works for the Minister of Interior.
11. As of February 2005, there were seven operational Iraqi Army battalions and one Iraqi Army brigade under the operational control of the U.S. task force brigade. The task force used a building-block approach, coupling a robust adviser team with each element, using U.S. mission-essential task list assessments to track progress and skill-set-specific command post exercises to attain proficiency.
12. In January 2005, the Iraqi National Guard was renamed the Iraqi Army by the Iraqi Interim Government.
13. Task Force Baghdad resourced the Baghdad city-wide survey, January 2005.
14. The task force prepared to become fluent in these unmilitary-like tasks by studying the complexity of managing a large southern U.S. city. We examined how a city plans, prepares, and executes the services we consider "a right" rather than a privilege. We laid those plans on top of a fully functional model of the cultural norms of the Arab people, the current status of Baghdad services and government, and the networked strategy and actions of the insurgent and terrorist influence.
15. The task force also concentrated on hospitals, schools, communications, and emergency response networks.
16. Amanat is the title of the Baghdad city hall.
17. The division established a TIPS hotline through the local cell-phone network to allow anonymous reporting. The IO campaign to support this had a refrigerator-magnet effect ubiquitous to the entire population: it was always there in the background.
18. Ibid, Kennedy.

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Major Patrick R. Michaelis, U.S. Army, is the operations officer of the 1st Squadron, 7th U.S. Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. He received a B.A. in history from Texas A&M University, an M.P.A. from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and is a graduate of CGSC. He has served in various command and staff positions in CONUS, Germany, Bosnia, and Iraq.

Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations

Brigadier Nigel R.F. Aylwin-Foster, British Army

A virtue of having coalition partners with a legacy of shared sacrifice during difficult military campaigns is that they can also share candid observations. Such observations are understood to be professional exchanges among friends to promote constructive discussion that can improve the prospects of the coalition successes for which all strive. It was in a constructive spirit, then, that this article was made available to Military Review. *The article is a professional commentary by an experienced officer based on his experiences and background. It should also be understood that publishing this article does not imply endorsement of or agreement with its observations by the Combined Arms Center leadership or* Military Review. *Indeed, some comments are already dated and no longer valid. Nonetheless, this article does provide* Military Review *readers the thought-provoking assessments of a senior officer with significant experience in counterterrorism operations. And it is offered in that vein—to stimulate discussion.*—Editor

Few could fail to be impressed by the speed and style of the U.S. dominated Coalition victory over Saddam's forces in spring 2003. At the time, it appeared, to sceptics and supporters alike, that the most ambitious military action in the post Cold War era had paid off, and there was an air of heady expectation of things to come. Much of the credit lies rightly with the U.S. Army, which seemed entirely attuned morally, conceptually and physically to the political intent it served.[1]

In contrast, 2 years later, notwithstanding ostensible campaign successes such as the elections of January 2005, Iraq is in the grip of a vicious and tenacious insurgency. Few would suggest Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) has followed the path intended by U.S. President George W. Bush when he commited U.S. forces. Pentagon and other Administration staff acknowledge that a moment of opportunity was missed immediately after the toppling of Saddam's regime: that fleeting chance to restore law and order, maintain the momentum, nurture popular support and thus extinguish the inevitable seeds of insurgency sown amongst the ousted ruling elite. Today, the Coalition is resented by many Iraqis, whilst analysis of attack trends since mid 2003 shows that Coalition forces formed the bulk of the insurgents' target set throughout 2004. In short, despite political and military leaders' justifiable claims of achievement against tough odds, others claim, justifiably on the face of it, that the Coalition has failed to capitalise on initial success.

This change in fortune has been attributed to many factors. The Iraq undertaking was, in any case, 'forbiddingly difficult' and might not have seemed as appealing had the U.S. forces not recently achieved a sudden and decisive victory over Taleban forces in Afghanistan.[2] Inadequate attention was paid to planning for OIF Phase 4, including Security Sector Reform (SSR), arising in part, according to at least one source, from frictions in the Administration.[3] The CPA [Coalition Provisional Authority] decisions to disband the senior levels of the Baath Party and the entire old Iraqi Army, thus effectively disenfranchising those most likely to resent the new order, have also attracted much criticism. Some argue, however, that the Coalition military, particularly the U.S. Army, were partly to blame, citing aspects of their performance since the cessation of formal hostilities and commencement of Phase 4 of the operation.[4] Indeed, some serving U.S. Army and DOD personnel acknowledge that whilst the Army is indisputably the master of conventional warfighting, it is notably less

This is a reprint of an article originally published in the "Seaford House Papers" and retains its original punctuation, spelling, grammar, and paragraphing. The views herein do not reflect those of the United Kingdom, the U.S. Army, or Military Review.*—Editor*

proficient in the Phase 4 type of role, or what the U.S. defence community commonly calls Operations Other Than War (OOTW). The crux of the debate is whether the performance and approach of the U.S. Army have indeed been contributory factors in the deepening crisis in OIF Phase 4, and, if so, what that means for the future development of the Army, particularly given that it has already embarked on a process of transformation. OIF is a joint venture, and dedicated, courageous Americans from all 4 Services and the civil sector risk their lives daily throughout Iraq, but the Army is the pivotal, supported force, and thus the most germane to the issue.

My motivation to study this has arisen from my experience serving with the U.S. Forces in Iraq throughout 2004. There can be few acts more galling than a soldier from one country publicly assessing the performance of those from another. However, this is not an arrogant exercise in national comparisons: there is no other Army in the world that could even have attempted such a venture. It is, rather, an attempt to understand and rationalise the apparently paradoxical currents of strength and weakness witnessed at close hand over the course of a year. Ultimately, the intent is to be helpful to an institution I greatly respect.

The purpose of the paper, therefore, is to assess the impact and root causes of the U.S. Army's approach to and conduct of operations in OIF Phase 4, in order to demonstrate that, whilst not yet another Vietnam, it does need to be recognised as just as critical a watershed in U.S. Army development.

The paper focuses on the moral and conceptual components of capability, since these are likely to prove the most contentious and present the U.S. Army with the greatest challenges. If you are the richest nation in the world, changing structures, systems and platform capabilities is one thing: changing the way your people think, interact and behave under extreme duress is much more difficult. Section 1 will analyse U.S. Army activity from immediately after the defeat of Saddam's forces in conventional combat until mid 2005, when this paper was drafted, in order to identify relevant trends and determine their impact on campaign success. Section 2 will consider these trends in the context of the Army as a whole, in order to offer wider supporting evidence and determine root causes. Section 3 will briefly assess the U.S. Army's response to lessons identified from this period of operations, and conclude. Since the purpose is to analyse an issue, rather than define policy, there are no specific recommendations.

Section 1:
The Extent to Which U.S. Army Performance in OIF Phase 4 Has Fuelled the Insurgency

If I were treated like this, I'd be a terrorist!—U.S. Army Colonel: Baghdad, September 2004.[5]

Commenting on a contentious current campaign is self-evidently problematic. With the outcome still so much in the balance, no absolute conclusions about the overall effectiveness of the U.S. Army's conduct of operations can safely or legitimately be drawn: only time will tell. Security requirements also constrain the depth of supporting evidence. Nonetheless, there is plenty of unclassified anecdotal and circumstantial evidence from which to deduce trends, at least about the shorter term effects of its operations from 1 May 2003, the formally declared end of combat operations, through to June 2005. Such a short paper can only highlight the issues most salient to the aim, provide snapshots of evidence, and trust that the authenticity and currency of the sources will carry the necessary conviction.

My own experience, serving at the heart of a U.S. dominated command within the Coalition from December 2003 to November 2004, suggests something of an enigma, hence the spur to study the subject further. My overriding impression was of an Army imbued with an unparalleled sense of patriotism, duty, passion, commitment, and determination, with plenty of talent, and in no way lacking in humanity or compassion. Yet it seemed weighed down by bureaucracy, a stiflingly hierarchical outlook, a pre-disposition to offensive operations, and a sense that duty required all issues to be confronted head-on. Many personnel seemed to struggle to understand the nuances of the OIF Phase 4 environment. Moreover, whilst they were almost unfailingly courteous and considerate, at times their cultural insensitivity, almost certainly inadvertent, arguably amounted to institutional racism. To balance that apparent litany of criticisms, the U.S. Army was instrumental in a string of tactical and operational successes through the second half of 2004; so any blanket verdict would be grossly misleading.

Other sources offer similarly divergent evidence. Extreme critics point to Vietnam and predict a

long and bloody struggle, leading eventually to a withdrawal with political objectives at best partially secured. However, there is no weight of a priori evidence to support that view yet, and one senses that its proponents almost wish for failure in order to make some other wider political point. A more balanced view came from a senior British officer, in theatre for 6 months in 2004, who judged that the U.S. Army acted like 'fuel on a smouldering fire', but that this was 'as much owing to their presence as their actions'.[6] Others have been less sanguine. One senior Washington Administration official considered that the Army was unquestionably successful during the combat phase, but much less so subsequently.[7] He noted that General Tommy Franks had assured the Administration that the Army would restore law and order, but in the event it had failed to do so, and thus to some extent Lt Gen (Retired) Jay M. Garner had been replaced because of a failure by the Army, since the absence of law and order had rendered the country ungovernable by the thinly staffed ORHA [Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance].[8] Like many others, he believed that a window of opportunity had been missed in the period immediately after the fall of Saddam, to some extent owing to a failure by the Army to adjust in time to the changing requirement. He thought the Administration had already recognised the need to be better prepared for Irregular Warfare (IW) and post conflict stabilisation and reconstruction (S&R) operations, but the Army had not yet done so.[9] Consistent with his claim, the Department of Defense sponsored *Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)* 2006 draft IW Study reports, inter alia, 'a need for changed approaches to IW'.[10]

The remainder of this section will assess two aspects of the Army's conduct of the early stages of OIF Phase 4, which are judged key to success, and mutually supporting. These are:

- The Army's indirect impact on campaign success, through its interaction with the Iraqi population; and,
- Its inherent effectiveness, in terms of its capacity to adapt to the unexpected.

U.S. Army Interaction with the Iraqi Population

Western COIN [counterinsurgency] doctrine generally identifies the 'hearts and minds campaign'—gaining and maintaining the support of the domestic population in order to isolate the insurgent—as the key to success. It thus sees the population as a potential instrument of advantage. It further recognises that military operations must contribute to the achievement of this effect and be subordinate to the political campaign. This implies that above all a COIN force must have two skills that are not required in conventional warfighting: first, it must be able to see issues and actions from the perspective of the domestic population; second, it must understand the relative value of force and how easily excessive force, even when apparently justified, can undermine popular support. Likewise, whilst S&R operations imply a more benign environment, nonetheless it is critical that the actions of the military should not serve to alienate the local population. The alternative doctrinal approach concentrates on attrition, through the destruction of the insurgent, and thus sees the population as at best a distraction to this primary aim, and in extremis a target for repression.[11]

Clearly, Western liberal democracies cannot resort to repression of the population, but they do have varying perceptions of the balance required between the two doctrinal models and the extent to which military operations should focus on the destruction of the insurgent versus his isolation from the population. The most striking feature of the U.S. Army's approach during this period of OIF Phase 4 is that universally those consulted for this paper who were not from the U.S. considered that the Army was too 'kinetic'. This is shorthand for saying U.S. Army personnel were too inclined to consider offensive operations and destruction of the insurgent as the key to a given situation, and conversely failed to understand its downside.

Granted, this verdict partly reflects the difference in perspectives of scale between the U.S. and her Coalition allies, arising from different resourcing levels. For example, during preparatory operations in the November 2004 Fallujah clearance operation, on one night over forty 155mm artillery rounds were fired into a small section of the city. Given the intent to maintain a low profile prior to the launch of the main operation, most armies would consider this bombardment a significant event. Yet it did not feature on the next morning's update to the 4-Star Force Commander: the local commander considered it to be a minor application of combat power.[12]

Notwithstanding, there is little dispute that U.S. forces in Iraq over this period were more offensively minded than their Coalition counterparts. For a start, U.S. Rules of Engagement (ROE) were more lenient than other nations', thus encouraging earlier escalation. One senior Coalition officer

noted that too much of the force remained conceptually in warfighting mode in the post combat phase, and failed to understand that every soldier becomes a CIMIC [civil-military cooperation] operator in COIN and S&R operations.[13] Conversely, some U.S. officers held that their allies were too reluctant to use lethal force. They argued that a reluctance to use force merely bolstered the insurgents' courage and resilience, whilst demonstrating Coalition lack of resolve to the domestic population, thus prolonging the conflict. It was apparent that many considered that the only effective, and morally acceptable, COIN strategy was to kill or capture all terrorists and insurgents; they saw military destruction of the enemy as a strategic goal in its own right. It should be stressed that this does not imply some sort of inherent brutality or lack of humanity: examples are legion of the toughest U.S. soldiers in Iraq exercising deeply moving levels of compassion in the face of civilian suffering, and often under extreme provocation. The issue is more a conceptual one about relative views of the value of lethal force.

The same contrast in national perspectives applied at the operational level of command. At various key decision points the instinct of the U.S. senior chain of command differed from its Coalition counterparts. Yet it would be simplistic and misleading to suggest that U.S. senior commanders simply did not understand the importance of popular support. At least 2 evidently did. Major General (MG) David Petraeus, as Commanding General (CG) of the 101st Division and responsible for Northern Iraq in the period after the fall of Saddam, swung his troops routinely between offensive operations and an equally vigorous domestic construction and restoration programme.[14] He is widely accredited with maintaining relative peace and normal functionality in Mosul, a city with an ethnic mix easily liable to ignite into civil conflict. Likewise, MG Pete Chiarelli, CG of 1st Cav Div, responsible for the demanding and volatile Baghdad area of operations in 2004, referred in briefings to his Division's SWETI ops: Sewage, Water, Electricity, Trash, Information. He considered his role to be as much city chief executive as soldier. Before his Division's deployment to Iraq he took his senior commanders and staff on a seminar with U.S. industrialists, because he realised from the outset that they would need to understand how to manage a population and restore and rebuild a city at least as much as they would need to know how to kill and capture terrorists.

The other widely held view, amongst non-U.S. participants in theatre, was that the U.S. Army was too often insensitive to the cultural nuances of the situation. In practical terms this amounts to a variation of the 'too kinetic' theme, since the effect was potentially the same—to undermine popular support for the Coalition campaign.

However, to apply the judgement of cultural insensitivity universally would be similarly misleading. Troops could undoubtedly be damagingly heavy-handed, as they could in any army, but there were many reported instances of U.S. Army courtesy and empathy with the local population. As an illustration of the contrasts, one senior Iraqi official who worked closely with the Coalition had his house twice subjected to routine search by U.S. Army personnel.[15] On one occasion the troops displayed exemplary awareness of cultural sensitivities, such as appropriate treatment of women in the household. On the other, the aggressive behaviour of troops from a battalion newly arrived in theatre led to his formal complaint, with consequent apology from a U.S. General Officer.

Obviously the latter occasion was simply a mistake and betrayed, if anything, a lack of training: it was hardly likely to have been indicative of command intent. Nonetheless, another U.S. General did assert that it was unreasonable and impractical to expect front-line soldiers, given their training and pre-eminent warfighting role, to develop the levels of subtlety or master the wider range of skills predicated by the hearts and minds campaign. He implied that their employment must perforce be restricted to combat tasks, leaving post conflict engagement with the populace largely to other organisations, such as the Army's reservist dominated CIMIC units, and NGOs [nongovernmental organizations].

The *QDR* IW Study suggests that the latter General Officer held the more common view. It notes that, in an analysis of 127 U.S. pacification operations in Iraq between May 2003 to May 2005, 'most ops were reactive to insurgent activity—seeking to hunt down insurgents. Only 6% of ops were directed specifically to create a secure environment for the population'. [16]

'There was a strong focus on raiding, cordon & search and sweep ops throughout: the one day brigade raid is the preferred tactic'. There was a 'preference for large-scale kinetic maneuver' and 'focus on killing insurgents, not protecting the population'.

U.S. Army personnel, like their colleagues in the other U.S. Services, had a strong sense of moral authority. They fervently believed in the mission's

underlying purpose, the delivery of democracy to Iraq, whereas other nations' forces tended to be more ambivalent about why they were there. This was at once a strength and hindrance to progress. It bolstered U.S. will to continue in the face of setbacks. But it also encouraged the erroneous assumption that given the justness of the cause, actions that occurred in its name would be understood and accepted by the population, even if mistakes and civilian fatalities occurred in the implementation.

This sense of moral righteousness combined with an emotivity that was rarely far from the surface, and in extremis manifested as deep indignation or outrage that could serve to distort collective military judgement. The most striking example during this period occurred in April 2004 when insurgents captured and mutilated 4 U.S. contractors in Fallujah. In classic insurgency doctrine, this act was almost certainly a come-on, designed to invoke a disproportionate response, thereby further polarising the situation and driving a wedge between the domestic population and the Coalition forces. It succeeded. The precise chain of events leading to the committal of U.S. and Iraqi security forces, or reasons for the subsequent failure to clear what had become a terrorist stronghold, lie well beyond the classification of this paper. However, the essential point is that regardless of who gave the order to clear Fallujah of insurgents, even those U.S. commanders and staff who generally took the broader view of the campaign were so deeply affronted on this occasion that they became set on the total destruction of the enemy. Under emotional duress even the most broad-minded and pragmatic reverted to type: kinetic.

Much has also been made in open sources about the failures of intelligence in theatre.[17] A detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is germane that U.S. forces put relatively little emphasis on HUMINT [human intelligence], concentrating instead on using technological assets to gather intelligence, the significance being that the latter can serve to keep the troops separated from the local population. This assists force protection, in the short term, particularly in an environment where suicide bombers are the major threat, but it equally helps to encourage the local sentiment that the troops are a distant, impersonal occupying force which has no interest in the population. It denies one avenue for nurturing popular support. Similarly, the *QDR* IW Study notes that during the period studied U.S. forces were relatively isolated from the population they existed to support: 'they live in fortified camps away from the population and most face-to-face contact . . . is during cordon and search or vehicle checkpoint operations'.[18] Routine foot patrolling, a key means of interacting and thus gathering HUMINT, was the exception.

On balance, and notwithstanding many examples of highly effective interaction with the Iraqi population, the empirical evidence supports the following broad conclusions about the U.S. Army in theatre over this period:

- There was a doctrinal issue: some accepted that the key to success was to gain popular support, in order to drive a wedge between the terrorist and his lifeline. Others believed that the best concept was to concentrate on destruction of the insurgent. Similarly, some commanders believed that there was a pragmatic limit to the range of skills and approaches a front-line soldier could be expected to acquire, which de facto limited their value in terms of significant hearts and minds activity.
- There was a training issue: a significant proportion was unaware of the doctrine, or the relative importance of influencing the population through appropriate interaction.
- Intuitively the use of options other than force came less easily to the U.S. Army than her allies.
- High levels of emotivity, combined with a strong sense of moral authority, could serve to distort collective judgement and invoke responses to insurgent activity that ultimately exacerbated the situation.
- Despite its own multi-cultural nature, the Army was not culturally attuned to the environment.
- U.S. Army personnel instinctively turned to technology to solve problems. Similarly, their instinct was to seek means, including technology, to minimise frequent close contact with the local population, in order to enhance force protection, but this served further to alienate the troops from the population.

U.S. Army Adaptability

The U.S. Army way of command is germane to the argument. According to one source, whilst the U.S. Army may espouse mission command, in Iraq it did not practise it; other observers have echoed this sentiment.[19] Commanders and staff at all levels were strikingly conscious of their duty, but rarely if ever questioned authority, and were reluctant to deviate from precise instructions. Staunch loyalty upward and conformity to one's superior were noticeable traits. Each commander had his own style, but if there was a common trend it was for

micro-management, with many hours devoted to daily briefings and updates. Planning tended to be staff driven and focused on process rather than end effect. The net effect was highly centralised decision-making, which worked when serving a commander with a gift for retaining detail and concurrently managing a plethora of issues, but all too readily developed undue inertia. Moreover, it tended to discourage lower level initiative and adaptability, even when commanders consciously encouraged both.

The U.S. Army's laudable and emphatic 'can-do' approach to operations paradoxically encouraged another trait, which has been described elsewhere as damaging optimism. Self-belief and resilient optimism are recognised necessities for successful command, and all professional forces strive for a strong can-do ethos. However, it is unhelpful if it discourages junior commanders from reporting unwelcome news up the chain of command. The U.S. Army during this period of OIF exemplified both sides of this coin. Most commanders were unfailingly positive, including in briefings and feedback to superior commanders, but there were occasions when their optimism may have served to mislead those trying to gauge progress. In briefings to superiors, intentions and targets could easily become misconstrued as predictions and in turn develop an apparent, but unjustified and misleading degree of certainty.[20] Force commanders and political masters need to know the true state of affairs if they are to reach timely decisions to change plans: arguably, they did not always do so.

Like any deployed force, levels of proficiency were mixed, including a discernible difference between formed units and ad hoc organisations. However, the range of competence amongst deployed U.S. Army personnel seemed more pronounced than in other contributing nations, perhaps reflecting how gravely the inescapable requirement for manpower was over-stretching the structure, leading to excessive deployments for individuals and causing the Army to dig deep into reserves and those parts of the force with the least expertise.[21] Whilst this did not per se prevent adaptation, it did compound the issue, since the lower levels of expertise encountered discouraged commanders all the more from loosening their grip on the reins.

On balance the available evidence indicates these U.S. Army trends:

- Exceptional commitment, sense of duty, and unquestioning loyalty to the wider cause, the mission, the force and superior officers.
- Insufficient adaptability to the requirements of Phase 4 caused by:
  - Process rather than effects orientated command and control regimes.
  - A hierarchically conscious command ethos, which encouraged centralisation, and conversely discouraged low level initiative or innovation even when senior commanders stressed the need for them.
  - Commander over-optimism, which could sometimes compound the disinclination to adapt plans, since it raised undue confidence in higher headquarters that existing plans were on track.
- A shortage of manpower from which to draw troops into theatre, leading to very varied levels of expertise, which tended to compound the issues noted above.

Overall Judgement

Much of the above could be explained away as the inevitable friction resulting from operations in a fractured, war-torn country with an ethnically complex population. Nor is there any suggestion that the trends identified above apply universally. However, setting aside the many exogenous factors impacting on the effectiveness of the military campaign in Iraq during this period, there is sufficient weight of empirical evidence to deduce that, following its striking success in the conventional warfighting phase of OIF, and notwithstanding the immense bravery and dedication exhibited throughout the force:

- The Army's approach to and conduct of operations was a contributory factor in the Coalition's failure to exploit success immediately after the fall of Saddam. (That is not to say that the outcome would have been different had the Army operated differently, but it might have been).
- The Army took too long to adapt to the changed requirements arising from Phase 4 operations.
- Although the Army may now be achieving campaign success, it created a harder task for itself by dint of its approach and conduct during the early stages of OIF Phase 4, including well into 2004.

Section 2 will consider the Army more widely, in order to analyse the root causes of the trends identified in this Section. In so doing, it will demonstrate that the trends identified in OIF Phase 4 were characteristic of the Army as a whole, and that the operational state and thinking of the Army in the period leading up to OIF made the outcome assessed above almost inevitable.

Section 2:
The Root Causes of the OIF Phase 4 Trends Identified in Section 1

The United States is fighting the Global War on Terrorism with a mindset shaped by the Cold War. That mindset helped create today's joint force that possesses nearly irresistible powers in conventional wars against nation-states. Unfortunately, the wars the United States must fight today in Afghanistan and Iraq are not of this variety.—LTC M. Wade Markel, USA[22]

No army can be analysed comprehensively in 5,000 words, least of all the U.S. This section will, therefore, concentrate on those aspects of the U.S. Army's conceptual and moral components judged to hold the key to explaining the features and impacts identified in the OIF snapshot in Section 1. These are a combination of enduring, longer term factors, compounded by shorter term, transient factors, which have collectively conspired to render the U.S. Army conceptually and culturally ill-disposed to OIF Phase 4, and similarly ill-disposed to adapt to the extent required, and thus ironically ill-suited to the path determined for it de facto by U.S. Foreign Policy at the beginning of the 21st Century.

The Army's Conventional Warfighting Focus

The most straightforward reason why the Army struggled in OIF Phase 4 to achieve the effectiveness demonstrated in the preceding combat phase was that it was, by design, relatively ill prepared for it. In spite of COIN and S&R operations having occupied the majority of the Army's operational time since the Cold War, and their being an inevitable consequence of the GWOT [Global War on Terror], these roles have not been considered core Army activities. The Army's focus has been conventional warfighting, and its branches into COIN and S&R have been regarded as a diversion, to be undertaken reluctantly, and preferably by Special Operations Forces and other specialists, many of whom are in the Army reserves. So deeply ingrained is the Army's focus on conventional warfighting that even when HQ 3 Corps was preparing to deploy to Iraq in early 2004 and must have known it would be conducting COIN and S&R operations, with all that that should entail in terms of targeted preparation, its pre-deployment training still focused on conventional operations.[23]

Surprising though HQ 3 Corps' omission may seem, it is symptomatic of a trend rooted in U.S. Army historical development: the Army has consistently seen itself more or less exclusively as a conventional warfighting organisation, and prepared for operations accordingly. In his seminal book *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife,* LTC John Nagl contrasts the development of organisational culture in the British and U.S. Armies, in order to determine why the former succeeded in Malaya but the latter failed in Vietnam.[24] The book pre-dates OIF by a year. Nonetheless the parallels with the evidence arising from OIF Phase 4 are too marked to ignore, a feature which evidently did not escape the notice of the COS of the Army, General Peter J. Schoomaker, who in 2005 ordered copies for every 4-Star General Officer currently serving, and provided a Foreword to the second edition.[25]

Nagl notes that 'The American Army's role from its very origins was the eradication of threats to national survival', in contrast to the British Army's history as 'an instrument of limited war, designed to achieve limited goals at limited cost'. And, 'As a consequence, its historical focus was almost unfailingly and exclusively to be a conventional warfighting organisation'.[26] He contends that this focus was so dominant in the American military psyche that the Army of the Vietnam era saw its core task unshakeably as 'the absolute defeat of an enemy on the field of battle'.[27] This attitude was sufficiently well ingrained throughout the Vietnam era that the enemy's destruction on military terms prevailed as the dominant operational intent, despite the many indicators that might have driven the Army towards the necessary realisation that the military objectives must be subordinate to wider political goals.

The trends identified in Section 1 are consistent with this. Likewise, there is plenty of evidence, from Nagl by implication, and from other sources more directly, that this uncompromising focus on conventional warfighting, and concomitant aversion to other roles, have persisted to the present day, or at least until very recently, and were instrumental in shaping the Army's approach to OIF in 2003 and 2004. LTC [Scott M.] Eagen, an instructor at West Point, informs cadets studying COIN: 'the United States has never excelled at fighting insurgencies. In particular, our most disastrous effort, Vietnam, has left a bitter taste for irregular warfare on the historical palate of most Americans'.[28] U.S. Army Colonel (Retired) Don Snider, a senior lecturer in Social Sciences at West Point and an authority on the professional development of the Army, asserted

that Army senior officers 'only realised recently that OOTW had become an enduring purpose for the Army'.[29] Combined Arms Center staff, in a briefing to the author about Military Transformation, talked exclusively about enhancing warfighting capability and were evidently at a loss when asked what was being done to enhance COIN and S&R capabilities.[30]

Nor does COIN have a strong conceptual and training foundation in the U.S. Army. As LTC Eagen notes: 'To make matters worse, nowhere in the DOD's Joint Professional Military Education system is a course that is solely dedicated to the specific study of counter-insurgency'.[31] Written doctrine has also been neglected. The U.S. Army published an interim field manual on COIN only recently, in response to events in Iraq, but too late to assist those who needed to adapt so swiftly in 2003.[32] Furthermore, COIN only merits the status of an elective subject at West Point and other officer training establishments, and is not widely studied in any of these: there is little incentive to do so. As Snider observed, from the outset officers are taught that the acid test is army operations in great power battles; they must not be found wanting in this mainstream activity. Careers are shaped accordingly, and the COIN expert has been seen as something of an outsider. Likewise, according to TRADOC [Training and Doctine Command] staff, COIN is not yet included in their programmes of instruction as a type of operation in its own right, although some relevant military tasks are.

The U.S. Army has not merely been uncompromising in its focus on conventional warfighting. It has also developed an uncompromising approach to conventional warfare that is particularly ill-suited to the nuances of COIN and thus compounds the problem. Nagl again: 'When the United States finally did develop a national approach to the use of force in international politics, the strategy of annihilation became characteristically the American way of war'.[33] Eliot Cohen cites the two dominant characteristics of American strategic culture as: 'The preference for massing a large number of men and machines and the predilection for direct and violent assault'.[34] Although a doctrine intended for conventional warfare rather than COIN, it has permeated the American military and renders the transition to the more graduated and subtle responses required for effective COIN all the more difficult.

Nagl also notes the conceptual separation in American military thinking between military and political activity: 'the American way of war is marked by a belief that the nation is at war or at peace; the binary nature of war leaves no space for political-military interface'.[35] Granted, modern technology enables lethal force to be applied more precisely, thus helping to minimise collateral damage and reduce the potential for inadvertent alienation of the civilian population. Nonetheless, the characteristic U.S. military intent has remained one of uncompromising destruction of the enemy's forces, rather than a more finely tuned harnessing of military effect to serve political intent—a distinction in the institutional understanding of military purpose that becomes highly significant when an army attuned to conventional warfare suddenly needs to adapt to the more subtle political framework of a COIN campaign.

In short, the U.S. Army has developed over time a singular focus on conventional warfare, of a particularly swift and violent style, which left it ill-suited to the kind of operation it encountered as soon as conventional warfighting ceased to be the primary focus in OIF. Success thereafter therefore depended on its capacity to adapt, to S&R in the first place, and then to COIN as the insurgency gathered strength during 2003.

U.S. Army Organisational Culture and Adaptability

The capacity to adapt is always a key contributor to military success. Nagl combines historical analysis with a comprehensive examination of organisational theory to rationalise why, as many of his readers will already intuitively sense, 'military organisations often demonstrate remarkable resistance to doctrinal change' and fail to be as adaptive as required.[36] His analysis is helpful in determining why the U.S. Army can appear so innovative in certain respects, and yet paradoxically slow to adapt in others. He notes that: 'Even under the pressures for change presented by ongoing military conflict, a strong organisational culture can prohibit learning the lessons of the present and can even prevent the organisation's acknowledging that its current policies are anything other than completely successful'.[37] He suggests that the culture of the British Army encourages a rapid response to changing situations, whereas 'the culture of the American Army does not, *unless the changed situation falls within the parameters of the kind of war it has defined as its primary mission'*. And, it has 'evolved a standard organisation and doctrine devoted to ensuring uniformity in the employment of American material and firepower superiority on the battlefield, and encouraged innovation *in line with these proclivities'*.[38] Empirical evidence supports his thesis, namely a

propensity for innovation in pursuit of enhanced conventional warfighting capability, and the converse—that its organisational culture, unquestionably strong, has tended to discourage adaptation to roles deemed outside its primary mission, namely everything other than conventional warfighting.

Nagl goes so far as to suggest that the demands of conventional and unconventional warfare differ so greatly that in extremis it may be very difficult, if not impossible, for an organisation optimised for one to adapt to the other, all the more so when it has a strong organisational culture attuned to its original role.[39] The evidence from Section 1 is consistent with his thesis, but his implied solution, to focus on just the one type of mission, is unrealistic. U.S. foreign and security policy requires forces that can undertake the full spectrum of roles, and the manpower strains arising from OIF Phase 4 illustrate all too clearly that the entire Army needs to be able to engage: any thought of COIN and S&R being the preserve of a specialist force must be banished. Adaptability within the one army remains the prerequisite for success.

Compounding Cultural and Conceptual Factors

If the Army's strong organisational culture, focused on conventional warfighting, has discouraged adaptation to other roles, other conceptual and cultural factors have compounded the difficulties faced.

Armies reflect the culture of the civil society from which they are drawn. According to Snider the Army is characterised, like U.S. domestic society, by an aspiration to achieve quick results.[40] This in turn creates a presumption of quick results, and engenders a command and planning climate that promotes those solutions that appear to favour quick results. In conventional warfighting situations this is likely to be advantageous, but in other operations it often tends to prolong the situation, ironically, as the quick solution turns out to be the wrong one. In COIN terms the most obvious example is the predilection for wide ranging kinetic options (sweep, search and destroy) in preference to the longer term hearts and minds work and intelligence led operations: even though the former may often be the least effective strategy, it always seems the most appealing, since it purports to offer a quicker and more tangible result.

Armies also develop customs and behavioural norms that serve, inter alia, to emphasise to the workforce their necessary distinctness from their civilian origins. The U.S. Army's habits and customs, whilst in some respects very obviously products of American society, are also strikingly distinct, much more so than most militaries, to the extent that some individuals almost seem like military caricatures, so great is their intent on banishing all traces of the civilian within. U.S. Army soldiers are not citizen soldiers: they are unquestionably American in origin, but equally unquestionably divorced from their roots. Likewise, most armies to some extent live apart from their host civilian environment, but the U.S. Army has traditionally been more insular than most, especially when abroad: U.S. Army bases world-wide are a mini-America. Neither trait can make it any the easier for Army personnel to empathise with the local civilian population on operations, particularly when the local cultural norms also happen to be markedly different from Western trends.

It is, on the face of it, quite logical in a force with unparalleled access to high technology, to seek to use technological solutions to compensate for shortages in manpower. That logic is further encouraged when the deployed force is supported by a massive industrial base, with vested business interests in the wider employment of technological solutions, and a powerful Congressional lobby culture. However, the lure of technology can be misleading. In an environment where, above all else, it is imperative that the occupying force be seen as a force for the good, it is counter-productive when technological solutions are employed that promote separation from the population. Furthermore, a predilection with technology arguably encourages the search for the quick, convenient solution, often at the expense of the less obvious, but ultimately more enduring one.

In sum, whilst the Army's organisational culture has discouraged adaptation to non-conventional roles, a range of other cultural and conceptual factors have compounded the trend.

U.S. Army De-Professionalisation

Another reason why the Army has struggled to adapt is simply that it has not been at its professional best in recent years.

Snider contends that the Army 'de-professionalised' during the 1990s.[41] He asserts that the culmination of the Army's post Vietnam re-professionalisation came in the `91 Gulf War, when the Army was probably 'the most integrated and professional yet produced by the USA'. However, over the next 6-8 years it became more bureaucratised, centralised and correspondingly less professional. It was just starting to recover from this when 9/11 happened and it became unavoidably committed to such extensive



DOD

A local resident speaks animatedly after being stopped by Iraqi Army soldiers with the 2d Battalion, 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, in Baghdad.

and challenging operations.

Evidence supporting the notion of de-professionalisation has been widely reported elsewhere, to the extent that it is unlikely to be contentious any longer, but it merits brief consideration, since it offers further clues about the general capacity of the Army to adapt as it embarked on OIF.

A significant symptom, and in time a catalyst for the de-professionalisation of the Army, was the so-called exodus of the captains, now a well documented phenomenon. Captains are a particularly significant rank in the U.S. Army, as they provide the company commanders, and it is arguably company and squad commanders who are the lynchpin in the de-centralised operations that tend to characterise COIN and S&R campaigns. According to Mark R. Lewis, in the mid-90s, junior officers, particularly captains, began leaving the Army in increasing numbers.[42] The captain attrition rate exceeded the in-flow necessary to maintain a steady state, such that by 2000 the Army could fill only 56% of those positions intended for experienced captains with officers of the right quality and experience.

Army studies into the extent and causes of this attrition indicated predictable dissatisfaction with pay and benefits, and the domestic turbulence caused by the increased operational tempo that has characterised Western military life since the Cold War. However, junior officers also consistently expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs, and with their leaders. These factors are linked: one of the principal reasons for job dissatisfaction was the sense of a zero-defects culture in the Army, which arose indirectly from unit leadership ambition—mistakes in the unit do not, at least on the face of it, show the commander in a good light, with consequent perceived impact on his career. This sense of junior officer dissatisfaction with the leadership became so profound that in one study, commissioned by the then Army COS General Eric Shinseki in the year 2000, it was reported that 'many officers believe there needs to be a clean sweep of senior leadership'.[43]

Lewis argues convincingly that the captain exodus had degraded Army effectiveness and caused a downward spiral of increasing attrition and inexperience in post. It had also exacerbated the zero-defects culture, since, to plug the resultant gaps, even more junior officers had to be advanced to more demanding posts all the more quickly, causing competence to fall even further, with leaders thus even less

inclined to trust their subordinates and allow them freedom of action. Lewis notes that before 1994 pin-on time to captain was about 54 months, but by 2002 it had dropped to 38 months. And a year later the Army was engaged in the most ambitious and demanding undertaking to date in the careers of most of those serving, OIF, and in particular OIF Phase 4.

This episode strongly suggests that operational standards in the Army had indeed fallen since Gulf War 1. Formal Army examination of it reported as much, and it seems inconceivable that overall levels of competence would not have dropped, given the reduction in pin-on time to captain by over 25%, and their pivotal role of company command.

Similarly, the indications of a zero-defects culture at unit level, and a mistrusting leadership, lend credence to the notion of an inadequately adaptive force. Adaptation requires finely tuned responses to situations encountered at local levels. The more dispersed the force and varied the situations encountered, the more critical it becomes that command be decentralised, such that junior commanders can exercise their initiative and innovate in order to respond appropriately. But this is contingent on leaders trusting their subordinates, and the latter having the competence to warrant that trust, which is hardly synonymous with a zero-defects culture.

Summary of Analysis of Root Causes

Analysis of the Army's evolution, organisational culture, and other cultural traits, explains in large part why the trends identified in Section 1 occurred. In a sense, it also lends those trends greater credibility, since it illustrates their consistency with characteristics observed in the Army as a whole prior to OIF. In essence, always seeing itself as an instrument of national survival, over time the Army has developed a marked and uncompromising focus on conventional warfighting, leaving it ill-prepared for the unconventional operations that have characterised OIF Phase 4. Moreover, the resultant strong conventional warfighting organisational culture and centralised way of command tended to discourage the necessary swift adaptation to the demands of Phase 4. The Army's cultural singularity and insularity compounded the problem, as did the recent so-called de-professionalisation.

However, the Army is certainly not complacent. The final section will briefly assess its reaction to the lessons it has identified from OIF Phase 4.

Section 3:
Observations on U.S. Army Response to OIF Lessons

We are leveraging the momentum of this war to transform our Army's organisation and culture. . . . For the 21st Century, we must have an Army characterised by a culture of innovation and imagination.—COS of the Army, General Peter J. Schoomaker.[44]

Tempting though it may be to attribute all the problems in OIF to U.S. institutional ineptitude and a collective closed view of the world, this is simplistic, quite apart from being unjust. Enlightened Americans in theatre, military and civilian, were surprisingly willing, for such a powerful nation, to bare their professional souls and heed advice from other nationals. A visit to various U.S. Army establishments in May 2005 to research this paper revealed a similar open-mindedness, frankness, and hunger to learn and adapt, in order to improve military effectiveness. It was also clear that Army senior leadership was actively engaged.

The Army already intends, for example, to bolster junior leadership training, through a compulsory 6-week Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC), to supplement existing officer initial training and education courses. Army-wide cultural awareness training is also being planned. Meanwhile, HQ Department of the Army is actively discussing the establishment of a formal proponent for OOTW, clearly a timely step. It is also considering adjusting the balance of the Army's core focus to include OOTW missions, but recognises that it cannot forsake its conventional warfighting prowess, nor resource fully the required spectrum of roles; hence the capability for the one force to adapt between roles becomes of paramount importance. At the Defence-wide level, the *QDR* IW Study notes that key improvements could be achieved by efforts to:

- Capture and preserve corporate knowledge on IW, as distilled from historical experience and refined by current practice.
- Develop mechanisms for feeding this knowledge into the wider force and government.
- Do all this before conflict or in the initial stages, in order to avoid the 'fatal learning curve' (experienced at the start of OIF Phase 4, and many previous IW campaigns).
- Improve skills and tactical repertoire for IW across the wider force—broaden the knowledge base

outside Special Operations Forces and Marines.[45] In short, much seemingly apposite work is in progress.

Nonetheless, there are potential pitfalls. For example, it remains to be seen whether a mere 6 weeks of BOLC will prove adequate, or whether a root and branch review of officer training and education would not be more appropriate. U.S. Army officer entrants, surprisingly, receive somewhat less practical vocational leadership training than many of their European counterparts. In the process, the Army could also afford to review the rank and experience levels of company and squad commanders, since these posts are so pivotal to achieving adaptability.

However, the main concern remains whether the Army will really become adaptive in the manner required. In this respect Nagl's work, so helpful in understanding the trends observed in OIF Phase 4 through his analysis of the Army's evolution and organisational culture, is yet again useful, but this time ironically so. In his Foreword to the Second Edition, drafted in early 2005, Army COS General Schoomaker notes: 'As we capture lessons from military operations, our Army is immediately integrating the lessons into our training, so that each follow-on unit learns from the experience of those in contact with the enemy'.[46] Yet 3 Corps' reported focus on conventional warfighting in its pre-deployment training, discussed in Section 1, hardly chimes with the COS's intent. Nor is that the only example of pre-deployment training being poorly attuned to operational reality.

In similar vein, Nagl reports in his own draft Preface to the Second Edition, composed after he had served in Iraq for a year: 'The Army is adapting to the demands of counterinsurgency in Iraq at many levels, from the tactical and operational through the training base in the United States'.[47] Yet Nagl's service in Iraq pre-dates most of the contrary observations in Section 1, so evidently not all of the Army has been adapting in the manner required. Or

The Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment, and myself.

I am an expert and a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

perhaps the discrepancy between Schoomaker and Nagl's assertions and the concurrent reports from other sources indicates that the Army (and Nagl, ironically) is already falling prey to the very danger that Nagl highlights, and discussed in Section 2—that of the strong organisational culture convincing the institution that it is adapting in the way required, when it is instead merely innovating all the more vigorously in line with its perceived primary mission. As Nagl so lucidly recounts, the Army has a history of reacting thus.[48] Or perhaps the discrepancy simply reflects the inevitable variations in adaptability and effectiveness in an organisation as large and diverse as the U.S. Army and thus highlights the extent of the challenge facing General Schoomaker. Certainly, the conventional warfighting pre-disposition is so deeply ingrained in the institution that it will take many years to effect the necessary transformation.

The Army's 'Warrior Ethos' is also illuminating in this respect. It was introduced in 2001, therefore well before OIF, in response to concerns that some branches of the Army lacked basic soldierly skills and the realisation that whatever their specialisation they must first and foremost be combat effective. It was noticeable in Iraq that it was emphasised frequently, in a range of ways. At its core is the Soldier's Creed. Note that it enjoins the soldier to have just the one type of interaction with his enemy—'to engage and *destroy* him:' not *defeat*, which could permit a number of other politically attuned options, but *destroy*. According to TRADOC, 'lessons learned from OIF re-validated the "need" and influenced the final language, which was officially released in 2003'.[49] Yet it is very decidedly a warfighting creed, which has no doubt served well to promote the much sought conventional warfighting ethos, but cannot be helping soldiers to understand that on many occasions in unconventional situations they have to be soldiers, not warriors. Is the Army really learning to become adaptive to changes in purpose, or is it learning to innovate all the more vigorously in line with its conventional warfighting primary focus?

Similarly, the OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] paper *Military Transformation: A Strategic Approach* outlines the key tenets of the intended Defence-wide Force Transformation.[50] It makes much of changing the military culture, and enhancing strategic and operational agility and responsiveness, but is itself uncompromisingly and ironically orientated towards warfighting in tone and content. It leaves the distinct impression that the Transformation project will concentrate too much on harnessing high technology to enhance conventional warfighting capability across Defence, and too little on the much more critical, and demanding, transformation of the human workforce, the key to development of a genuinely adaptive entity.[51]

Conclusions

The U.S. Army's tardiness in adapting to the changing operational imperatives of OIF Phase 4 was indeed a contributory factor in the Coalition's failure to exploit the rapid victory over Saddam achieved in the preceding conventional warfighting phase. Furthermore, its approach during the early stages of OIF Phase 4 exacerbated the task it now faces by alienating significant sections of the population.

However, to conclude, as some do, that the Army is simply incompetent or inflexible, is simplistic and quite erroneous. If anything the Army has been a victim of its own successful development as the ultimate warfighting machine. Always seeing itself as an instrument of national survival, over time the Army has developed a marked and uncompromising focus on conventional warfighting, leaving it ill-prepared for the unconventional operations that characterise OIF Phase 4. Moreover, its strong conventional warfighting organisational culture and centralised way of command have tended to discourage the necessary swift adaptation to the demands of Phase 4. Its cultural singularity and insularity have compounded the problem, as has the recent so-called 'de-professionalisation'.

Though justifiably confident and proud as a warfighting organisation, the Army acknowledges it needs to change. It is, rightly, considering adjusting its core focus to encompass Operations Other Than War, with all that that entails in terms of proponency, doctrinal development and a broader training base, although Army planners are keenly aware how difficult it will be to achieve this without compromising unduly the Army's existing warfighting pre-eminence. Likewise, it plans to bolster leadership training and rectify shortcomings in cultural awareness. However, these initiatives may not be enough: the inconsistency between trends observed in OIF Phase 4 and signals from the training base and leadership raise the concern that the Army still does not appreciate the extent of the watershed it faces. To that end, the planned Army Transformation needs to focus less on generating warfighting capability and much more on:

- The realisation that all military activity is subordinate to political intent, and must be attuned accordingly: mere destruction of the enemy is not the answer.
- The development of a workforce that is genuinely adaptive to changes in purpose, as opposed to

merely adapting to be even better at conventional warfighting.

- Keeping the lure of technology in perspective, and realising that the human component is the key to adaptability.

As important, the Army needs to learn to see itself as others do, particularly its actual or potential opponents and their supporters. They are the ones who need to be persuaded to succumb, since the alternative approach is to kill or capture them all, and that hardly seems practicable, even for the most powerful Army in the world.

General Schoomaker asks, rhetorically: 'When the historians review the events of our day, will the record for our Army at the start of the 21st Century show an adaptive and learning organisation? I think so, and we are committed to making it so'.[52] His intent is absolutely right. But he faces a challenge potentially no less tough than his post-Vietnam forebears, and it is to be hoped that the historians from all nations, not just America, will agree with his provisional verdict. ***MR***

NOTES

1. British military doctrine uses the terms "morally," "conceptually," and "physically" to encompass the constituent components of a force's fighting power.

2. The epithet "forbiddingly difficult" is taken from a Royal College of Defence Studies lecture.

3. Phase 4 was intended to be stabilisation operations following the formal cessation of combat after the defeat of Saddam's forces. Although Security Sector Reform (SSR) eventually became an Army-led activity, I do not discuss it in this article because it would entail discussing too many extraneous factors to use it as a gauge of Army effectiveness. Various sources, including discussions with a senior U.S. official, support the contention that administrative frictions caused inadequate attention to be paid to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Phase 4 planning. However, detailed analysis is outside the scope of this article. For a hard-hitting analysis, see Correlli Barnett, "Post-conquest Civil Affairs, Comparing War's End in Iraq and in Germany," The Foreign Policy Centre, London, February 2005, on-line at <http://fpc.org.uk/publications/144>, accessed 2 November 2005.

4. A plethora of media articles lay the blame for disbanding the Baath Party and the Old Iraqi Army partly on the coalition military and the U.S. Army. See "Special Report on Iraq," *The Economist* (18 June 2005): 25.

5. Anonymous U.S. Army colonel, Baghdad, September 2004.

6. MG A.J.N. Graham, Deputy Commanding General, Multi-National Corps–Iraq, interview by author, May 2005.

7. Anonymous, interview by author, May 2005.

8. GEN Tommy Franks, Commander, U.S. Central Command, was responsible for OIF until early in Phase 4.

9. "Irregular warfare" is a term commonly used in U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) literature. Counterinsurgency operations might be considered a subset of irregular warfare.

10. DOD, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (*QDR*) *2006,* vers. 3.1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 23 May 2005). The *QDR* will be presented to Congress in early 2006 but was the focus of much study during 2005.

11. For an excellent, concise discussion of the two contrasting doctrines, see John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (New York: Praeger, 2002), 26.

12. The bombardment was a U.S. Marine Corps operation, not an Army one. Still, it illustrates the issue—the markedly differing national perspectives about scales of combat power.

13. Anonymous, interview by author, May 2005.

14. MG David H. Petraeus was subsequently promoted to the rank of lieutenant general (LTG) in June 2004 and took command of coalition SSR operations. I was privileged to share an office with this inspirational officer for 4 months.

15. The house of LTG Nasier Abadi (with whom I had frequent contact and who later became the vice chief of the defence staff in the newly created Iraqi Ministry of Defense) was searched twice.

16. *QDR 2006*.

17. For a concise discussion of the intelligence operation, read Anthony H. Cordesman, *The War after the War: Strategic Lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Press, 2005).

18. *QDR 2006*.

19. Anonymous, interview by author, May 2005.

20. Misconstruing predictions as certainty seemed evident in the reporting of progress against SSR milestones to Washington during the latter half of 2004. On at least two occasions, one senior officer in the reporting chain expressed frustration that he was not receiving an accurate picture of progress, although a senior National Security Council official later asserted in a December 2004 interview that the White House, at the end of the chain, had accurate situational awareness.

21. Of course, the corollary to the observation of excessive deployments and digging into reserves is that if other nations shouldered more of the burden, there would be correspondingly less strain on the U.S. Army, but this article is not about burden-sharing.

22. LTC M. Wade Markel, "Winning Our Own Hearts and Minds: Promotion in Wartime," *Military Review* (November-December 2004): 25; *QDR 2006*.

23. Discussions with U.S. exercise observers in theatre, Iraq, 2004.

24. Nagl.

25. The *National Review Online* noted that Nagl's work had become "must reading for high-level officers in Iraq because its lessons seem so directly applicable to the situation there." See on-line at <www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/567702.html/>, accessed 2 November 2005.

26. Nagl, 43.

27. Ibid., 50.

28. LTC Scott M. Eagen, memorandum for cadets enrolled in study module MS460, Counterinsurgency Operations, West Point, New York, 21 September 2004, 1. Eagen overstates the case, in fact. As Nagl notes, the United States has sometimes been successful, particularly against Filipino guerrillas in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War at the turn of the 19th century, where the emphasis was on isolating guerrillas from the population. Unfortunately, the lessons were quickly lost as institutional focus was diverted elsewhere by the next conflict. (See Nagl, 46.)

29. Anonymous, interview by author, 24 May 2005.

30. Ibid., 25 May 2005.

31. Eagen, 1.

32. U.S. Army, Field Manual-Interim 3-07.22, *Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 1 October 2004).

33. Nagl, 43.

34. Eliot A. Cohen, "The Strategy of Innocence? The United States, 1920-1945," in Nagl, 44.

35. Nagl, 43.

36. Ibid., 8.

37. Ibid., 217.

38. Ibid., 218.

39. Ibid., 219.

40. Snider, interview by author, 24 May 2005.

41. Ibid.

42. See Mark R. Lewis, "Army Transformation and the Junior Officer Exodus," *Armed Forces and Society*, 31, 1 (Fall 2004): 63-93.

43. Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) Eric K. Shinseki, Leadership Survey, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2000, quoted in Lewis.

44. GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, prepublished draft foreword to the second edition of Nagl.

45. *QDR 2006*.

46. Schoomaker in Nagl.

47. Nagl.

48. Nagl, 43-50.

49. MAJ Donald Ellerthorpe, Executive Officer to the Deputy CSA, Operations and Training. (No other information given.)

50. Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Military Transformation: A Strategic Approach," Pentagon, Washington, D.C., 2003.

51. *The Economist* (18 June 2005), 12, notes that "Mr. Rumsfeld has a visionary's fixation on the high-tech 'transformation' of America's military and a misplaced disdain for the plain old infantry.

52. Schoomaker in Nagl.

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Operation Knockout: Counterinsurgency in Iraq

Colonel James K. Greer, U.S. Army

ON 12 NOVEMBER 2005, Coalition and Iraqi forces demonstrated again the flexibility and agility so necessary for counterinsurgency (COIN) operations against a smart, adaptive foe. After concentrating large-scale operations for months in Ninewah and Al Anbar Provinces northwest and west of Baghdad, Coalition forces conducted a new, no-notice operation in Diyala Province, northeast of Baghdad. Named Operation Knockout, this successful action reinforced the tactics, techniques, and procedures needed to defeat the insurgents and terrorists in Iraq.

Cordon and Search Operations

The bread-and-butter offensive COIN operation in Iraq is the battalion and smaller unit cordon and search. From 2003 to 2004, Coalition forces conducted literally dozens of these operations daily. In 2005, however, Iraqi Security Forces independently planned, prepared for, and conducted most cordon and search operations. Confronted constantly by these operations, some insurgent and terrorist cells adapted to survive; others did not, and Coalition and Iraqi forces disrupted their operations or destroyed them.

Coalition and Iraqi forces have also been successful in large-scale, deliberate offensive operations such as in Fallujah in November 2004 and in Tal Afar in September 2005. Publicized ahead of time and with deliberate force buildups accompanied by provincial, tribal, and sectarian diplomacy, these large-scale operations resulted in significant gains in two major insurgent strongholds—gains that were reinforced with economic, social, and civil efforts. As with cordon and search operations, large-scale offensive operations are increasingly Iraqi-led. For example, in 2004 nine Coalition battalions led five Iraqi Army battalions in the attack on Fallujah. By contrast, in the successful 2005 attack on Tal Afar, 11 Iraqi Army battalions led 5 Coalition battalions. Coalition forces killed or captured insurgents who did not flee Tal-Afar, disrupted their cells, and restored law and order to the towns and surrounding areas.

Operation Knockout

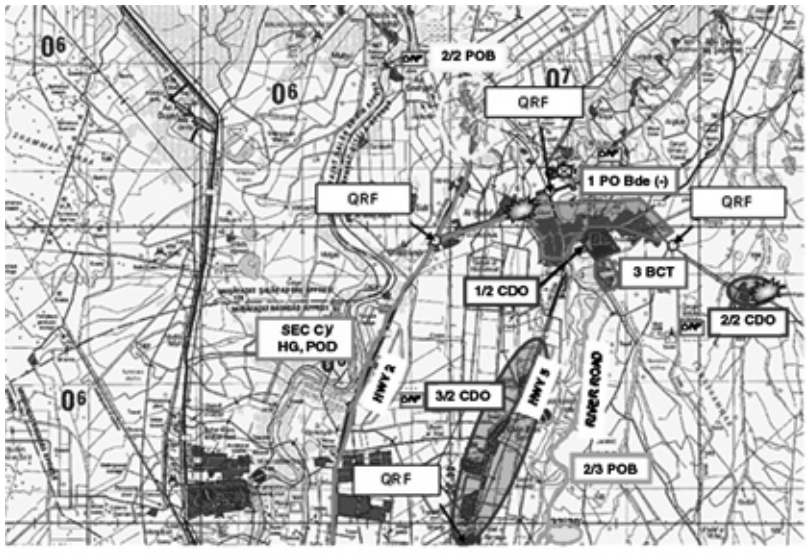
Operation Knockout confronted the insurgents and terrorists with another challenge: a division-size raid designed to destroy or disrupt all of their cells in a large locality in a single night. In this case the target was the city of Ba'qubah and its environs. Seven battalions under the command of two brigades and a single division headquarters departed after midnight on 12 November 2005, moved along three separate routes, and struck hundreds of targets in Ba'qubah and nearby towns. Coalition and Iraqi forces captured 377 suspected insurgents without destroying one house or harming one civilian; nor did they kill any friendly or enemy combatants, and only three Iraqi Special Police were wounded. More remarkable was that the Iraqi Special Police Forces of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) had planned, prepared, and executed the entire operation.

In late October, the minister of interior told the Operations Directorate to study options for a large-scale, simultaneous strike in Diyala against a large number of suspected insurgents and their support and information networks. After receiving the options, the minister decided on 5 November to execute the mission. That same day the intelligence section of the Operations Directorate provided a list of insurgent and terrorist targets to the Public Order Division commander with a warning order to be prepared to move to Ba'qubah and conduct operations to detain those targets.

The Public Order Division immediately began planning, focusing on developing target folders for the hundreds of discrete targets forces would have to secure. Simultaneously, Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I) was notified through its cell in the MOI National Command Center. Planning and coordination continued with an MOI/Multinational Command-Iraq (MNC-I) meeting on 9 November to address deconfliction of routes, battlespace, and access to Coalition medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) and effects. The 3d Brigade Combat Team (BCT)

of Multi-National Division-North Central hosted the meeting and conducted detailed coordination with Public Order Division units to prepare for supporting the Iraqi operation.

Throughout the planning and coordination stage of Operation Knockout, Special Police Transition Teams (SPTTs) under Colonel Gordon B. "Skip" Davis and Colonel Jeffrey Buchanan advised the Iraqis and planned and coordinated their own support to the operation. These teams of 10 to 12 soldiers lived, trained, and fought alongside the Iraqi Special Police 24 hours a day and contributed significantly to the Iraqis' development. For several months before Operation Knockout, Davis and Buchanan's teaching, coaching, and mentoring helped the Iraqi Special Police plan, coordinate, and develop the operational skills necessary for success. At the small unit level, the SPTTs did not just train the Iraqi Special Police to fight; they helped develop noncommissioned officers and junior leaders who could lead the fight.



Multiple, simultaneous operations in Operation Knockout.

At execution, Public Order Division elements, reinforced by a brigade of Iraqi Special Police commandos, moved along three separate routes to their objectives in and around Ba'qubah, conducting clean-up operations in small towns along the way. At 0500 on 12 November 2005, seven battalions of Iraqi Special Police struck their main objectives nearly simultaneously. At target areas, they dispersed into small groups, each executing several preplanned and prepared targets. As soon as they accomplished their missions, the units redeployed. By noon all raids were complete, and by 1800 all units had returned to their bases. Detainees were immediately placed in the detention facility at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Justice, with the overflow held in the FOB dining facility.

In designing Operation Knockout, Iraqi planners used the same sophisticated approach U.S. planners had employed for Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989. Both operations were based on well-developed intelligence and knowledge of the enemy. Both were supported by in-place capabilities: in the case of Operation Just Cause, by U.S. forces permanently based in the Panama Canal Zone; in Operation Knockout by Iraqi Army and Special Police units and the 3d BCT.

In both actions, operations security and deception were effectively integrated and contributed to success. And, in each operation, the main body deployed en mass from out of sector to achieve surprise. The critical similarity is that both operations struck dozens of points almost simultaneously to overwhelm the enemy physically and mentally. Finally, both operations swiftly exploited combat gains. In successfully executing Operation Knockout, Iraqi Special Police carried out one of the most complex and challenging types of military operations.

Intelligence-Based Operations

Operation Knockout demonstrated the necessity for and effectiveness of intelligence-based COIN operations. The MOI Intelligence Office of the Operations Directorate spent several weeks developing the targets that would eventually be raided. Local informants confirmed potential targets, and the Intelligence Office produced one- to three-page papers detailing why each individual was targeted. Using manual methods and Falcon View Light (an airborne mapping capability), Special Police units developed a target folder for each individual. Surreptitious eyes-on provided last-minute updates to target sets.

One of the other lessons learned is that planners must provide clear targets to raiding forces. For some of the targets, the MOI gave the Public Order Division little more than names and addresses. When that happens, the burden of target development is transferred to the tactical unit, and the reason for going after that target becomes unclear.

A second lesson concerns the need for accurate maps. While Iraqi Special Police demonstrated great agility in planning, preparing, and executing a division-size operation in a week, they did so without accurate maps because the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and MOI have virtually no map-production and distribution system. Iraqi Special Police units were forced to rely on the SPTTs for maps. The Coalition must

work with the security ministries to develop a responsive capability to produce more sufficient maps.

Surprise and operations security. A number of factors helped Iraqi Special Police gain the advantage of surprise, which in turn resulted in an effective mission with almost no casualties or collateral damage. The short time between notification of the mission and its execution reduced the chance that notice of the operation would leak to the residents of Ba'qubah or the media. MOI leaders also employed basic deception techniques. Special Police commanders briefed their troops on potential operations in southern Baghdad and then employed deception as to the timing and magnitude of the coming operation. Next, rather than a slow buildup of troops visible to insurgents and their supporters, Special Police units staged in Baghdad at various FOBs, then moved the approximately 40 kilometers to the Ba'qubah area along multiple routes in the middle of the night.

The speed with which units moved slowed enemy reactions and reduced advance warning to intended targets. The use of a new tactic, a division-size raid rather than a smaller, sequential cordon and search or deliberate attack, ensured that opponents would have to react without preplanned counters or tactics. This tactic and the raiders' swift departure after mission accomplishment meant Special Police units had already returned to their protected compounds near Baghdad before any opponent could react.

Small, distributed, simultaneous operations. We can attribute much of the Iraqi Special Police's success to tactics that were ideal for the COIN environment. Insurgents survive by dispersing into small cells distributed across the battlespace and by reacting and adapting faster than conventional opponents. Operation Knockout negated these advantages during execution when the Public Order and commando battalions broke into dozens of company-size elements that struck simultaneously.

Simultaneity was the key because targets had no opportunity to react or even to pass warnings before other targets were hit. More conventional operations are conducted linearly, starting at one end of a town and pushing deliberately through that town on line. They resemble squeezing a tube of toothpaste from the bottom up: You might get the first insurgents you put the clamps on, but those further up the street will escape to fight another day. In contrast, the Iraqi Special Police's small-unit raids were distributed laterally and in depth, allowing little opportunity for escape. By executing distributed, simultaneous operations, the Special Police units demonstrated solid training, discipline, and the ability to execute actions using mission orders and commander's intent instead of detailed, direct supervision.

Minimizing casualties and damage. COIN operations must do more than simply kill or capture opponents. To win the COIN fight, counterinsurgents cannot alienate the local population; in fact, the people must be turned from supporting the insurgents to supporting the legitimate government and its forces. Killing and wounding innocent civilians and destroying homes and businesses can have adverse strategic consequences that far outweigh any temporary tactical gains.

Under Saddam Hussein's regime, the police had a reputation for oppressing the people, a reputation that seemed to carry forward when disturbing images of abused detainees from the Baghdad Bunker surfaced the same week Operation Knockout was conducted. But the Iraqi Special Police took care in planning, orders, and execution to ensure the operation would show the people of Ba'qubah that government forces could defeat terrorists without destroying homes or harming innocent civilians. Through discreet, deliberate, precise targeting; by conducting operations at night; by focusing on detention, not killing; and by treating detainees humanely and rapidly releasing detainees who were innocent, the Iraqi Special Police set the example for operating in a manner designed to win hearts and minds without creating new opponents. That no civilians were killed or injured and no local buildings were destroyed proves the Iraqi Special Police understood the strategic, not just the tactical, effect of military operations.

Exploitation. In the days following the raid, the Iraqi Special Police took specific steps to exploit their success. First, they used investigators to screen out noninsurgents, whom they released as fast as possible. Those who remained in custody received three hot meals a day (the same food Public Order Division policemen were eating) and were given mattresses, blankets, clean clothes, and access to latrines and washing facilities. External observers, media, Coalition officers, and local sheikhs from the tribes of Diyala were welcome to observe this humane treatment and were free to speak to the detainees.

The Public Order Division also followed up the raid with preplanned media events designed to demonstrate their competence and to assure the Iraqi people that the Special Police were there to protect them from the insurgents. The speed with which the Public Order Division organized effective media events despite only a week's notice was impressive; more conventional forces with highly centralized approval of themes and messages are

often incapable of exploiting tactical success. By conducting a media event each day for several days, the Special Police kept their successful operation in the local and national Iraqi news long enough to reinforce the Public Order Division's key messages.

Operational mobility. The Iraqi Special Police, a national force designed to operate anywhere in Iraq, have worked in Baghdad, Fallujah, Mosul, Ramadi, Tal Afar, and Samarrah. They provide a level of operational agility that other, more conventional forces simply cannot. And they will get even better. For Operation Knockout, Public Order Division and commando units had not yet received their full complement of cargo and fuel trucks, ambulances, water trucks, and personnel transport. Fortunately, the distances traveled and the duration of the raid were short, so the lack of vehicles did not hamper operational mobility. That must be corrected, however, to make full use of these units' unique capabilities.

The Public Order Division enhanced its operational mobility by building a Command and Control (C2) van, which the Division Commander used as an assault command post. With Iraqi Special Police tactical communications connectivity to the brigades and battalions; operational communications back to the MOI National Command Center and division headquarters; and laptop computers for battle tracking, the C2 van allowed the Division Commander to exercise command when away from his headquarters.

Iraqi Security Forces "In the Lead"

Operation Knockout is an excellent example of what happens when Iraqi Security Forces take the lead. Iraqi Special Police commanders planned, prepared, and executed the raid and then conducted an after-action review (AAR). The SPTTs also used the mission as a training vehicle, observing, providing Coalition coordination, and coaching when necessary.

While training for Operation Knockout, Davis's division-level SPTT focused on battle-tracking by the Division Commander in his van and by division headquarters at FOB Justice. The Public Order Division hosted several meetings to conduct detailed coordination with the 3d BCT/3d Infantry Division and its higher headquarters, the 101st Airborne Division, to ensure Coalition support (such as quick-reaction and MEDEVAC) was integrated into the operation.

The Public Order Division commanded and executed Operation Knockout. SPTTs at each level accompanied their assigned units, observed, and ensured that Coalition forces had situational awareness of the operation. They were prepared to call for Coalition support if required. The 3d BCT executed a small, parallel raid to reinforce the Iraqi Special Police's operation and to provide quick-reaction forces and on-call MEDEVAC. Far and away, however, Operation Knockout was an operational punch delivered by Iraqi units.

The final AAR was run entirely by the Iraqi Special Police chain of command, which used the review process to reinforce lessons learned and training at every echelon from battalion to division. The AAR was robustly attended, with the MOI, MNF-I, MNC-I, 101st Airborne Division, and Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq participating. Clearly, though, the Iraqi Special Police were "in the lead."

On the Road to Victory

In 21st-century counterinsurgencies one operation cannot win a war or even change the course of a conflict. But Operation Knockout certainly marks a positive stage in the development of the Iraqi Security Forces. The Iraqi Special Police proved to have a keen understanding of the fundamentals of COIN operations, as well as of the leadership, discipline, and training needed to execute those operations. They demonstrated clearly that they are fully capable of leading and executing both the kinetic and nonkinetic aspects of COIN operations. By conducting an innovative, effective operation, they have given the insurgents and terrorists a new set of problems to adapt to and overcome. All in all, Operation Knockout demonstrated that Iraq is on the road to defeating the insurgents and ensuring its future as a secure, democratic state. ***MR***

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Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq

Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army



U.S. Marine Corps

Iraqi Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 2d Brigade, 1st Iraqi Infantry Division conduct search operations in Fallujah, Iraq, 9 December 2005.

THE ARMY HAS LEARNED a great deal in Iraq and Afghanistan about the conduct of counterinsurgency operations, and we must continue to learn all that we can from our experiences in those countries.

The insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan were not, in truth, the wars for which we were best prepared in 2001; however, they are the wars we are fighting and they clearly are the kind of wars we must master. America's overwhelming conventional military superiority makes it unlikely that future enemies will confront us head on. Rather, they will attack us asymmetrically, avoiding our strengths—firepower, maneuver, technology—and come at us and our partners the way the insurgents do in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is imperative, therefore, that we continue to learn from our experiences in those countries, both to succeed in those endeavors and to prepare for the future.

Soldiers and Observations

Writing down observations and lessons learned is a time-honored tradition of Soldiers. Most of us have done this to varying degrees, and we then reflect on and share what we've jotted down after returning from the latest training exercise, mission, or deployment. Such activities are of obvious importance in helping us learn from our own experiences and from those of others.

In an effort to foster learning as an organization, the Army institutionalized the process of collection, evaluation, and dissemination of observations, insights, and lessons some 20 years ago with the formation of the Center for Army Lessons Learned.[1] In subsequent years, the other military services and the Joint Forces Command followed suit, forming their own lessons learned centers. More recently, the Internet and other knowledge-management tools have sped the processes of collection, evaluation, and dissemination enormously. Numerous products have already been issued since the beginning of our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and most of us have found these products of considerable value as we've prepared for deployments and reviewed how different units grappled with challenges our elements were about to face.

For all their considerable worth, the institutional structures for capturing lessons are still dependent on Soldiers' thoughts and reflections. And Soldiers have continued to record their own observations, particularly in recent years as we have engaged in so many important operations. Indeed, my own pen and notebook were always handy while soldiering in Iraq, where I commanded the 101st Airborne Division during our first year there (during the fight to Baghdad and the division's subsequent operations in Iraq's four northern provinces), and where, during most of the subsequent year-and-a-half, I helped with the so-called "train and equip" mission, conducting an assessment in the spring of 2004 of the Iraqi Security Forces after their poor performance in early April

Observations from Soldiering in Iraq

1. "Do not try to do too much with your own hands."
2. Act quickly, because every Army of liberation has a half-life.
3. Money is ammunition.
4. Increasing the number of stakeholders is critical to success.
5. Analyze "costs and benefits" before each operation.
6. Intelligence is the key to success.
7. Everyone must do nation-building.
8. Help build institutions, not just units.
9. Cultural awareness is a force multiplier.
10. Success in a counterinsurgency requires more than just military operations.
11. Ultimate success depends on local leaders.
12. Remember the strategic corporals and strategic lieutenants.
13. There is no substitute for flexible, adaptable leaders.
14. A leader's most important task is to set the right tone.

2004, and then serving as the first commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq and the NATO Training Mission-Iraq.

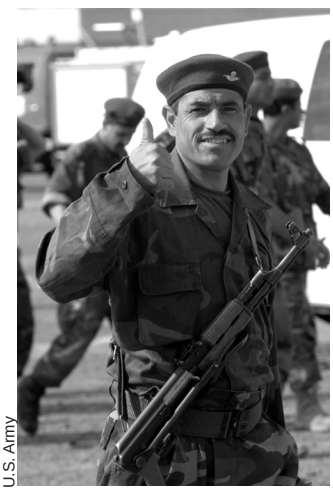
What follows is the distillation of a number of observations jotted down during that time. Some of these observations are specific to soldiering in Iraq, but the rest speak to the broader challenge of conducting counterinsurgency operations in a vastly different culture than our own. I offer 14 of those observations here in the hope that others will find them of assistance as they prepare to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan or in similar missions in the years ahead.

Fourteen Observations

Observation Number 1 is "*Do not try to do too much with your own hands."* T.E. Lawrence offered this wise counsel in an article published in *The Arab Bulletin* in August 1917. Continuing, he wrote: "Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is. It may take them longer and it may not be as good as you think, but if it is theirs, it will be better."[2]

Lawrence's guidance is as relevant in the 21st century as it was in his own time in the Middle East during World War I. Like much good advice, however, it is sometimes easier to put forward than it is to follow. Our Army is blessed with highly motivated Soldiers who pride themselves on being action oriented. We celebrate a "can do" spirit, believe in taking the initiative, and want to get on with business. Yet, despite the discomfort in trying to follow Lawrence's advice by not doing too much with our own hands, such an approach is absolutely critical to success in a situation like that in Iraq. Indeed, many of our units recognized early on that it was important that we not just perform tasks for the Iraqis, but that we help our Iraqi partners, over time enabling them to accomplish tasks on their own with less and less assistance from us.

Empowering Iraqis to do the job themselves has, in fact, become the essence of our strategy—and such an approach is particularly applicable in Iraq. Despite suffering for decades under Saddam, Iraq still has considerable human capital, with the remnants of an educated middle class, a number of budding entrepreneurs, and many talented leaders. Moreover, the Iraqis, of course, know the situation and people far better than we ever can, and unleashing their productivity is essential to rebuilding infrastructure and institutions. Our experience, for example, in helping the Iraqi military reestablish its staff colleges and branch-specific schools has been that, once a good Iraqi leader is established as the head of the school, he can take it from there, albeit with some degree of continued Coalition assistance. The same has been true in many other areas, including in helping establish certain Army units (such as the Iraqi



U.S. Army

An Iraqi public order brigade soldier after graduating from the police academy in the Muthana Zayuna District of Baghdad, Iraq, 9 January 2006.



U.S. Air Force

During a recognition ceremony held in the Baghdad Convention Center on 9 January 2004, an Iraqi working for the Civil Defense Corps petitions the Coalition for compensation for all the wounded Iraqis and widows.

Army's 9th Division (Mechanized), based north of Baghdad at Taji, and the 8th Division, which has units in 5 provinces south of Baghdad) and police academies (such as the one in Hillah, run completely by Iraqis for well over 6 months). Indeed, our ability to assist rather than do has evolved considerably since the transition of sovereignty at the end of late June 2004 and even more so since the elections of 30 January 2005. I do not, to be sure, want to downplay in the least the amount of work still to be done or the daunting challenges that lie ahead; rather, I simply want to emphasize the importance of empowering, enabling, and assisting the Iraqis, an approach that figures prominently in our strategy in that country.

Observation Number 2 is that, in a situation like Iraq, the liberating force must *act quickly, because every Army of liberation has a half-life* beyond which it turns into an Army of occupation. The length of this half-life is tied to the perceptions of the populace about the impact of the liberating force's activities. From the moment a force enters a country, its leaders must keep this in mind, striving to meet the expectations of the liberated in what becomes a race against the clock.

This race against the clock in Iraq has been complicated by the extremely high expectations of the Iraqi people, their pride in their own abilities, and their reluctant admission that they needed help from Americans, in particular.[3] Recognizing this, those of us on the ground at the outset did all that we could with the resources available early on to help the people, to repair the damage done by military operations and looting, to rebuild infrastructure, and to restore basic services as quickly as possible—in effect, helping extend the half-life of the Army of liberation. Even while carrying out such activities, however, we were keenly aware that sooner or later, the people would begin to view us as an Army of occupation. Over time, the local citizenry would feel that we were not doing enough or were not moving as quickly as desired, would see us damage property and hurt innocent civilians in the course of operations, and would resent the inconveniences and intrusion of checkpoints, low helicopter flights, and other military activities. The accumulation of these perceptions, coupled with the natural pride of Iraqis and resentment that their country, so blessed in natural resources, had to rely on outsiders, would eventually result in us being seen less as liberators and more as occupiers. That has, of course, been the case to varying degrees in much of Iraq.

The obvious implication of this is that such endeavors—especially in situations like those in Iraq—are a race against the clock to achieve as quickly as possible the expectations of those liberated. And, again, those expectations, in the case of Iraqi citizens, have always been very high indeed.[4]



U.S. Air Force

Iraqi workers hired to build steps beside the Research Triangle Institute Center in Dhi Qar Province, An Nasiriyah, Iraq, 10 January 2004.

Observation Number 3 is that, in an endeavor like that in Iraq, *money is ammunition*. In fact, depending on the situation, money can be more important than real ammunition—and that has often been the case in Iraq since early April 2003 when Saddam's regime collapsed and the focus rapidly shifted to reconstruction, economic revival, and restoration of basic services. Once money *is* available, the challenge is to spend it effectively and quickly to rapidly achieve measurable results. This leads to a related observation that the money needs to be provided as soon as pos-

sible to the organizations that have the capability and capacity to spend it in such a manner.

So-called "CERP" (Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program) funds—funds created by the Coalition Provisional Authority with captured Iraqi money in response to requests from units for funds that could be put to use quickly and with minimal red tape—proved very important in Iraq in the late spring and summer of 2003. These funds enabled units on the ground to complete thousands of small projects that were, despite their low cost, of enormous importance to local citizens.[5] Village schools, for example, could be repaired and refurbished by less than $10,000 at that time, and units like the 101st Airborne Division carried out hundreds of school repairs alone. Other projects funded by CERP in our area included refurbishment of Mosul University, repairs to the Justice Center, numerous road projects, countless water projects, refurbishment of cement and asphalt factories, repair of a massive irrigation system, support for local elections, digging of dozens of wells, repair of police stations, repair of an oil refinery, purchase of uniforms and equipment for Iraqi forces, construction of small Iraqi Army training and operating bases, repairs to parks and swimming pools, support for youth soccer teams, creation of employment programs, refurbishment of medical facilities, creation of a central Iraqi detention facility, establishment of a small business loan program, and countless other small initiatives that made big differences in the lives of the Iraqis we were trying to help.



U.S. Army

Conference of the Entrepreneur Business Professionals of Iraq hosted by the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade on 20 September 2003. More than 200 young business professionals between the ages of 21 and 35 participated in lectures and working groups on topics related to creating and managing businesses in a global economy.

The success of the CERP concept led Congress to appropriate additional CERP dollars in the fall of 2003, and additional appropriations have continued ever since. Most commanders would agree, in fact, that CERP dollars have been of enormous value to the effort in Iraq (and in Afghanistan, to which the concept migrated in 2003 as well).

Beyond being provided money, those organizations with the capacity and capability to put it to use must also be given reasonable flexibility in how they spend at least a portion of the money, so that it can be used to address emerging needs—which are inevitable. This is particularly important in the case of appropriated funds. The recognition of this need guided our requests for resources for the Iraqi Security Forces "train and equip" mission, and the result was a substantial amount of flexibility in the 2005 supplemental funding measure that has served that mission very well, especially as our new organization achieved the capability and capacity needed to rapidly put to use the resources allocated to it.[6]

Observation Number 4 reminds us that *increasing the number of stakeholders is critical to success.* This insight emerged several months into our time in Iraq as we began to realize that more important than our winning Iraqi hearts and minds was doing all that we could to ensure that as many Iraqis as possible felt a stake in the success of the new Iraq. Now, I do not want to downplay the importance of winning hearts and minds for the Coalition, as that extends the half-life I described earlier, something that is of obvious desirability. But more important was the idea of Iraqis wanting the new Iraq to succeed. Over time, in fact, we began asking, when considering new initiatives, projects, or programs, whether they would help increase the number of Iraqis who felt they had a stake in the country's success. This guided us well during the time that the 101st Airborne Division was in northern Iraq and again during a variety of initiatives pursued as part of the effort to help Iraq reestablish its security forces. And it is this concept, of course, that undoubtedly is behind the reported efforts of the U.S. Ambassador in Iraq to encourage Shi'ia and Kurdish political leaders in Iraq to reach out to Sunni Arab leaders and to encourage them to help the new Iraq succeed.

The essence of **Observation Number 5**—that we should *analyze costs and benefits of operations before each operation*—is captured in a question we developed over time and used to ask before the conduct of operations: "Will this operation," we asked, "take more bad guys off the street than it creates by the way it is conducted?" If the answer to that question was, "No," then we took a very hard look at the operation before proceeding.

In 1986, General John Galvin, then Commander in Chief of the U.S. Southern Command (which was supporting the counterinsurgency effort in El Salvador), described the challenge captured in this observation very effectively: "The . . . burden on the military institution is large. Not only must it subdue an armed



U.S. Army

Soldiers assigned to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) look on as a tube-launched optically-tracked wire-guided (TOW) missile penetrates a building where Uday and Qusay Hussein, the sons of Saddam Hussein, barricaded themselves.

adversary while attempting to provide security to the civilian population, it must also avoid furthering the insurgents' cause. If, for example, the military's actions in killing 50 guerrillas cause 200 previously uncommitted citizens to join the insurgent cause, the use of force will have been counterproductive."[7]

To be sure, there are occasions when one should be willing to take more risk relative to this question. One example was the 101st Airborne Division operation to capture or kill Uday and Qusay. In that case, we ended up firing well over a dozen antitank missiles into the house they were occupying (knowing that all the family members were safely out of it) after Uday and Qusay refused our call to surrender and wounded three of our soldiers during two attempts to capture them.[8]

In the main, however, we sought to carry out operations in a way that minimized the chances of creating more enemies than we captured or killed. The idea was to try to end each day with fewer enemies than we had when it started. Thus we preferred targeted operations rather than sweeps, and as soon as possible after completion of an operation, we explained to the citizens in the affected areas what we'd done and why we did it.

This should not be taken to indicate that we were the least bit reluctant about going after the Saddamists, terrorists, or insurgents; in fact, the opposite was the case. In one night in Mosul alone, for example, we hit 35 targets simultaneously, getting 23 of those we were after, with only one or two shots fired and most of the operations requiring only a knock on a door, vice blowing it down. Such operations obviously depended on a sophisticated intelligence structure, one largely based on human intelligence sources and very similar to the Joint Interagency Task Forces for Counter-Terrorism that were established in various locations after 9/11.

That, logically, leads to **Observation Number 6**, which holds that *intelligence is the key to success*. It is, after all, detailed, actionable intelligence that enables "cordon and knock" operations and precludes large sweeps that often prove counterproductive. Developing such intelligence, however, is not easy. Substantial assets at the local (i.e., division or brigade) level are required to develop human intelligence networks and gather sufficiently precise information to allow targeted operations. For us, precise information generally meant a 10-digit grid for the target's location, a photo of the entry point, a reasonable description of the target, and directions to the target's location, as well as other information on the neighborhood, the target site, and the target himself. Gathering this information is hard; considerable intelligence and operational assets are required, all of which must be pulled together to focus (and deconflict) the collection, analytical, and operational efforts. But it is precisely this type of approach that is essential to preventing terrorists and insurgents from putting down roots in an area and starting the process of intimidation and disruption that can result in a catastrophic downward spiral.

Observation Number 7, which springs from the fact that Civil Affairs are not enough when undertaking huge reconstruction and nation-building efforts, is that *everyone must do nation-building*. This should not be taken to indicate that I have anything but the greatest of respect for our Civil



U.S. Army

101st Airborne troopers deliver computer equipment to Iraq's Mosul University, 21 May 2003. The equipment was donated by the Division's 159th Aviation Brigade.

Affairs personnel—because I hold them in very high regard. I have personally watched them work wonders in Central America, Haiti, the Balkans, and, of course, Iraq. Rather, my point is that when undertaking industrial-strength reconstruction on the scale of that in Iraq, Civil Affairs forces alone will not suffice; every unit must be involved.

Reopening the University of Mosul brought this home to those of us in the 101st Airborne Division in the spring of 2003. A symbol of considerable national pride, the University had graduated well over a hun-



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dred thousand students since its establishment in 1967. Shortly after the seating of the interim Governor and Province Council in Nineveh Province in early May 2003, the Council's members established completion of the school year at the University as among their top priorities. We thus took a quick trip through the University to assess the extent of the damage and to discuss reopening with the Chancellor. We then huddled with our Civil Affairs Battalion Commander to chart a way ahead, but we quickly found that, although the talent inherent in the Battalion's education team was impressive, its members were relatively junior in rank and its size (numbering less than an infantry squad) was simply not enough to help the Iraqis repair and reopen a heavily-looted institution of over 75 buildings, some 4,500 staff and faculty, and approximately 30-35,000 students. The mission, and the education team, therefore, went to one of the two aviation brigades of the 101st Airborne Division, a brigade that clearly did not have "Rebuild Foreign Academic Institutions" in its mission essential task list. What the brigade did have, however, was a senior commander and staff, as well as numerous subordinate units with commanders and staffs, who collectively added up to considerable organizational capacity and capability.

Seeing this approach work with Mosul University, we quickly adopted the same approach in virtually every area—assigning a unit or element the responsibility for assisting each of the Iraqi Ministries' activities in northern Iraq and also for linking with key Iraqi leaders. For example, our Signal Battalion incorporated the Civil Affairs Battalion's communications team and worked with the Ministry of Telecommunications element in northern Iraq, helping reestablish the local telecommunications structure, including assisting with a deal that brought a satellite downlink to the central switch and linked Mosul with the international phone system, producing a profit for the province (subscribers bore all the costs). Our Chaplain and his team linked with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Engineer Battalion with the Ministry of Public Works, the Division Support Command with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Corps Support Group with the Ministry of Education, the Military Police Battalion with the Ministry of Interior (Police), our Surgeon and his team with the Ministry of Health, our Staff Judge Advocate with Ministry of Justice officials, our Fire Support Element with the Ministry of Oil, and so on. In fact, we lined up a unit or staff section with every ministry element and with all the key leaders and officials in our AOR, and our subordinate units did the same in their areas of responsibility. By the time we were done, everyone and every element, not just Civil Affairs units, was engaged in nation-building.

Observation Number 8, recognition of the need to *help build institutions, not just units,* came from the Coalition mission of helping Iraq reestablish its security forces. We initially focused primarily on developing combat units—Army and Police battalions and brigade headquarters—as well as individual police. While those are what Iraq desperately needed to help in the achievement of security, for the long term there was also a critical need to help rebuild the institutions that support the units and police in the field—the ministries, the admin and logistical support units, the professional military education systems, admin policies and procedures, and the training organizations. In fact, lack of ministry capability and capacity can undermine the development of the battalions, brigades, and divisions, if the ministries, for example, don't pay the soldiers or police on time, use political rather than professional criteria in picking leaders, or fail



U.S. Army

"Cultural awareness is a force multiplier." COL Michael Linnington, commander, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and the Deputy Governor of Nineveh meet with tribal leaders of Tallafar, Iraq.

to pay contractors as required for services provided. This lesson underscored for us the importance of providing sufficient advisors and mentors to assist with the development of the security ministries and their elements, just as we provided advisor teams with each battalion and each brigade and division headquarters.[9]

Observation Number 9, c*ultural awareness is a force multiplier,* reflects our recognition that knowledge of the cultural "terrain" can be as important as, and sometimes even more important than, knowledge of the geographic terrain. This observation acknowledges that the people are, in many respects, the decisive terrain, and that we must study that terrain in the same way that we have always studied the geographic terrain.

Working in another culture is enormously difficult if one doesn't understand the ethnic groups, tribes, religious elements, political parties, and other social groupings—and their respective viewpoints; the relationships among the various groups; governmental structures and processes; local and regional history; and, of course, local and national leaders. Understanding of such cultural aspects is essential if one is to help the people build stable political, social, and economic institutions. Indeed, this is as much a matter of common sense as operational necessity. Beyond the intellectual need for the specific knowledge about the environment in which one is working, it is also clear that people, in general, are more likely to cooperate if those who have power over them respect the culture that gives them a sense of identity and self-worth.

In truth, many of us did a lot of "discovery learning" about such features of Iraq in the early months of our time there. And those who learned the quickest—and who also mastered some "survival Arabic"—were, not surprisingly, the most effective in developing productive relationships with local leaders and citizens and achieved the most progress in helping establish security, local governance, economic activity, and basic services. The importance of cultural awareness has, in fact, been widely recognized in the U.S. Army and the other services, and it is critical that we continue the progress that has been made in this area in our exercises, military schools, doctrine, and so on.[10]



U.S. Army

"Success means acting across the full spectrum of operations." U.S. military assists in local Iraqi election.

Observation Number 10 is a statement of the obvious, fully recognized by those operating in Iraq, but it is one worth recalling nonetheless. It is that *success in a counterinsurgency requires more than just military operations.* Counterinsurgency strategies must also in-

clude, above all, efforts to establish a political environment that helps reduce support for the insurgents and undermines the attraction of whatever ideology they may espouse.[11] In certain Sunni Arab regions of Iraq, establishing such a political environment is likely of greater importance than military operations, since the right political initiatives might undermine the sanctuary and assistance provided to the insurgents. Beyond the political arena, other important factors are economic recovery (which reduces unemployment, a serious challenge in Iraq that leads some out-of-work Iraqis to be guns for hire), education (which opens up employment possibilities and access to information from outside one's normal circles), diplomatic initiatives (in particular, working with neighboring states through which foreign fighters transit), improvement in the provision of basic services, and so on. In fact, the campaign plan developed in 2005 by the Multinational Force-Iraq and the U.S. Embassy with Iraqi and Coalition leaders addresses each of these issues.

Observation Number 11—*ultimate success depends on local leaders*—is a natural reflection of Iraqi sovereignty and acknowledges that success in Iraq is, as time passes, increasingly dependent on Iraqi leaders—at four levels:

• Leaders at the national level working together, reaching across party and sectarian lines to keep the country unified, rejecting short-term expedient solutions such as the use of militias, and pursuing initiatives to give more of a stake in the success of the new Iraq to those who feel left out;

• Leaders in the ministries building the capability and capacity necessary to use the tremendous resources Iraq has efficiently, transparently, honestly, and effectively;

• Leaders at the province level resisting temptations to pursue winner-take-all politics and resisting the urge to politicize the local police and other security forces, and;

• Leaders in the Security Forces staying out of politics, providing courageous, competent leadership to their units, implementing policies that are fair to all members of their forces, and fostering loyalty to their Army or Police band of brothers rather than to specific tribes, ethnic groups, political parties, or local militias.

Iraqi leaders are, in short, the real key to the new Iraq, and we thus need to continue to do all that we can to enable them.



"Success depends on local leaders."

Observation Number 12 is the admonition to *remember the strategic corporals and strategic lieutenants*, the relatively junior commissioned or noncommissioned officers who often have to make huge decisions, sometimes with life-or-death as well as strategic consequences, in the blink of an eye.

Commanders have two major obligations to these junior leaders: first, to do everything possible to train them before deployment for the various situations they will face, particularly for the most challenging and ambiguous ones; and, second, once deployed, to try to shape situations to minimize the cases in which they have to make those hugely important decisions extremely quickly.

The best example of the latter is what we do to help ensure that, when establishing hasty checkpoints, our strategic corporals are provided sufficient training and adequate means to stop a vehicle speeding toward them without having to put a bullet through the windshield. This is, in truth, easier said than it is done in the often chaotic situations that arise during a fast-moving operation in such a challenging security environment. But there are some actions we can take to try to ensure that our young leaders have adequate time to make the toughest of calls—decisions that, if not right, again, can have strategic consequences.

My next-to-last observation, **Number 13**, is that *there is no substitute for flexible, adaptable leaders.* The key to many of our successes in Iraq, in fact, has been leaders—especially young leaders—who have risen to the occasion and taken on tasks for which they'd had little or no training,[12] and who have demonstrated enormous initiative, innovativeness, determination, and courage.[13] Such leaders have repeatedly been the essential ingredient in many of the achievements in Iraq. And fostering the development of others like them clearly is critical to the further development of our Army and our military.[14]

My final observation, **Number 14**, underscores that, especially in counterinsurgency operations, *a leader's most important task is to set the right tone*. This is, admittedly, another statement of the obvious, but one that nonetheless needs to be highlighted given its tremendous importance. Setting the right tone and communicating that tone to his subordinate leaders and troopers are absolutely critical for every leader at every level, especially in an endeavor like that in Iraq.

If, for example, a commander clearly emphasizes so-called kinetic operations over non-kinetic operations,



U.S. Army

SGT Joshua Rogers, of Charlie Company, 2d Battalion, 3d Infantry Regiment, 3d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), speaks with an Iraqi man in Mosul, on 3 July 2004. Charlie Company was participating in Mutual Security 2, an operation in which the Iraqi police and the Iraqi National Guard were conducting a town cordon and knock, while 2-3 Infantry provided blocking positions for the outer cordon.

his subordinates will do likewise. As a result, they may thus be less inclined to seize opportunities for the nation-building aspects of the campaign. In fact, even in the 101st Airborne Division, which prided itself on its attention to nation-building, there were a few mid-level commanders early on whose hearts really weren't into performing civil affairs tasks, assisting with reconstruction, developing relationships with local citizens, or helping establish local governance. To use the jargon of Iraq at that time, they didn't "get it." In such cases, the commanders above them quickly established that nation-building activities were not optional and would be pursued with equal enthusiasm to raids and other offensive operations.

Setting the right tone ethically is another hugely important task. If leaders fail to get this right, winking at the mistreatment of detainees or at manhandling of citizens, for example, the result can be a sense in the unit that "anything goes." Nothing can be more destructive in an element than such a sense.

In truth, regardless of the leader's tone, most units in Iraq have had to deal with cases in which mistakes have been made in these areas, where young leaders in very frustrating situations, often after having suffered very tough casualties, took missteps. The key in these situations is for leaders to ensure that appropriate action is taken in the wake of such incidents, that standards are clearly articulated and reinforced, that remedial training is conducted, and that supervision is exercised to try to preclude recurrences.

It is hard to imagine a tougher environment than that in some of the areas in Iraq. Frustrations, anger, and resentment can run high in such situations. That recognition underscores, again, the importance of commanders at every level working hard to get the tone right and to communicate it throughout their units.

Implications

These are, again, 14 observations from soldiering in Iraq for most of the first 2-1/2 years of our involvement there. Although I presented them as discrete lessons, many are inextricably related. These observations carry with them a number of implications for our effort in Iraq (and for our Army as well, as I have noted in some of the footnotes).[15]

It goes without saying that success in Iraq—which clearly is important not just for Iraq, but for the entire Middle East region and for our own country—will require continued military operations and support for the ongoing development of Iraqi Security Forces.

Success will also require continued assistance and resources for the development of the emerging political, economic, and social institutions in Iraq—efforts in which Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and General George Casey and their teams have been engaged with their Iraqi counterparts and have been working very hard.

Lastly, success will require time, determination, and resilience, keeping in mind that following the elections held in mid-December 2005, several months will likely be required for the new government—the fourth in an 18-month period—to be established



U.S. Army

MG David Petraeus and COL Ben Hodges with Arab and Kurdish leaders at a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the reconstruction of a Kurd-Arab village south of Mosul, 2003.

and functional. The insurgents and extremists did all that they could to derail the preparations for the constitutional referendum in mid-October and the elections in mid-December. Although they were ineffective in each case, they undoubtedly will try to disrupt the establishment of the new government—and the upcoming provincial elections—as well. As Generals John Abizaid and George Casey made clear in their testimony on Capitol Hill in September 2005, however, there is a strategy—developed in close coordination with those in the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and with our inter-agency, Coalition, and Iraqi partners—that addresses the insurgency, Iraqi Security Forces, and the other relevant areas. And there has been substantial progress in a number of areas. Nonetheless, nothing is ever easy in Iraq and a great deal of hard work and many challenges clearly lie ahead.[16]

The first 6 months of 2006 thus will be of enormous importance, with the efforts of Iraqi leaders being especially significant during this period as a new government is seated and the new constitution enters into force. It will be essential that we do all that we can to support Iraq's leaders as they endeavor to make the most of the opportunity our Soldiers have given them.

Conclusion

In a 1986 article titled "Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm," General John R. Galvin observed that "[a]n officer's effectiveness and chance for success, now and in the future, depend not only on his character, knowledge, and skills, but also, and more than ever before, on his ability to understand the changing environment of conflict.[17] General Galvin's words were relevant then, but they are even more applicable today. Conducting counterinsurgency operations in a vastly different culture is exceedingly complex.

Later, in the same article, noting that we in the military typically have our noses to the grindstone and that we often live a somewhat cloistered existence, General Galvin counseled: "Let us get our young leaders away from the grindstone now and then, and encourage them to reflect on developments outside the fortress-cloister. Only then will they develop into leaders capable of adapting to the changed environment of warfare and able to fashion a new paradigm that addresses all the dimensions of the conflicts that may lie ahead."[18]

Given the current situation, General Galvin's advice again appears very wise indeed. And it is my hope that, as we all take time to lift our noses from the grindstone and look beyond the confines of our current assignments, the observations provided here will help foster useful discussion on our ongoing endeavors and on how we should approach similar conflicts in the future—conflicts that are likely to be the norm, rather than the exception, in the 21st century. ***MR***

NOTES

1. The Center for Army Lessons Learned website can be found at <http://call.Army.mil/>.

2. T.E. Lawrence, "Twenty-Seven Articles," *Arab Bulletin* (20 August 1917). Known popularly as "Lawrence of Arabia," T.E. Lawrence developed an incomparable degree of what we now call "cultural awareness" during his time working with Arab tribes and armies, and many of his 27 articles ring as true today as they did in his day. A website with the articles can be found at <www.pbs.org/lawrenceofarabia/revolt/warfare4.html>. A good overview of Lawrence's thinking, including his six fundamental principles of insurgency, can be found in "T.E. Lawrence and the Mind of an Insurgent," *Army* (July 2005): 31-37.

3. I should note that this has been much less the case in Afghanistan where, because the expectations of the people were so low and the abhorrence of the Taliban and further civil war was so great, the Afghan people remain grateful to Coalition forces and other organizations for all that is done for them. Needless to say, the relative permissiveness of the security situation in Afghanistan has also helped a great deal and made it possible for nongovernmental organizations to operate on a much wider and freer basis than is possible in Iraq. In short, the different context in Afghanistan has meant that the half-life of the Army of liberation there has been considerably longer than that in Iraq.

4. In fact, we often contended with what came to be known as the "Man on the Moon Challenge"—i.e., the expectation of ordinary Iraqis that soldiers from a country that could put a man on the moon and overthrow Saddam in a matter of weeks should also be able, with considerable ease, to provide each Iraqi a job, 24-hour electrical service, and so on.

5. The military units on the ground in Iraq have generally had considerable capability to carry out reconstruction and nation-building tasks. During its time in northern Iraq, for example, the 101st Airborne Division had 4 engineer battalions (including, for a period, even a well-drilling detachment), an engineer group headquarters (which is designed to carry out assessment, design, contracting, and quality assurance tasks), 2 civil affairs battalions, 9 infantry battalions, 4 artillery battalions (most of which were "out of battery" and performed reconstruction tasks), a sizable logistical support command (generally about 6 battalions, including transportation, fuel storage, supply, maintenance, food service, movement control, warehousing, and even water purification units), a military police battalion (with attached police and corrections training detachments), a signal battalion, an air defense battalion (which helped train Iraqi forces), a field hospital, a number of contracting officers and officers authorized to carry large sums of money, an air traffic control element, some 9 aviation battalions (with approximately 250 helicopters), a number of chaplain teams, and more than 25 military lawyers (who can be of enormous assistance in resolving a host of problems when conducting nation-building). Except in the area of aviation assets, the 4th Infantry Division and the 1st Armored Division, the two other major Army units in Iraq in the summer of 2003, had even more assets than the 101st.

6. The FY 2005 Defense Budget and Supplemental Funding Measures approved by Congress provided some $5.2 billion for the Iraqi Security Force's train, equip, advise, and rebuild effort. Just as significant, it was appropriated in just three categories—Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, and Quick Reaction Funds—thereby minimizing substantially the need for reprogramming actions.

7. General John R. Galvin, "Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm," *Parameters*, 16, no. 4 (Winter 1986): 6.

8. As soon as the "kinetic" part of that operation was complete, we moved into the neighborhood with engineers, civil affairs teams, lawyers, officers with money, and security elements. We subsequently repaired any damage that might conceivably have been caused by the operation, and completely removed all traces of the house in which Uday and Qusay were located, as the missiles had rendered it structurally unsound and we didn't want any reminders left of the two brothers.

9. Over time, and as the effort to train and equip Iraqi combat units gathered momentum, the Multinational Security Transition Command–Iraq placed greater and greater emphasis on helping with the development of the Ministries of Defense and Interior, especially after the mission to advise the Ministries' leaders was shifted to the Command from the Embassy's Iraq Reconstruction Management Office in the Fall of 2005. It is now one of the Command's top priorities.

10. The Army, for example, has incorporated scenarios that place a premium on cultural awareness into its major exercises at the National Training Center and Joint Readiness Training Center. It has stressed the importance of cultural awareness throughout the process of preparing units for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and in a comprehensive approach adopted by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. As part of this effort, language tools have been developed; e.g., the Rosetta Stone program available through Army Knowledge Online, and language training will be required; e.g., of Command and General Staff College students during their 2d and 3d semesters. Doctrinal manuals are being modified to recognize the importance of cultural awareness, and instruction in various commissioned and noncommissioned officer courses has been added as well. The Center for Army Lessons Learned has published a number of documents to assist as well. The U.S. Marine Corps has pursued similar initiatives and is, in fact, partnering with the Army in the development of a new Counterinsurgency Field Manual.

11. David Galula's classic work, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (St. Petersburg, FL: Hailer Publishing, 2005) is particularly instructive on this point. See, for example, his discussion on pages 88-89.

12. As I noted in a previous footnote, preparation of leaders and units for deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan now typically includes extensive preparation for the kind of "non-kinetic" operations our leaders are called on to perform, with the preparation period culminating in a brigade combat team mission rehearsal exercise at either the National Training Center or the Joint Readiness Training Center. At each Center, units conduct missions similar to those they'll perform when deployed and do so in an environment that includes villages, Iraqi-American role players, "suicide bombers," "insurgents," the need to work with local leaders and local security forces, etc. At the next higher level, the preparation of division and corps headquarters culminates in the conduct of a mission rehearsal exercise conducted jointly by the Battle Command Training Program and Joint Warfighting Center. This exercise also strives to replicate—in a command post exercise format driven by a computer simulation—the missions, challenges, and context the unit will find once deployed.

13. A great piece that highlights the work being done by young leaders in Iraq is Robert Kaplan's "The Future of America—in Iraq," *latimes.com,* 24 December 2005. Another is the video presentation used by Army Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker, "Pentathlete Leader: 1LT Ted Wiley," which recounts Lieutenant Wiley's fascinating experiences in the first Stryker unit to operate in Iraq as they fought and conducted nation-building operations throughout much of the country, often transitioning from one to the other very rapidly, changing missions and reorganizing while on the move, and covering considerable distances in short periods of time.

14. In fact, the U.S. Army is currently in the final stages of an important study of the education and training of leaders, one objective of which is to identify additional programs and initiatives that can help produce the kind of flexible, adaptable leaders who have done well in Iraq and Afghanistan. Among the issues being examined is how to provide experiences for our leaders that take them out of their "comfort zone." For many of us, attending a civilian graduate school provided such an experience, and the Army's recent decision to expand graduate school opportunities for officers is thus a great initiative. For a provocative assessment of the challenges the U.S. Army faces, see the article by U.K. Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November-December 2005): 2-15.

15. The Department of Defense (DOD) formally recognized the implications of current operations as well, issuing DOD Directive 3000.05 on 28 November 2005, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations," which establishes DOD policy and assigns responsibilities within DOD for planning, training, and preparing to conduct and support stability operations. This is a significant action that is already spurring action in a host of different areas. A copy can be found at <www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/html/300005.htm>.

16. A brief assessment of the current situation and the strategy for the way ahead is in Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad's "The Challenge Before Us," *Wall Street Journal*, 9 January 2006, 12.

17. Galvin, 7. One of the Army's true soldier-statesman-scholars, General Galvin was serving as the Commander in Chief of U.S. Southern Command at the time he wrote this article. In that position, he oversaw the conduct of a number of operations in El Salvador and elsewhere in Central and South America, and it was in that context that he wrote this enduring piece. He subsequently served as the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and following retirement, was the Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, Medford, Massachuesetts.

18. Ibid.

Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army, took command of the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in October 2005. He also serves as the Commandant of the Command and General Staff College and as Deputy Commander for Combined Arms of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. LTG Petraeus commanded the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Iraq during the first year of Operation Iraqi Freedom, returning to the United States with the Division in mid-February 2004. He returned to Iraq for several weeks in April and May 2004 to assess the Iraqi Security Forces, and he subsequently returned in early June 2004 to serve as the first commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, the position he held until September 2005. In late 2004, he also became the first commander of the NATO Training Mission-Iraq. Prior to his tour with the 101st, he served for a year as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations of the NATO Stabilization Force in Bosnia. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, LTG Petraeus earned M.P.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.

The Object Beyond War: Counterinsurgency and the Four Tools of Political Competition

Montgomery McFate, Ph.D., J.D., and Andrea V. Jackson

The state is a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate (that is, considered to be legitimate) violence. If the state is to exist, the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the powers that be. When and why do men obey? Upon what inner justifications and upon what external means does this domination rest?
—Max Weber[1]

IN 1918, MAX WEBER, the father of modern sociology, asked these questions; the answers reveal a key to conducting effective counterinsurgency operations (COIN). In the most basic sense, an insurgency is a competition for power. According to British Brigadier General Frank Kitson, "[T]here can be no such thing as [a] purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity."[2] U.S. Field Manual (Interim) 3-07.22, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, defines insurgency as "organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict. It is a protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken government control and legitimacy while increasing insurgent control. *Political power is the central issue in an insurgency*" (emphasis added).[3]

In any struggle for political power there are a limited number of tools that can be used to induce men to obey. These tools are coercive force, economic incentive and disincentive, legitimating ideology, and traditional authority.[4] These tools are equally available to insurgent and counterinsurgent forces. From the perspective of the population, neither side has an explicit or immediate advantage in the battle for hearts and minds. The civilian population will support the side that makes it *in its interest* to obey. The regard for one's own benefit or advantage is the basis for behavior in all societies, regardless of religion, class, or culture. Iraqis, for example, will decide to support the insurgency or government forces based on a calculation of which side *on balance* best meets their needs for physical security, economic well-being, and social identity.

The central goal in counterinsurgency operations, then, is to surpass the adversary in the effective use of the four tools. According to British Brigadier General Richard Simpkin, "Established armed forces need to do more than just master high-intensity maneuver warfare between large forces with baroque equipment. They have to go one step further and structure, equip, and train themselves to employ the techniques of revolutionary warfare to beat the opposition at their own game on their own ground."[5] Beating the opposition requires that counterinsurgency forces make it in the interest of the civilian population to support the government. How? To win support counterinsurgents must be able to selectively provide security—or take it away. Counterinsurgency forces must become the arbiter of economic well-being by providing goods, services, and income—or by taking them away. Counterinsurgency forces must develop and disseminate narratives, symbols, and messages that resonate with the population's preexisting cultural system or counter those of the opposition. And, finally, counterinsurgents must co-opt existing traditional leaders whose authority can augment the legitimacy of the government or prevent the opposition from co-opting them.

To use the tools of political competition effectively, the culture and society of the insurgent group must be fully understood. Julian Paget, one of Britain's foremost experts on the subject, wrote in 1967 that "every effort must be made to know the Enemy before the insurgency begins."[6] For each key social group, counterinsurgency forces must be able to identify the amount of security the group has and where it gets that security, the level of income and services that group has and where it gets that income, ideologies and narratives that resonate with the group and the means by which they communicate, and the legitimate traditional leaders and their interests.

In most counterinsurgency operations since 1945, insurgents have held a distinct advantage in their level of local knowledge. They speak the language, move easily within the society in question, and are more likely to understand the population's interests. Thus, effective counterinsurgency requires a leap of imagination and a peculiar skill set not encountered in conventional warfare. Jean Larteguy, writing about French operations in Indochina and Algeria, noted: "To make war, you always must put yourself in the other man's place . . . , eat what they eat, sleep with their women, and read their books."[7] Essentially, effective counterinsurgency requires that state forces mirror their adversary.[8]

Past counterinsurgency campaigns offer a number of lessons about how to conduct (and how not to conduct) counterinsurgency using the four tools of political competition. These lessons have potential relevance for current operations in Iraq.

Coercive Force

In his 1918 speech "Politics as a Vocation (Politik als Beruf)," Max Weber argued that the state must be characterized by the means which it, and only it, has at its disposal: "A state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."[9] While the most direct source of any state's political power is coercion, or the right to use or threaten the use of physical force, it is not necessarily the most effective mode of governing. Governments (such as totalitarian regimes) that base their power purely on coercion play a dangerous game, because citizens who are the object of this unmediated power often view it as illegitimate and are frequently willing to engage in acts of resistance against the state.

Legitimate governance, on the other hand, implies a reciprocal relationship between central authority and citizenry. To be considered legitimate by the populace, the government must monopolize coercive force within its territorial boundaries to provide its citizens with the most basic human need—security.[10] Where the state fails to provide security to its citizens or becomes a threat to them, it fails to fulfill the implicit contract of governance. In certain circumstances, citizens may then seek alternative security guarantees in the form of an ethnic or political allegiance with a group engaged in an armed struggle against a central authority.[11] In some cases, this struggle might develop into an outright insurgency.

The government's legitimacy becomes a center-of-gravity target during an insurgency, meaning insurgents will attempt to demonstrate that the state cannot guarantee security within its territory. The "central goal of an insurgency is not to defeat the armed forces, but to subvert or destroy the government's legitimacy, its ability and moral right to govern."[12] Insurgents have a natural advantage in this game because their actions are not constrained by codified law. States, however, must not only avoid wrongdoing but any appearance of wrongdoing that might undermine their legitimacy in the community. Thomas Mockaitis points out: "In counterinsurgency an atrocity is not necessarily what one actually does but what one is successfully blamed for."[13] During an insurgency, there are three ways to conserve state legitimacy: using proportionate force, using precisely applied force, and providing security for the civilian population.

Proportionate force. In responding to an insurgency, states naturally tend to reach for the most convenient weapon at their disposal—coercive force. Most states focus their military doctrine, training, and planning squarely on major combat operations as a core competency, often leaving them unprepared for counterinsurgency operations. Since 1923, for example, the core tenet of U.S. warfighting strategy has been that overwhelming force deployed against an equally powerful state will result in military victory.[14] Yet, in a counterinsurgency, "winning" through overwhelming force is often inapplicable as a concept, if not problematic as a goal. Often, the application of overwhelming force has a negative, unintended effect of strengthening the insurgency by creating martyrs, increasing recruiting, and demonstrating the brutality of state forces. For example, in May 1945 the Muslim population of Sétif, Algeria, rioted and killed 103 Europeans. At the behest of the French colonial government of Algeria, General Raymond-Francis Duval indiscriminately killed thousands of innocent Algerians in and around Sétif in reprisal. The nascent Algerian liberation movement seized on the barbarity of the French response and awakened a mostly politically dormant population. "Sétif!" became a rallying cry of the Algerian insurgency, an insurgency that led to 83,441 French casualties and the eventual French withdrawal from independent Algeria.[15] As this example indicates, political considerations must circumscribe military action as a fundamental matter of strategy.[16]

Because state military institutions train, organize, and equip to fight wars against other states, they have a natural tendency to misread the nature of the adversary during counterinsurgencies. Charles Townsend noted: "If the nature of the challenging 'force' is misunderstood, then the counter-application of force is likely to be wrong."[17] This misunderstanding can result in a use of force appropriate against another



DOD

Security is paramount: Infantrymen from the 172d Stryker Brigade Combat Team patrolling the streets of Mosul, January 2006.

state's army but counterproductive when used against an insurgent group. For example, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) historically viewed itself as an "army" and construed its activities as a "war" against British occupation. Thus, any British actions that implied that the conflict was a war provided effective propaganda for the IRA. According to the *Record of the Rebellion in Ireland in 1920-21*, "recognition [by military authorities] of the IRA as belligerents may ipso facto be said to involve the Imperial Government in the recognition of an Irish Republic."[18] Identifying the conflict as a war would have legitimized Sinn Fein and threatened the political legitimacy of the British Government and of the Union, itself. As Lloyd George said in April 1920: "You do not declare war against rebels."[19]

The use of excessive force may not only legitimize the insurgent group, but also cause the state to lose legitimacy in the eyes of the civilian population. For example, in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, on 30 January 1972 the British Army Parachute Regiment arrested demonstrators participating in an illegal, anti-internment march. Believing that they were being attacked, soldiers opened fire on a crowd of civil-rights demonstrators. According to a sergeant who witnessed the debacle, "acid bottle bombs were being thrown from the top of the flats, and two of our blokes were badly burnt. . . . It was very busy, very chaotic. . . . People were running in all directions, and screaming everywhere."[20] The soldiers responded to the rioters as if they were an opposing army. According to one British Army observer, "The Paras are trained to react fast and go in hard. That day they were expecting to have to fight their way in. . . . In those street conditions it is very difficult to tell where a round has come from. [T]hat section, quite frankly lost control. For goodness' sake, you could hear their CO [commanding officer] bellowing at them to cease firing, and only to fire aimed shots at [an] actual target."[21] As a result of the overkill in Londonderry on what is now known as Bloody Sunday, the IRA came to be seen as the legitimate protectors of their own communities. The British Army, on the other hand, became a target of the people it had intended to protect. For the government to retain legitimacy, the population must believe that state forces are improving rather than undermining their security.

Precisely applied force. A direct relationship exists between the appropriate use of force and successful counterinsurgency. A corollary of this rule is that force must be applied precisely. According to British Army

Colonel Michael Dewar, counterinsurgency "operates by precise tactics. Two weeks waiting in ambush and one kill to show for it is far better than to bomb a village flat."[22] Force must be applied precisely so that it functions as a disincentive to insurgent activity. If the state threatens individuals through the imprecise application of force, the insurgency may begin to look more appealing as a security provider.

Certain senior U.S. military commanders in Vietnam understood the need for precise application of firepower, although they never implemented its use. When General Harold K. Johnson became U.S. Army Chief of Staff in 1964, he proposed an approach to the war in Vietnam radically at variance with General William Westmoreland's attrition-based body-count approach. During his early trips to Vietnam, Johnson was disturbed by the enormous amount of firepower being "splashed around," of which only 6 percent was actually observed.[23] In 1965 Johnson commissioned a study titled "A Program for the Pacification and Long-Term Development of Vietnam (PROVN)."[24] The study was drafted by 10 officers from diverse backgrounds, including Colonel Don Marshall, a cultural anthropologist by training, who later directed General Creighton Abrams' Long-Range Program Plan.[25] The PROVN study carefully examined the unintended consequences of indiscriminate firepower and concluded that "aerial attacks and artillery fire, applied indiscriminately, also have exacted a toll on village allegiance."[26] Operations intended to protect villagers were having the opposite result of harming and alienating them. Johnson noted a new rule to be applied to this type of warfare: "Destruction is applied only to the extent necessary to achieve control and, thus, by its nature, must be discriminating."[27]

The PROVN study has implications for operations in Iraq. The main focus of Multinational Forces-Iraq (MNF-I) has been the destruction of insurgent and terrorist networks. Lacking quality information on the identity of insurgents, MNF-I has engaged in raids on neighborhoods where they suspect weapons caches might be. These untargeted raids have a negative, unintended effect on the civilian population. One young Iraqi imam said: "There are too many raids. There are too many low-flying helicopters at night. Before, people wanted to go to America. Now they do not want to see Americans anymore. They do not want to see any more Soldiers. They hate all of the militaries in their area."[28] To avoid causing resentment that can drive insurgency, coercive force must be applied accurately and precisely. Each use of force should be preceded by the questions: Is the action creating more insurgents than it is eliminating? Does the benefit of this action outweigh the potential cost to security if it creates more insurgents?



DOD

Less-than-precise application of force: U.S. jets napalm buildings suspected of harboring Viet Cong south of Saigon, 1965.

Providing security. One core state function is to provide security to citizens within its territory. Security is the most basic precondition for civilian support of the government. In regard to Vietnam, Charles Simpson pointed out that "the motivation that produces the only real long-lasting effect is the elemental consideration of survival. Peasants will support [the guerrillas] if they are convinced that failure to do so will result in death or brutal punishment. They will support the government if and when they are convinced that it *offers them a better life*, and it can and will protect them against the [guerrillas] forever."[29]

To counter an insurgency the government must establish (or reestablish) physical security for its citizens. Establishing physical security for civilians was the basis of the defensive enclave strategy, also known as the "oil spot" strategy, advocated by Major General Lewis W. Walt, Lieutenant General James Gavin, Ambassador Maxwell Taylor, and others during the Vietnam War. In a recent *Foreign Affairs* article, Andrew Krepinevich reaffirms this approach: "Rather than focusing on killing insurgents, Coalition forces should concentrate on providing security" to the civilian population.[30]

Such an approach is difficult to carry out because of force-structure requirements, and because using Soldiers as police conflicts with the operational code of the military. Westmoreland, for example, ultimately rejected the oil spot strategy on the grounds that "the marines should have been trying to find the enemy's main forces and bring them to battle," an activity

which was presumably more martial than drinking tea with villagers.[31] Such a strategy is also difficult to conceive and implement because most Americans live in communities with effective policing and cannot imagine a world without security guarantees. One 101st Airborne battalion commander noted: "Establishing a secure environment for civilians, free from the arbitrary threat of having your personal property appropriated by a man with a gun, should be the main task of COIN. But we messed it up because it's such an understood part of our own social contract—it's not a premise that we debate because we're mostly just suburban kids."[32]

There are three ways to provide civilian security in a counterinsurgency: local, indigenous forces working with regular military forces; community policing; and direct support. In Vietnam, the U.S. Marine Corps' (USMC) Combined Action Program (CAP) was highly effective at providing civilian security by using local, indigenous forces as well as regular military forces. In every CAP unit, a Marine rifle squad was paired with a platoon of local Vietnamese forces. Using a local village as a base, CAP units trained, patrolled, defended, and lived with indigenous forces, preventing the guerrillas from extracting rice, intelligence, and sanctuary from local towns and villages. In addition to providing valuable intelligence about enemy activity, CAP units accounted for 7.6 percent of the enemy killed while representing only 1.5 percent of the Marines killed in Vietnam.[33] In Malaya, under the Briggs Plan, the British administration replaced soldiers with civilian police who gained the trust of the community by building long-term relationships. The British also developed an information campaign to portray the police as civil servants, whose job it was to protect civilians. By 1953, these efforts reduced violence and increased trust in the government.[34]

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During 2003, the 101st Airborne Division provided security to the civilian population of Mosul. With more than 20,000 Soldiers, the U.S. force in Nineveh province had excellent civil affairs, patrolling, and rapid-reaction coverage. As the largest single employer in northern Iraq, the 101st Airborne was a powerful force for social order in the community.[35]

The Coalition has designated Iraqi Police as the main force to provide security to Iraqi citizens. Despite vigorous recruiting and training efforts, they have been less than effective in providing security for the population. As of August 2005, the town of Hit, with a population of over 130,000, entirely lacked a police force.[36] Iraqis interviewed between November 2003 and August 2005 indicated that security and crime, specifically kidnapping and assault, remain their greatest concerns.[37] In many Iraqi towns, women and children cannot walk in the street for fear of abduction or attack. Incidents such as minor traffic accidents can potentially escalate into deadly violence. In many towns police patrol only during the daytime with support from the Iraqi Army or Coalition forces, leaving the militias and insurgents in control at night. Residents view the police as a means of legitimizing illegal activities rather than as a source of security: police commonly accept bribes to ignore smuggling (from Iran and Turkey), black market activities, kidnappings, and murders. For a price, most police officers will arrest an innocent man, and for a greater price, they will turn the suspect over to the Coalition as a suspected insurgent. In August 2005 in Mosul, a U.S. officer reported that for $5,000 to $10,000 a detainee could bribe his way out of Iraqi Police custody.[38]

In most areas of the country, local preexisting militias and ad hoc units form the core of local police forces. These units tend to be overwhelmingly dominated by a single ethno-religious or tribal group, which frequently arouses the animosity of local populations from different groups. Many of these forces freely use official state structures to serve their own interests. One American military officer, when discussing the Sunni Arab police from East Mosul (90 percent of whom are from the Al Jaburi tribe) said: "I don't know if the police are about peace and security, or about their own survival and power."[39]

In some areas of the country, self-interested militias previously engaged in insurgent activities against Saddam Hussein's regime now provide questionable security services to the population. Some, like the Badr Brigade or the peshmerga, have been integrated into the new Iraqi Security Forces.[40] In other areas, the Interior Ministry has deployed Public Order Battalions to maintain government control. Intended to augment civilian police during large-scale civil disobedience, these units are not trained to provide police services and have been heavy-handed in their application of coercive force. In Falluja, the Public Order Battalion currently functions as a de facto Shiite militia, extorting business owners, dishonoring women, and raiding homes indiscriminately.[41] According to a USMC officer, using Shiite police in predominately Sunni

areas leads to resentment among the population: "We've had problems. There are inevitable cultural clashes."[42]

State failure to provide security may cause citizens to accept alternative security guarantees from nonstate actors, which can be a major driver of insurgency.[43] For example, the British failure to provide security to Republican communities in Northern Ireland during Loyalist attacks in 1968 resulted in the Irish Republican Army's reemergence as a paramilitary organization and its assumption of certain police functions within its communities. The same dynamic has taken place in Iraq. According to one Iraqi insurgent, the failure of U.S. forces to provide security motivated him to take up arms: "My colleagues and I waited to make our decision on whether to fight until we saw how they would act. They should have come and just given us food and some security. . . . It was then that I realized that they had come as occupiers and not as liberators, and my colleagues and I then voted to fight."[44]

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In some areas of Iraq, insurgent groups and militias have established themselves as extra-governmental arbiters of the physical security of the population and now represent a challenge to the state's monopoly on coercive force. For example, Muqtada al Sadr's Mehdi Army is the sole security provider for the population of Sadr City, a district of Baghdad with an estimated population of 2 million.[45] In Haditha, Ansar al Sunna and Tawhid al-Jihad mujihadeen govern the town, enforce a strict interpretation of Islamic law in their court system, and use militias to provide order. If Haditha residents follow the rules, they receive 24-hour access to electricity and can walk down the street without fear of random crime. If they disobey, the punishments are extremely harsh, such as being whipped with cables 190 times for committing adultery.[46] In the border town of Qaim, followers of Abu Musab Zarqawi took control on 5 September 2005 and began patrolling the streets, killing U.S. collaborators and enforcing strict Islamic law. Sheik Nawaf Mahallawi noted that because Coalition forces cannot provide security to local people "it would be insane [for local tribal members] to attack Zarqawi's people, even to shoot one bullet at them. . . ."[47]

Until the Coalition can provide security, Iraqis will maintain affiliations with other groups to protect themselves and their families. If they fear reprisal and violence, few Iraqis will be willing to work with the Coalition as translators, join the Iraqi Security Forces, participate in local government, initiate reconstruction projects, or provide information on insurgent and terrorist operations. According to an Iraqi police officer, "The people are scared to give us information about the terrorists because there are many terrorists here. And when we leave, the terrorists will come back and kill them."[48] Currently, cooperation with the Coalition does not enhance individual and family security and can even undermine it. For Iraqi civilians, informing on other Iraqis can eliminate enemies and economic competitors, but informing on actual insurgents is likely to result in the murder of the informant and his family.[49] Throughout Iraq, translators working with Americans regularly turn up dead. City council members and senior police officials are assassinated. These strong security disincentives for cooperation with the Coalition and the Iraqi Government have a negative combined effect. Iraqis have little incentive to provide information to the Coalition, and the lack of intelligence makes accurate targeting of insurgents difficult. To develop intelligence, Coalition forces conduct sweeps and raids in suspect neighborhoods. Sweeps greatly undermine public support for the Coalition and its Iraqi partners and thus create further disincentive for cooperation.

Ideology

In *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, and Peacekeeping*, Kitson notes that ideas are a motivating factor in insurgent violence: "The main characteristic which distinguishes campaigns of insurgency from other forms of war is that they are primarily concerned with the struggle for men's minds."[50] Insurgencies fight for power as well as an idea, whether it is Islam, Marxism, or nationalism. According to USMC General Charles C. Krulak, to fight back "you need a better idea. Bullets help sanitize an operational area. . . . They don't win a war."[51]

While compelling ideas are no guarantee of victory, the ability to leverage ideology is an important tool in a counterinsurgency. Mass movements of all types, including insurgencies, gather recruits and amass popular support through ideological appeal. Individuals subscribe to ideologies that articulate and render comprehensible the underlying reasons why practical, material interests remain unfulfilled.

Recruits are often young men whose ambitions have been frustrated and who are unable to improve their (or their community's) lot in life.[52] A mass movement offers a refuge "from the anxieties, bareness and meaninglessness . . . of individual existence . . . , freeing them from their ineffectual selves—and it does this by enfolding them into a closely knit and exultant corporate whole."[53] The insurgent group provides them with identity, purpose, and community in addition to physical, economic, and psychological security. The movement's ideology clarifies their tribulations and provides a course of action to remedy those ills.

The central mechanism through which ideologies are expressed and absorbed is the narrative. A cultural narrative is an "organizational scheme expressed in story form."[54] Narratives are central to the representation of identity, particularly the collective identity of groups such as religions, nations, and cultures. Stories about a community's history provide models of how actions and consequences are linked and are often the basis for strategies, actions, and interpretation of the intentions of other actors. D.E. Polkinghorne tells us: "Narrative is the discourse structure in which human action receives its form and through which it is meaningful."[55]

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Insurgent organizations have used narratives quite efficiently in developing legitimating ideology. For example, in *Terror's Mask: Insurgency Within Islam*, Michael Vlahos identifies the structure and function of the jihadist narrative.[56] According to Vlahos, Osama bin-Laden's depiction of himself as a man purified in the mountains of Afghanistan, who begins converting followers and punishing infidels, resonates powerfully with the historic figure of Muhammad. In the collective imagination of bin-Laden and his followers, Islamic history is a story about the decline of the umma and the inevitable triumph against Western imperialism. Only through jihad can Islam be renewed both politically and theologically. The jihadist narrative is expressed and appropriated through the sacred language of mystical heroic poetry and revelations provided through dreams. Because the "act of struggle itself is a triumph, joining them to God and to the River of Islam. . . , there can be no defeat as we know it for them."[57] Narratives thus have the power to transform reality: the logic of the narrative insulates those who have absorbed it from temporal failure, promising followers monumental, inevitable victory.[58]

To employ (or counter) ideology effectively, the cultural narratives of the insurgent group and society must be understood. William Casebeer points out that "understanding the narratives which influence the genesis, growth, maturation, and transformation of terrorist organizations will enable us to better fashion a strategy for undermining the efficacy of those narratives so as to deter, disrupt and defeat terrorist groups."[59]

Misunderstanding the cultural narrative of an adversary, on the other hand, may result in egregious policy decisions. For example, the Vietnamese view their history as continued armed opposition to invasions in the interest of national sovereignty, beginning with the Song Chinese in the 11th century, the Mongols in the 13th century, the Ming Chinese in the 15th century, the Japanese during World War II, and the French who were eventually defeated at Dien Bien Phu on 7 May 1954.

After establishing the League for Vietnamese Independence, better known as the Viet Minh, Ho Chi Minh wrote: "National liberation is the most important problem. . . . We shall overthrow the Japanese and French and their jackals in order to save people from the situation between boiling water and boiling heat."[60] The Vietnamese believed that their weak and small (nhuoc tieu) nation would be annihilated by colonialism, a cannibalistic people-eating system (che do thuc dan), and that their only chance for survival was to fight back against the more powerful adversary.[61] When the Viet Minh began an insurrection against the French, however, U.S. policymakers did not see their actions as a quest for national liberation but as evidence of communist expansion.[62] U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson frequently told visitors to the White House that if we did not take our stand in Vietnam, we would one day have to make our stand in Hawaii.[63] U.S. failure to understand the Vietnamese cultural narrative transformed a potential ally into a motivated adversary. Ho Chi Minh said: "You can kill ten of my men for every one I kill of yours. But even at those odds, you will lose and I will win."[64]

Insurgent organizations in Iraq have been effective in leveraging preexisting cultural narratives to generate antiimperialist sentiment. Current events resonate powerfully with the history of successive invasions of Iraqi territory, including the 13th-century sacking of Baghdad by Genghis Khan's grandson

Hulegu, the invasion of Tamerlane of Samarkand in 1401, and more recently, the British Mandate. Abu Hamza, an Egyptian cleric, has described U.S. President George W. Bush as "the Ghengis Khan of this century" and British Prime Minister Tony Blair as "his chambermaid," concluding that "we are just wondering when our blood is going to be shed."[65] Capitalizing on this narrative of foreign invasion and domination, insurgent groups have generated pervasive beliefs that undermine the Coalition. Two such notions are that the Coalition intends to appropriate Iraq's natural resources and that America wants to destroy Islam. Unfortunately, some of our actions tend to confirm these narratives; for example, protecting oil refineries rather than the Baghdad museum after major combat operations ended indicated to Iraqis what U.S. priorities were.[66]

Despite the general appeal of the anti-imperialist narrative to the general Iraqi population, the insurgency in Iraq currently lacks an ideological center. Because of ethno-religious divisions in the society, the resurgence of tribalism following the occupation, and the subsequent erosion of national identity, insurgent organizations are deploying ideologies that appeal only to their own ethno-religious group. Various Sunni Arab insurgent groups, for example, feel vulnerable within the new Shia-dominated regime and would prefer an authoritarian, secular, Sunni government. Other Sunni Arab insurgents are using extremist Islam to recruit and motivate followers.[67] They claim that the secular nature of the Ba'ath regime was the root cause of its brutality and corruption. Among the Shia, the Sadr Movement employs the narrative of martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Imam Hussein, at Karbala in 681 A.D., as a way to generate resistance against the Ba'ath Party; against secular, democratic forms of government; and against other Shia Arab leaders (like Al Hakim and Al Jaffari) who are viewed as proxies of Iran. The Shia construe their persecution for opposing outside influences (including modernization, capitalism, communism, socialism, secular government, and democracy) as martyrdom for making the "just choice" exactly as Imam Hussein did.[68]

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To defeat the insurgent narratives, the Coalition must generate a strong counternarrative. Unfortunately, the Coalition's main themes—freedom and democracy—do not resonate well with the population. In Iraq, freedom is associated with chaos, and chaos has a particularly negative valence expressed in the proverb: Better a thousand years of oppression than a single day of anarchy. The aversion to political chaos has a strong basis in historical reality: Iraq's only period of semidemocratic governance, from 1921 until 1958, was characterized by social, political, and economic instability. Current Iraqi skepticism regarding the desirability of democratic governance is accentuated by the continued declarations that the current system, which is quite chaotic, is a democracy. After witnessing unlawful, disorderly behavior, Iraqis will occasionally joke: "Ah, so this is democracy."[69]

Democracy is also problematic as an effective ideology because Islam forms the basis for conceptions of government and authority (despite the secular views of many Iraqis). The Islamic concept of sovereignty is grounded in the notion that human beings are mere executors of God's will. According to the Islamic political philosopher Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi, "Islam, speaking from the viewpoint of political philosophy, is the very antithesis of secular Western democracy. [Islam] altogether repudiates the philosophy of popular sovereignty and rears its polity on the foundations of the sovereignty of God and the viceregency (khilafah) of man."[70]

Economic Incentive and Disincentive

To win the support of the population, counterinsurgency forces must create incentives for cooperating with the government and disincentives for opposing it. The USMC *Small Wars Manual* advocates this approach, stressing the importance of focusing on the social, economic, and political development of the people more than on simple material destruction.[71] Although counterinsurgency forces typically have a greater financial capacity to utilize economic incentive and disincentive than do insurgent organizations, this tool of political competition is not used as frequently as it could be.

Vietnam. The "land to the tiller" program in South Vietnam offers an example of effective use of economic incentive in a counterinsurgency. The program was intended to undercut the Viet Cong land program and gain the farmers' political support.[72] Unlike the concurrent communist land reform program that offered only provisional ownership rights, the program transferred actual ownership of the land to peasants. Between 1970 and 1975, titles were distributed for 1,136,705 hectares, an estimated 46 percent of the national rice crop hectarage.[73] The old



DOD

Iraqi subcontractors cut rebar for a health care clinic under construction outside of Erbil, Iraq, 20 June 2005. The clinic will handle primary health care requirements for a suburban neighborhood outside of Erbil. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversees the project and works directly with Iraqi workers and contractor companies.

landlord-tenant system, which motivated many of the agrarian political movements in South Vietnam, was eliminated. The land to the tiller program effectively undercut the support for the Viet Cong by attacking one of the communists' main ideological tenets (that the capitalist system harmed peasants) and by 1975 dramatically reduced support for the insurgency in South Vietnam.[74]

Angola. Economic benefits were also a component of Portuguese counterinsurgency efforts in Angola. After the onset of the conflict, the Portuguese Government invested in industrial development, boosting Angola's iron ore production from its 1957 rate of 100,000 tons a year to 15 million tons by 1971.[75] The Portuguese also expanded social services: within 8 years, the number of primary school students increased from 100,000 to 400,000. The Portuguese Army built schools and functioned as teachers in areas where there were no qualified civilians.[76] By establishing mobile clinics staffed by army doctors, the Portuguese were able to meet World Health Organization standards for proper health care by 1970.[77]

Compulsory labor was abolished in 1961 along with the requirement that farmers plant cash crops, such as cotton, to be sold at state-controlled prices. Programs such as these negated the guerrilla's claims that Portugal was only concerned for the welfare of white settlers, and by 1972, lacking any factual basis for their claims, the guerrillas could no longer operate inside Angola.

Malaya. Direct financial rewards for surrender can also be used as an incentive. During the Malayan Emergency that occurred between 1948 and 1960, the British began bribing insurgents to surrender or to provide information leading to the capture, elimination, or surrender of other insurgents. Incentives for surrender ranged from $28,000 for the Chairman of the Central Committee, to $2,300 for a platoon leader, and $875 for a soldier. A guerrilla leader named Hor Leung was paid more than $400,000 for his own surrender as well as the surrender of 28 of his commanders and 132 of his foot soldiers.[78] Statements by insurgents who had accepted amnesty urging their former comrades to surrender were broadcast from airplanes over the jungle; these "voice flights" were so effective that 70 percent of those who surrendered

said that these recordings contributed to their decision to surrender. During the 12 years of the Emergency, a total of 2,702 insurgents surrendered, 6,710 were killed, and 1,287 were captured as a result of information gained from the rewards-for-surrender program. One observer called the program "the most potent propaganda weapon in the Emergency."[79]

To date, economic incentives and disincentives have not been used effectively in Iraq. Although the Coalition and its Iraqi partners have pledged $60 billion toward reconstruction, the average Iraqi has seen little economic benefit. The U.S. Government appropriated $24 billion (for 2003-2005 fiscal years) for improving security and justice systems and oil, electricity, and water infrastructures. As of May 2003, only $9.6 billion had been disbursed to projects.[80] U.S. funds for infrastructure repair were channeled mainly through six American engineering companies, but the cost of providing security to employees resulted in unexpected cost inflation, undermined transport capacity, and made it difficult to ensure the completion of projects by Iraqi subcontractors. As of March 2005, of the $10 billion pledged in international community loans and $3.6 million pledged in grants, the Iraqi Government has only accessed $436 million for debt relief and $167 million in grants.[81]

High unemployment, lack of basic services, and widespread poverty are driving the insurgency in Iraq. Unemployment is currently estimated at 28 to 40 percent.[82] In Sunni Arab areas, however, unemployment figures are probably much higher, given that Sunnis typically worked in the now disbanded Ba'ath state apparatus. As a result of the collapse of the Iraqi educational system over 20 years of war and sanctions, a large group of angry, semiliterate young men remain unemployed. For these young men, working with insurgent organizations is an effective way to make a living. According to General John Abizaid most cases of direct-fire engagements involve very young men who have been paid to attack U.S. troops. Indeed, the Ba'ath loyalists running the insurgency pay young male Iraqis from $150 to $1,000 per attack—a considerable amount of money in a country where the average monthly household income is less than $80.[83] In Iraq, where a man's ability to support his family is directly tied to his honor, failure by operating forces to dispense money on payday often results in armed attacks. One Marine noted: "If we say we will pay, and we don't, he will go get that AK."[84]

Economic incentive could be used to reduce support for the insurgency in Iraq either by employing young men in large-scale infrastructure rebuilding projects or through small-scale local sustainable development programs. Small-scale sustainable development could be kick-started by distributing $1.4 billion worth of seized Iraqi assets and appropriated funds through the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP).[85] Typically, local military commanders award CERP as small grants to serve a community's immediate needs. Military units, however, must cut through miles of red tape to distribute funds and often lack the economic background necessary to select projects most likely to encourage sustainable local economic growth. Because Iraq is an oil economy, it is susceptible to what is commonly known as the "Dutch Disease," an economic condition that limits the ability of oil economies to produce low-cost products and that results typically in a service-driven economy.[86] Thus, CERP funds should not be expended to reconstruct factories (which were an element of Saddam Hussein's state-controlled command economy and did not produce goods for export), but to develop small-scale local enterprises such as tea shops, hair salons, and auto-repair services.

Traditional Authority

The fourth tool available to insurgents and counterinsurgents is the ability to leverage traditional authority within a given society. Max Weber identifies three primary types of authority:

The Islamic concept of sovereignty is grounded in the notion that human beings are mere executors of God's will.

1. Rational-legal authority, which is grounded in law and contract, codified in impersonal rules, and commonly found in developed, capitalist societies.

2. Charismatic authority, which is exercised by leaders who develop allegiance among their followers because of their unique, individual charismatic appeal, whether ethical, religious, political, or social.

3. Traditional authority, which is usually invested in a hereditary line or in a particular office by a higher power.

Traditional authority, which relies on the precedent of history, is the most common type of authority in non-Western societies.[87] According to George Ritzer, "Traditional authority is based on a claim by the leaders, and a belief on the part of the followers, that there is virtue in the sanctity of age-old rules and powers."[88] Status and honor are accorded to those with traditional authority and this status helps maintain dominance. In particular, tribal and religious forms of organization rely on traditional authority.

Traditional authority figures often wield enough power, especially in rural areas, to single-handedly drive an insurgency. During the 1948 and 1961 Dar'ul Islam rebellions against the Indonesian Government,

for example, several Islamic leaders were kidnapped or executed without trial by the Indonesian military. A village leader described how "the anger of the Ummat Islam in the region of Limbangan, because of the loss of their bapak (father or leader) who was very much loved by them, was at that time a flood which could not be held back."[89] After a series of missteps, the Indonesian military recognized the importance of these local traditional authority figures and began to use a combination of coercion and amnesty programs to remove, village by village, support for the Dar'ul Islam in West Java, eventually defeating the insurgency.[90]

Throughout the Vietnam War, insurgent groups leveraged traditional authority effectively. After Viet Minh forces overthrew the Japanese in a bloodless coup in 1945, official representatives traveled to the Imperial Capital at Hué to demand Emperor Bao Dai's abdication.[91] Facing the prospects of losing his throne or his life, Bao Dai resigned and presented Ho Chi Minh with the imperial sword and sacred seal, thereby investing him with the mandate of heaven (thien minh)—the ultimate form of traditional authority.[92] Subsequently, Ho ruled Vietnam as if he, too, were an emperor possessed of a heavenly mandate, even replicating many of the signs and signals of Vietnamese traditional authority.[93] Like many political systems that operate on the principle of traditional authority, the character of the leader was of paramount concern.[94] Thus, Ho cultivated and projected the virtuous conduct of a superior man (quant u) and stressed the traditional requisites of talent and virtue (tai duc) necessary for leadership.[95] Widely seen as possessing the mandate of heaven and having single-handedly liberated Vietnam from the French, Ho had little opposition inside Vietnam. Although some senior U.S. military officers recognized that many Vietnamese considered Ngo Dinh Diem's government to be illegitimate, the dictates of policy trumped an honest assessment of the power of traditional authority in Vietnam, which would have made the futility of establishing a puppet government in South Vietnam immediately apparent.[96]

The U.S. failure to leverage the traditional authority of the tribal sheiks in Iraq hindered the establishment of a legitimate government and became a driver of the insurgency. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein in April 2003 created a power vacuum that resurgent tribes, accustomed to political and legal autonomy, quickly filled. One young tribal leader observed: "We follow the central government. But, of course, if communications are cut between us and the center, all authority will revert to our sheik."[97] Tribes became the source of physical security, economic well-being, and social identity. Shortly after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, for example, religious and tribal leaders in Falluja appointed their own civil management council, prevented looting, and protected government buildings.[98] Because Coalition forces have been unable to reestablish a legal system throughout the country, tribal law has become the default mode of settling disputes. According to Wamidh Nadmih, a professor of political science at Baghdad University, "If you have a car accident, you don't sort it out in the courts anymore; even if you live in the city, you sort it out in the tribe."[99]

The fall of Saddam Hussein unintentionally re-tribalized Iraq, but, ironically, the implicit policy of Paul Bremer's administration in Iraq appears to have been de-tribalization. According to a U.S. Army officer: "The attitude at the CPA [Coalition Provisional Authority] was that it was our job to liberate the individual from the tyranny of the tribal system."[100] Tribes were viewed as a social anachronism that could only hinder the development of democracy in Iraq. According to a senior U.S. official: "If it is a question of harnessing the power of the tribes, then it's a question of finding tribal leaders who can operate in a post-tribal environment."[101] The anxiety motivating the antitribal policy was, in the words of one official, the "ability of people like the Iranians and others to go in with money and create warlords" sympathetic to their own interests.[102] As a result, an opportunity to leverage traditional authority was wasted in Iraq. Thus, although U.S. Army military-intelligence officers negotiated an agreement with the subtribes of the Dulalimi in al-Anbar province to provide security, the CPA rejected the deal. According to one officer, "All it would have required from the CPA was formal recognition that the tribes existed—and $3 million."[103]

Tribes became the source of physical security, economic well-being, and social identity—"If you have a car accident, you don't sort it out in the courts anymore; even if you live in the city, you sort it out in the tribe."

Instead of leveraging the traditional authority of the tribes, Coalition forces virtually ignored it, thereby losing an opportunity to curb the insurgency. According to Adnan abu Odeh, a former adviser to the late King Hussein of Jordan, "The sheiks don't have the power to stop the resistance totally. But they

certainly could impede its development by convincing tribesmen that it's a loser's strategy or they could be bribed to capture or betray the member of the resistance."[104] The key to securing Iraq is to make it in the interest of the tribes to support the Coalition's goals. Ali Shukri, also an adviser to the late king and now a member of Saint Anthony's College at Oxford, notes: "There are two ways to control [the tribes]. One way is . . . by continually attacking and killing them. But if you want them on your side, what will you give them? What's in it for them? To the extent that the tribes are cooperating with the [U.S.] right now is merely a marriage of convenience. They could be doing a lot more—overnight, they could give the Americans security, but they will want money, weapons, and vehicles to do the job."[105]

Beyond the War

In the Clausewitzian tradition, "war is merely the continuation of policy by other means" in which limited means are used for political ends.[106] U.S. War Department General Order 100 of 1863 reflects this rule: "The destruction of the enemy in modern war, and, indeed, modern war itself, are means to obtain that object of the belligerent which lies beyond the war."[107] The object that lies beyond the war is the restoration of civil order, which is particularly essential in a counterinsurgency where the government's legitimacy has been weakened or possibly destroyed. General Harold K. Johnson noted: "[M]ilitary force . . . should be committed with the object beyond war in mind. [B]roadly speaking, the object beyond war should be the restoration of stability with the minimum of destruction, so that society and lawful government might proceed in an atmosphere of justice and order."[108]

The restoration of civil order in Iraq requires a guarantee of security; a guarantee of political and economic participation; the reconstruction of civil institutions destroyed by decades of repression and dehumanization; and the generation of a national ideology and a set of symbols around which people feel proud to organize. The four tools of political competition–coercive force, ideology, economic incentive and disincentive, and traditional authority–can be employed at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels to attain the object beyond war. But like every counterinsurgency, the conflict in Iraq requires soldiers and statesmen alike to take a leap of imagination. Success depends on the ability to put oneself in the shoes of the civilian population and ask: How would I get physical and economic security if I had to live in this situation? Why would I accept the authority claimed by the powers that be? In the words of Max Weber, "When and why would I obey?"[109] ***MR***

NOTES

1. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* eds., H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), 78.

2. Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), 283.

3. U.S. Army Field Manual (Interim) 3-07.22, *Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 1 October 2004), sec. 1-1.

4. This framework is partially derived from Max Weber. See "The Types of Authority and Imperative Coordination," in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: The Free Press, 1947), 324-69, and "Politics as a Vocation," 77-80.

5. Richard Simpkin, *Race to the Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-First Century Warfare* (London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1985), 320.

6. Julian Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 163–64.

7. Jean Larteguy, *The Centurions* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1961), 280.

8. The idea that an effective counterinsurgency requires state forces to mirror their adversary has a long history. At the beginning of World War II, Great Britain established the Special Operations Executive (SOE) to arm and train the French resistance. Colonel Colin Gubbins, who had served in Ireland from 1921 to 1922 and on the North-West Frontier in the 1930s, was SOE's first Director of Operations and Training. According to M.R.D Foot, Gubbins "saw the advantages, in the economy of life and effectiveness of effort, of the Irish guerrilla [and] both determined that next time, guerrilla [tactics] should be used by the British instead of against them" (M.R.D Foot, "The IRA and the Origins of SOE," in *War and Society: Historical Essays in Honour and Memory of J.R. Western,* 1928-71, ed., M.R.D. Foot [London: Pal Ellele, 1973]).

SOE training and operations, which were directly based on studies of the Irish Republic Army (IRA), became the basis of counterinsurgency doctrine in the post-1945 period and laid the foundation of British Special Forces. See Ian F.W. Beckett and John Pimlott, eds., *Armed Forces and Modern Counter-Insurgency* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), 17; Timothy Llewellyn Jones, "The Development of British Counter-insurgency Polices and Doctrine, 1945-52" (Ph.D. dissertation, King's College, University of London, 1991), 47; E.H. Cookridge, *Inside SOE: The Story of Special Operations in Western Europe, 1940-45* (London: Arthur Baker, Ltd., 1966); Foot, 68.

9. Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 77-78.

10. John W. Burton, "The History of International Conflict Resolution," in *International Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice,* eds., Edward Azar and John W. Burton (Boulder, CO: Wheatsheaf Books, 1986), 51.

11. Christopher Louise, "The Social Impacts of Light Weapons Availability and Proliferation," *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance* (15 September 1995), on-line at <www.jha.ac/articles/a004.htm>, accessed 4 October 2005. For a full discussion of the concept of human security, see United Nations Development Programme, "New Dimensions of Human Security," *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 22-46.

12. Courtney E. Prisk, "The Umbrella of Legitimacy," in *Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm of Low Intensity Conflict,* ed., Max G. Manwaring (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 69.

13. Thomas R. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency, 1919-1960* (London: MacMillan, 1990), 37.

14. The 1923 Field Service Regulations postulate that the ultimate objective of all military operations is the destruction of the enemy's armed forces and that decisive results are obtained only by the offensive. The preference for use of offensive force is found continuously in U.S. military thought, most recently in Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2001), vii, which says: "The doctrine holds warfighting as the Army's primary focus and recognizes that the ability of Army forces to dominate land warfare also provides the ability to dominate any situation in military operations other than war." See also Richard Darilek and David Johnson, "Occupation of Hostile Territory: History, Theory, Doctrine; Past and Future Practice" (paper presented at the Future Warfare Seminar V, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 18 January 2005).

15. Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 28.

16. Loren B. Thompson, "Low-Intensity Conflict: An Overview," in *Low-Intensity Conflict: The Pattern of Warfare in the Modern World*, ed., L.B. Thompson (Lexington, KY: Lexington Books, 1989), 4.

17. Charles Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars: Counterinsurgency in the Twentieth Century* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 59.

18. Correspondence from H.Q. [headquarters], 23 November 1920, Jeudwine Papers 72/82/2, Imperial War Museum, London.

19. Keith Jeffery, *The British Army and the Crisis of Empire, 1918-1922* (England: Manchester University Press, 1984), 86. Margaret Thatcher echoed this sentiment when she stated during the 1981 IRA hunger strikes that "we will not negotiate with terrorists."

20. Max Arthur, *Northern Ireland: Soldiers Talking* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1987), 73.

21. Desmond Hamill, *Pig in the Middle: The Army in Northern Ireland, 1969-1984* (London: Methuen, 1985), 93.

22. COL Michael Dewar, interview by Montgomery McFate, London, November 1994.

23. Lewis Sorley, "To Change a War: General Harold K. Johnson and the PROVN Study," *Parameters* (Spring 1998): 93-109.

24. U.S. Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, *A Program for the Pacification and Long-Term Development of Vietnam* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 1966), G-8.

25. Gerald C. Hickey, *Window on a War: An Anthropologist in the Vietnam Conflict* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2002), 260. The Long Range Program Plan (LRPP) was tasked with an appraisal of U.S. strategy in Vietnam and projected future strategies based on historical, economic, and sociopsychological perspectives.

26. Sorley, 93-109.

27. Ibid.,

28. Interviews by Andrea Jackson, Fallujah, Iraq, July 2005.

29. Charles Simpson, *Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982), 62.

30. Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., "How to Win in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2005), on-line at: <www.foreignaffairs.org/20050901faessay84508/andrew-f-krepinevich-jr/how-to-win-in-iraq.html>, accessed 4 October 2005. Krepinevich argues that U.S. and Iraqi forces should focus on key areas and gradually broaden the effort, in what he refers to as an "oil-spot strategy."

31. GEN William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 164-65.

32. Interviews by Montgomery McFate, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, December 2005.

33. Robert M. Cassidy, "Back to the Street without Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and Other Small Wars," *Parameters* (Summer 2004): 73-83, on-line at <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/04summer/cassidy.htm>, accessed 4 October 2005.

34. Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare: The Malayan Emergency, 1948-1960* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 155-64.

35. Michael Knights, "Lessons from Mosul," *PolicyWatch #950,* 27 January 2005. on-line at <www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2245>, accessed 4 October 2005. Beginning in January 2004, the U.S. force in Nineveh Province was drawn down to the 8,700-strong Task Force Olympia (built around a Stryker Brigade Combat Team), with a commensurate loss of security, mentoring, and Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) capacity.

36. Tom Lasseter, "Iraqi Forces May Need Years of Preparation," *Mercury News*, 26 August 2005.

37. Interviews by Andrea Jackson, Baghdad, Baquba, Fallujah, Ramadi, Samara, Basra, and Hilla, November 2003 through August 2005.

38. Richard A. Oppel, Jr., "A New Police Force Emerges From Mosul's Chaos," *New York Times,* 17 August 2005.

39. Interviews by Andrea Jackson, Diyala Province, Iraq, November 2003 through April 2005.

40. The Badr Brigade is the militia of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), one of the most powerful organizations inside the governing United Iraqi Alliance. The Iranian Government founded SCIRI in 1980 as an umbrella organization for Shia Arab organizations aiming to overthrow the Ba'ath regime. The Badr Brigade was trained by the Iranian military and fought on the side of Iran during the Iran-Iraq war. Many Iraqis, including many Shia Arabs, view SCIRI's ties to the Iranian Government with suspicion. Peshmerga are paramilitary forces associated with the two large, tribally based political parties (the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) in the Kurdish territories.

41. Interviews by Andrea Jackson, Fallujah, Iraq, July 2005.

42. Lasseter, "Iraqi Forces May Need Years of Preparation."

43. For example, see Lawrence Boudon, "Guerrillas and the State: The Role of the State in the Colombian Peace Process," in *Journal of Latin American Studies,* vol. 28, no. 2 (May 1996): 279-97.

44. P. Mitchell Prothero, "Iraqi Guerillas: 'Why We Fight,'" United Press International, 4 December 2003.

45. The Mehdi Army is a paramilitary organization composed largely of poor, uneducated urban Shia who are followers of Muqtada al Sadr, an Iraqi nationalist who feels Iraq's Shia Arabs should rule Iraq and dominate the relationship with Iran. During Saddam Hussein's regime, the Sadr family led an insurgency inside Iraq with the goal of replacing it with rule by Shia clerics. After Operation Iraqi Freedom, Sadr, who was not included in the interim governments, has continually fought Coalition forces and is not participating in the new government; he is engaged in a major conflict with the members of the United Iraqi Alliance for leadership of Iraq's Shia population.

46. Omer Mahdi, "Under US Noses, Brutal Insurgents Rule Sunni Citadel," *The Guardian,* London, 22 August 2005.

47. Ellen Knickmeyer and Jonathan Finer, "Insurgents Assert Control Over Town Near Syrian Border," *Washington Post,* 6 September 2005, A20.

48. Lasseter, "Iraqi Forces May Need Years of Preparation."

49. Interviews by Andrea Jackson, Diyala Province.

50. Kitson, 290.

51. Evan Thomas, Rod Nordland, and Christian Caryl, "Operation Hearts and Minds" Newsweek, 29 December/5 January 2003, on-line at <www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3771204/>, accessed 4 October 2005.

52. Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).

53. Ibid., 41.

54. D.E. Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1988), 13. Narrative theory (narratology) is often used to understand the construction of ethnohistory. See W. Labov, "Some Further Steps in Narrative Analysis," in *Journal of Narrative and Life History,* 7 (1997); Hayden V. White, *Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

55. Polkinghorne, 135.

56. Michael Vlahos, *Terror's Mask: Insurgency Within Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Joint Warfare Analysis Department, Applied Physics Laboratory, Johns Hopkins University, May 2002).

57. Ibid., 54.

58. See also Mark Juergensmeyer's theory of "cosmic war" in *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence,* 3d ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

59. William D. Casebeer and James A. Russell, "Storytelling and Terrorism: Towards a Comprehensive 'Counter-Narrative' Strategy," *Strategic Insights* (March 2005).

60. Ho Chi Minh, "Letter from Abroad," in *Ho Chi Minh on Revolution: Selected Writings, 1920-1966,* ed., Bernard Fall (New York: Signet, 1968), 132-34.

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64. Stanley Karnow, Vietnam: A History (New York: Viking Press, 1983), 169.

65. "Britain Revokes Citizenship of Cleric," Associated Press, 5 April 2003, on-line at <www.jsonline.com/news/intl/ap/apr03/ap-britain-radical040503.asp>, accessed 4 October 2005.

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68. Following Muhammed's death in 632 A.D., a split emerged in the Muslim community between the Shia, who supported Ali (Muhammed's cousin and son-in-law) as caliph, and the Sunni, who supported Muawiyah (the governor of Syria and the cousin of the murdered 3d Caliph Uthman) after he claimed the caliphate. According to the terms of the succession arbitration, the prophet's grandson Hussein agreed to postpone his claim to the caliphate until Muawiyah's death. When Muawiyah died, however, he named his son Yazid as successor. Hussein and his supporters were defeated by Yazid's army at Karbala in 680 A.D. Before Hussein went to Karbala he said: "If the world be counted a thing most precious, still the abode of God's reward (that is, paradise) is higher and more noble. And if bodies be made for death, then the death of a man by the sword in the way of God is a better choice." Since the battle of Karbala, the Shia have considered martyrdom in the struggle against injustice as the highest form of spiritual nobility. (See Manochehr Dorraj, "Symbolic and Utilitarian Political Value of a Tradition: Martyrdom in the Iranian Political Culture," *The Review of Politics,* vol. 59, no. 3, *Non-Western Political Thought* (Summer 1997): 494.)

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Post-Saddam Iraq (Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution, May 2005), 26. The wide range in the March 2005 estimate is the result of the presence of a large gray and black market, a large number of housewives, payment of salaries to employees of state-owned enterprises that no longer function, and the number of people with multiple jobs.

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DOD

So You Want to Be an Adviser

Brigadier General Daniel P. Bolger, U.S. Army

Your ideal position is when you are present and not noticed. —Lieutenant Colonel T.E. Lawrence, 1917[1]

THE LAST THING I ever expected was to go to war in my 27th and 28th years of service. Oh, sure, I'd done the shadow-boxing in the Korean Demilitarized Zone in 1990 and in Haiti for a few days in 1995, but those hardly counted. Like most Americans, I hadn't heard much about this Osama bin-Laden individual and his ilk, though I'd watched as our embassies were attacked in Iran, Lebanon, Kenya, and Tanzania; had seen the Marines pay the ultimate price one ugly Sunday in 1983; and knew what had happened in Mogadishu on another Sunday 10 Octobers later. I definitely understood that Saddam Hussein had his fingers in some of this rotten stuff, aside from the outrages he had inflicted on his own suffering people. Of course, I knew all of that, at least as some kind of barely noticed backdrop, heat lightning playing on the horizon of a summer evening. So off I went to Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) rotations and joint duty and various exercises, all great experiences, and all pretty familiar to anyone in our Army in the 1980s and 1990s. But America's terrorist enemies had their timetables regardless of mine or yours. On 11 September 2001, they moved with horrific results. This time they hit our home, and hit us hard. We have been at war since that bright September morning.

Above photo: A joint Advisory Support Team, Habbaniyah, Iraq, 2005.

If you look at the beginning of the latest *Quadrennial Defense Review*, you'll see this flat declaration: "The United States is a nation engaged in what will be a long war."[2] The passive voice might be kind of awkward, but I think we all get that one quite clearly. This Long War, the Global War on Terror, World War IV, or whatever you want to call it, has fully encompassed all of us in uniform. It will do so for many years to come. Such a stark reality carries some freight.

Our enemies are cunning, ruthless, and numerous. They move in the dark corners of many regions of the world. They lash out on their schedules, not ours. Because of those characteristics, they defy conventional solutions. Smacking such foes with Aegis cruisers or armored brigades or F-22A Raptors may work now and then, in the same sense that if you hammer mercury blobs you get smaller and smaller blobs. But the mercury will still be there, and if left intact, it will come back together. The goal here is to destroy the terrorists, not disperse them. That takes presence and persistence in a lot more places and times than we can fill with troops, planes, and ships. Even an aspiring hyperpower has limits.

So we have needed and will continue to need help. Fortunately, we have that, and in great numbers. We have more countries working with us in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Horn of Africa, and other theaters than we had in the Korean War. Some can keep pace with us step for step, like the British, Australians, and Danes. Others fill distinct military

roles or work in key locations, like the Koreans, the Czechs, and the Georgians, among many others. But the bulk of the folks out with us are local friends. In today's major theaters, most of the fighting is done by Afghans and Iraqis.[3] They have signed on, but they could use our help. The Coalition is willing, but sometimes the flesh is weak.

That's where I came in, old enough but of some use, I guess. Like many, I got the call to join this Long War not with U.S. forces, but with Iraqis. If I ever thought somebody might need me for the real thing, I sure never expected it to be with foreign troops. All my life I had read about advisers like Lieutenant Colonel T.E. Lawrence in Arabia, General Joe Stillwell in China, and Lieutenant Colonel John Paul Vann in Vietnam.[4] I couldn't help but notice that these famous ones were often eccentric, regularly frustrated, and commonly came to unpleasant ends. I resolved right then and there not to be famous, and I'm happy to say I've succeeded very well in that aim. Your goal as an adviser is to make your counterpart famous, not you.

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A combat adviser influences his ally by force of personal example. You coach, you teach, and you accompany in action. Liaison with friendly forces becomes a big role, and you ensure independent ground-truth reporting to both your counterpart and your own chain. Finally, an adviser provides the connection and expertise to bring to bear fires, service support, and other combat multipliers. All accolades go to the leader you support. That, at least, is the idea.

As for actually advising a foreign military, in my case the new Iraqi Armed Forces, that has proven to be tremendously challenging and rewarding. My role was a very small one. I was a little cog inside a big effort that involved to some degree almost every person in uniform in Multi-National Force-Iraq. The acronyms and the line and box charts changed some over the year-plus I was there, but those amount to details, of interest only to purists. The important decision was the one made in mid-2004, when we got serious about creating a decent Iraqi military founded on trust between leaders and led.[5]

The way to do that seems simple to explain, but it has been hard to accomplish. To create an effective Iraqi military, you must accomplish three tasks:

● *Train and equip to a uniform standard.* Taught initially by Coalition leaders and later by their own newly-certified instructors, Iraqi units have learned how to move, shoot, and communicate the right ways, and received the gear necessary to make it all work under fire. The enemy has similar weapons, but no legitimate training and poor discipline.

● *Partner each Iraqi organization with a similar Coalition formation,* usually American, but in some areas Australian, British, Danish, El Salvadoran, Italian, Korean, or Polish. Day to day, this allows the Iraqi leadership to reach across culture and language barriers and act like their partner units, who work side-by-side with them on operations.

● *Provide a small team of combat advisers to live, train, and fight day and night with their Iraqi brothers.* Before 9/11, this task would have been turned over to highly select, rigorously trained Special Forces. We have only so many of these tremendous quiet professionals, and they are fully engaged in all theaters, including Iraq. So the rest of us conventional types had to step up. Schooled in many cases by Special Forces experts, we had to learn (or relearn) our weapons and tactics fundamentals, absorb some cultural awareness, and get out to Iraq and get cracking. Our exceptionally flexible U.S. Armed Forces and our allies have done this well. The Iraqis have responded by rising to meet the high marks set by our young NCOs and officers.

The people advising today's Iraqi Armed Forces have learned to fight what T.R. Fehrenbach so rightly and ruefully called "this kind of war."[6] In the opening rounds of this enduring, twilight struggle, our wily enemies wear civilian clothes and strike with bombs and gunfire without regard to innocents in the crossfire. The battles feature short, sharp exchanges of Kalashnikov slugs and M-4 carbine bullets, the fiery death blossom of a car bomb, the quick, muffled smack of a wooden door going down and a blindfolded figure stumbling out at gunpoint. Dirty little firefights spin up without warning and die out in minutes. But the campaign in Iraq will last years, and will not be cheap in money or blood. Since the present advisory effort began to accompany Iraqi forces into action, we have lost 8 killed

and 84 wounded.[7] More sacrifices will come, and enemy AK bullets and roadside bombs don't respect rank, service, component, nationality, age, branch, gender, or military occupational specialty.

So you want to be an adviser? If so, read on.

Everybody Fights

We have advisers of all types in Iraq, about 4,500 counting those with the new Armed Forces and the Police. About 3,500 advisers work in the field with Iraqi battalions, brigades, and divisions or with Police units. A few hundred advise at fixed logistics bases, schools, and training centers. A similar number help with Iraq's small Navy and Marine unit and with the nascent Air Force. Some assist with the internal functions of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior. But all share one fact: Everybody fights.

In Robert Heinlein's science fiction classic *Starship Troopers*, his hard-bitten Mobile Infantry use that same slogan: Everybody fights.[8] In Iraq, it means that every adviser must be ready to locate the armed hostile among a crowd of scattering civilians, administer an intravenous drip to a wounded buddy, move through an ambush by vehicle or on foot, and shoot to kill. While some places are safer than others, no place is immune from enemy attention. This is true for those with an Iraqi Infantry battalion, of course. But it also applies to ministry advisers driving to a meeting across town, school advisers headed out to escort Iraqi recruits to their next phase of training, or supply convoy advisers motoring down Iraq's often-contested highways. There are better locales and worse ones—placid Zakho in the green Kurdish mountains to the north and squalid Ar Ramadi in sullen Al Anbar on the western Euphrates River stand far apart in every sense. But regardless of what the adviser came to do, he or she must show up ready to fight. We are all combat advisers.

In that role, advisers have to be physically tough. You need energy and stamina to spare in 120 degree heat when running down a street under fire, carrying that happy 80+ pounds of armor, ammunition, water, and other essentials. Regardless of how much fitness you bring to Iraq, if you don't maintain it daily, it will grind down to nothing. If you're over 30, that goes double. If you're over 40, you had better be as ready to rumble as any 20-year-old. The Iraqis call us "the robots" because we keep going regardless of heat or hours on foot. It has to be that way. That means regular exercise in between operations and training evolutions. You are the primary weapon, and you need exercise to be fully effective.

Advisers who intend to fight must be experts with weapons and communications. In one of those unexpected clashes, you may well be the first with a chance to engage, and you need to hit what you shoot at. Even well-trained Iraqi units have only been shooting to our standards for a year or so, so you and your fellow advisers will usually be the best shots in your convoy or patrol. Additionally, you will have the vital communications for supporting fires, attack helicopters, and aerial medical evacuation. You need to be able to load and troubleshoot all kinds of radios and computer tracking systems. There won't be a "commo guy" anywhere near when the bad day comes. You don't want to have 30 Iraqis looking at you with disgust when you can't raise the Apache helicopters during some backstreet gunfight.



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An Iraqi unit, with advisers, patrols the streets of Habbaniyah, 2005.

Most importantly, "everybody fights" reinforces the basic tie between leaders and led. Because all of



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Iraqi Special Police commandos going through small arms training prior to a counterinsurgency operation, November 2005.

us, adviser and Iraqi, are brothers, we all come back, every time. You cannot promise your fellow advisers or your Iraqi counterparts that they won't get hurt or even killed. But you can assure them that you will bring them all home. This is a fundamental difference between this Iraqi Army and the ones we shattered in 1991 and 2003. In the present Iraqi forces, we all go out and come home together. That essential truth makes the whole thing work. It is the big edge we have over brave but brittle enemy elements.

Fight to Sustain. Sustain to Fight.

Today's Iraqi forces have been trained and equipped to a recognized standard. Even without Coalition advisers and partner units, they would still fight—for about 12 hours. In our proper determination to rush trained Iraqi battalions into action in 2005, we consciously did not build combat support and combat service support organizations beyond a bare minimum of training centers and rudimentary base camps.[9] As the campaign continues, that has to change. For advisers, much of the day-to-day work involves the mundane but critical building of habits in accounting for people, accounting for things, and then maintaining what you have.

Accounting for people sounds easy enough. In our Army, it is. But all our Soldiers are literate and educated, and we have many experienced sergeants who willingly and effectively take charge of "their" Soldiers and keep track of them. On operations or at home station, we hold ourselves responsible for the location and condition of our subordinates every day and every night, on or off duty. It is a very rare day in the U.S. Army when a sergeant doesn't look each private in the eye.

Though the Iraqis inherited a similar approach during the British League of Nations Mandate era of 1920-1932, years of Soviet military influence and Saddam's oppressive meddling corroded the NCO corps. The form remained, but the substance was long gone. Americans who engaged Iraqi units in 1991 and 2003 found that Iraqi officers seldom knew the whereabouts of their conscripts, many of whom legged it for home at the first chance. In the Saddam era, the drill roll allowed officers to draw pay in cash for all the names on the roster, so a rather casual air about actually having men to pay could be profitable for leaders who knew how to keep a secret. And anyone who survived as an Iraqi Army officer from 1979-2003 definitely knew how to keep

You cannot promise your fellow advisers or your Iraqi counterparts that they won't get hurt or even killed. But you can assure them that you will bring them all home.

a secret. Some also kept a lot of excess dinar (Iraqi currency).[10]

To be effective in war, this had to change. Thus, teaching Iraqi NCOs to account for their people became the first big step. In some cases, this meant finding Iraqis educated enough to keep a notebook. Saddam's disdain for education had cruelly torn apart a previously fine public school system and left many adults illiterate. In the new Iraqi Army, to be an NCO, you must be able to read and write Arabic and do basic arithmetic.[11] Accountability starts with keeping count, and that is indeed a learned skill.

Once an Iraqi sergeant knows how to run his roll call, the new Army's close contact between leaders and led helps keep things straight. Advisers offer a separate and reliable cross-check on current Iraqi muster rolls. The Iraqis still pay their men in cash once a month, but now there are numerous checks and counter-checks by various echelons to prevent siphoning off of funds. These measures include channels for enlisted complaints and an active inspector-general program.[12] Along with a full signed and witnessed by-name roll-up of every man paid for duty, Iraqi units must return money intended for men who have been killed or deserted. (In a country that no longer compels military service, not all stay to finish their nominal 2-year enlistment.) With advisers watching and helping, units know who they have and who they don't have. This information then allows the Iraqi training centers to enlist and graduate the right numbers and skills in replacement troops, and get them to the units that are running short.

Accounting for equipment naturally comes next. In Saddam's Iraq, the sclerotic socialist economy ensured that all things held in common got about the same loving care as the highway medians in many big U.S. cities—they were used, abused, and dumped upon. Military gear fell into the same category. Because it belonged to "the people," fixing it, cleaning it, or turning it back when finished were only priorities to the extent that anyone from Baghdad checked up. Combined with dozens of major arsenals bulging with every kind of weapon and ammunition, there always seemed to be plenty of gear in the old Army, yet with typical socialist dysfunction, distribution somehow always failed to move the supplies.

Supply works quite differently in the present Iraqi military. As with personnel, advisers play key roles in establishing procedures to issue and track weapons, personal equipment, unit items, and expendable supplies. The daily tempo of operations provides a lot of incentive for an Iraqi rifleman to have a functional AK-47 with 7 magazines, body armor, a helmet, and so on. Our NCO advisers have been instrumental in teaching the value of pre-combat and post-combat inspections. Moreover, because each Iraqi Soldier gets checked regularly, losses are found swiftly and result in punishment and reimbursement similar to what might happen for negligent loss in our Army.[13] American lieutenants and sergeants who have long cursed the paper mountain of hand receipts and statements of charges have renewed their faith that the surest way to keep track of anything is to assign it to someone and then hold him responsible to keep it.

Of course, having a weapon, truck, or radio is only part of the answer. The rest involves keeping it functional. Here, our advisers have been happily surprised by the innate ingenuity of Iraqis, who are incredible tinkerers and shade-tree mechanics. Just as some of the best-kept 1957 Chevrolets on Earth putter the streets of Communist Havana, so Iraqis groaning under Saddam's Ba'athist socialist workers' paradise learned how to keep everything ticking damn near forever. Iraqi equipment maintenance tends to be long on fixing and running and short on log-books and paper trails, which probably suits them given their consistent pattern of operations. As more complex weapons like tanks and heavy machineguns replace simple AK-series weapons and Nissan pick-ups, the service and repair schedules will require more documentation.

In fighting to sustain the new Iraqi Armed Forces, training has been the glue. Only the best militaries train during combat, but if you don't do that, you won't stay good for long. On any given Sunday in the fall, even as the games play on the field, you'll see the National Football League's kickers on the sidelines, practicing and practicing kicks into a net. On summer days in Major League baseball, throwing "on the side" in the bullpen is part of the routine for ace pitchers, and every batter takes his practice

swings. So it is in war. Iraqi units must eke out shooting, communications, combat life-saving, and tactical battle drills as part of mission preparation or, in quieter areas, in dedicated training cycles. As with the cascade of hand receipts, the drudgery of cranking out a decent training schedule, so onerous Stateside, has become an important and transferable adviser skill. To stay in the fight at maximum capability, Soldiers and units must train every day. In an Army that used to shoot a few bullets a year under Saddam, firing hundreds of rounds a day on ranges has been nothing short of revolutionary. The overmatch pays off in firefights every time.

Set the Example

At heart, Soldiers are hero worshipers. All of us have somebody who inspires us to keep going when we'd rather quit. While Hollywood makes much of the "kick in the ass" method, in reality, with everyone carrying loaded rifles, bullying proves pretty thin gruel. Threatening someone with a court martial in a firefight provokes smirks—who wouldn't rather go hang out in a warm, safe courtroom than the deadly alleys of Baqubah? No, under fire, you follow the guys who know what they are doing, the ones who show by physical example what to do next. There is a reason the big statue in front of Infantry Hall at Fort Benning depicts a leader upright, with rifle in hand and arm raised, hollering "Follow me!"

In a good American unit, the characters living out "follow me" are also the ones wearing stripes and bars. Building a cadre of great leaders in the new Iraqi Army has not been easy. Saddam pretty well rooted out, smashed down, and killed or jailed anyone with a streak of initiative or charisma. The organization chart for Saddam's Iraq was simple: a dot (him) and a line (27 million cowering subjects). Tough squad leaders, able company commanders, shrewd sergeants major, and competent colonels did not need to apply.

That changed with the new Army's emphasis on cohesive volunteer units in which leaders and led share hardships. Iraqi officers and NCOs today don't just send out patrols or raids. They lead their men out. That directly reflects the strong influence of our advisers.

The adviser does not command his Iraqi counterpart, though if the local leader is not cutting it, we can and do push that up the chain for action. Iraqi units are under tactical control of Coalition (usually American) commanders, and as such, cowardice and incompetence can't be tolerated. Iraqi senior leaders will let their subordinate officers and NCOs learn and make mistakes, minus the "two Cs"—corruption and cowardice. If an Iraqi gets caught with his hand in the cookie jar, he's out. But just as important, probably more so from a moral aspect, the new Army's leadership will dispassionately cut away any officer or NCO who will not leave the base or move to the sound of the guns.

This emphasis on leading in action has had consequences, mostly good. Iraqi units follow their leaders. They stand and fight. They recover their dead and wounded, and they will not quit—all marks of very good troops indeed. But they have also taken some noteworthy leader casualties, from sergeant through general.[14] The Iraqis stay at it, though.

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This ethos strongly depends on what the adviser says and does, especially what he or she does. Given that most adviser teams at battalion level amount to a dozen or so people, it's physically impossible to accompany every foot patrol or stand on every checkpoint. But it is not only possible, but expected, that the adviser share the hardship of operations daily. Where goes the adviser, so goes the counterpart. We've seen this time and time again. Our Arabic could always improve, and Iraqi English can make strides, but in the end, example remains the strongest form of leadership.

Although the "follow me" tenet definitely comes first, there is a lot more to setting the example than that critical primary principle. An adviser speaks and acts, even appears and assumes, that whatever he or she does, the Iraqis will do. If the adviser fires regularly at the range, does physical training daily, and checks gear carefully before and after operations, the Iraqis will do likewise. Conversely, no matter what you say, even in pitch-perfect Arabic, if your actions are otherwise, don't expect results. If you tell the Iraqi company commander to eat with his men and then slip over to the U.S.

dining facility each noon, don't be surprised at the outcome.

Setting the example is the hardest thing an adviser does. It means he or she is always being watched and mimicked, for good or ill. Because even the greatest actors and professional players need their own space, ensure that you and your team have a small area that can be designated, when appropriate, "advisers only." The Iraqis understand privacy, and they know that at times you and your partners need to go "English secure" to discuss operations, training, personalities, or the NCAA March Madness brackets. But after your spots of "me time," get back out there. The Iraqis are watching . . . and learning.

Strength and Honor

In the popular film *Gladiator*, the Roman General Maximus greets his legionaries by banging his breastplate and sounding off with "Strength and Honor."[15] Had the filmmakers wanted to go with Latin, he would have said "Integritas," which we often translate as "integrity." But the term implies more than that.

At the Roman Army's daily inspection (yes, they did that too), when his centurion walked the ranks, each legionary would bash his metal breastplate with his right fist, striking over his heart and shouting "Integritas."[16] This meant that he was armed and ready to fight. He'd completed his pre-combat checks. He was ready in body, and also in his Soldier's heart, in spirit, for the rigors of the march, the perils of a siege, or the uncertain fortunes of battle against Germans, Picts, or Parthians. The clang on the breastplate showed he had his combat weapons and armor, not the flimsy parade versions. The loud, confident report and the fist to the heart demonstrated that the Roman Soldier stood ready to use his arms for the right purpose—honor.

"Strength and Honor" summarizes the role of the adviser. The former Iraqi Army had strength in numbers, tanks, howitzers, and personnel. But it lacked heart. The innate evil of the Saddam regime could intimidate men into the front lines, but absent an honorable relationship between leaders and led, few stood the test of battle. Today, Iraqi battalions do fight with strength and honor, energized by the strong and steady examples of many American and other Coalition sergeants and officers.

So you want to be an adviser? Pick up your rifle and let's go. It's a long war. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Lieutenant Colonel T.E. Lawrence, British Army, "Twenty-Seven Articles," *The Arab Bulletin*, 27 August 1917, Article Number 8. Lawrence's Article Number 15 is often quoted in the present war: "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is."

2. United States, Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 6 February 2006), v.

3. In Iraq in March of 2006, we fielded about 130,000 Americans, about 15,000 or so other Coalition troops, and over 230,000 Iraqi Soldiers and Police.

4. All three men have their share of biographers, most notably the enigmatic Lawrence. For those interested, I recommend these books: Michael Asher, *Lawrence: The Uncrowned King of Arabia* (Eastbourne, East Sussex, UK: Gardners Books, Ltd., 1999); Barbara Tuchman, *Stillwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-1945* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970); Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988). Lawrence, Stillwell, and Vann have been depicted in movies, with Lawrence rating the full epic treatment in the acclaimed *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), Stillwell a small part in Steven Spielberg's ill-received comedy *1941* (1979), and Vann taking center stage in the Home Box Office production of *A Bright Shining Lie* (1998), based on Sheehan's book.

5. Many consider the formation of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) in June of 2004 to be a critical development that organized and accelerated good preliminary work done by combat units and earlier advisory entities. See, for example, Anthony H. Cordesman, *Iraqi Security Forces: A Strategy for Success* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 64, 66.

6. T.R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), 59. Fehrenbach's wonderful history of the Korean War also offers his strong opinions on how and why America must prepare for and fight limited wars. A veteran of the Korean War and an accomplished author and journalist, Fehrenbach continues to write today.

7. Brigadier General Daniel P. Bolger, U.S. Army, "Notes on Commanding General, Multi-National Force-Iraq Military Transition Team Update," 16 March 2006. The count runs from 1 September 2004, when Iraqi forces trained by MNSTC-I began to carry out combat operations.

8. Robert A. Heinlein, *Starship Troopers* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1959), 4. In the book, the full motto reads: "Everybody drops. Everybody fights." In the 1997 movie *Starship Troopers,* directed by Paul Verhoeven, this became "Everybody fights. Nobody quits." The key point in both the novel and the movie is that in the Mobile Infantry, there could be no rear echelon. To use current U.S. Army terms, all had to possess the Warrior Ethos. Today's war without fronts demands no less.

9. Cordesman, 231.

10. Ibid., 10-12.

11. Republic of Iraq, Joint Headquarters, *Policy 1-11: Enlisted Promotions* (Baghdad: Ministry of Defense, 28 July 2005), 2. This policy requires a primary school certificate for advancement to sergeant and a high school certificate for promotion to the three senior NCO ranks, the equivalent of the U.S. Army ranks of Sergeant First Class, Master Sergeant/First Sergeant, and Sergeant Major/Command Sergeant Major.

12. Republic of Iraq, Joint Headquarters, *Policy 1-5: Accountability of Personnel* (Baghdad: Ministry of Defense, 29 May 2005), 1-2, 3, 5. Page 5 refers specifically to cross-checks for payroll purposes.

13. Republic of Iraq, Joint Headquarters, *Policy 4-2: Equipment Management Procedure (Final Draft)* (Baghdad: Ministry of Defense, 8 August 2005), 1-2.

14. For example, on 6 March 2006, Major General Mobdir Hatem Hasyah al-Dulime, commanding the 6th Iraqi Army Division, was killed in action alongside his men in West Baghdad.

15. Ridley Scott, dir., *Gladiator* (Hollywood, California: Dreamworks SKG, 2000).

16. For references to this tough Roman discipline, see Flavius Vegetius Renatus, *The Military Institutions of the Romans*, trans. Lieutenant John Clarke, British Army, on-line at <www.pvv.ntnu.no/~madsb/home/war/vegetius/>, accessed 26 March 2006, in particular the chapter "The Arms of the Ancients." Former U.S. Marine Corps Commandant General Charles C. Krulak often referred to this practice in speeches on leadership and discipline. See, for example, General Charles C. Krulak, USMC (Ret.), "Remarks at Joint Service Conference on Professional Ethics," 27 January 2000, on-line at <www.appleseeds.org/krulak_integrity.htm>, accessed 26 March 2006.

Brigadier General Daniel P. Bolger, U.S. Army, was assigned to the Multi-National Transition Command-Iraq in 2005-2006. A 1990 graduate of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, he has served with the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia, the 2d Infantry Division in Korea, and the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

CORDS/Phoenix
Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam for the Future

Dale Andrade and Lieutenant Colonel James H. Willbanks, U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D.

AS THE UNITED STATES ends its third year of war in Iraq, the military continues to search for ways to deal with an insurgency that shows no sign of waning. The specter of Vietnam looms large, and the media has been filled with comparisons between the current situation and the "quagmire" of the Vietnam War. The differences between the two conflicts are legion, but observers can learn lessons from the Vietnam experience—if they are judicious in their search.

For better or worse, Vietnam is the most prominent historical example of American counterinsurgency (COIN)—and the longest—so it would be a mistake to reject it because of its admittedly complex and controversial nature. An examination of the pacification effort in Vietnam and the evolution of the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program provides useful insights into the imperatives of a viable COIN program.

Twin Threats: Main Forces and Guerrillas

In Vietnam, the U.S. military faced arguably the most complex, effective, lethal insurgency in history. The enemy was no rag-tag band lurking in the jungle, but rather a combination of guerrillas, political cadre, and modern main-force units capable of standing toe to toe with the U.S. military. Any one of these would have been significant, but in combination they presented a formidable threat.

When U.S. ground forces intervened in South Vietnam in 1965, estimates of enemy guerrilla and Communist Party front strength stood at more than 300,000. In addition, Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese main forces numbered almost 230,000—and that number grew to 685,000 by the time of the Communist victory in 1975. These main forces were organized into regiments and divisions, and between 1965 and 1968 the enemy emphasized main-force war rather than insurgency.[1] During the war the Communists launched three conventional offensives: the 1968 Tet Offensive, the 1972 Easter Offensive, and the final offensive in 1975. All were major campaigns by any standard. Clearly, the insurgency and the enemy main forces had to be dealt with simultaneously.

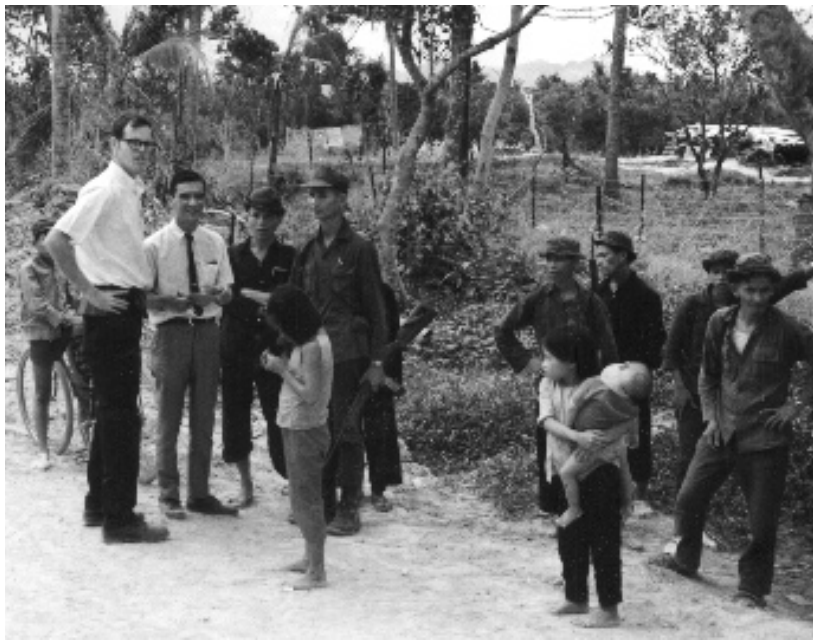
When faced with this sort of dual threat, what is the correct response? Should military planners gear up for a counterinsurgency, or should they fight a war aimed at destroying the enemy main forces? General William C. Westmoreland, the overall commander of U.S. troops under the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), faced just such a question. Westmoreland knew very well that South Vietnam faced twin threats, but he believed



U.S. Army

Unidentified U.S. Army adviser and child in the III Corps area north of Saigon, date unknown.

that the enemy main forces were the most immediate problem. By way of analogy, he referred to them as "bully boys with crowbars" who were trying to tear down the house that was South Vietnam. The guerrillas and political cadre, which he called "termites," could also destroy the house, but it would take them much longer to do it. So while he clearly understood the need for pacification, his attention turned first to the bully boys, whom he wanted to drive away from the "house."[2]



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CORDS advisers with hamlet chief in Binh Dinh Province, 1969.

Westmoreland's strategy of chasing the enemy and forcing him to fight or run (also known as search and destroy) worked in the sense that it saved South Vietnam from immediate defeat, pushed the enemy main forces from the populated areas, and temporarily took the initiative away from the Communists. South Vietnam was safe in the short term, and Communist histories make clear that the intervention by U.S. troops was a severe blow to their plans.[3] In the end, however, there were not enough U.S. troops to do much more than produce a stalemate. The Communists continued to infiltrate main-force units from neighboring Laos and Cambodia, and they split their forces into smaller bands that could avoid combat if the battlefield situation was not in their favor.

The enemy continued to build his strength, and in January 1968 launched the Tet Offensive, a clear indication that the Americans could never really hold the initiative. Although attacks on almost every major city and town were pushed back and as many as 50,000 enemy soldiers and guerrillas were killed, the offensive proved to be a political victory for the Communists, who showed they could mount major attacks no matter what the Americans tried to do.

Counterinsurgency, or pacification as it was more commonly known in Vietnam, was forced to deal with the twin threats of enemy main forces and a constant guerrilla presence in the rural areas. MACV campaign plans for the first 2 years of the war show that pacification was as important as military operations, but battlefield realities forced it into the background. In January 1966, Westmoreland wrote, "It is abundantly clear that all political, military, economic, and security (police) programs must be completely integrated in order to attain any kind of success in a country which has been greatly weakened by prolonged conflict."[4] He looked to the enemy for an example of how this was done. "The Viet Cong, themselves, have learned this lesson well. Their integration of efforts surpasses ours by a large order of magnitude."[5]

Westmoreland knew that he lacked the forces to wage both a war of attrition and one of pacification, so he chose the former. The argument over whether or not this was the right course of action will likely go on forever, but undoubtedly the shape of the war changed dramatically after the Tet Offensive. The enemy was badly mauled and, despite the political gains made, militarily lost the initiative for quite some time.

As the Communists withdrew from the Tet battlefields to lick their wounds, the ensuing lull offered a more propitious environment for a pacification plan. Westmoreland never had such an advantage. When American ground forces entered the war in 1965, they faced an enemy on the offensive, but in June 1968 the new MACV commander, General Creighton W. Abrams, confronted an enemy on the ropes. Abrams plainly recognized his advantage and implemented a clear-and-hold strategy aimed

at moving into rural enclaves formerly dominated by the VC. A Communist history of the war notes that "[b]ecause we did not fully appreciate the new enemy [allied] schemes and the changes the enemy made in the conduct of the war and because we underestimated the enemy's capabilities and the strength of his counterattack, when the United States and its puppets [the South Vietnamese] began to carry out their 'clear and hold' strategy our battlefronts were too slow in shifting over to attacking the 'pacification' program. . . ."[6]

To cope with the new battlefield situation, the Communist Politburo in Hanoi revised its strategy in a document known as COSVN Resolution 9.[7] North Vietnam considered its Tet "general offensive and uprising" to be a great success that "forced the enemy [U.S. and South Vietnam] to . . . sink deeper into a defensive and deadlocked position," but admitted that new techniques were required to force the Americans out of the war.[8] Rather than fight U.S. troops directly, Resolution 9 dictated that guerrilla forces would disperse and concentrate their efforts on attacking pacification. The main objective was to outlast the allies: "We should fight to force the Americans to withdraw troops, cause the collapse of the puppets and gain the decisive victory. . . ."[9] Implicit in the plan was a return to more traditional hit-and-run guerrilla tactics with less emphasis on big battles.

Between late 1968 and 1971 the battle for hearts and minds went into full swing, and the government made rapid advances in pacifying the countryside. Historians and military analysts still debate the merits of Abrams's strategy vis-à-vis Westmoreland's, but the bottom line is that the two generals faced very different conflicts.[10] There was no "correct" way to fight; the war was a fluid affair with the enemy controlling the operational tempo most of the time. The successes in pacification during Abrams' command owed a lot to the severely weakened status of the VC after the 1968 Tet Offensive. Even so, with U.S. President Richard Nixon's order to "Vietnamize" the war, the South Vietnamese would be left to cope with both the enemy main forces and the Communist insurgency in the villages. Pacification alone simply could not do the job.

Essentials of Counterinsurgency

Insurgencies are complex affairs that defy all attempts at seeking a common denominator. The counterinsurgent's strategy will depend on how he is organized and how he chooses to fight. The enemy is never static, and every situation will differ from the next. Still, when an insurgency is stripped to its essentials, there are some basic points that are crucial to any COIN effort.

Security forces must be prepared to use armed force to keep the enemy away from the population. To conclude that large-scale operations play no role in COIN is a mistake. The big-unit war of 1965 and 1966 robbed the Communists of a quick victory and allowed the South Vietnamese breathing space in which to begin pacifying the countryside. Without the security generated by military force, pacification cannot even be attempted.

At the same time, government forces must target the insurgents' ability to live and operate freely among the population. Given time, insurgents will try to create a clandestine political structure to replace the government presence in the villages. Such an infrastructure is the real basis of guerrilla control during any insurgency; it is the thread that ties the entire insurgency together. Without a widespread political presence, guerrillas cannot make many gains, and those they do make cannot be reinforced. Any COIN effort must specifically target the insurgent infrastructure if it is to win the war.

These objectives—providing security for the people and targeting the insurgent infrastructure—form the basis of a credible government campaign to win hearts and minds. Programs aimed at bringing a better quality of life to the population, including things like land reform, medical care, schools, and agricultural assistance, are crucial if the government is to offer a viable alternative to the insurgents. The reality, however, is that nothing can be accomplished without first establishing some semblance of security.

Key to the entire strategy is the integration of all efforts toward a single goal. This sounds obvious, but it rarely occurs. In most historical COIN efforts, military forces concentrated on warfighting objectives, leaving the job of building schools and clinics, establishing power grids, and bolstering local government (popularly referred to today as nationbuilding) to civilian agencies. The reality is that neither mission is more important than the other, and failure to recognize this can be fatal. Virtually all COIN plans claim they integrate the two: The



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CORDS adviser, Tay Ninh Province, 1969.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and the defunct Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq were attempts to combine and coordinate civilian and military agencies, although neither really accomplished its objective. In this respect, the development of the CORDS program during the Vietnam War offers a good example of how to establish a chain of command incorporating civilian and military agencies into a focused effort.

Foundation for Successful Pacification

During the early 1960s, the American advisory effort in Vietnam aimed at thwarting Communist influence in the countryside. The attempt failed for many reasons, but one of the most profound was the South Vietnamese Government's inability to extend security to the country's countless villages and hamlets. This failure was, of course, the main factor leading to the introduction of American ground forces and the subsequent rapid expansion of U.S. military manpower in 1965. (U.S. troop strength grew from 23,300 in late 1964 to 184,300 one year later). The huge increase in troop strength exacerbated the already tenuous relationship between the military mission and pacification. As a result, many officials argued that the latter was being neglected.

In early 1965, the U.S. side of pacification consisted of several civilian agencies, of which the CIA, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Information Service, and the U.S. Department of State were the most important. Each agency developed its own program and coordinated it through the American embassy. On the military side, the rapid expansion of troop strength meant a corresponding increase in the number of advisers. By early 1966, military advisory teams worked in all of South Vietnam's 44 provinces and most of its 243 districts. The extent of the military's presence in the countryside made it harder for the civilian-run pacification program to cope—a situation made worse because there was no formal system combining the two efforts.

In the spring of 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration turned its attention toward pacification in an attempt to make the existing arrangement work. Official trips to South Vietnam as well as studies by independent observers claimed there was little coordination between civilian agencies. Most concluded that the entire system needed a drastic overhaul. Johnson took a personal interest in pacification, bringing the weight of his office to the search for a better way to run the "other war," as he called pacification. American ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge received written authority from the president to "exercise full responsibility" over the entire advisory effort in Vietnam, using "the degree of command and control that you consider appropriate."[11]

It was not enough. Westmoreland was cooperative, yet the civilian and military missions simply did not mesh. After a trip to South Vietnam in November 1965, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara told Westmoreland, "I don't think we have done a thing we can point to that has been effective in five years. I ask you to show me one area in this country . . . that we have pacified."[12]

McNamara's observation prompted quick action. In January 1966, representatives from Washington agencies concerned with the conduct of the war met with representatives from the U.S. mission in Saigon at a conference in Virginia. During the ensuing discussion, participants acknowledged that



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Robert Komer (right), with William Colby (center) at MACV Headquarters, date unknown.

simply relying on the ambassador and the MACV commander to "work things out" would not ensure pacification cooperation. A single civil-military focus on pacification was needed; however, the conference ended without a concrete resolution.[13]

Although Johnson was displeased by slow progress and foot dragging, the embassy in Saigon continued to resist any changes that would take away its authority over pacification. Then, at a summit held in Honolulu in February 1966 with South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu and Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, Johnson pushed an agenda that tasked the South Vietnamese Army with area security, allowing the U.S. military to concentrate mostly on seeking out enemy main forces. Johnson also demanded greater American coordination in the pacification effort and called for a single manager to head the entire program. In April he assigned Robert W. Komer, a trusted member of the National Security Council, the task of coming up with a solution. Johnson gave Komer a strong mandate that included unrestrained access to the White House—a key asset that was put in writing. That authority gave Komer the clout he needed to bring recalcitrant officials into line.[14]

Other steps followed in quick succession. In August 1966 Komer authored a paper titled "Giving a New Thrust to Pacification: Analysis, Concept, and Management," in which he broke the pacification problem into three parts and argued that no single part could work by itself.[15] The first part, not surprisingly, was security—keeping the main forces away from the population. In the second part he advocated breaking the Communists' hold on the people with anti-infrastructure operations and programs designed to win back popular support. The third part stressed the concept of mass; in other words, pacification had to be large-scale. Only with a truly massive effort could a turnaround be achieved, and that was what Johnson required if he was to maintain public support for the war.

It was Westmoreland himself, however, who brought the issue to the forefront. Contrary to popular belief, the MACV commander understood the need for pacification and, like a good politician, figured it would be better to have the assignment under his control than outside of it. On 6 October 1966, despite objections from his staff, he told Komer: "I'm not asking for the responsibility, but I believe that my headquarters could take it in stride and perhaps carry out this important function more economically and efficiently than the present complex arrangement."[16]

Komer lobbied McNamara, arguing that with 90 percent of the resources, it was "obvious" that only the military "had the clout" to get the job done. Komer believed that the U.S. Defense Department (DOD) was "far stronger behind pacification" than the Department of State and was "infinitely more dynamic and influential."[17]

Now the DOD was on board, but the civilian agencies uniformly opposed the plan. As a compromise, in November 1966 the Office of Civil Operations (OCO) was formed, with Deputy Ambassador William Porter in charge. The OCO combined civilian agencies under one chain of command, but failed to bring the military into it. The entire plan was doomed from the start.

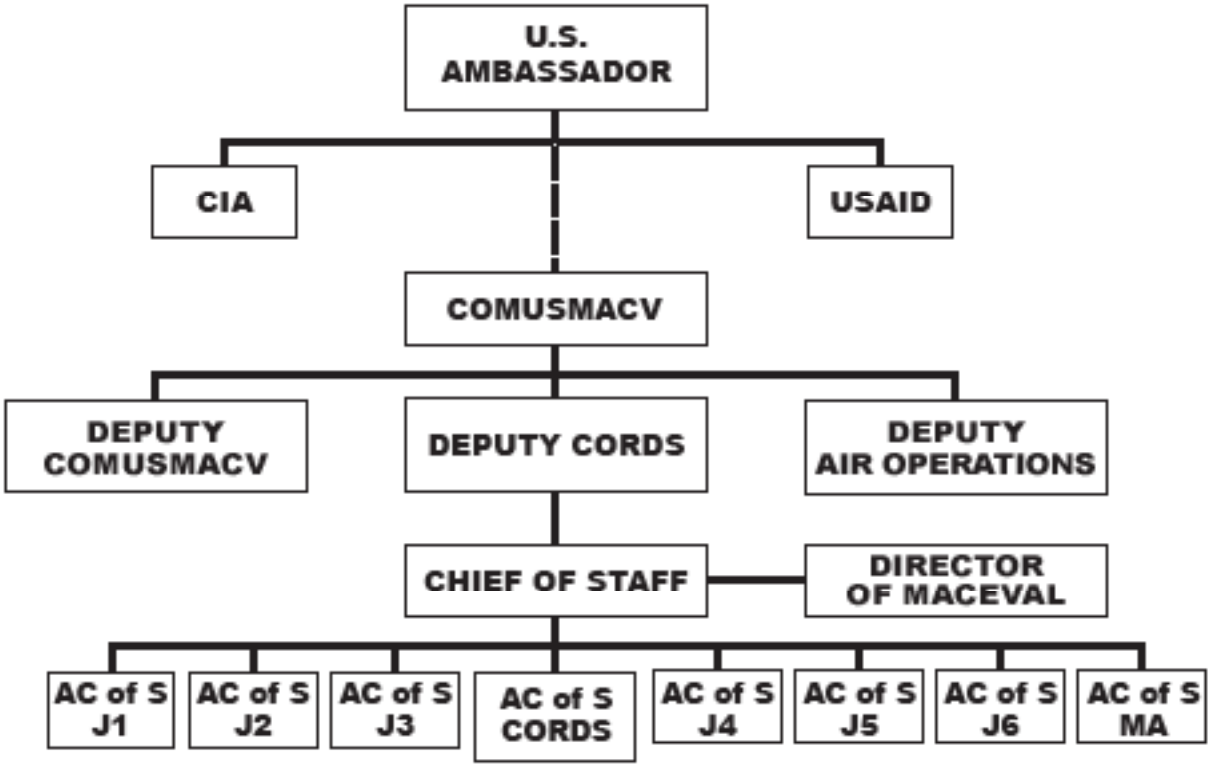
The OCO was really no different from the old way of doing business because it kept the civilian and military chains of command separate. Johnson was deeply dissatisfied. So in June 1966 Komer went to Vietnam to assess the situation. He wrote that the U.S. Embassy "needs to strengthen its

own machinery" for pacification. Komer met with Westmoreland, and the two agreed on the need for a single manager. "My problem is not with Westy, but the reluctant civilian side," Komer told the president.[18]

The Birth of CORDS

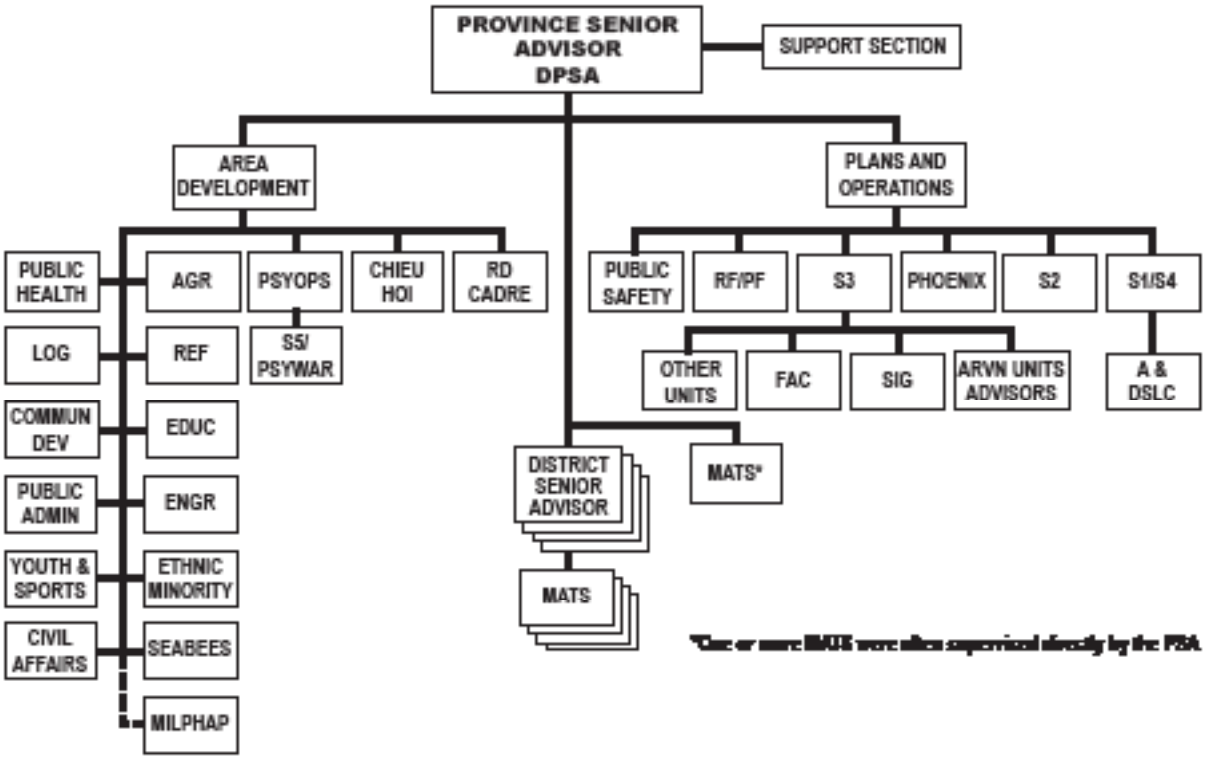
In March 1967, Johnson convened a meeting on Guam and made it clear that OCO was dead and that Komer's plan for a single manager would be implemented. Only the paperwork remained, and less than 2 months later, on 9 May 1967, National Security Action Memorandum 362, "Responsibility for U.S. Role in Pacification (Revolutionary Development)," established Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support, or CORDS.[19] The new system unambiguously placed the military in charge of pacification. As MACV commander, Westmoreland would have three deputies, one of them a civilian with three-star-equivalent rank in charge of pacification, and there would be a single chain of command. Komer took the post of Deputy for CORDS, which placed him alongside the Deputy MACV commander, Abrams. Below that, various other civilians and civilian agencies were integrated into the military hierarchy, including an assistant chief of staff for CORDS positioned alongside the traditional military staff. For the first time, civilians were embedded within a wartime command and put in charge of military personnel and resources. CORDS went into effect immediately and brought with it a new urgency oriented toward making pacification work in the countryside.[20] (See figure 1.)

The new organization did not solve all problems immediately, and it was not always smooth sailing. At first Komer attempted to gather as much power as possible within his office, but Westmoreland made it clear that his military deputies were more powerful and performed a broad range of duties, while Komer had authority only over pacification. In addition, Westmoreland quashed Komer's direct access to the White House, rightly insisting that the chain of command be followed. Westmoreland naturally kept a close watch over CORDS, occasionally prompting Komer to complain that he was not yet sure that he had Westmoreland's "own full trust and confidence."[21] Their disagreements were few, however, and the relationship between the MACV commander and



Source: Thomas W. Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1991).

Figure 1. Structure of U.S. mission showing position of CORDS, May 1967.



Source: Ngo Quang Truong, *Indochina Monographs: RVNAF and US Operational Cooperation and Coordination* (Washington, D.C.: Army Center of Military History, 1980), p. 154.

Figure 2. Organization of the CORDS team at province level.

his new deputy became close and respectful, which started the new program on the right track.

Time was the crucial ingredient, and eventually Komer's assertive personality and Westmoreland's increasing trust in his new civilian subordinates smoothed over many potential problems. According to one study, "[a] combination of Westmoreland's flexibility and Komer's ability to capitalize on it through the absence of an intervening layer of command permitted Komer to run an unusual, innovative program within what otherwise might have been the overly strict confines of a military staff."[22]

With the new organization, almost all pacification programs eventually came under CORDS. From USAID, CORDS took control of "new life development" (the catch-all term for an attempt to improve government responsiveness to villagers' needs), refugees, National Police, and the Chieu Hoi program (the "Open Arms" campaign to encourage Communist personnel in South Vietnam to defect). The CIA's Rural Development cadre, MACV's civic action and civil affairs, and the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office's field psychological operations also fell under the CORDS aegis. CORDS assumed responsibility for reports, evaluations, and field inspections from all agencies.[23]

CORDS organization. At corps level, the CORDS organization was modeled on that of CORDS at the MACV headquarters. (See figure 2.) The U.S. military senior adviser, usually a three-star general who also served as the commander of U.S. forces in the region, had a deputy for CORDS (DepCORDS), usually a civilian. The DepCORDS was responsible for supervising military and civilian plans in support of the South Vietnamese pacification program within the corps area.[24]

Province advisory teams in the corps area of responsibility reported directly to the regional DepCORDS. Each of the 44 provinces in South Vietnam was headed by a province chief, usually a South Vietnamese Army or Marine colonel, who supervised the provincial government apparatus and commanded the provincial militia as well as Regional Forces and Popular Forces (RF/PF).

The province advisory teams helped the province chiefs administer the pacification program. The



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Former Viet Cong makes radio appeal calling former comrades to join the Chieu Hoi ("Open Arms" returnee) program.

province chief's American counterpart was the province senior adviser, who was either military or civilian, depending on the security situation of the respective province. The province senior adviser and his staff were responsible for advising the province chief about civil-military aspects of the South Vietnamese pacification and development programs.

The province senior adviser's staff, composed of both U.S. military and civilian personnel, was divided into two parts. The first part handled area and community development, including public health and administration, civil affairs, education, agriculture, psychological operations, and logistics. The other part managed military issues. It helped the province staff prepare plans and direct security operations by the territorial forces and associated support within the province.

The province chief exercised authority through district chiefs, and the province senior adviser supervised district senior advisers, each of whom had a staff of about eight members (the actual size depending on the particular situation in a district). District-level advisory teams helped the district chief with civil-military aspects of the pacification and rural development programs. Also, the district team (and/or assigned mobile assistance training teams) advised and trained the RF/PF located in the district. All members of the province team were advisers; they worked closely with the province chief and his staff, providing advice and assistance, and coordinating U.S. support.

CORDS gains muscle. Sheer numbers, made possible by the military's involvement, made CORDS more effective than earlier pacification efforts. In early 1966, about 1,000 U.S. advisers were involved in pacification; by September 1969—the highpoint of the pacification effort in terms of total manpower—7,601 advisers were assigned to province and district pacification teams. Of those, 6,464 were military, and 95 percent of those came from the Army.[25]

CORDS' ability to bring manpower, money, and supplies to the countryside where they were needed was impressive. Some statistics illustrate the point: Between 1966 and 1970, money spent on pacification and economic programs rose from $582 million to $1.5 billion. Advice and aid to the South Vietnamese National Police allowed total police paramilitary strength to climb from 60,000 in 1967 to more than 120,000 in 1971. Aid to the RF/PF grew from a paltry $300,000 per year in 1966 to over $1.5 million annually by 1971, enabling total strength to increase by more than



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RF/PF adviser and district chief inspect troops in Gia Dinh Province, 1969.

50 percent. By 1971 total territorial militia strength was around 500,000—about 50 percent of overall South Vietnamese military strength. Advisory numbers increased correspondingly: In 1967 there were 108 U.S. advisers attached to the militia; in 1969 there were 2,243."[26] The enemy saw this buildup as a serious threat to his control in the countryside, and Communist sources consistently cited the need to attack as central to their strategy.[27]

What effect did all of this have on the security situation? Numbers alone do not make for successful pacification, but they are a big step in the right direction. By placing so much manpower in the villages, the allies were able to confront the guerrillas consistently, resulting in significant gains by 1970. Although pacification statistics are complicated and often misleading, they do indicate that CORDS affected the insurgency. For example, by early 1970, 93 percent of South Vietnamese lived in "relatively secure" villages, an increase of almost 20 percent from the middle of 1968, the year marred by the Tet Offensive.[28]

The Phoenix Program

Within CORDS were scores of programs designed to enhance South Vietnamese influence in the countryside, but security remained paramount. At the root of pacification's success or failure was its ability to counter the insurgents' grip on the population. Military operations were designed to keep enemy main forces and guerrillas as far from the population as possible, but the Communist presence in the villages was more than just military. Cadre running the Viet Cong infrastructure (VCI) sought to form a Communist shadow government to supplant the Saigon regime's influence.

In 1960, when Hanoi had formed the Viet Cong movement (formally known as the National Liberation Front), the VCI cadre was its most important component. Cadre were the building blocks of the revolution, the mechanism by which the Communists spread their presence throughout South Vietnam. Cadre did not wear uniforms, yet they were as crucial to the armed struggle as any AK-toting guerrilla. The cadre spread the VCI from the regional level down to almost every village and hamlet in South Vietnam. A preferred tactic was to kill local government officials as a warning for others not to come back.

Indeed, the VC's early success was due to the VCI cadre, which by 1967 numbered somewhere between 70,000 and 100,000 throughout South Vietnam. The VCI was a simple organization. Virtually every village had a cell made up of a Communist Party secretary; a finance and supply unit; and information and culture, social welfare, and proselytizing sections to gain recruits from among the civilian population. They answered up a chain of command, with village cadre answering to the district, then to the province, and finally to a series of regional commands which, in turn, took orders from Hanoi.

The Communists consolidated their influence in the countryside by using a carrot-and-stick approach. The VCI provided medical treatment, education, and justice—along with heavy doses of propaganda—backed by threats from VC guerrillas. The VC waged an effective terror campaign aimed at selected village officials and authority figures to convince fence-sitters that support for the revolution was the best course. In short, the VCI was the Communist alternative to the Saigon government.

The South Vietnamese Government, on the other hand, was rarely able to keep such a presence in the villages, and when they could, the lack of a permanent armed force at that level meant that officials were usually limited to daytime



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Phung Hoang (Phoenix) Team in field operations, Tay Ninh Province, 1969.

visits only. Unfortunately, in the earliest days of the insurgency (1960 to 1963), when the infrastructure was most vulnerable, neither the South Vietnamese nor their American advisers understood the VCI's importance. They concentrated on fighting the guerrillas who, ironically, grew stronger because of the freedom they gained through the VCI's strength and influence.

The VCI was nothing less than a second center of gravity. By 1965, when the United States intervened in South Vietnam with ground troops, Communist strength had grown exponentially, forcing Westmoreland to deal with the main force threat first and making pacification secondary.

The U.S. did not completely ignore the VCI. As early as 1964 the CIA used counterterror teams to seek out and destroy cadre hiding in villages. But the CIA had only a few dozen Americans devoted to the task, far too few to have much effect on tens of thousands of VCI. The advent of CORDS changed that, and anti-infrastructure operations began to evolve. In July 1967, the Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Program (ICEX) was created. It was basically a clearinghouse for information on the VCI, information that was then disseminated to district advisers.[29] Unfortunately, given the lack of anti-VCI operations during the first 3 years of the war, little intelligence was available at the start. A few organizations, such as the RF/PF, actually lived in the villages and gathered information, but their main task was security, not intelligence gathering.



U.S. Army

Operations under the Phoenix program sought to target and neutralize members of the Viet Cong infrastructure (VCI). A U.S. Navy SEAL in the Mekong Delta leads away a VC suspect.

Phoenix rising. In December 1967 ICEX was given new emphasis and renamed Phoenix. The South Vietnamese side was called Phung Hoang, after a mythical bird that appeared as a sign of prosperity and luck. CORDS made Phoenix a high priority and within weeks expanded intelligence centers in most of South Vietnam's provinces.

At this stage, the most important part of Phoenix was numbers. CORDS expanded the U.S. advisory effort across the board, and the Phoenix program benefited. Within months all 44 provinces and most of the districts had American Phoenix advisers. This proved vital to the effort. Only by maintaining a constant presence in the countryside—in other words, by mirroring the insurgents—could the government hope to wage an effective counterinsurgency. By 1970 there were 704 U.S. Phoenix advisers throughout South Vietnam.[30]

For the Phoenix program—as with most other things during the war—the Tet Offensive proved pivotal. The entire pacification program went on hold as the allies fought to keep the Communists from taking entire cities. If there was any doubt before, Tet showed just how crucial the VCI was to the insurgency, for it was the covert cadres who paved the way for the guerrillas and ensured that supplies and replacements were available to sustain the offensive. On the other hand, the failure of the attacks exposed the VCI and made it vulnerable. As a result, anti-infrastructure operations became one of the most important aspects of the pacification program.

In July 1968, after the enemy offensive had spent most of its fury, the allies launched the Accelerated Pacification Campaign (APC), which devoted new resources to pacification in an attempt to capitalize on post-Tet Communist weakness. While enemy main forces and guerrillas licked their wounds, they were less able to hinder pacification in the villages.

Under the APC, Phoenix emphasized four aspects in its attack on the VCI:

- Decentralization of the old ICEX command and control (C2) apparatus by placing most of the responsibility on the provinces and districts. This included building intelligence-gathering and interrogation centers (called district intelligence and operations coordinating centers, or DIOCCs) in the regions where the VCI operated.



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RF platoon, date and location unknown.

● Establishment of files and dossiers on suspects, and placing of emphasis on "neutralizing" (capturing, converting, or killing) members of the VCI.

● Institution of rules by which suspected VCI could be tried and imprisoned.

● Emphasis on local militia and police rather than the military as the main operational arm of the program.[31]

This last aspect was crucial. While military forces could be used to attack the VCI, they had other pressing responsibilities, and anti-infrastructure operations would always be on the back burner. So the program concentrated on existing forces that could be tailored to seek out the VCI, the most important of these being the RF/PF militia, the National Police, and Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU).

Recruited locally, the RF/PF were ideally suited to anti-VCI operations because they lived in the villages. In addition to providing security against marauding VC guerrillas, the RF/PF reacted to intelligence sent from the DIOCC. The National Police had two units specially tailored to VCI operations: the intelligence-gathering Police Special Branch and the paramilitary National Police Field Force. For the most part, however, the police did not perform well, although there were exceptions. PRUs, which were recruited and trained by the CIA, were the best action arm available to Phoenix. However, as was generally the problem with CIA assets, PRUs were not numerous enough to deal effectively with the VCI. Never numbering more than 4,000 men nationwide, the PRU also had other paramilitary tasks to perform and so were not always available.[32]

DIOCCs. The district was the program's basic building block, and the DIOCC was its nerve center. Each DIOCC was led by a Vietnamese Phung Hoang chief, aided by an American Phoenix adviser. The adviser had no authority to order operations; he could only advise and call on U.S. military support. The DIOCC was answerable to the Vietnamese district chief, who in turn reported to the province chief. DIOCC personnel compiled intelligence on VCI in their district and made blacklists with data on VCI members. If possible, the DIOCC sought out a suspect's location and planned an operation to capture him (or her). Once captured, the VCI was taken to the DIOCC and interrogated, then sent to the province headquarters for further interrogation and trial.[33]

Because Phoenix was decentralized, the programs differed from district to district, and some worked better than others. Many DIOCCs did little work, taking months to establish even the most basic blacklists. In many cases the Phung Hoang chief was an incompetent bureaucrat who used his position to enrich himself. Phoenix tried to address this problem by establishing monthly neutralization quotas, but

these often led to fabrications or, worse, false arrests. In some cases, district officials accepted bribes from the VC to release certain suspects. Some districts released as many as 60 percent of VCI suspects.[34`]


Texas Tech Vietnam Virtual Archive

PF platoon on guard in Phu My village, Duip Tuong Province, 1970.

Misconceptions about Phoenix

The picture of Phoenix that emerges is not of a rogue operation, as it is sometimes accused of being, but rather of one that operated within a system of rules. Special laws, called An Tri, allowed the arrest and prosecution of suspected communists, but only within the legal system. Moreover, to avoid abuses such as phony accusations for personal reasons, or to rein in overzealous officials who might not be diligent enough in pursuing evidence before making arrests, An Tri required three separate sources of evidence to convict any individual targeted for neutralization.

If a suspected VCI was found guilty, he or she could be held in prison for 2 years, with renewable 2-year sentences totaling up to 6 years. While this was probably fair on its surface, hardcore VCI were out in 6 years at most and then rejoined the guerrillas. The legal system was never really ironed out. The U.S. has the same problem today: Accused terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and in other prisons fall within a shadowy middle ground that our policymakers and legal system have yet to deal with.

An assassination bureau? Between 1968 and 1972 Phoenix neutralized 81,740 VC, of whom 26,369 were killed. This was a large piece taken out of the VCI, and between 1969 and 1971 the program was quite successful in destroying the VCI in many important areas.[35] However, these statistics have been used to suggest that Phoenix was an assassination program. It was not. People were killed, yes, but statistics show that more than two-thirds of neutralized VC were captured, not killed. Indeed, only by capturing Viet Cong could Phoenix develop the intelligence needed to net additional Viet Cong. Abuses did occur, such as torture, which U.S. advisers could not always halt, but most advisers understood the adage that dead Viet Cong do not tell about live ones.

Phoenix was also accused of sometimes targeting civilians, because the VCI did not wear military uniforms. But the VCI was an integral—indeed paramount—aspect of the insurgency and a legitimate target. We Americans should have done a better job of pointing this out to critics.

Contracting out the dirty work? Another charge was that Phoenix relied on other units to neutralize the VCI. Of the 26,000 VCI killed, 87 percent died during operations by conventional units. How effective was Phoenix if it accounted for only 13 percent of those killed in action? A later study found that a still-low 20 percent of the killed or captured neutralizations came from Phoenix assets, with most of the rest caught up in sweeps by regular units or by the RF/PF. Both claims are almost irrelevant: Direct physical action was the conventional force, RF/PF part of a two-part job. The bottom line should have been 26,000 VCI permanently eliminated, never mind by whom.

Statistics themselves caused problems. During the first 2 years of Phoenix, each province was given a monthly quota of VC to neutralize, depending on the size of the infrastructure in the province. The quotas were often unrealistic and encouraged false reporting—or the capture of innocent people with whom South Vietnamese officials had a grudge. The quotas were lowered in 1969, and thereafter no VC could be counted in the total unless he or she had been convicted in court.[36]

Aiming low? Others critics attacked Phoenix for netting mostly middle- and low-level VC while



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RF/PF adviser with counterpart in Binh Duong Province, 1969.

senior leaders eluded capture. In fact, in 1968, before the VCI adapted to aggressive pursuit by Phoenix, about 13 percent of neutralizations were district and higher level cadre. In 1970 and 1971, that figure dropped to about 3 percent.[37] The drop, however, masks two positive results: Thanks to Phoenix, ranking VC had been forced to move to safer areas, thereby removing themselves from the "sea of the people (which did not negate their ability to control village populations, but did make the job more difficult); and by attacking mid level Viet Cong, Phoenix actually severed the link between the population and the Party-level cadre calling the shots—a serious blow to the VCI.

Communist Testimony to Phoenix's Success

In the end, attacking the VCI was not as difficult as it might seem. The VCI was a secret organization, but to be effective in the villages it had to stay among the population, which made it vulnerable. Guerrillas could melt into the bush; in contrast, the VCI had to maintain contact with the people.

Although they were not completely successful, anti-infrastructure operations were a serious problem for the enemy, and he took drastic steps to limit the damage. By 1970, Communist plans repeatedly emphasized attacking the government's pacification program and specifically targeted Phoenix officials.[38] District and village officials became targets of VC assassination and terror as the Communists sought to reassert control over areas lost in 1969 and 1970. Ironically, the VC practiced the very thing for which critics excoriated Phoenix—the assassination of officials. The VC even imposed quotas. In 1970, for example, Communist officials near Danang in northern South Vietnam instructed VC assassins to "kill 1,400 persons" deemed to be government "tyrant[s]" and to "annihilate" anyone involved with the pacification program.[39]

Although the anti-infrastructure program did not crush the VCI, in combination with other pacification programs it probably did hinder insurgent progress. In Vietnam, with its blend of guerrilla and main-force war, this was not enough to prevail, but it seems clear that without Phoenix, pacification would have fared far worse. Communist accounts after the war bear this out. In *Vietnam: A History*, Stanley Karnow quotes the North Vietnamese deputy commander in South Vietnam, General Tran Do, as saying that Phoenix was "extremely destructive."[40] Former Viet Cong Minister of Justice Truong Nhu Tang wrote in his memoirs that "Phoenix was dangerously effective" and that in Hau Nghia Province west of Saigon, "the Front Infrastructure was virtually eliminated."[41] Nguyen Co Thach, who became the Vietnamese foreign minister after the war, claimed that "[w]e had many weaknesses in the South because of Phoenix."[42]

Clearly, the political infrastructure is the basic building block of almost all insurgencies, and it must be a high-priority target for the counterinsurgent from the very beginning. In Vietnam the allies faced an insurgency that emphasized political and military options in equal measure, but before the Tet Offensive weakened the Communists sufficiently to allow concentration on both main-force warfare and pacification, it was difficult to place sufficient emphasis on anti-infrastructure operations. Yet in just 2 years—between 1968 and 1970—the Phoenix program made significant progress against the VCI. What might have happened had the Americans and South Vietnamese begun it in 1960, when the Viet Cong were much weaker?

Assessing Pacification in Vietnam

Historian Richard A. Hunt characterizes the achievements of CORDS and the pacification

program in Vietnam as "ambiguous."[43] Many high-ranking civilians and other officials who participated in the program, such as Komer, CIA director William Colby, and Westmoreland's military deputy, General Bruce Palmer, assert that CORDS made great gains between 1969 and 1972.[44] Some historians disagree with this assessment, but clearly the program made some progress in the years following the Tet Offensive. The security situation in many areas improved dramatically, releasing regular South Vietnamese troops to do battle with the North Vietnamese and main-force VC units. The program also spread Saigon's influence and increased the government's credibility with the South Vietnamese people.

Evidence suggests that one of the reasons Hanoi launched a major offensive in 1972 was to offset the progress that South Vietnam had made in pacification and in eliminating the VCI.[45] In the long run, however, those gains proved to be irrelevant. Although the South Vietnamese, with U.S. advisers and massive air support, successfully blunted North Vietnam's 1972 invasion, U.S. forces subsequently withdrew after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords. When the fighting resumed shortly after the ceasefire in 1973, South Vietnamese forces acquitted themselves reasonably well, only to succumb to the final North Vietnamese offensive in 1975. In the end, Communist conventional forces, not the insurgents, defeated the South Vietnamese.

Lessons Learned

Despite the final outcome, there were lessons to be learned from Vietnam. The U.S. military applied some of these lessons to conflicts in the Philippines and El Salvador during the 1980s, and now that counterinsurgency is again in vogue, it would be wise for planners to reexamine pacification operations in Vietnam. The most important lessons to heed follow:

- Unity of effort is imperative; there must be a unified structure that combines military and pacification efforts. The pacification program in Vietnam did not make any headway until the different agencies involved were brought together under a single manager within the military C2 architecture. Once CORDS and Phoenix became part of the military chain of command, it was easier to get things done. The military tends to regard pacification tasks as something civilian agencies do; however, only the military has the budget, materiel, and manpower to get the job done.
- An insurgency thrives only as long as it can sustain a presence among the population. Make anti-infrastructure operations a first step in any COIN plan. Immediately establish an intelligence capability to identify targets, and use local forces to go after them.
- Do not keep the anti-infrastructure program a secret or it will develop a sinister reputation. Tell the people that the government intends to target the infrastructure as part of the security program. Locals must do most of the anti-infrastructure work, with the Americans staying in the background.
- Establish a clear legal framework for the pacification program, especially the anti-infrastructure effort. If this is done immediately and the program is run consistently, people will be more likely to accept it. Legality was a problem in Vietnam, and it is clearly a problem today.
- An insurgency will not be defeated on the battlefield. The fight is for the loyalty of the people, so establish a government-wide program to better the lives of people in the countryside. Improvement must go hand in hand with anti-infrastructure operations, or the population will likely regard government efforts as repressive.
- Above all, Americans must never forget that the host nation is responsible for maintaining security and establishing viable institutions that meet the people's needs, especially since the host nation will have to do the heavy lifting for itself after U.S. forces leave.

These lessons might seem obvious, and it is true that with hindsight they might be easily identified; however, in practice, they are hard to execute. This should not, however, stop us from trying to apply the lessons learned in Southeast Asia to Iraq and Afghanistan. CORDS was one of the Vietnam War's success stories, and its well-conceived, well-executed programs and successful synthesis of civilian and military efforts offer a useful template for current and future COIN operations. ***MR***

NOTES

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3. For an important source from the Communist perspective, see Merle L. Pribbenow, trans., *Victory in Vietnam: The Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954-1975* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

4. Message, Westmoreland Military Advisory Command 0117 to BG James Lawton Collins, Jr., Washington, 7 January 1966, Westmoreland files, U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH), Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

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6. Pribbenow, 237.

7. Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) Resolution 9, 4, 19. English translation available at the Texas Tech Virtual Vietnam Archive, item no. 4080418002.

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12. Robert S. McNamara, quoted in Military Advisory Command Vietnam Command History, 1965, 229, Historians files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

13. Thomas W. Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support* (Washington, DC: CMH, 1991), 18-19.

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15. Memorandum from Komer to John T. McNaughton, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, Department of Defense, "Giving A New Thrust to Pacification: Analysis, Concept, and Management," 7 August 1967.

16. Westmoreland Historical Briefing, 17 October 1966, cited in Scoville, 38.

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18. Memorandum from Lyndon B. Johnson to Komer, Subject: Second Komer Trip to Vietnam, 23-29 June 1966, 1 July 1966, 6, Historians files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

19. Johnson to Komer, National Security Action Memorandum 362, Responsibility for U.S. Role in Pacification (Revolutionary Development), on-line at <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/NSAMs/nsam362.asp>, accessed 27 March 2006.

20. For more detail on the CORDS organization, see Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support*, 62-68.

21. Ibid., 72.

22. Ibid., 76.

23. Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 93.

24. The CORDS organization in IV Corps was different. Because there were fewer U.S. forces in the Mekong Delta than in the other corps areas, IV Corps had no U.S. three-star general.

25. These figures have been compiled by the authors from several sources. For statistics on 1969-70, see Jeffrey J. Clarke, *Advice and Support: The Final Years, 1965-1973* (Washington, DC: CMH, 1988), 373.

26. Thayer, 884-87.

27. The history of the North Vietnamese 9th Division points out that one of its primary missions in 1969-1970 was to "frustrate the enemy's pacification plan." See *Su Doan 9* [*9th Division*] (Hanoi: Nha Xuat Ban Quan Doi Nhan Dan [People's Army Publishing House], 1990), 100.

28. Hamlet Evaluation Survey (HES) Annual Statistical Analysis, 1968-71, Historians files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

29. The Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Program (ICEX) was established by MACV Directive 381-41, "Military Intelligence: Coordination and Exploitation for Attack on the VC Infrastructure; Short Title: ICEX," 9 July 1967, Historians files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. For a detailed study of ICEX, see Ralph W. Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang: A Study of Wartime Intelligence Management" (Ph.D. diss, The American University, 1985).

30. Dale Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), Appen. A-2, "Resource Allocations."

31. Ibid., 87-91.

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33. Deputy Undersecretary of the Army John Siena to Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, Subject: Memorandum of Army Vietnam Trip, 28 August 1969, Historians files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

34. Ibid., 61; Military Advisory Command CORDS-PSD, "Fact Sheet: Legal Processing of VCI Detainees," 8 June 1970, 3, Historians' files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

35. Andrade, appen. A-1, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang Neutralization Results."

36. Phuong Hoang 1970 End of Year Report, 11 May 1971, 4-5, Historians' files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

37. MACCORDS-PSD, "Fact Sheet," 2.

38. By mid-1969, U.S. Army division operational reports contained numerous references to captured enemy plans that aimed to "disrupt pacification," in particular the Regional Forces/Popular Forces (RF/PF) and Phoenix programs, because these were a constant threat to Communist domination in the villages. See also memorandum to William Colby from Wilbur Wilson, Deputy for CORDS, Subject: Motivation of [Government of Vietnam] GVN Leadership in the Phung Hoang Program, 24 June 1971, Historians files, CMH, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

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41. Truong Nhu Tang, *A Viet Cong Memoir: An Inside Account of the Vietnam War and Its Aftermath* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1985), 268.

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45. Military History Institute of Vietnam, *Victory in Vietnam: The Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954-1975*, trans. Merele L. Pribbenow (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 283; Hunt, 255.

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Revisiting CORDS: The Need for Unity of Effort to Secure Victory in Iraq

Major Ross Coffey, U.S. Army

IN NOVEMBER 2005, the National Security Council published its *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* [hereafter called *National Strategy*], articulating the broad strategy President George W. Bush set forth in 2003 and providing an "update on our progress as well as the challenges remaining."[1] The report—

- Describes conditions for victory in the short, medium, and long term.
- Describes the three integrated political, security, and economic tracks.
- Defines eight strategic pillars with associated lines of action, subactions, and objectives for military and civilian entities.
- Presents a three-tiered "organization for victory" to achieve the strategy.

Three-Tiered Organization for Victory

According to the *National Strategy,* weekly strategy sessions at the highest levels of the U.S. Government ensure that Iraq remains a top priority. At the operational level, the "team in Baghdad—led by Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and General George Casey—works to implement policy on the ground and lay the foundation for long-term success."[2] Each of the eight pillars have corresponding interagency working groups to coordinate policy, review and assess progress, develop new proposals, and oversee the implementation of existing policies.

The multitracked approach (political, security, and economic) to counterinsurgency in Iraq has historical parallels with the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program of the Vietnam War era. Established in 1967, CORDS partnered civilian and military entities engaged in pacification of Vietnamese rural areas. The program enhanced rural security and local political and economic development and helped defeat the Viet Cong (VC) insurgency. Significantly, CORDS unified the efforts of the pacification entities by establishing unity of command throughout the combined civil-military organization.

Lack of unity of effort is perhaps the most significant impediment to operational-level interagency action today. The victorious conditions the *National Strategy* describes might be unachievable if the interagency entities present in Iraq do not achieve unity of effort. To help achieve unity of effort, Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I) and the Nation should consider adopting a CORDS-like approach to ensure integrated action and victory.

The Impediment

The lack of unity of effort is the principal impediment to operational-level interagency integration. Simply put, no one is in overall control of the efforts. Matthew F. Bogdanos writes: "According to *Joint Vision 2020,* 'the primary challenge of interagency operations is to achieve unity of effort despite the diverse cultures, competing interests, and differing priorities of participating organizations.'"[3] Joint doctrine suggests that the cause of our inability to achieve unity of effort is the wide-ranging backgrounds and values of the agencies involved. Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations,* states: "If the interagency process is to be successful, it should bring together the interests of multiple agencies, departments, and organizations. . . . *The essence of interagency coordination is the interplay of multiple agencies with individual agendas. . . . Each agency has core values that it will not compromise* (emphasis in the original)."[4]

Because of the agencies' different backgrounds, values, and agendas, unifying command appears to be the only approach to efforts at the operational level. Bathsheba Crocker says: "As with any mission . . . , the key question for post-conflict operations is who

is in charge. To date, true unity of command between civilians and the military in Iraq has so far proved elusive in American operations."[5] More so than the wide-ranging backgrounds of interagency entities, lack of unity of command at the operational level has been the most significant factor in failing to achieve unity of effort. Interagency coordination is centralized only at the strategic level. In Iraq, while unity of effort is a useful phrase, lack of an effective mechanism has thus far failed to solve the problem of lack of decisive authority. This causes a lack of cooperation by agencies across the U.S. Government and, ultimately, the absence of unity of effort in Iraq overall. The result is no accountability for integration of interagency efforts outside of Washington, D.C., and thus, no unity of command during their execution.

In remarks to the 2004 Eisenhower National Security Conference, General Peter J. Pace, now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, noted that the overarching problem with interagency integration is found at the operational level: "The problem comes after [the President of the United States] makes the decision. The various parts of the government take their various pieces and go back to work on them. No one below the president has control over the totality of the process. And if there are disagreements among the various players, it has to go back to the president for resolution."[6] Strategic-level entities must resolve operational-level problems because current interagency organizations have no mechanisms to resolve issues at the operational level. The *National Strategy* describes the roles played by each of the eight working groups, but does not articulate how issues will be resolved in-theater.[7]

Achieving unity of effort in practice requires more than identifying common purposes and establishing working groups; instead, "unity of effort . . . refers to collapsing political and military authority in the same hands [and requires] a complete overhaul of the entire division of labor."[8] Unity of effort requires accountability, which is only achieved through unity of command. Michéle Flournoy says: "Perhaps the most significant determinant of success in interagency planning is the degree to which participants are held accountable for meeting U.S. objectives and for the roles they play in the process."[9] Therefore, unity of command at the operational level in Iraq is absolutely essential for achieving interagency unity of effort.

Counterinsurgent Warfare Principles

The concept of unity of effort is relevant today because counterinsurgent warfare requires coordinated interagency action. History indicates that separating insurgents from the population is the only meaningful method of pursuing a COIN strategy. To achieve this end, integrated interagency action is necessary. Early 20th-century British military author and theorist General Sir Charles Gwynn laid out these principles in *Imperial Policing*.[10] They include—

- The primacy of civil power.
- The use of minimum force.
- The need for firm and timely action.
- The need for cooperation between civil and military authorities.

When pursuing a counterinsurgency strategy, matters of policy must "remain vested in the civil Government" regardless of the degree to which military forces actually control the conduct of operations.[11] Similarly, the use of military force must be kept to an absolute minimum because "the military object is to reestablish the control of civil power and secure its acceptance without an aftermath of bitterness."[12] Interagency coordination, specifically the cooperation of civilian and military entities, is fundamental to success in the COIN campaign.

French military theorist David Galula describes similar challenges in his 1964 work *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.[13] Tasks required in counterinsurgent warfare require the combination of military, police and judicial, and political operations, whether destroying or expelling guerrilla forces; identifying, arresting, or interrogating noncompliant political agents; or doing "the constructive work needed to win the wholehearted support of the population."[14]

Integrating efforts and achieving results require consolidation of direction. Galula says: "Clearly, more than any other kind of warfare, counterinsurgency must respect the principle of a single direction. A single boss must direct the operations from the beginning to the end."[15] Galula offers five associated principles:

- The primacy of political over military power.
- The coordination of efforts.
- The primacy of territorial command.
- The adaptation of the armed forces to COIN warfare.
- The adaptation of minds to the special demands of this form of warfare.[16]

To adapt armed forces and minds as Galula suggests, military historian Andrew Birtle offers practical advice for military officers in *Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1860-1941:* "The best preparation officers can have for such duty, barring personal experience, is to study previous historical situations to sensitize themselves to the kinds of dilemmas that counterguerrilla, civil affairs, and contingency operations typically pose."[17] The Vietnam-era CORDS program provides a relevant historical situation for study by today's student of COIN warfare.

Sir Charles Gwynn	David Galula
• The primacy of civil power. • The use of minimum force. • **The need for firm and** timely action. • The need for cooperation between civil and military authorities.	• The primacy of political over military power. • The coordination of efforts. • The primacy of territorial command. • The adaptation of the armed forces to COIN warfare. • The adaptation of minds to the special demands of this form of warfare.

The CORDS Program

The CORDS program partnered civilian entities with the U.S. Military Assistance Command–Vietnam (MACV). The program established the position of Deputy to Commander MACV (COMUSMACV) for CORDS and filled the position with a senior civilian. Similar partnerships existed at subordinate commands across the country. This arrangement, which contributed to stemming the Viet Cong insurgency and to helping pacify the countryside, addressed the principal impediment to integrated interagency action—lack of unity of effort—and addressed Gwynn's and Galula's principles of COIN warfare.

CORDS achievements. In its 4-year existence, CORDS contributed to the defeat of the Viet Cong by influencing the decline of popular support for the insurgency, by helping pacify rural provinces of Vietnam, and by strengthening South Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces. The Viet Cong suffered after Allied counterattacks post-Tet and could not reassert itself. CORDS-enabled nationbuilding and pacification prevented effective recruiting efforts. In the Kien Hoa province in the Mekong Delta—the birthplace of the National Liberation Front—Viet Cong strength fell from more than 12,000 insurgents in 1967 to 9,000 in 1968 to less than 2,000 in 1971. The monthly rate of insurgent and criminal incidents in the province fell to 2 or 3 per 100,000 inhabitants by 1971, a crime rate that would be welcomed in any U.S. community today.[18]

Other observers concur. According to Thomas Thayer, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis–Southeast Asia, "there was widespread evidence and agreement that the government of Vietnam exercised a predominant influence over the vast majority of South Vietnamese people."[19] Raymond Davis, a U.S. Army noncommissioned officer assigned to the CORDS program made a similar, firsthand assessment: "CORDS, a thorn in the side of the Viet Cong, has been frequently denounced by the VC. Some officials in Saigon believe the program's progress since 1967 might have been a factor in North Vietnam's decision to launch major military operations in 1968 to halt joint pacification efforts in rural areas."[20]

The CORDS approach. The CORDS approach was initiated after years of other unsuccessful attempts to achieve unity of effort through mere coordination. The initial stages of the U.S. Government's pre-CORDS response are case studies in the lack of unity of command causing disunity of effort. In the early 1960s, no one agency in the government possessed the capability to oversee and discipline the entire, multipillared pacification mission. In its early stages of involvement in Vietnam, the United States did not provide its existing institutions the structure, the authority, or the incentives to adapt to the situation.[21]

At the outset of the Vietnam War, the government attempted to resolve the situation in Vietnam through its normal institutions and processes. The typical response was characterized by decentralized decisionmaking and delegation of authority to each individual agency with little accountability for results. U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam Frederick E. Nolting conceded to participating agencies the

"full authority over their operations within agreed programs and policies—in effect, management by committee."[22] To complicate matters, the MACV nominally controlled civilian agencies, but, in reality, civilian agencies reported either directly to their superiors in Washington, D.C., or to the ambassador.[23]

There were scattered efforts to coordinate the response to the Vietnam situation in 1961-1962, but little centralized direction. Part of the problem was tied to the statutory obligations of each agency to remain responsible to its headquarters in Washington and to heed the expressed will of Congress.[24] This approach, later termed the Country Team, was typical of early attempts to achieve a balance between Washington-based direction and Vietnam-located execution.

The Country Team concept was a loose, poorly defined description of the relationship between the ambassador and the heads of the civilian agencies in-country. Although the ambassador remained technically in charge of all agencies in the country, in reality no one was in charge because each agency went its own way. President John F. Kennedy supported the concept throughout his administration, but the loose collection of agencies did not achieve the integration Kennedy desired. Furthermore, the Viet Cong insurgency continued to increase in size, influence, and effectiveness.[25]

The Country Team structure was modified when Maxwell Taylor became the Ambassador to Vietnam. President Lyndon B. Johnson empowered Taylor with "sweeping delegation of authority" to coordinate military and civilian activities.[26] However, he left military matters to the hands of General William Westmoreland, the COMUSMACV. Taylor renamed the structure the Mission Council and attempted to prepare a common agenda and a detailed follow-up of action.[27] However, each agency continued to retain separate responsibility for its operations, and, similar to previous integrative attempts, the Mission Council did not achieve effective interagency action. The Pentagon Papers describe the tensions and situation between the disparate civilian actors.[28] The unidentified author of the chapter titled "Re-emphasis on Pacification: 1965-1967" wrote: "Each agency had its own ideas on what had to be done, its own communications channels with Washington, and its own personnel and administrative structure."[29]

From late 1964 to early 1965, agencies began fielding their own structures for operations in the provinces. These agencies acted under wholly separate chains of command. Unified effort did not exist because the Americans in the provinces did not work together and received conflicting and overlapping guidance from Saigon and Washington.[30]

To better coordinate the civilian entities' nation-building activities, Robert W. Komer, the recently appointed Special Assistant to the President (for supervision of nonmilitary programs relating to Vietnam) argued for the creation of the Office of Civil Operations in Saigon.[31] The office would consist of functional divisions that he would organize along regional lines, including placing directors at regional and provincial levels.[32] When William Porter assumed duties as the Deputy Ambassador to the Saigon Mission, he became the second-ranking civilian in the U.S. hierarchy. His responsibility was to coordinate the civil side of the pacification effort, and he devoted himself to the task.[33] Under his control were three major agencies: the CIA, the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Three field operating agencies (the Chieu Hoi Defector Program, Manpower, and Economic Warfare) reported directly to him.[34]

The military took parallel steps to centralize its pacification efforts by establishing a section in its headquarters, named Revolutionary Development



LBJ Library, photo by Yoichi R. Okamoto

President Lyndon B. Johnson meeting with Robert Komer in the Oval Office.

Support, to focus the attention of its subordinate echelons toward pacification. The military also emphasized the roles of military advisory units that had been assigned to territorial security sectors apart from regular Vietnamese Army formations.[35] However, these attempts, made in 1966, did not result in pacification, the defeat of the Viet Cong insurgency, or the withdrawal of its popular support. Splitting responsibilities between military and civilian entities to pursue pacification left the interagency entities with, in reality, no responsibility.[36]

In response, Komer continued to adamantly insist that Vietnam vitally needed a centralized authority to direct interagency pacification efforts. He asserted that a unified, integrated civilian-military structure would achieve decisive collective effects as opposed to the existing system of individual and unconnected efforts that were by themselves indecisive. In "Clear, Hold, and Rebuild," Komer states: "We realistically concluded that no one of these plans—relatively inefficient and wasteful in the chaotic, corrupted Vietnamese wartime context—could be decisive. But together they could hope to have a major cumulative effect."[37]

The energy Komer brought to his role as the president's special assistant precipitated the formation of CORDS. Consensus developed among the president, the secretary of defense, and the Joint Chiefs, that because the overall mission could not achieve integrative effects, unifying the pacification efforts (civil and military) was necessary.[38] Integrating the two efforts (the Office of Civilian Operations and the Revolutionary Development Support program) and establishing unity of command ultimately resulted in success.

To emphasize his personal interest in the combined pacification efforts, Johnson appointed Komer as the deputy to COMUSMACV for CORDS and gave him ambassadorial rank. On 1 May 1967, Komer pulled together all U.S. civilian and military pacification programs into CORDS under MACV control.[39] Komer now had status equivalent to a three-star general and ranked third in the MACV hierarchy behind Westmoreland and his military deputy, General Creighton Abrams.[40] Although Komer possessed ambassadorial rank, he was not a diplomat; he was a member of Westmoreland's military staff and enjoyed direct access to Westmoreland, an access enjoyed by only one other person, Abrams. In itself, Komer's position reflected the unique nature of CORDS as a civilian-military approach to integration.

CORDS-Partnered Civilian-Military Entities

The CORDS approach directly addressed the principal impediment of lack of unity of effort by partnering civilian and military entities. CORDS did so by placing one person in command of the combined entities and supporting him with appropriate civilian and military personnel under a consolidated staff directorate in MACV.[41] The ensuing organization "represented the formation of an ad hoc civil-military hybrid," not a military takeover of the pacification mission but, instead, an organization that maintained Gywnn's and Galula's "primacy of civil and political power and, thus, a civil as well as military process."[42]

The partnership in the MACV headquarters of a civilian CORDS deputy and the military commander was also replicated throughout subordinate echelons of the command; each of the four corps commanders partnered with a CORDS chief performing similar functions. Provincial and district military advisers were transferred to CORDS, and the appointment of personnel to CORDS positions was based on merit and experience without regard to either civilian or military status.[43]

To achieve unity of effort throughout Vietnam, CORDS also created unified civilian-military advisory teams down to district level. Eventually CORDS created teams in all 250 districts and 44 provinces in South Vietnam to ensure cooperation of military and civilian entities, a principle that both Gwynn and Galula articulated, and to recognize the "primacy of the Territorial Command" Galula had suggested.[44] Komer said: "Each U.S. corps senior adviser had a civilian deputy for CORDS and the province senior advisers were roughly half-and-half civilian and military."[45] At peak strength, military personnel comprised nearly 85 percent of personnel assigned to the CORDS program (6,500 military to 1,100 civilian).[46]

CORDS was the one program specifically tailored to the environment in Vietnam. No conventional organizations in the U.S. Government had the raison d'etre for or the political, military, and social capabilities to address counterinsurgency. The CORDS program filled the gap; it was a deliberate attempt to



DOD

As part of the village self-help program in Vietnam, civilian adviser Chuck Husick shows the people of a hamlet, located about 60 miles southwest of Saigon, how to construct a concrete span of a bridge with their own labor and materials.

break the mold of governmental form and function. In Komer's eyes it was the right thing to do at the time. He later wrote: "If institutional constraints . . . are such an impediment to adaptive response, then it would seem better to adapt the organizational structure to fit the need."[47]

The de facto subordination of pacification efforts to military control was unprecedented. However, Komer quickly recognized the value of its placement within MACV: "Since most available resources were in Vietnamese and U.S. military hands by 1967, since pacification first required the restoration of security in the countryside, and since what little GVN [Government of Vietnam] administration that existed outside Saigon had been military-dominated, it was also logical for the new pacification program to be put under military auspices."[48] Placement of the pacification programs under military command and control became necessary because the military controlled the practical resources.

Not surprisingly, the military was generally pleased with the arrangement. Westmoreland graciously accepted the "unprecedented grafting of a civilian/military hybrid onto his command" and supported Komer in his dealings with the MACV staff, even into strategic plans and policy matters where military advisers opposed civilian-led initiatives.[49] Westmoreland was both careful and politically savvy enough not to stand in the way of Komer's efforts. He did not want to be an obstacle to CORDS and thus be forced to face the prospect of its failure because of a lack of sufficient resources or support. His attitude was quickly replicated throughout the military and greatly enhanced CORDS' early effectiveness and the integration it aimed to achieve.

Initial Reservations

Many civilians, on the other hand, were initially less confident in the new command relationship. Ever fearful of being subsumed by military authority, civilian agencies had serious reservations about an arrangement that would reduce their autonomy.[50] Civilian reservations had some merit; thus far, the military had demonstrated little interest or enthusiasm for nationbuilding activities. Military operations to date had convinced civilians that they would be relegated to cleaning up the battlefield after poorly conceived search-and-destroy operations.

To address this initial uncertainty, Komer developed a clever compromise to the civilian-military cooperation problem and the reservations of civilian agencies. Understanding that a single manager was required, Komer established deputies for CORDS throughout the command with civilians as leads to reassure the civilian agencies.[51] This allied pacification and COIN operations under a single strategy and enabled the consolidation of authority for all aspects of pacification.

Unlike operations of the early 1960s, civilian programs could not be subordinated to military operations to seek out and destroy the enemy, thus realizing Gwynn's primacy of civil power and use of minimum force and Galula's primacy of the political over the military power. Similarly, the military penchant for unity of command could not be breached because programs and problems could be addressed in Vietnam instead of in Washington. The CORDS organization retained civilian attributes and control from within the military structure without being subsumed by it.[52] The structural "takeover" of the pacification effort by the U.S. military had little effect on civilian agencies' individual identities or

Providing resources, manpower, and organization to civilian entities enabled them to make progress by improving cooperation between civilian-military entities and combining the function of civilian policymaking with the military's overwhelming people, money, and resources.

any real control over civilian programs. Aggressive civilian leadership, bureaucratic skill, and presidential interest ensured that the disparate U.S. civilian foreign policy agencies could achieve a remarkable degree of harmony.[53]

Subordinating civilian capabilities to the military chain of command actually realized the principle of the primacy of civil power. This unique placement gave civilian entities greater influence than they ever had before because it provided resources they did not previously have. According to Komer: *"Paradoxically, this [partnership] resulted in even greater U.S. civilian influence over pacification than had ever existed before;* it also powerfully [reinforced] pacification's claim on U.S. and GVN military resources, which constituted the bulk of the inputs during 1967-1971 (emphasis in original)."[54] He goes on to say: "If you are ever going to get a program going, you are only going to be able to do it by stealing from the military. They have all the trucks, they have all the planes, they have all the people, they have all the money—and what they did not have locked up, they had a lien on."[55]

Providing resources, manpower, and organization to civilian entities enabled them to make progress by improving cooperation between civilian-military entities and combining the function of civilian policymaking with the military's overwhelming people, money, and resources. CORDS gave civilians direct access to resources like transportation, military engineers for horizontal construction (roads, for example) and vertical construction (such as buildings), and Department of Defense (DOD)-allocated funds, enabling firm and timely action and coordination of efforts.[56] Much of DOD's monetary contribution went to support Regional and Popular Forces, but the U.S. Department of State and the CIA no longer needed to support U.S. civilians assigned to GVN military development out of their relatively small budgets.[57] As evidence of the new cooperation the civilian-military interagency community achieved, the terms "other war" and "nonmilitary actions" fell out of the lexicon, another example of adherence to Gwynn's principle of the primacy of civil power.[58]

CORDS Contributions

Like the *National Strategy,* the CORDS approach addressed the political, security, and economic tracks. The CORDS program's principal contribution was how it complemented allied security operations.[59] Davis noted: "The key to CORDS [was clearly] protection [of the populace]."[60] By denying villages and hamlets to the Viet Cong, civil-military operations enabled the U.S. Army and Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) military forces to concentrate on North Vietnamese main forces. Also, CORDS fostered the creation of an organized People's Self-Defense Force composed of local inhabitants who could defend their villages and hamlets. Furthermore, CORDS created a grassroots political support mechanism for the government and, as a matter of routine, helped with community development.[61]

Regional Force units, equivalent to federalized U.S. Army National Guard forces, deployed throughout the country to deny sanctuary to North Vietnamese Army units or known VC sympathizers. Once Regional Force units forced the withdrawal of VC units, Regional and Popular Forces, advised by the CORDS program, maintained continual security while other CORDS advisory teams fostered development of villages and hamlets, thereby denying the insurgents a recruiting base.[62]

CORDS also affected political and economic progress, attempting to touch "the lives of the Vietnamese on every social level."[63] CORDS enhanced local protection and area security and fostered significant gains in nationbuilding. Other major CORDS achievements included the revival of a functioning rural administration; an economic revival to parallel USAID land reform programs; and health and human services functions, including medicine, education, and refugee care.[64] CORDS also facilitated the rebuilding of roads and waterways, which military forces had ignored during the early years of the war.[65]

The results of this multitracked approach appeared almost immediately. By 1969 CORDS had accelerated the pacification of the country, and by 1970,



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Black smoke covers areas of Saigon in 1968 as fire trucks rush to the scenes of fires set by the Viet Cong during the Tet holiday.

CORDS contributed to the departure of an estimated 300,000 foreign troops and the prevention of South Vietnamese capitulation even as the North increased its pressure at every attempt.[66]

Programs to destroy the VC infrastructure achieved great success. David R. Palmer said: "An enhanced security situation, along with increased peasant ownership of property and steadily increasing economic conditions, certainly constituted major dampeners to communist appeal, while plainly diminishing chances of success likewise abetted defections in insurgent ranks."[67] The VC insurgency that had battled the MACV during Tet in 1968 was virtually eliminated by 1971.[68]

CORDS' Success

The North Vietnamese's decision to rely on conventional means to conquer South Vietnam suggests that CORDS and the pacification program were successful. With the help of U.S. forces and air and logistics support, South Vietnamese forces were able to repulse the 1972 North Vietnamese ground offensives. Former CORDS adviser to Abrams and later director of the CIA William Colby said: "The attack of 1972 and the final attack of 1975 were pure North Vietnamese military attacks. There were no guerrillas in those operations because in the interim our program actually won the guerrilla war by winning the guerrilla to the government. They were all on the government side."[69]

Curiously, the Viet Cong shared Colby's viewpoint. A VC official, who out of frustration and dejection, surrendered to the CORDS-strengthened Regional and Popular Forces in 1971, reported that recruiting became nearly impossible in his region after the pacification program reached full operating capacity in 1969.[70] In his private notebook, another VC colonel wrote: "If we are winning while the enemy is being defeated, why have we encountered increasing difficulties? Last year we could attack United States forces. This year we find it difficult to attack even puppet forces. . . . We failed to win the support of the people and keep them from moving back to enemy controlled areas. . . . At present, the [South Vietnamese and U.S. forces are] weakened while we are exhausted."[71] By the early 1970s, adopting a pacification strategy had enabled the defeat of the Viet Cong insurgency.[72]

The interrelationship of U.S. civilian and military functions and South Vietnamese counterpart functions permitted a more efficient application of resources, enabling firm and timely action.[73] The interrelationship was far more cost-effective than other parts of the war effort. It entailed "only a modest fraction of the enormous costs of the Vietnam war" and was tailored directly to the needs of the environment.[74]

Observers suggest that CORDS was a successful program: "By the time Komer left [in the late 1960s], CORDS did seem to be pacifying the South Vietnamese countryside."[75] U.S. "Ambassador [to South Vietnam] Ellsworth Bunker [insisted] that this essential and integral part of the war [the counterinsurgency campaign] had been won by 1971."[76] Evidence suggests that CORDS worked better than even its advocates expected because of two things. First, CORDS ensured unity of effort among both

military and civilian entities because it unified command. Second, it adhered to both Gwynn's and Galula's principles for counterinsurgent warfare.

Criticism of the CORDS program is generally founded on its limited duration and scope. Komer attributes its failure to have greater effect on the overall Vietnam situation to too little, too late.[77] For example, the CORDS program could not affect the capabilities of regular forces the North Vietnamese defeated in 1975. According to Komer: "Even after 1967, pacification remained a small tail to the very large conventional military dog. It was never tried on a large enough scale until too late. . . ."[78]

The scope of the CORDS program did not allow it to address the ineffectiveness of the South Vietnamese Government. Focused on defeating the VC insurgency, CORDS did not possess the personnel, organization, or structure to enhance the legitimacy and thus the popularity of the South Vietnamese government. A former CORDS analyst stated: "CORDS was a great program and a good model—with one caveat. Under the Hamlet Evaluation System, we collected lots of data indicating the security of the regions and provinces but nowhere did we find any evidence or indication of popular support of the [national-level] government."[79] This perspective implies that future CORDS-like approaches should include governmental legitimacy as an objective. This coincides with Komer's assessment of the program: "Perhaps the most important single reason why the U.S. achieved so little for so long was that it could not sufficiently revamp, or adequately substitute for, a South Vietnamese leadership, administration, and armed forces inadequate to the task."[80]

Lessons for Iraq

The formation of CORDS enabled unity of effort among the civilian and military entities in Vietnam and provides a model for achieving unity of effort in Iraq. Commenting on command and control in Vietnam, Major General George S. Eckhardt stated that a prerequisite for command and control "will be unity of command, to ensure both tight control of the overall U.S. effort by American political authorities and effectiveness of military and advisory activities."[81] He recognized the value of this approach in counterinsurgent warfare: "An organization like CORDS should be established as soon as possible."[82] He explicitly stated that civil affairs, counterinsurgency, and pacification could not be adequately coordinated without doing so.

The Nation is once again attempting to achieve unity of effort in its counterinsurgent campaign in Iraq. Therefore, MNF-I should consider adopting a CORDS-like approach to ensure integrated action to achieve victory in Iraq. In addition to adhering to time-tested principles of counterinsurgent warfare and addressing the lack of unity of effort, this approach would also provide an organizational model to implement the *National Strategy,* which articulates three broad tracks: political, security, and economic.

The objective of the political track is "to help the Iraqi people forge a broadly supported national compact for democratic government, thereby isolating enemy elements from the broader public."[83] Along the political track, the government aims to isolate hardened enemy elements, engage those outside the political process, and build stable, pluralistic, and effective national institutions.

The security track's objective is to develop "the Iraqis' capacity to secure their country while carrying out a campaign to defeat the terrorists and neutralize the insurgency."[84] Three associated actions are clearing areas of enemy control, holding areas freed from enemy control, and building Iraqi Security Forces.

The economic track's objective is to provide assistance to "the Iraqi government in establishing the foundations for a sound economy with the capacity to deliver essential services."[85] The *National Strategy* aims to restore Iraq's neglected infrastructure, reform Iraq's economy, and build the capacity of Iraqi institutions.

As indicated, a program similar to the CORDS program, which principally affected security of rural areas, could enable the interagency community in Iraq to achieve security and enhance already existing institutions and commands such as the Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq (MNSTC-I). Clearing, holding, and building, as articulated in the *National Strategy,* requires coordinated action from civilian and military entities. Adopting a CORDS-like approach would also enable MNF-I to resolve interagency issues in-theater instead of requiring resolution at the national level.

"[CORDS] was a better way then, but it came too late for the American people, whatever its successes on the ground. We cannot afford to stumble again before some new challenge." —William Colby

The CORDS program also affected economic progress. By reviving rural administrations, implementing land reform, and rebuilding public infrastructure, the CORDS program enhanced the rural populace's economic well-being. Like the *National Strategy's* security track, the economic track also requires coordinated civilian-military action. Military forces are not well-suited to reforming Iraq's economy or building the capacity of Iraqi institutions, but the military possesses resources that can aid in restoring Iraq's infrastructure. A CORDS-like approach adopted by the MNF–I would ensure the primacy of civil power, firm and timely action, and the coordination of civil-military actions along the economic track.

Last, the CORDS program enhanced political progress, although only in rural areas. The scope of a CORDS-like approach in Iraq would need to be expanded to effect political progress and contribute to the appropriate isolation, engagement, and building of Iraqi entities. The promising voter turnout in recent Iraqi elections indicates that this track is well along toward the political benchmarks the *National Strategy* describes; a CORDS-like approach could further that progress along with progress in the other two tracks. As the Coalition eventually pacifies the four remaining noncompliant provinces in Iraq, a future CORDS-like organization should focus on national-level governmental legitimacy so Iraqi political structures can maintain the security that military, police, and border control forces have established.

Implementing a CORDS-like approach in Iraq, however, might not directly mirror the approach adapted to Vietnam. For example, subordinate CORDs-like organizations in Iraq must reflect the nature of MNF-I's major subordinate commands because one command—the Multi-National Corps-Iraq—controls the majority of the spatial battlespace as compared to MACV's four subordinate corps, each of which controlled a quarter of Vietnam. Nevertheless, subordinate CORDS-like organizations in functional commands like MNSTC-I, which require the capabilities of civilian judicial and border control institutions, will also benefit from the unity of effort achieved by adopting a CORDS-like approach.

Implementing this approach in Iraq also requires a historical perspective of two other topics. First, personal contributions by key figures and personnel are paramount.[86] Accordingly, implementing such a program in Iraq will require identifying and appointing the right people to the program. Second, recognizing that CORDS required a presidential decision for implementation is important. As a "field experiment directly tailored to the need," CORDS had little legislative authority in terms of appropriations or authorizations.[87] Adopting this approach requires decision by the appropriate entity—either executive or legislative—and the provision of accurate public information to decisionmakers and the American people.

The *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* is intended to help "the Iraqi people defeat the terrorists and build an inclusive democratic state."[88] These two aims also enhance our own national security, and they will influence the Middle East and the global community. To achieve the victorious conditions the *National Strategy* describes, the MNF-I and the U.S. Government should consider adopting a CORDS-like approach to achieve unity of effort. As William Colby, the program's second director said: "[CORDS] was a better way then, but it came too late for the American people, whatever its successes on the ground. We cannot afford to stumble again before some new challenge."[89] Iraq is just that challenge. ***MR***

NOTES

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what I regard as an extremely important problem area. The 'other war'—it was all one war, as [General Creighton] Abrams used to say, but it was being run by all sorts of different agencies. There was no unified management of the whole war." Frantz asked: "You had a dozen or more quarterbacks, huh?" Komer said: "Exactly. And that made it very difficult. The only guy fully in charge was the President, and that is not the optimum way to do things" (interview AC 94-2, transcript, Oral History Collection, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin, Texas, 26-7).

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23. Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents Since 1750* (London: Routledge, Taylor, and Francis Group, 2001).

24. Blaufarb, 117.

25. Robert W. Komer, *Bureaucracy at War: U.S. Performance in Vietnam* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 169.

26. Blaufarb, 233.

27. Ibid.

28. The Pentagon Papers is the term used for a study by the U.S. Department of Defense, titled *United States Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967,* which details the history of political and military involvement in Vietnam. The study was leaked to the *New York Times,* and all available information was eventually published under the title *The Pentagon Papers: The Defense Department History of United States Decisionmaking on Vietnam* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1971).

29. Blaufarb, 233.

30. Ibid.

31. Nagl, 165.

32. Thomas W. Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support* (Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1982), 57.

33. Blaufarb, 234.

34. Records of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), part 3, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 11.

35. William E. Colby, *Lost Victory: A Firsthand Account of America's Sixteen-Year Involvement in Vietnam* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989), 206.

36. Blaufarb, 237.

37. Robert W. Komer, "Clear, Hold, and Rebuild," *Army* (May 1970): 19.

38. Blaufarb, 238.

39. Nagl, 165.

40. Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988), 656.

41. Scoville, 58.

42. Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 217; Willard S. Thompson and Donaldson D. Frizzell, *The Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1977), 214.

43. Blaufarb, 240.

44. Gwynn, Galula.

45. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: Institutional Constraints on U.S.-GVN Performance in Vietnam* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, R-967-ARPA, 1972), 115.

46. Krepinevich, 218.

47. Komer, *Bureaucracy at War*, 168.

48. Thompson, 214-15.

49. Blaufarb, 240.

50. Colby, 207.

51. Ibid.

52. Blaufarb, 239.

53. Krepinevich, 217.

54. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 114.

55. Nagl, 165.

56. For the military, the formation of CORDS was innovative. U.S. Army commanders, who in 1965 would have organized for combat with military forces to the exclusion of all else, began to cross-assign forces to the U.S. Department of State, USAID, CIA, and the U.S. Information Service (USIS) beginning in June 1967 with the establishment of CORDS. (See James K. McCollum, "CORDS: Matrix for Peace in Vietnam," *Army* [July 1982]: 49.) Similarly, military commanders received cross-assignment of civilian agency personnel for conducting their operations, which was a sharp contrast to military-only search-and-destroy operations like those conducted by the 1st Cavalry Division and the 25th Infantry Division in 1966 and 1967. (See Krepinevich, 222-23.)

57. Scoville, 80-81.

58. Ibid., 80.

59. Headquarters, Military Assistance Command Vietnam, "Speaker Notes," Command Briefing, March 1972, Records of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam, part 1, microfilm, reel 2, frames 578-79.

60. Davis, 34.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Hunt and Schultz, 57.

65. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 116.

66. Palmer, 285.

67. Ibid., 287.

68. Ibid.

69. Paul Seidenmann, "Pacification: A Winning Combination that Came too Late?" *Armed Forces Journal International* 114 (January 1977): 25.

70. Palmer, 286-87.

71. Ibid., 288.

72. Note that for all of its success, CORDS could not contribute to the defeat of the main North Vietnamese invasion force. In 1982, McCollum wrote: "CORDS defeated the insurgency in Vietnam, but it could not defeat the main-force invasion. Since nations in the Western Hemisphere are not likely to be threatened by outside invasion, the defeat of the insurgency should therefore be the primary concern. In subsequent attempts at pacification in any nation threatened by insurgency, it seems essential that a matrix organization [such as CORDS] be set up to ensure the local efforts are properly directed and coordinated" (53). Establishing the Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq appears to have addressed this deficiency.

73. Headquarters, MACV, frame 579.

74. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, 118.

75. Sheehan, 731.

76. Bruce Palmer, *The 25 Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 116.

77. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*.

78. Komer, quoted in Palmer, 164.

79. Ambassador David Passage, interview by author, 18 January 2006.

80. Komer, *Bureaucracy at War*, 160.

81. George S. Eckhardt, *Vietnam Studies: Command and Control, 1950-1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1974), 86.

82. Ibid.

83. *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

86. Key figures and personnel included Robert W. Komer; General Creighton Abrams, General William Westmoreland's successor as COMUSMACV; Ellsworth Bunker, U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam; William Colby, Komer's successor; and the personnel of the CORDS organization.

87. Komer, *Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*.

88. *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*.

89. Colby, 373.

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Massing Effects in the Information Domain

A Case Study in Aggressive Information Operations

Lieutenant General Thomas F. Metz, U.S. Army, with Lieutenant Colonel Mark W. Garrett, U.S. Army; Lieutenant Colonel James E. Hutton, U.S. Army; and Lieutenant Colonel Timothy W. Bush, U.S. Army

. . . I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma.[1]

—Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, 9 July 2005

If I were grading I would say we probably deserve a "D" or a "D-plus" as a country as to how well we're doing in the battle of ideas that's taking place in the world today.[2]

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 27 March 2006

Lieutenant General Thomas F. Metz is the Deputy Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command. He commanded III Corps from February 2003 to May 2006, including 13 months in Operation Iraqi Freedom. From January to May 2004, he served as the Deputy Commanding General, Coalition Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7), and from May 2004 to February 2005 commanded the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I). He has commanded at every echelon, from company to corps, in the continental United States (CONUS) and multiple theaters overseas.

IN 1995, the Department of the Army, Forces Command, and the Training and Doctrine Command began a joint venture called Force XXI, the focus of which was to understand how information-age technology could improve the U.S. Army's warfighting capabilities. While many experiments with information technology and theory were conducted across the Army, the Task Force XXI (TFXXI) and Division XXI Advanced Warfighting Experiments

(AWE) were the capstone events of this venture. Over 70 initiatives were reviewed in the TFXXI AWE, which culminated at Fort Irwin, California, in March 1997 with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's National Training Center rotation.

At the heart of this experiment was near real-time location knowledge of friendly units down to individual vehicles and in some cases, individual Soldiers. The experiment proved that "Where I am and where my buddies are" is powerful information for combat leaders. Leaders at all echelons became convinced that information-age technology would help our Soldiers, leaders, and formations become much more capable.

Post-AWE, the Army decided to reduce its combat power in combat and combat support formations by a quarter to afford the coming technology. However, our Army has not fully exploited the available technology, especially in the domain of information and knowledge management operations.

Public sentiment is everything. With it, nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed.

—President Abraham Lincoln

Information Operations (IO) in the AWE

After graduating from the U.S. Army War College and serving as a division G3, brigade commander, and division chief of staff, I was assigned to the Training and Doctrine Command with duty at Fort Hood in the 4th Infantry Division to support the Force XXI Joint Venture. Although I had no background in information technology or acquisition experience, I was involved with the preparation, execution, and after action reviews of the TFXXI AWE and preparation for the Division XXI AWE. In the summer of 1997, I was assigned as assistant division commander for support of the 4th Infantry Division. As I took on this assignment, I was optimistic that the results of the Division XXI AWE would support what we had learned with the TFXXI AWE, and that our Army would continue to aggressively pursue applying information-age technology to improve our warfighting capabilities. Although I lacked a technical background in information technology, I was confident that we were only beginning to understand the potential improvements to warfighting. I believed that funding, developing, understanding, and maturing these capabilities were certainly going to be challenging. I was excited about their prospects. But I was not prepared for the management of information operations (IO).

Shortly before the Division XXI AWE, a decision was made to add an objective to the experiment, focusing attention on IO. Because the simulation that would drive the Division XXI AWE was not designed to train this new aspect of warfighting, a "Green Cell" was established that would inject information operations events. Major General William S. Wallace, commanding general of the 4th Infantry Division at that time, gave me the task to manage this new IO challenge.

I wasted no time gathering all I could find on the subject of IO and began to study it. At this stage of our preparations, our standard operating procedures, battle rhythm, and command post drills were well established. Adding IO at this late date seemed to be a good idea added too late. Nevertheless, in the short time available, I learned as much as I could about the five disciplines which make up our doctrinal IO: psychological operations (PSYOP), deception, operational security (OPSEC), electronic warfare (EW), and computer network operations (CNO).

Lieutenant Colonel Mark W. Garrett is the Information Operations Chief, III Corps and Fort Hood. He received a B.S. from Texas Tech University and an M.S. in Information Operations from the Naval Postgraduate School. LTC Garrett has served in a variety of command and staff positions in CONUS, Germany, the Balkans, and the Middle East.

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Lieutenant Colonel Timothy W. Bush is the Executive Officer to the Commanding General, III Corps and Fort Hood. He received a B.S. from Bowling Green State University and an M.A. from the University of Cincinnati. He has served in a variety of command and staff positions in CONUS, Iraq, Korea, and Panama.

IO's Importance in Iraq

Although I don't think we enhanced the AWE by adding IO, the opportunity to focus on this new doctrine did pay dividends 6 years later when, as the commanding general of III Corps, I found myself preparing the Corps headquarters to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Although IO doctrine had not changed over those 6 years, its importance to a successful campaign in Iraq and to the Global War on Terrorism was crystal clear to many in and out of uniform.

On 1 February 2004, III Corps relieved V Corps. Lieutenant General Ric Sanchez remained the commander of Combined Joint Task Force-7, and I became his deputy. Over the next 13 months, 5 as Sanchez's deputy and 8 as the commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I), my staff, our subordinate units, and I gained a very healthy respect for IO and knowledge and perception management, primarily because our enemy was better than we were in operating in the information domain, certainly in perception management. Although little has formally changed in our IO doctrine, many leaders, both friend and foe, understand its awesome power. So why is it that we can't seem to be the best at IO as we are in so many other areas? Where is our initiative? Where is our offensive spirit?

In April 2006, with the help of the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), III Corps conducted a constructive simulation to train the headquarters of the 1st Cavalry Division as it prepared for its potential return to Iraq. As the exercise director of this Warfighter, I was disappointed at what little progress we have made in IO. The capabilities to move information not only around the battlefield but also around the world have grown exponentially, IO's importance grows daily, and our enemy, who recognizes that victory can be secured in this domain alone, has seized the opportunity to be the best at operating in the information domain.

The Green Cell had matured over the 8 years since the Division XXI AWE, and, although its formal objective for 1st Cav's BCTP Warfighter was to drive IO, it spent little time in the 5 disciplines of our doctrinal IO. It did, however, spend very important time in helping Division Headquarters prepare for the perception of a war it might face in Iraq—regretfully by being reactive instead of proactive.



DOD

MNC-I and Iraqi government officials discuss security plans associated with the January 2005 elections.

I am absolutely convinced that we must approach IO in a different way and turn it from a passive warfighting discipline to a very active one. We must learn to employ aggressive IO. We cannot leave this domain for the enemy; we must fight him on this battlefield and defeat him there just as we've proven we can on conventional battlefields.

The Current Information Situation

In an open letter to President George W. Bush published in the January 2006 issue of the *Armed Forces Journal*, Joseph Collins, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations in Bush's administration, predicted that "[i]f our strategic communications on Iraq don't improve, the strategy for victory will fail and disastrous consequences will follow."[3] We are not consistently achieving synergy and mass in our strategic communications (consisting of IO, public affairs [PA], public diplomacy, and military diplomacy) from the strategic to the tactical level, but blaming the IO component for the overall situation is too convenient and too narrow. The perception that IO should shoulder the blame is based on expectations that are beyond the doctrinal charter or operational capabilities of IO as currently resourced. The collective belief is that we lack the necessary skills, resources, and guidance to synchronize IO in order to achieve tangible effects on the battlefield.

Further complicating our efforts in the information domain is the fact that we are facing an adaptive,



DOD

U.S. Marines of Weapons Platoon, Company E, 2d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, dig in while they wait to go in and patrol the city of Fallujah, Iraq, during Operation Vigilant Resolve.

relentless, and technologically savvy foe who recognizes that the global information network is his most effective tool for attacking what he perceives to be our center of gravity: public opinion, both domestic and international. And the truth of the matter is that our enemy is better at integrating information-based operations, primarily through mass media, into his operations than we are. In some respects, we seem tied to our legacy doctrine and less than completely resolved to cope with the benefits and challenges of information globalization. We are too wedded to procedures that are anchored in the Cold War-Industrial Age.

Nevertheless, there appears to be an emerging recognition among warfighters that a broader and more aggressive, comprehensive, and holistic approach to IO—an approach that recognizes the challenges of the global information environment and seamlessly integrates the functions of traditional IO and PA—is required to succeed on the information-age battlefield. Furthermore, a clear need exists for strategic and operational commanders to become as aggressive and as offensive-minded with information operations as they have always been with other elements of combat power and warfighting functions—movement and maneuver, fire support, intelligence, and so on. Given the follow-on successes of XVIII Airborne Corps and the current success of V Corps, we are clearly making progress, but we still have much to do to ingrain these advances into the institutional structure.

Examples abound where we have failed to mass effects and leverage all of the available tools in the information domain; likewise, we have examples where we have effectively bridged the gap between IO and PA to achieve integrated full-spectrum effects. Comparing Operation Vigilant Resolve and Operation Al-Fajr clearly illustrates the power of an aggressive, holistic approach to integrating IO into the battle plan. A careful study of IO in support of Operation Al-Fajr suggests three imperatives for the future of full-spectrum operations:

- The successful massing of information effects requires the commander to clearly articulate his intent for the integration of all the available elements of operations in the information domain into the battle plan.
- The successful massing of information effects requires precise and disciplined execution from shaping operations through exploitation.
- Commanders at all echelons must, at present, serve as the bridge across the doctrinal gap between IO and PA in order to synchronize efforts in the information domain. Only in this way will the intended effect be achieved.

Information Power

In April 2004, in response to the murder and desecration of Blackwater contractors in Fallujah, Coalition forces led by the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) launched Operation Vigilant Resolve, an assault to restore control of Fallujah. In spite of the superior combat power of I MEF—in leadership, movement and maneuver, and fire support—the operation failed because operations in the information domain were not integrated into the battle plan; in effect, we failed to give the warfighter-on-the-ground the best opportunity to achieve a decisive victory. Steps to prepare the information battlefield, including engaging numerous and varied Iraqi leaders, removing enemy information centers, and rapidly disseminating information from the battlefield to worldwide media were not woven into the plan.

U.S. forces unilaterally halted combat operations after a few days due to lack of support from the

Interim Iraqi Government and international pressures amid media focus on unsubstantiated enemy reports of collateral damage and excessive force. Marines won virtually every combat engagement throughout the battle and did so within the established rules of engagement. The missing element was an overall integrated information component to gain widespread support of significant influencers and to prepare key publics for the realities of the battle plan. Without such advance support, the finest combat plan executed by competent and brave Soldiers and Marines proved limited in effectiveness. The insurgent forces established links with regional and global media outlets that had agendas of their own. Our failure to mass effects in the global information sphere proved decisive on the battleground in Fallujah.[4]

Raising the IO Threshold

As the summer of 2004 passed and the Fallujah brigade experiment failed, it became imperative that the city's festering insurgent safe haven had to be removed. Planning for Operation Al-Fajr, an assault to decisively clear Fallujah of insurgent activity, was initiated. A key task for MNC-I planners was to ensure that the information defeat of Vigilant Resolve was not repeated in Operation Al-Fajr. Accordingly, we focused our planning to avoid replication of Vigilant Resolve and to prevent the worldwide media clamor and international public condemnation that would negatively impact operations.

To articulate a clear intent in the information domain, we developed what we called "the IO threshold." Its purpose was to enable the MNC-I commander to visualize a point at which enemy information-based operations (aimed at international, regional, and local media coverage) began to undermine the Coalition forces' ability to conduct unconstrained combat operations. As Operation Vigilant Resolve proved, the enemy understands the idea of an IO threshold. He is capable of effectively using the global media to impede our operations by creating the perception that our combat operations are indiscriminate, disproportionate, and in violation of the rules of war.

Using the commander's intent for massed effects in the information domain as expressed in terms of the IO threshold, we illustrated to our subordinate commanders that kinetic shaping operations had to be conducted underneath the IO threshold; that is, we couldn't remove a city block to prepare the battlefield because such an act could create negative effects in the information domain. Any resulting negative international and local media coverage could impair the conduct of the overall campaign, as had happened during Operation Vigilant Resolve.

We used the same concept to brief the operation to Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) commander General George Casey and to convince him that when I MEF executed the decisive operation, crossing the IO threshold could not distract us from our tactical and operational objectives. Once across the threshold, we planned for success to be achieved in days and hours.

Using this intent as a guideline, MNF-I, MNC-I, and Multi-National Force-West (MNF-W) developed courses of action to mass effects in the information domain, thereby raising the IO threshold and creating additional "maneuver" room for combat operations in Fallujah. We deliberately countered enemy information campaigning, planned and executed IO shaping operations, and executed carefully planned senior leader engagements, military diplomacy, and public diplomacy activities. As a result of these synchronized, integrated, and complementary actions, we were able to mass information effects and build a strong base of support for combat operations in advance of the operation; in other words, we were able to raise the IO



DOD

Marines from Charlie Company, 3d Battalion, Regimental Combat Team 7, provide security while a mortar team fires on enemy positions during Operation Al-Fajr, 12 November 2004.



DOD

FOX News Reporter Geraldo Rivera interviews LTG Thomas Metz in Baghdad in 2004. LTC Dan Baggio, III Corps PAO, monitors the interview.

IN THE WEEKS leading up to the historic January 2005 elections in Iraq, we in the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) Public Affairs Office had developed a comprehensive plan to publicize important aspects of pre-election preparations together with whatever events might unfold during that historically important day. Part of that plan included having obtained clearance to have Fox News reporter Geraldo Rivera cover events from the command's Joint Operations Center in Baghdad. During the preparation phase of this plan, we arranged for Rivera to visit several units "outside the wire," including accompanying mounted and dismounted patrols in Mosul. This preparation phase culminated with us dropping him off in Tikrit two days prior to the election for a final sensing of the Iraqi population.

However, on the evening just prior to the election, the MNC-I chief of staff called me in to inform me that higher headquarters had made a last-minute decision not to permit interviews with MNC-I forces on election day. This was a stunning development owing to the many commitments we had made to the media. Fortunately, we were able to negotiate a modification to the guidance that permitted interviews with battalion and lower level elements. However, we were unable to clear media access for interviews at HQ MNC-I. This placed us in a very difficult position with Rivera, potentially putting him and his network in a bad position at virtually the last minute and compromising our ability to show an immensely important dimension of what we believed was going to be a great and vitally needed story.

Both concerns weighed heavily on me as we scrambled to find alternatives. I viewed the situation as a matter of honor, believing that the broken commitment could easily be perceived as a betrayal of trust. The anxiety apparently showed on my face as I went to the helipad the next day to meet Rivera coming from Tikrit. As Rivera saw me walk towards him, he asked me what was wrong. I paused, and then said: "Geraldo I've got some bad news."

His chin dropped, his face became tensely serious, and his eyes narrowed with concern. He said: "What's wrong—what happened?"

"Well," I began, "though I know that we committed to support your coverage of the election from here, for reasons I am not at liberty to explain, we have to cancel your access to the MNC-I operations center."

At that point, his eyes opened, his face regained its composure, and he let out a gasp of relief. He then grabbed my head and, with his hand behind my neck, placed his forehead on my forehead—skin to skin—and said: "Is that all?" Continuing, he said, "Man, you had me worried. I thought you were going to tell me another helicopter with troops was shot down or something like that—Man, am I relieved." After briefly discussing our efforts to find alternative ways to cover the election, he then said, "Don't sweat it—this is just bureaucratic B.S. —we'll figure something out."

As it turned out, the 1st Cavalry Division's public affairs officer, LTC James Hutton, was able to set up a visually rich opportunity at a police station in Saba Al Boor, supported by the 256th Enhanced Separate Brigade of the Louisiana National Guard. Ironically, the change of venue resulted in some of the most dramatic and famous coverage of election day. Rivera reported from polling stations and featured the work of the Soldiers of the 256th, who demonstrated the great effort that had gone into making the election a resounding success.

Subsequently, Rivera continued to provide some of the most consistently comprehensive, informed, and accurate reporting that we saw during III Corps' entire tour in Iraq.

Editor's note: The above anecdote was solicited by the Editor, *Military Review,* from the Public Affairs Officer, COL Dan Baggio, who served under LTG Metz in Iraq during the period encompassing the first Iraqi election.

threshold by preparing key influencers and agencies for the impending operation.

This offensive mindset and aggressive massing of effects resulted in two additional complementary effects: first, MNC-I placed additional pressure on the enemy throughout Iraq through the elimination of widespread support for his activities; second, decisionmakers were prepared for the pending operation and given the necessary information to prepare their constituencies for the operation.

IO in Operation Al-Fajr

As with other operations, massing effects in the information domain requires disciplined execution by leaders, Soldiers, and staffs at all echelons. In Operation Al-Fajr, this meant precise, painstaking execution of all the core elements of traditional IO as well as other elements of combat power that had information implications. Doctrinal IO—PSYOP, deception, OPSEC, EW, and CNO—played a significant role in our shaping operations. Fallujah became a textbook case for the coordination and use of the core elements of IO capabilities in support of the tactical fight.



DOD

Arab news reporters conduct an on site interview with MAJ M.N. Hawkins, 4th Civil Affairs Group, in front of the Dr. Talib Al-Janabi Hospital. The hospital was one stop on the 2 December 2004 media tour around Fallujah during Operation Al-Fajr.

Deception and OPSEC. MNF-I, MNC-I, and MNF-W used deception and OPSEC to conceal our buildup of forces north of Fallujah. We attempted to focus the enemy's attention on the south by constant and aggressive patrolling and feints from the south while simultaneously executing precision strikes in the southern parts of the city. Movement by the British Black Watch Battle Group and employment of a very maneuverable brigade combat team in a dynamic cordon also aided in this effort.

PSYOP. MNC-I conducted very effective PSYOP encouraging noncombatants to leave the city and persuading insurgents to surrender. These doctrinal psychological operations might have been the most important aspect of our operations to defeat the enemy in Fallujah, as some estimates showed that 90 percent of the noncombatants departed the city.

Electronic warfare. MNC-I and MNF-W also controlled the enemy's communications capabilities by restricting his access to select communications and not only denying the enemy a means to communicate but also directing him to a means that we could monitor.

Computer network operations. Although we cannot discuss operations in this realm here, we must not allow the enemy to win the battle in cyberspace.

The massing of information effects in Al-Fajr was also apparent in the incorporation of information considerations into the application of other elements of combat power. The seizure of the Fallujah hospital by Iraqi commandos during the early stages of the battle provides an excellent example of the integration of full-spectrum planning, rehearsing, and execution of IO in support of overall campaign objectives. During the military decision-making process, MNF-W identified a piece of key IO terrain that it believed had to be secured early in the operation to begin eliminating the enemy's ability to disseminate misinformation and propaganda. The Fallujah hospital had long been used as a propaganda organ by insurgent forces and had been one of the most significant sources of enemy information during Operation Vigilant Resolve. By securing this key IO terrain, MNF-W could significantly disrupt the enemy's access point to disseminate information.



DOD

An Iraqi soldier and an M1A1 Abrams tank provide security for Marine ground forces during Operation Al-Fajr, 11 December 2004.

The Iraqi 36th Commando Battalion captured the Fallujah hospital in the first major combat operation of Al-Fajr. Documented by CBS reporter Kirk Spitzer, this operation established Coalition control of the enemy propaganda platform while building the legitimacy of the Iraqi Security Forces as well as the Interim Iraqi Government. Although this small attack garnered only a footnote in history, it was decisive to winning the IO battle: Without this portal, the enemy had a much weaker voice.

Bridging the IO-PA firewall. In order to mass effects in the information domain and effectively integrate IO into the battle plan, the warfighter must find a way to bridge the doctrinal firewall separating IO and PA without violating the rules governing both. This firewall is essential to ensuring PSYOP, Deception Operations, EW, and CNO do not migrate into PA and discredit the PA effort. We need to be proud of our values and be prepared to underwrite the risk that we will expose too much in the service of transparency; this is counterbalanced with an implicit trust that our values and the truth will eventually prevail. Truth and transparency are strengths and not hindrances. Truth and transparency in PA are the military's legal obligation, and they also reinforce the effectiveness of our IO by providing a trusted source of information to domestic and international media. Providing information is only effective in the long run if the information is truthful and squares with the realities faced by its recipients.

The challenge is getting the truth out first, in an appealing package, before the enemy does. Timing is critical. Furthermore, we must recognize that the current global media gravitates toward information that is packaged for ease of dissemination and consumption; the media will favor a timely, complete story. As an aside, the enemy knows this, but he is not encumbered by the truth or regulations, which makes our challenge that much harder.

As our main force entered Fallujah from the north (which the enemy did not expect until 2,000-pound precision weapons breached the railway berm and the main attack launched), they did so with guidance—

- To be prepared to execute actions specifically tailored to capture photographic documentation of insurgent activities (figure 1).
- To pass that information quickly up the chain to MNC-I, which would then turn that documentation into products that could be disseminated by the Iraqi Government and our PA elements.

Specific guidance was handed down to key elements to develop bite-sized vignettes with graphics and clear storylines.[5] An example of massing effects, this small component of the battle enabled the Coalition to get its story out first and thereby dominate the information domain. Figure 2 is an example of this type of product: MNC-I used information from combat forces to construct a document that illustrated insurgent atrocities discovered in Fallujah. To borrow a football analogy, MNC-I flooded the zone with images and stories that the media could—and did—use.

The PAO and other staff sections can use information gathered from external sources. For example, the 1st Cavalry Division, operating as Task Force Baghdad, used information gained from multiple sources to create a product for public distribution. On the eve of the January 2005 election, insurgents attacked the U.S. Embassy with rockets and killed embassy personnel. Media outlets fixated on the event. Some media coverage initially focused on the Coalition's inability to stop the insurgents even in the most secure areas. Even though the truth of

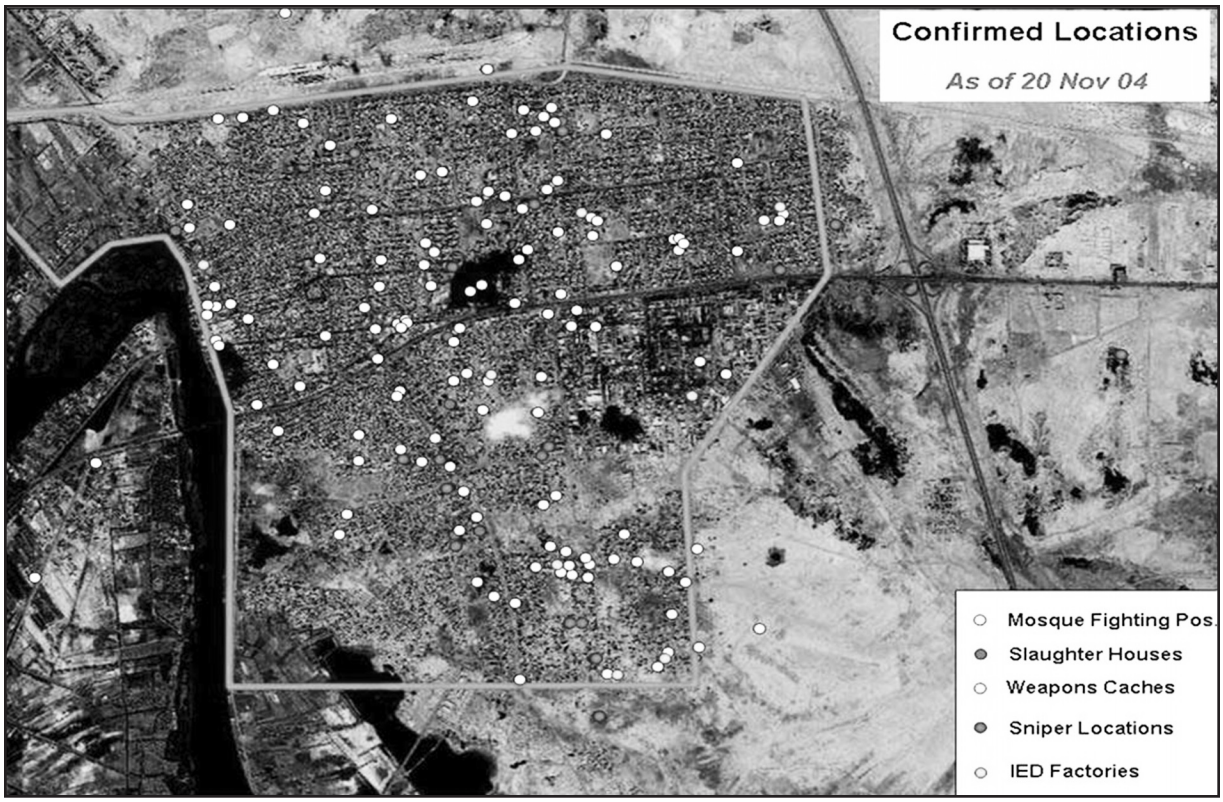


Figure 1. Operation Al-Fajr—Fallujah, insurgent activities map.

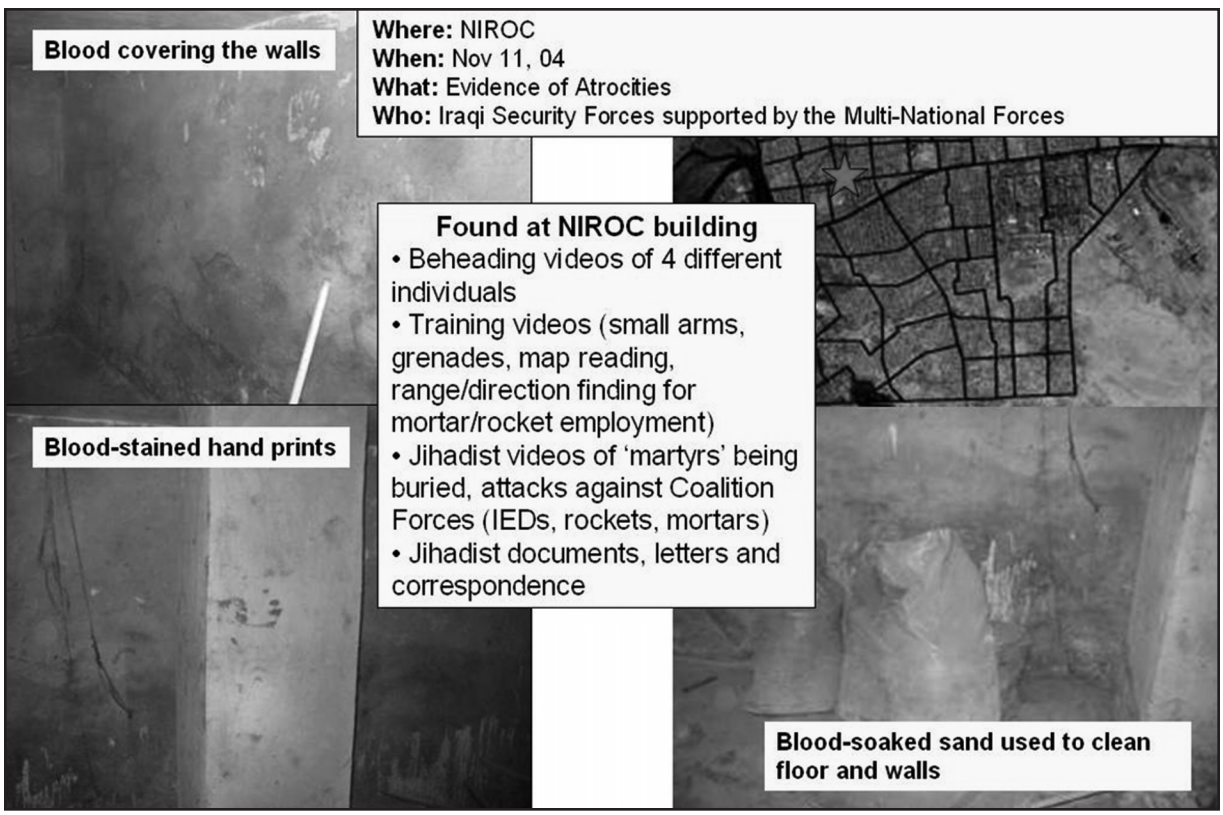


Figure 2. Fallujah vignette #3, National Islamic Resistance Operational Center (NIROC) atrocities.

the matter was that the insurgents had no targeting capability and had merely struck the building through luck, the storyline still had resonance.

What the insurgents did not know was that the image of the rocket-firing was captured by an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). Through the UAV, analysts saw the group assemble and fire the weapon, and then tracked their movement. Coalition forces moved to a house where the insurgents reassembled following the firing and detained most of those who had participated.



DOD

Iraqi soldiers help carry a baby through a checkpoint during the January 2005 elections.

The Division simultaneously recorded the event, and the recording was quickly taken to the public affairs officer and edited for delivery to media. The product showed the rocket firing, the attempted escape from the area by the insurgents, and their capture. Using the relatively new capability for posting such items to a publicly accessible webpage via the Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS), the Division alerted the media to its availability.[6] Media outlets downloaded the product, and the storyline in the media shifted from the Coalition's inability to stop insurgent activity to how successful the Coalition was in detaining the insurgents.

Was this PA or IO? Developing a packaged product for dissemination might appear more like IO than PA, but it was clearly a PA action to utilize the DVIDS' capability. No media outlet could have collected this information independently. The PAO is charged by the commander to determine how best to provide information about the conduct of operations within the construct of doctrine and law. Surely, close cooperation with IO officers fits within doctrinal and legal parameters. Of course, such work should be done in conjunction with standard embedding of reporters and the provision of senior-leader access to the media as often as possible. First-hand reporting by reporters from commercial outlets is indispensable to commanders seeking transparency; in fact, embedded reporters were critically important in the media coverage of Operation Al-Fajr: Over 80 embedded reporters worked with MNF-W during combat operations.

In reality, these two vignettes (Al-Fajr and the embassy attack) are clear examples of how we can mass effects in the information domain by leveraging all available tools. The 1st Cav PAO decided to use available technology to deliver a clearer public message about the course of events. Why shouldn't we use our situational awareness technology and network-centric warfare to give us an asymmetric advantage over our enemies? In Fallujah, when enemy forces used a mosque, a minaret, or some other protected site as a sniper position, the rules of engagement rightfully—and legally—enabled our Soldiers and leaders to engage with lethal force. We must have the agility to use our technological advantage, too, so that as a main gun round moves downrange to destroy a sniper position, simultaneously the digital image of the sniper violating the rules of war, plus the necessary information to create the packaged product, can be transmitted for dissemination to the news media.

Implications for the Future

The big issue in our world is whether our doctrine and our policy are up to date. We owe more thinking to the combatant commanders. What are the things that should be balanced when you look at information and communications issues?[7]

—Lawrence Di Rita

MNF-I, MNC-I and MNF-W were successful in massing effects in the information domain in Operation Al-Fajr for three reasons: We articulated an achievable end-state; we took pains to integrate, synchronize, and execute with discipline all of the elements of combat power (leadership, movement and maneuver, intelligence) and all of the tools

available in the information domain (traditional IO, PA, engagement, and political actions); and we were able to effectively bridge the firewall between IO and PA to achieve our desired end-state without violating the rules of either discipline.

This integration has broader implications. We must consider how tactical actions will influence the operational and strategic levels. Because of its failure to influence important audiences, Operation Vigilant Resolve offers a cautionary tale for anyone who would downplay the significance of information in modern warfare.

If general expectations are that we should be able to compete and win the information battle in the global media environment—and this appears to be the general perception within our Army—then we must reshape our doctrine and develop ways to train in the new domains, ways that will evolve as the Information Age evolves. We should restructure the definitions of IO and PA and the relationship between them and develop a considerable global mass-marketing and public-relations capability. There is no other option because "winning modern wars is as much dependent on carrying domestic and international public opinion as it is on defeating the enemy on the battlefield."[8]

This idea is not without controversy. The recent debate in the media concerning the use of the Lincoln Group to push written opinion-editorials to Iraqi news outlets by paying for their placement illustrates that there are no clean lines in this discussion. Despite this situation, innovation and the use of new techniques will help us win future campaigns. The new reality simply will not enable Cold War methods to figuratively outgun technologically able enemies unfettered by cumbersome processes for dissemination of information.

In an article published in the *New York Times* on 22 March 2006, Lawrence Di Rita, co-director of a Pentagon panel studying communications questions for the *Quadrennial Defense Review*, said Rumsfeld and other senior officials were considering new policies for regional combatant commanders. Di Rita noted that "[t]he big issue in our world is whether our doctrine and our policy are up to date. We owe more thinking to the combatant commanders."[9]

Massing of effects in the information domain can be achieved, as evidenced by Operation Al-Fajr. Functional progress within the realms of the communications professions (IO and PA) requires that we accommodate to the globalization of information. After III Corps departed and XVIII Airborne Corps took over as the new MNC-I in early 2005, it remained (and remains) clear that in Iraq our U.S. and Coalition partners have inculcated the lessons of Vigilant Resolve and Al-Fajr.

We must address the challenges an interconnected global media/communications environment and its processes pose to our information-related operations, an environment in which timely and fully packaged stories are far more valuable than mere imagery. While acknowledging continued greater levels of globalization, we must be able to harness all of the elements of national power in an integrated manner. Doing so is absolutely critical if the United States is to successfully defend itself. Failure to do so could be ruinous. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Ayman al-Zawahiri, intercepted letter to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, 9 July 2005, on-line at <www.dni.gov/letter_in_english.pdf>, accessed 26 April 2006.

2. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, in response to a question after a speech at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 27 March 2006.

3. Joseph J. Collins, "An Open Letter to President Bush," *Armed Forces Journal* 143, no. 6 (January 2006): 28, on-line at <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/story.php?F=1403423_0106>, accessed 1 May 2006.

4. Ralph Peters, "The Counterrevolution in Military Affairs—Fashionable thinking about defense ignores the great threats of our time," *The Weekly Standard*, Volume 11, 2, 6 February 2006.

5. LTG Thomas F. Metz, "The Battle of Fallujah: A Case Study for Warfare in the Information Age," briefing to the Capitol Bohemian Club, 26 October 2005, Washington, D.C.

6. The Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) feeds a signal from a portable machine to a satellite. News stations can pull the signal from the DVIDS website either live or from stored data on the site. It was first used in Iraq in 2004.

7. Thom Shanker, "No Breach Seen in Work in Iraq on Propaganda," *New York Times*, 22 March 2006.

8. Kenneth Payne, "The Media as an Instrument of War," *Parameters* 35, 1 (Spring 2005): 81, on-line at < http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05spring/payne.htm>, accessed 1 May 2006.

9. Shanker.

The Decisive Weapon:
A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations

Colonel Ralph O. Baker, U.S. Army



DOD

This article was solicited from the author by the editor in chief of Military Review *subsequent to a briefing the author presented to the Information Operations Symposium II held at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, on 15 December 2005. The text is an edited version of a transcript from that briefing. It includes additional material and clarification of facts and events provided by the author.*

DUTY IN IRAQ has a way of debunking myths and countering Ivory Tower theories with hard facts on the ground. I admit that while I was preparing to serve in Iraq as a brigade commander, I was among the skeptics who doubted the value of integrating information operations (IO) into my concept of operations. Most of the officers on my combat team shared my doubts about the relative importance of information operations. Of course, in current Army literature there is a great deal of discussion about IO theory. There is significantly less practical information, however, that details how theory can be effectively translated into practice by tactical units. My purpose in writing this article is to provide commanders the insights I gleaned from my experience.

Soon after taking command of my brigade, I quickly discovered that IO was going to be one of the two most vital tools (along with human intelligence) I would need to be successful in a counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign. COIN operations meant competing daily to favorably influence the perceptions of the Iraqi population in our area of operations (AO). I quickly concluded that, without IO, I could not hope to shape and set conditions for my battalions or my Soldiers to be successful.

It certainly did not take long to discover that the traditional tools in my military kit bag were insufficient to successfully compete in this new operational environment. As a brigade commander, I was somewhat surprised to find myself spending 70 percent of my time working and managing my intelligence and IO systems and a relatively small amount of my time directly involved with the traditional maneuver and fire support activities. This was a paradigm shift for me. The reality I confronted was far different from what I had professionally prepared for over a lifetime of conventional training and experience.

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Background

My brigade, the 2d Brigade Combat Team (BCT), was part of the 1st Armored Division. For the first 12 months in Iraq, we were task organized in Baghdad with up to eight battalions, roughly 5,000 strong, all trained for conventional combat. The BCT consisted of two mechanized infantry

battalions, a cavalry squadron, an armor battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, a support battalion, and a military police battalion. At headquarters were staff enablers such as psychological operations (PSYOP) and civil affairs (CA) detachments. At one point, my task organization also included 12 U.S. Army National Guard or Reserve Component companies.

My brigade's AO covered roughly 400 square kilometers and encompassed 2 of the 9 major districts in Baghdad: Karkh and Karada. In those 2 heavily populated and congested districts lived between 700,000 to a million citizens. The area contained at least 72 mosques and churches.

In the northwest part of our AO, the population was predominantly Sunni. This area also contained a small neighborhood called Kaddamiya, where Saddam Hussein had grown up. Not surprisingly, that community was a bastion of staunchly pro-Baath sentiment and was steadfastly loyal to Saddam. Such demographic factors made that part of our AO particularly volatile and problematic.

In contrast, our area also contained the Karada district, one of the most affluent parts of the city. Three universities are located there, Baghdad University being at the very southeastern tip. Many Western-trained and educated elites live in Karada, and many of Baghdad's banks and headquarters for major businesses are there. The population in this area is characteristically more secular in its views and somewhat more receptive to outside ideas and influence. In addition, 70 percent of the embassies and diplomatic residences in Baghdad were situated in our AO (figure 1).

The southeastern region of our area was home to a principally Shiite population. The infrastructure in this area was, in comparison to other parts of the city, shabby. In many places the population lived in almost uninhabitable conditions, the neighborhoods having been largely neglected by the Baathist regime for years (figure 2).

Another significant component of this complex society was the Christian population. Baghdad has

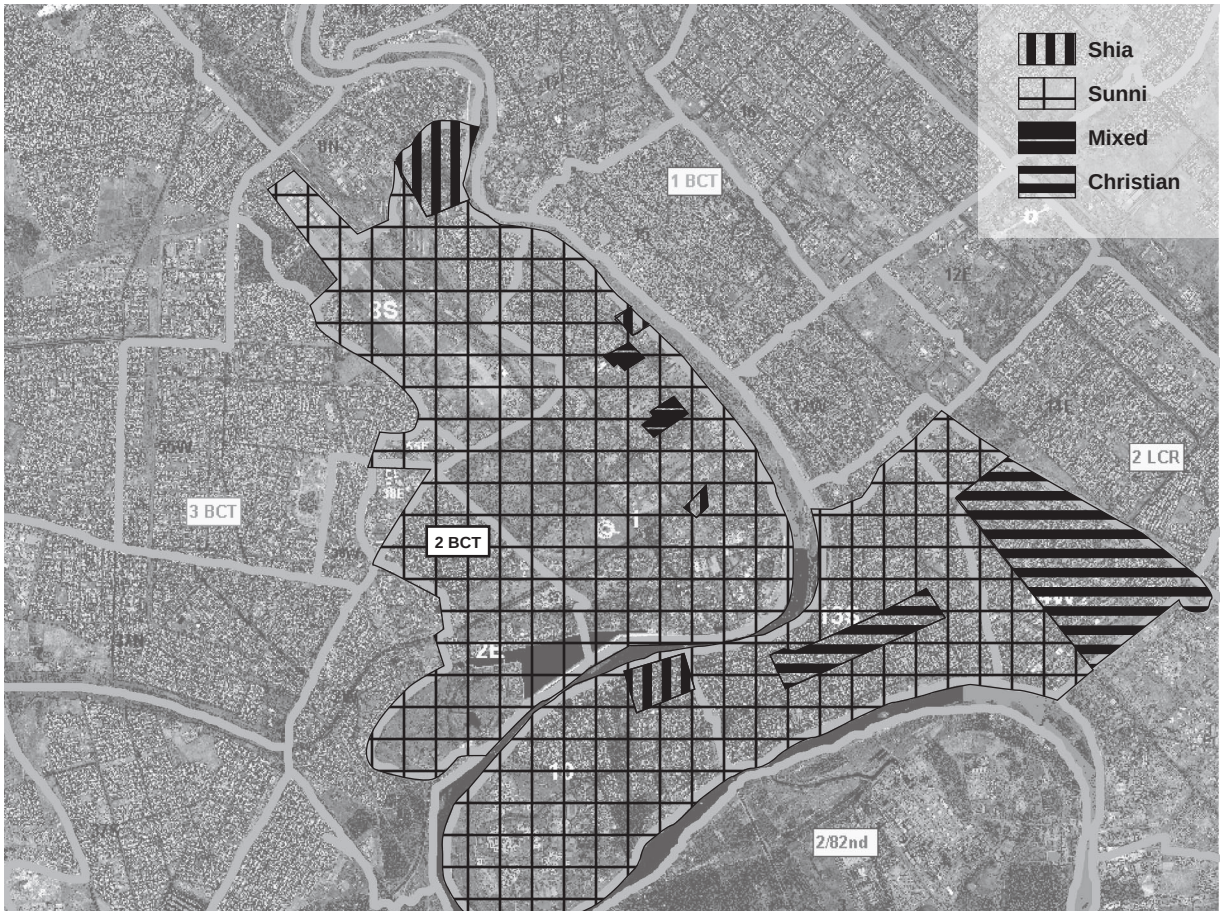


Figure 1. 2BCT/1AD battlespace religious demographics: Karkh.

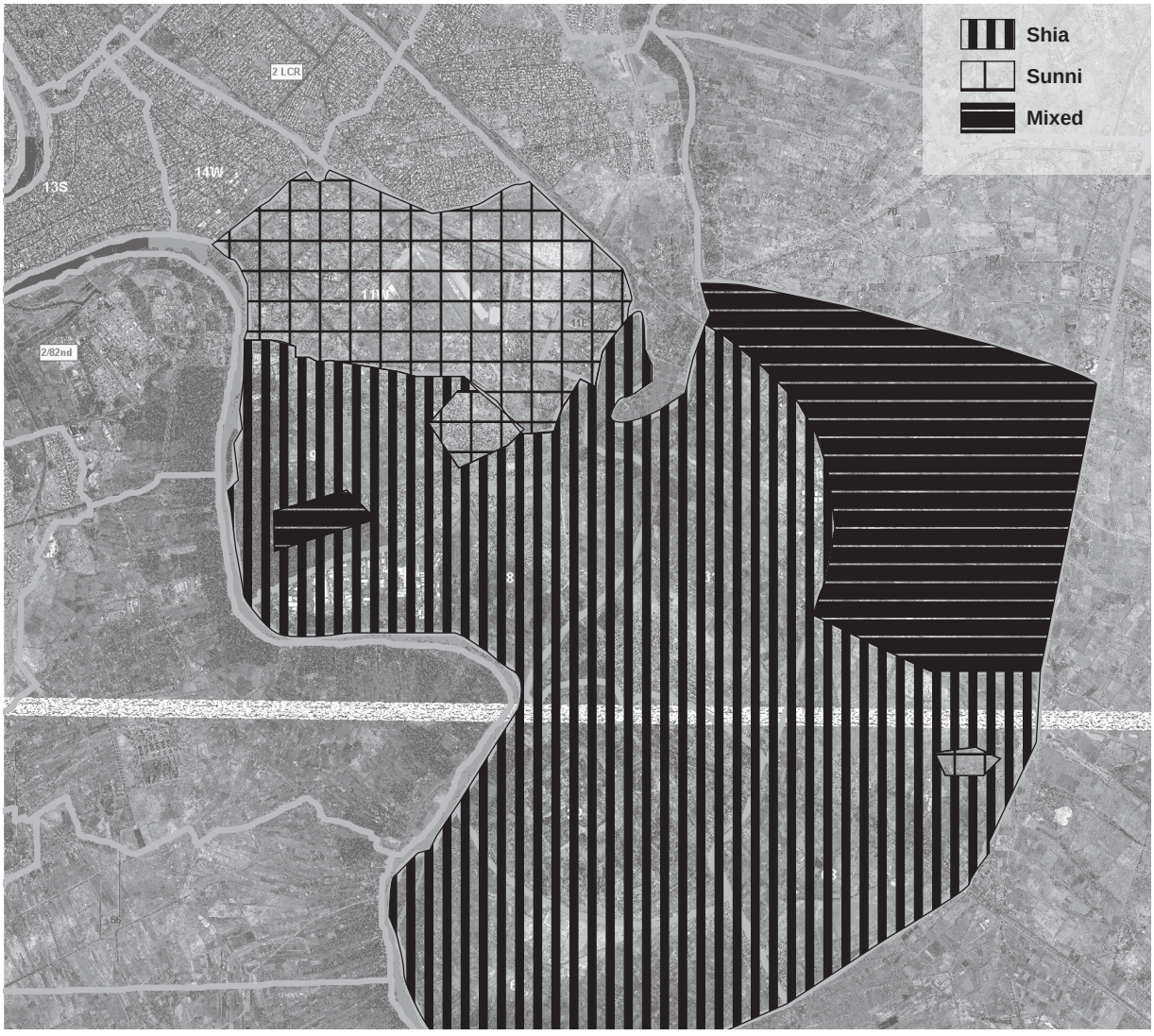


Figure 2. 2BCT/1AD battlespace religious demographics: Karada.

the largest Christian population in the country, and it was also concentrated inside our battlespace.

The demographic diversity in 2d Brigade's AO produced a lot of different ethnic, cultural, and religious dynamics. Consequently, each area presented unique IO challenges. And, of course, this already complex situation was made more complex by insurgent and terrorist violence and the persistent lack of infrastructure and basic services.

Also of note was what proved to be an additional geographic area with a completely different IO population of interest, one that had its own set of parochial concerns and priorities: the Green Zone. This area housed the headquarters of the Coalition Provisional Authority and Combined Joint Task Force 7.

Another vital demographic, one that my commanders and I found we had inadvertently taken for granted and failed to effectively address, was our own Soldiers. Most news that Soldiers typically received came from watching CNN, the BBC, or Fox News. Soldiers were getting the same inaccurate, slanted news that the American public gets. With a significant amount of negative news being broadcast into their living quarters on a daily basis, it was difficult for Soldiers to realize they were having a positive impact on our area of operations.

Once we appreciated the dynamics of the demographics in our AO, we found that we could easily fit Iraqi citizens into three broad categories: those who would never accept the Coalition's presence in Iraq (religious fundamentalists, insurgents, terrorists); those who readily accepted the Coalition's presence

in Iraq (typically secular, Western-educated pragmatists); and the vast majority of Iraqis, who were undecided. We referred to this last category as the silent majority and focused much of our information operations on influencing this group.

Adjusting the Plan to IO Realities

One of the first challenges I faced was to understand the overarching IO plan for Iraq and, more important, how my combat team was supposed to support it. Part of the challenge at this time for everyone—battalion through corps—was our lack of IO experience and our ignorance of how valuable IO is to COIN success. In fact, during the summer of 2003 there was still much debate over whether or not we were even fighting an insurgency. The IO support we did receive from higher headquarters included broad themes and messages that we were directed to communicate to the local populations. Unfortunately, these messages were often too broad to resonate with the diverse subpopulations within brigade and battalion areas.

This brings me to my first essential IO observation: To be effective, you must tailor themes and messages to specific audiences. IO planners at commands above division level appeared to look at the Iraqis as a single, homogeneous population that would be receptive to centrally developed, all-purpose, general themes and messages directed at Iraqis as a group. In many cases, the guidance and products we received were clearly developed for a high-level diplomatic audience and were inappropriate or ineffective for the diverse populations clustered within our battalion AO.

When we did request and receive theme support or IO products, they were typically approved too late to address the issue for which we had requested them. To overcome what was an ineffective and usually counterproductive attempt by the IO/PSYOP agencies at higher levels of command to centrally control themes and messaging, we were compelled to initiate a more tailored IO process. We developed products that incorporated relevant themes and messages fashioned specifically for the diverse groups and micropopulations in our area of operations.

A guiding imperative was to produce and distribute IO products with focused messages and themes more quickly than our adversaries. Only then could we stay ahead of the extremely adroit and effective information operations the enemy waged at neighborhood and district levels.

Challenges

- **Initially, did not believe IO was important.**
- **Approved IO messages and themes were too broad.**
- **IO culture and policies were too restrictive.**
- **Did not understand how to work with Arab and international media.**
- **Iraqi expectations were unrealistic.**
- **Population had little visibility on—**
  - **– Positive activities of US/Coalition.**
  - **– Impact of insurgent/terrorist activities on Iraqi citizens/country.**
- **IO not coordinated within BCT (IO fratricide).**
- **Rumor-centric society.**
- **US/Coalition lacked credibility.**

We were also initially challenged in working through the bureaucratic IO/PSYOP culture. We often faced situations where we needed handbills specifically tailored to the unique circumstances and demographics of the neighborhoods we were attempting to influence. However, the PSYOP community routinely insisted that handbills had to be approved through PSYOP channels at the highest command levels before they could be cleared for distribution. This procedure proved to be much too slow and cumbersome to support our IO needs at the tactical level.

Good reasons exist for some central control over IO themes and products under some circumstances, but information operations are Operations, and in my opinion that means commander's business. IO is critical to successfully combating an insurgency. It fights with words, symbols, and ideas, and it operates under the same dynamics as all combat operations. An old Army saw says that the person who gets to the battle the "firstest" with the "mostest" usually wins, and this applies indisputably to information operations. In contrast, a consistent shortcoming I experienced was that the enemy, at least initially,

consistently dominated the IO environment faster and more thoroughly than we did. Our adversary therefore had considerable success in shaping and influencing the perceptions of the Iraqi public in his favor. The ponderous way in which centrally managed PSYOP products were developed, vetted, and approved through bureaucratic channels meant they were simply not being produced quickly enough to do any good. Just as important, they were not being tailored precisely enough to influence our diverse audiences' opinions about breaking events.

Faced with bureaucratic friction and cumbersome policy, and thrust into an IO arena quite different from that for which most of us had been trained, I had to make decisions concerning IO matters based on common sense and mission requirements. To this end, I had to consciously interpret policy and regulatory guidance in creative ways to accomplish the mission as we saw it, though in a manner such that those who wrote the original regulations and guidance probably had not intended. This was necessary because Cold War regulations and policies were holding us hostage to old ideas and old ways of doing business. They were simply no longer valid or relevant to the challenges we were facing in this extremely fluid, nonlinear, media-centric COIN environment that was Baghdad circa 2003-2004.

Of course, such an approach made some people uncomfortable. As a rule, if our application of IO techniques was perceived to violate a strict interpretation of policy or regulation, I asked myself: Is it necessary to accomplish our mission, and is our tactic, technique, or procedure morally and ethically sound? If the answer was yes, I generally authorized the activity and informed my higher headquarters.

We were not a renegade operation, however. If what we thought we had to do ran counter to written policies and guidance, I kept my division commander informed in detail of what, when, and why we were doing it. Fortunately, the command environment was such that initiative, innovation, and common-sense pragmatism were supported in the face of uncertainty and lack of relevant doctrine. One example of this sort of support was our decision to adopt, as a policy, the engagement of foreign, Iraqi, and international media at the earliest opportunity following a sensational act of insurgent violence.

The guidance we were operating within was that brigades could not conduct press conferences. In my view, that policy was counterproductive. Headquarters above division were usually slow to react to major events involving terrorism on the streets, and costly hours would go by without an appropriate public response to major terrorist incidents. We experienced firsthand the detrimental effects that this ceding of the information initiative to insurgents was having in our area. The Iraqis had increasingly easy access to TV and radio, but restrictions prevented us from engaging those media to rapidly, efficiently, and directly communicate our public information messages at critical times. By contrast, press reports appeared quickly in the Arab media showing death and destruction in great detail, which undermined confidence in the ability of the Iraqi Provisional Council and the Coalition to provide security.

Our adversary also frequently twisted media accounts in a way that successfully assigned public blame to the Coalition—and the 2d Brigade specifically—for perpetrating the violent attacks. When slow IO responses and outright public information inaction in the face of such incidents dangerously stoked public discontent, we decided to engage the media on our own in order to get the truth out to the multitudes of people living in our area. If we were going to influence our silent majority successfully, we were going to have to convince them that it was in their best personal and national interest to support the Coalition's efforts. We had to convince them that the insurgents and terrorists were responsible for harming Iraqi citizens and inhibiting local and national progress.

As an illustration, on 18 January 2004 a suicide bomber detonated a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) during morning rush hour at a well-known Baghdad checkpoint called Assassin's Gate, a main entrance into the Green Zone. This attack killed about 50 Iraqis waiting at the checkpoint. While we were managing the consequences of the incident, which included dealing with a considerable number of international and Arab media, I was instructed not to release a statement to the press—higher headquarters would collect the facts and release them at a Coalition-sponsored press conference to be held at 1600 Baghdad time.

Unfortunately, the terrorists responsible for this bombing were not constrained from engaging the press. While precious time was being spent "gathering facts," the enemy was busily exploiting to their advantage the ensuing chaos. The message



U.S. Army

The aftermath of a VBIED at checkpoint 1, one of the major entry control points into the Green Zone.

they passed to the press was that Coalition Soldiers were responsible for the casualties at the checkpoint because of an overreaction to somebody shooting at them from the intersection; that is, the terrorists were spreading a rumor that the carnage on the street was not the result of a VBIED but, rather, the result of an undisciplined and excessive use of force by my Soldiers.

As precious time slipped by and with accusations multiplying in the Arab media and tempers heating up, we made a conscious decision that our field grade officers would talk to the press at the site and give them the known facts; in effect, we would hold a stand-up, impromptu press conference. We also decided that in all future terrorist attacks, the field grade officers' principle job would be to engage the press—especially the Arab press—as quickly as possible while company grade officers managed the tactical situation at the incident site.

Subsequently, when such incidents occurred, we took the information fight to the enemy by giving the free press the facts as we understood them as quickly as we could in order to stay ahead of the disinformation and rumor campaign the enemy was sure to wage. We aggressively followed up our actions by updating the reporters as soon as more information became available. As a result, the principal role of field grade officers at incident sites was to engage the press, give them releasable facts, answer questions as quickly and honestly as possible with accurate information, and keep them updated as more information became known.

Our proactive and transparent approach proved to be an essential tool for informing and influencing the key Iraqi audiences in our AO; it mitigated adverse domestic reaction. Our quick response helped dispel the harmful rumors that nearly always flowed in the wake of major incidents.

I heard that the methods we were using with the media immediately following such incidents caused considerable hand-wringing and resentment in some circles. However, no one ever ordered us to stop, no doubt because the positive effects were clearly apparent.

Executing Our IO Plan

My second IO observation is that you have no influence with the press if you do not talk to them. Moreover, trying to ignore the media by denying them access or refusing to talk can result in the press reporting news that is inaccurate, biased, and frankly counterproductive to the mission. Not talking to the press is the equivalent of ceding the initiative to the insurgents, who are quite adept at spinning information in adverse ways to further their objectives.

The way we adapted to working with the media contrasted significantly with our initial approach. At first, we allowed reporters to come into our unit areas and, essentially, wander around. What resulted was hit or miss as to whether reporters would find a good theme to report on or whether they would stumble onto something they did not understand and publish a story that was out of context or unhelpful. When this happened, we would scratch our heads and say, "Gee, these press guys just don't get it." Actually, we were the ones not getting it. We lacked a good plan on how to work with the press and interest them in the really great things happening in our area.

Recognizing this, we set about preparing our spokespersons and Soldiers to engage the media in a systematic, deliberate manner. We became familiar with what the media needed to know and

adept at providing the information they required as quickly as possible. At the same time, we ensured that the messages and supporting themes we felt were important were getting out.

To impress on our leaders and Soldiers the need for a press-engagement strategy, we emphasized agenda-setting. I conveyed the manner in which I wanted my leaders to approach this issue by asking how many of them would just let me go down to their motor pools and walk around without them grabbing me and at least trying to get me to look at the positive things they wanted to show me (while also trying to steer me away from the things that were perhaps "still a work in progress"). I told them: "All of you guys understand and do that. So from now on, when working with the media, adopt this same kind of approach."

Meeting Iraqi expectations. One of the more difficult credibility challenges we encountered among the Iraqis was a consequence of the initial mismanagement of Iraqi expectations before we ever crossed the berm into Iraq. As a result, we were met with enormously unrealistic expectations that we had to manage and were simply unable to gratify in a timely manner. Such expectations grew out of Coalition pronouncements before Soldiers arrived that extolled how much better off the average Iraqi citizen's life was going to be when Saddam and his regime were gone.

The concept of "better" proved to be a terrible cultural misperception on our part because we, the liberators, equated better with not being ruled by a brutal dictator. In contrast, a better life for Iraqis implied consistent, reliable electricity; food; medical care; jobs; and safety from criminals and political thugs. When those same Iraqis were sitting in Baghdad in August 2003 suffering 115-degree heat with no electricity, an unreliable sewage system, contaminated water, no prospects for a job, lack of police security, periodic social and economic disruption because of insurgent attacks, and no income or pensions with which to support their families, better had become a problematic concept. It took on the psychic dimensions of having been betrayed by the Coalition. Unfortunately, this view was exacerbated by the average Iraqis' man-on-the-moon analogy: If you Americans are capable of putting a man on the moon, why can't you get the electricity to come on? If you are not turning the electricity on, it must be because you don't want to and are punishing us.

We came to realize that any chance of success with information operations was specifically tied to immediate, visible actions to improve the average Iraqi's quality of life. Until there was tangible improvement that the Iraqis could experience and benefit from firsthand, lofty pronouncements about how much better life would be under democratic pluralism, as well as the value of secular principles of tolerance and national unity, were meaningless. This leads to my third IO observation: There is a direct correlation between our credibility and our ability to demonstrably improve the quality of life, physical security, and stability in a society. Until we could do the latter, we would continue to lack credibility. This was especially true because we were agents of change from a Western world the Iraqis had been taught to hate virtually from birth.

Reaching out to the community. Iraqis in general had little visibility of the positive aspects of the Coalition and U.S. presence in the country. Positive economic, political, and social reforms and improvements in the security environment generally went unnoticed. Collectively, the Iraqis were simply getting too little information on the good things being accomplished. International and Arab media failed to report favorable news, and little information was being passed by word of mouth. Meanwhile, efforts by Coalition forces to share information were limited because we lacked credibility and because many Iraqi citizens did not understand the horrific toll the insurgency was exacting on Iraqi lives and how much it was affecting infrastructure repair. The problem was that we did not have a coordinated, deliberate plan at the brigade level to provide timely, accurate, focused information to communicate these facts. This changed as we developed an IO concept based on a limited number of themes supported by accurate, detailed messages delivered repetitively to key target audiences.

Preventing IO fratricide. Our brigade IO effort did not begin as a centrally coordinated program within my BCT but, rather, evolved as our understanding of the importance of synchronized IO activities matured. Initially, well-intentioned commanders, many of whom lacked clearly defined brigade guidance, had independently arrived at the

same conclusion: They needed an IO plan. Each had therefore begun developing and executing his own IO effort. On the surface this was fine: Great commanders were using initiative to solve problems and accomplish the mission. Unfortunately, because our activities were not coordinated and synchronized, we often disseminated contradictory information.

For example, one battalion IO message might state that a recent operation had resulted in the capture of 10 insurgents with no civilian casualties. Referring to the same operation, an adjacent battalion might inform its Iraqi citizens that 5 insurgents had been captured and 3 civilians accidentally injured. From the Iraqi perspective, because our information was inconsistent, we were not being honest.

One of our major objectives was to earn the Iraqis' trust and confidence. If we continued to contradict ourselves or provide inaccurate information, we would never achieve this goal. We termed this phenomenon of contradictory IO statements "IO fratricide." The remedy for this challenge leads to a fourth significant IO observation: A major IO goal at tactical and operational levels is getting the citizens in your AO to have trust and confidence in you.

We have all heard about "winning hearts and minds." I do not like this phrase, and I liked it less and less as experience taught me its impracticality. The reality is that it will be a long, long time before we can truly win the hearts and minds of Arabs in the Middle East. Most of the people have been taught from birth to distrust and hate us. Consequently, I did not like my Soldiers using the phrase because it gave them the idea that to be successful they had to win the Iraqis' hearts and minds, which translated into attempts at developing legitimate friendships with the Iraqis. However, in my view, even with considerable effort it is possible to cultivate friendships with only a small segment of the Iraqis with whom we have frequent contact.

Unfortunately, befriending a small portion of the population will not help us convince the remaining Iraqi citizens to begin tolerating or working with us. For us, given the amount of time we had to influence our target population, the more effective plan was to prioritize our efforts toward earning the grudging respect of our target population within the 12 months we would occupy our AO. This was a more realistic goal. If we could demonstrate to our population that we were truthful and that we followed through on everything we said we would, then we could earn the respect of a population and culture that was predisposed to distrust us.

Conversely, I felt that it would take considerable effort and time (resources we did not have) to develop legitimate friendships—assuming friendships were possible on a broad scale. So, by replacing "winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqis" with "earning the trust and confidence of the Iraqis," I attempted to provide a mental construct to guide our Soldiers and leaders in all aspects of the IO campaign.

Subsequently, we began to formulate a general concept for IO based on the objective of garnering the trust, confidence, and respect, however grudging, of the various populations. Our overarching goal was to convince the silent majority that their personal and national interests resided with the Coalition's efforts, not with the insurgents'. If we were to succeed, it was imperative to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the Iraqi population.

Manning the IO cell. Staffing an IO cell at brigade level was another challenge. Because we were not authorized many of the military occupational specialties necessary to plan, coordinate, and control information operations, we built our own IO working group (IOWG) out of hide. Our IOWG consisted of senior officers from the PSYOPs and CA detachments attached to the brigade, one intelligence officer detailed to serve as our public affairs officer (PAO), an engineer officer, and the brigade fire support officer.

The engineer officer was key because much of the visible progress we were enjoying in our AO was the result of renovation and reconstruction activities. The engineer officer maintained visibility on these projects to ensure that we did not miss opportunities to inform the Iraqis of any progress.

Adding a PAO to the IOWG was an obvious step. Because of the immense interest in our operations shown by international and Arab media, I had to assign this duty full time to one of my most competent and articulate officers. Subsequently, we realized that we needed to expand our public affairs activities and therefore hired two Iraqi citizens with media experience to manage our activities with the Arab press.

In concert, we leveraged the doctrinal knowledge of our PSYOPs and CA officers to organize activities and develop messages and distribution concepts. Finally, because our IO activities were ultimately "targeting" specific demographic elements in our

AO, it was a natural fit to place the brigade fire support officer in charge of the IOWG.

Evolving unity of effort. Our approach to conducting IO evolved over time, out of the operational necessity to accomplish our mission. We were probably a good 3 to 4 months into our tour before we gained the requisite experience and understanding of key IO factors. We then began to deliberately develop a structure and mechanism to systematically synchronize our information operations throughout the brigade. The following observations ultimately helped shape our operational construct:

- It is imperative to earn the trust and confidence of the indigenous population in your AO. They might never "like" you, but I am convinced you can earn their respect.
- To defeat the insurgency, you must convince the (silent) majority of the population that it is in their best personal and national interest to support Coalition efforts and, conversely, convince them not to support the insurgents.
- For information operations to be effective, you must have focused themes that you disseminate repetitively to your target audience.
- Target audiences are key. You should assume that the silent majority will discount most of the information Coalition forces disseminate simply because they are suspicious of us culturally. Therefore, you must identify and target respected community members with IO themes. If you can create conditions where Arabs are communicating your themes to Arabs, you can be quite effective.
- Being honest in the execution of information operations is highly important. This goes back to developing trust and confidence, especially with target audiences. If you lose your credibility, you cannot conduct effective IO. Therefore, you should never try to implement any sort of IO "deception" operations.

Commander's Vision and Guidance

Visualizing and describing a concept of operation, one of a commander's greatest contributions to his organization, was a contribution I had yet to provide to my combat team. It was essential to do so immediately. I also understood that after developing an IO plan, I would have to act energetically to ensure that subordinate commanders embraced information operations and executed them according to my expectations. I did, and they embraced the concept and ultimately improved on it. My fifth IO observation is that for all types of military operations, the commander's vision and intent are essential, but when directing subordinate commanders to perform outside of their comfort zones, personal involvement is especially necessary to ensure that the commander's concept is executed according to plan.

After establishing an initial IO cell, we obviously needed to develop an IO concept of operation that would synchronize our collective efforts. The centerpiece of this concept was the decision to dedicate brigade IO efforts toward two major themes and five target audiences (figure 3). The two major themes were to convince the silent majority of Iraqis in our AO that the economic, political, and social reforms being implemented were in their personal and national interest to support, and to discredit insurgent and terrorist activities in order to deny them support by the silent majority.

Our overall target audience was clearly the silent majority. However, to reach them and to ensure

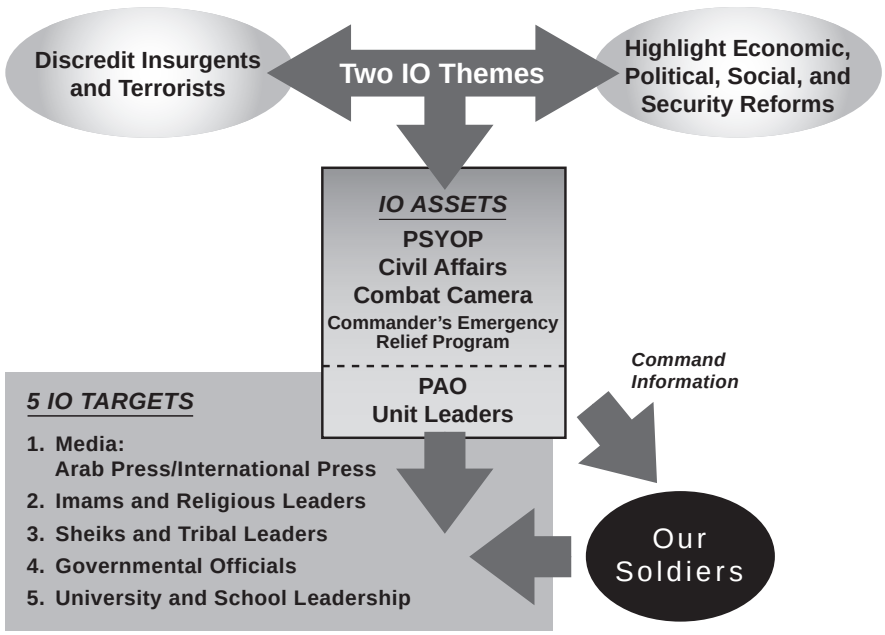


Figure 3. 2BCT IO campaign plan.

that our messages and themes would resonate with them, we determined that we needed to use mainly Iraqi proxies to convey our messages. We therefore identified five groups of Iraqis that had significant influence among the population: local imams and priests, local and district council members, staff and faculty from the universities, Arab and international media, and local sheiks and tribal leaders. Armed with a conceptual framework for conducting information operations throughout the brigade, we then wrote and published an IO annex. This leads to my sixth IO observation: An IO campaign has a greater likelihood of success if messages are simple and few, and repeated often.

Repeating themes and messages. While developing my commander's guidance, I recalled that the average person has a hard time remembering even simple concepts if he is only exposed to the concept once. A person watching commercials on TV, for example, must watch the same commercial 10 or 12 times before he retains the message and becomes inclined to buy the product. Keeping this in mind, we strove for sufficient repetition whenever we disseminated information. To influence the population, it was important to develop and repeat the messages that focused on our two themes, and to ensure that they were accurate and consistent.

Staying focused. Our ultimate IO objective was to convince the majority of the Iraqis in our area that they should tolerate our short-term occupation because we, working with them, could create conditions that would lead to a better life for them individually and collectively. As mentioned earlier, we developed two overarching themes that, if communicated often and convincingly to the Iraqis, would contribute to our goal. To support our first theme (convincing the Iraqis that it was in their personal and national interest to support reform initiatives), we defined success as progress being made economically, socially, politically, and in security. To support our second theme (discrediting the insurgents and terrorists), we took every opportunity to draw attention to the destructive, vicious disregard the enemy had for the Iraqi people and the adverse effects their actions were having on individual and national progress.

With much command emphasis, we developed metrics and the information requirements to support them. We then meticulously collected information from throughout the brigade area in support of the metrics, which we integrated into IO messages to bolster our two major themes. Using "economic reform," for example, we tracked the status of every brigade renovation and reconstruction project. These projects were effective in supporting our first theme because they directly resulted in quality-of-life improvements for the Iraqis. Better schools, cleaner drinking water, functional sewage disposal, more efficient distribution of electricity in our area, functioning health clinics and hospitals, and repair of university schools are some examples of the information we used to substantiate our claims.

We maintained a running total of the new projects we had started, how many were in various stages of completion, how many had been completed, and how much money the Iraqi transitional government, the U.S. Government, or the international community had contributed to each. We also collected detailed information about insurgent and terrorist activities in our area to support our second theme. We tracked the number of Iraqi citizens killed or injured because of insurgent activities each day, the type of property damage and associated dollar value of damage caused by the insurgents, and the adverse effect that insurgent attacks were having on the quality of life (hours of daily electricity diminished, fuel shortages, number of days lost on completing vital infrastructure projects, and so forth).

One of our early IO challenges was maintaining consistent, accurate, noncontradictory IO messages. To address the challenge, we codified in our IO annex the kind of information to be collected, along with the requirement to roll up such information and submit it to the brigade IO cell each week. The cell used this precise, accurate information to develop talking points for all brigade leaders, and the points were disseminated to subordinate commands in our weekly fragmentary order. As a result, when we spoke with the media, government officials, imams and priests, university staff and faculty, and tribal sheiks, we were all saying the same thing—one band, one sound—all the time, with talking points crafted to reinforce our two themes.

Making IO part of overall operations. Because battalion leaders were busy fighting a war and dealing with lots of other problems, it would have been easy for them to place less and less priority on the brigade IO plan until it was subsumed by some other priority. Therefore, I knew that if I did not

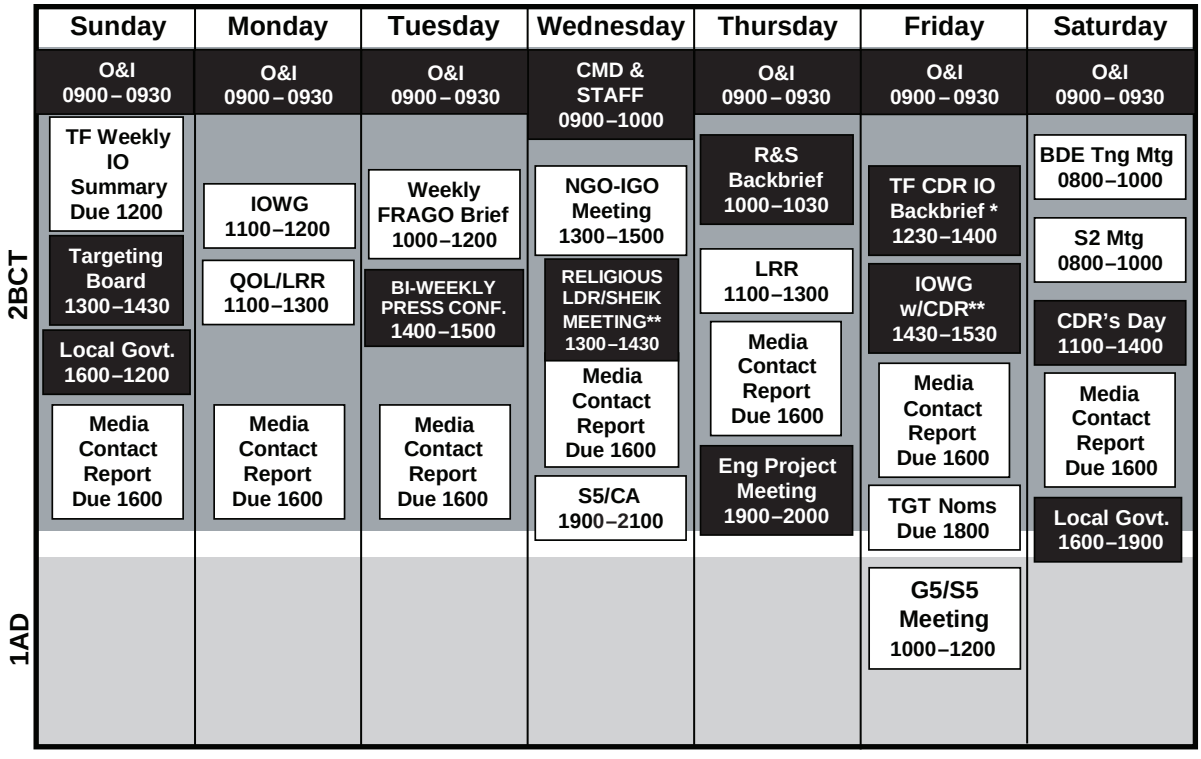
emphasize IO, it would not become a cornerstone of our daily operations. I felt strongly enough about the need for a brigade-wide IO effort that I made it one of my top priorities, so that the battalion commanders would follow suit as well.

Almost all of our IO activities were codified in our IO annex, which we developed and issued as a fragmentary order. This detailed annex described our two major themes and five target audiences, and it directed subordinate commands to conduct meetings, either weekly or bi-weekly depending on the audience, with the leaders of our targeted audiences (figure 4). The annex also directed subordinate commands to collect the information needed to support our weekly talking points, provided specific guidance on how to work with the media, and stipulated many other tasks that were necessary to support the brigade IO concept. I did not leave the "who and how often" up to the battalion commanders. They could not say, "I know I'm supposed to meet with these imams this week, but I'm just too busy." The engagement was required.

To manage this process further, I required weekly reports. If a commander failed to conduct a mandatory target audience engagement, I demanded an immediate justification. I do not typically operate in such a directive mode, but I felt such an approach was necessary, at least initially, to ensure that our IO plan developed into something more than a good idea.

Not surprisingly, there were some growing pains, even gnashing of teeth. But once commanders saw and felt the positive effects we were having, they bought in and the program became a standard part of how we did business.

To institutionalize the IO process even further and to habituate battalion commanders to it, I required monthly backbriefs, not unlike quarterly training briefings but focused on IO activities. The commanders briefed from prepared slides in a standardized format. They addressed such topics as the frequency of engagements with targeted audiences in their areas, the number of Arab press engagements conducted, and a roll-up of directed information requirements collected that month in



STRIKER 6 attends black shaded box events VER: 25 Jan (CMTC)

* TF CDR IO Backbrief – Last Friday of month ** EVERY OTHER WEEK

IGO, Intergovernmental Organization; O&I, Operations and Intelligence; QOL, Quality of Life; LRR, Logistical Readiness Review

Figure 4. 2BCT IO battle rhythm.

support of our major IO themes. They were also expected to brief what they had accomplished for the month, and what their plans were for the next month, specifically highlighting planned changes and adaptations.

This briefing technique improved my situational awareness of the brigade's IO and provided a forum where leaders could share ideas and best practices. For example, one of the commanders might brief a new way in which insurgents were attempting to discredit Coalition forces, then address what he was doing to counter it. Other commanders could anticipate similar attempts in their AOs and take proactive measures to deny insurgent success.

When we executed more traditional operations, I gave the battalion leadership great latitude to plan and execute in their battlespace. For information operations, however, I felt I had to be directive to ensure compliance with the plan I envisioned.

Developing talking points. We developed two sets of talking points to support our themes. The first set came from input the battalions provided weekly. It addressed what the insurgents were doing that adversely affected the Iraqis, and detailed actions showing how Iraqi lives were getting better because of cooperative Coalition and Iraqi successes. This information was consolidated and vetted by the IO cell, then pushed back out to the battalions to provide consistent, accurate talking points and to preclude us from committing IO fratricide by contradicting ourselves.

The other set of talking points were templated standing sound bites for engagements of opportunity that might occur due to catastrophic events. We could not predict when, but we knew suicide bombings and other sensational insurgent attacks were going to occur, and we wanted officers who would be the first to arrive to have some handy formatted guidance with which to engage the media and local officials who were sure to show up. These standard talking points gave the first company commander or battalion commander on the scene sufficient material to talk to the media with confidence.

The talking points also helped commanders stay on theme and make the points that we wanted to make. While the talking points were general, they were still specific enough and timely enough to satisfy the press. The standard talking points also allowed us to shape the information environment somewhat by suggesting what the focus of an incident should be rather than leaving it up to the media to find an interpretation (which the insurgents were often clever at providing).

Along with the five target audiences that we engaged with our weekly talking points, we actually had a sixth audience: our own Soldiers. As our own quality of life began to mature, our Soldiers gained easy access to satellite TV. Typically, they would watch CNN, the BBC, FOX, or some other major international news media. It quickly became clear to us that if these organizations were the most influential sources of information Soldiers were exposed to, they would receive unbalanced information from which to develop their opinions of the effect their efforts were having in this war.

I remembered talking about Soldier morale with Major General Martin E. Dempsey, who said that a Soldier's morale was a function of three things: believing in what he is doing, knowing when he is going home, and believing that he is winning. Watching the international news was not necessarily going to convince anyone that we were winning. Therefore, we decided to take the same information we were collecting to support our two IO themes and use it as command information for our Soldiers, so they could better understand how we were measuring success and winning, and be able to appreciate the importance of their contributions.

Value of Societal and Cultural Leaders

For communicating our message to the Iraqis, our challenge was twofold: We had to exhaust every means available to ensure the Iraqis heard our messages, and (frankly the greater challenge) we had to get them to believe our messages. We constantly strove to earn the trust and confidence of the Iraqis in our area by consistently being truthful with them and following through on our word. Many if not most of the Iraqis we were trying to influence with our IO themes did not have access to us, did not have an opportunity to change their opinions about our intentions, and tended not to believe anything a Westerner said to them. For our information to resonate with the population, we realized we had to reach the most trusted, most influential community members: the societal and cultural leaders. We hoped to convince them to be our interlocutors with the silent majority.

We identified the key leaders in our AO who wielded the greatest influence. These included clerics (Sunni and Shiite imams and Christian priests from Eastern Orthodox churches), sheiks and tribal leaders, staff and faculty at the universities (a group that has incredible influence over the young minds of college-age students), local government officials whom we were mentoring, and finally, select Arab media correspondents.

We began our leader engagement strategy by contacting members of local governments at neighborhood, district, and city council meetings. We sat side by side with elected local council leaders and helped them develop their democratic council systems. Eventually, we took a backseat and became mere observers. My commanders and I used these occasions to cultivate relationships with the leaders and to deliver our talking points (never missing an opportunity to communicate our two brigade themes). We typically met weekly or bi-weekly with prominent religious leaders, tribal sheiks, and university staff and faculty to listen to concerns and advice and to communicate the messages that supported our IO themes.

The meetings were excellent venues for our target audiences to express whatever views they were willing to share. Usually, we initiated a session with them by asking "What are we doing that you think is going well in your neighborhoods? What are we doing that is not going so well?" Not unexpectedly, 95 percent of their comments focused on what we were not doing so well (from their point of view). But this dialog, however negative the feedback might have been, gave them a forum to communicate to us the rumors they had heard through the Iraqi grapevine. In turn, this gave us a platform to counter rumors or accusations and, using the detailed information we had collected, to invalidate untrue or unsubstantiated rumors or allegations. After fostering relationships with the leaders from our target audiences over a period of time, we were able to refute anti-Coalition rumors and allegations with some degree of success.

These venues also gave brigade leaders insights to follow up on any allegations of unacceptable actions by any of our units or Soldiers. In fact, when any group raised a credible point that involved something I could affect, I tried to act on it immediately. In our next meeting with the Iraqi leaders, I would explain to them what I had discovered based on their allegations and what I was doing about it. For example, a sheik alleged that we were intentionally insulting Arab men when we conducted raids. He specifically referred to our technique of placing a sandbag over the head of a suspect once we apprehended him. I told him that doing so was a procedure we had been trained to perform, probably to prevent prisoners from knowing where they were being held captive. His response was that everybody already knew where we took prisoners and that it was humiliating for an Iraqi man to be taken captive in his house and have "that bag" put on his head, especially in front of his family. The sheik's point was that by following our standard operating procedure to secure prisoners, we were creating conditions that could potentially contribute to the insurgency.

Back at headquarters we talked this over. Why do we put bags on their heads? Nobody had a good answer. What do we lose if we don't use the bags? What do we gain if we don't? We decided to discontinue the practice. Whether doing so had a measurable effect or not is unknown, but the change played well with the target audience because it was a clear example that we valued the people's opinions and would correct a problem if we knew about it. This simple act encouraged the people to share ideas with us on how we should operate and allowed them to say, "See, I have influence with the Americans." This was useful because it stimulated more extensive and better future dialog.

Another benefit of these engagement sessions was an increase in our understanding of the culture. We had not undergone cultural training before deploying to Iraq, but we received a significant amount of it through on-the-job training during these sessions. In fact, many of the tactics, techniques, and procedures we adopted that allowed us to strike a balance between conducting operations and being culturally sensitive came from ideas presented to us during meetings with leaders of our key target audiences.

Embedded Media

Everybody thinks embedded media is a great concept. I do. I had James Kitfield from the *National Journal* embedded in my unit for 3 months during my tour in Iraq. That is an embed—somebody



U.S. Army

The author engages with reporters from an Arab TV network. Arab satellite TV had tremendous influence on the people in 2BCT's area.

who stays with the unit long enough to understand the context of what is going on around them and to develop an informed opinion before printing a story. Unfortunately, as Phase IV of the operation in Iraq began, the definition of what an embed was for some reason changed to mean hosting a reporter for 3 or 4 days or even just 1 day. That is risky business because a reporter cannot learn about or understand the context of the issues Soldiers face and, consequently, has a greater propensity to misinterpret events and draw inaccurate conclusions. Realizing this, I made it a brigade policy that we would not allow reporters to live with us in the brigade unless they were going to come down for an extended period of time.

Reporters who wanted to visit us for a day or two were welcome, but they had to go home every night because I was not going to expose them to, or give them, the same kind of access a true embed received if they did not want to invest the time needed to develop a sophisticated understanding of the environment the Soldiers faced, the decisions we were making, and the context in which we were fighting. Therefore, my seventh IO observation is that reporters must earn their access.

Unfortunately, it is also my experience that some reporters come with a predetermined agenda and only want to gather information to support some particular political or personal slant for a story they are already developing. However, I learned by experience who those reporters were and what to expect from them. No matter what we do, we are not going to change some reporters' or publications' mindsets. The best way to work around a biased and unprofessional journalist is by being more professional than they are and by developing a plan to deal with them.

Arab versus international media. Although the international press is an integral component of our IO effort, they were not our top media priority. While higher headquarters viewed U.S. and international media as their main media targets, our priority was more parochial: We regarded the Iraqi and Arab media as our main targets. As a result, most of the time I spent on the media was focused on the Arab press because it informed the population in my area. What most people were viewing on their new satellite TV dishes was Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera, not CNN, the BBC, NBC, or FOX. From my perspective, I was competing with the insurgents for the opinion of the silent majority, the wavering mass of Iraqi citizens who were undecided in who they



U.S. Army

CPT Scott Nauman, Commander, A Company, 2-6 Infantry, 2BCT, meets with local neighborhood council members.

supported and who constituted the most important audience we needed to influence.

Weekly roundtables. The most effective technique we developed to routinely engage the key members of the Arab press was the bi-weekly, brigade-level news huddle. Since policy at that time did not permit us to conduct press conferences, we held small roundtables, something like the exclusive U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) press roundtables conducted in Washington, D.C. We allowed only the Arab press to come to these sessions; CNN, the BBC, and other international media were excluded. The Arab media was our target audience because it was our conduit of information back to the Arab community.

Every 2 weeks I invited Arab media representatives to my headquarters. In preparation, one of my PAOs drafted talking points and a script. I began each meeting with scripted comments emphasizing messages related to our two primary IO themes, then opened the floor to questions.

To focus our efforts and to determine which venues the Iraqis received their news from, we conducted surveys and ascertained which newspapers were read and which TV programs were watched in our battlespace. We then hired two Iraqis to be brigade press agents. Their main jobs were to facilitate attendance at our press roundtables and to promote the publication of our messages. They would go out, visit with various newspapers, and invite reporters to our press conferences. Typically, the press agents described how we conducted our press conference, provided reporters with the location and frequency of our meetings, and coordinated the reporters' clearance for entry into our forward operating base. Finally, the press agents would stress to the reporters that they were not only allowed but encouraged to ask anything they wanted.

It was not unusual to have anywhere from 8 to 10 newspaper reporters attend these meetings, among them representatives from Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and one of the Lebanese satellite TV stations. After the press huddle I usually did offline interviews with the Arab satellite stations.

Engaging Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, for the most part, enjoy a justifiably bad reputation in the West because of their biased reporting style. But the fact is they report to the audience we need to influence, so why not develop a rapport with them so that maybe we can get some of our messages across to the Iraqi public?

When Al Jazeera reporters first came to one of our press huddles, they were distant. However, after three or four meetings they began warming up to us and later, they became just as friendly as any of the other reporters attending. We can, if we put enough effort into it, develop a good working relationship with almost any reporter as long as we are truthful and honest. They cannot help but respect us for that and, much of the time, respect is rewarded with fairer and more balanced news accounts because reporters know they can trust what we are saying. It is a mistake not to allow Al Jazeera and other Arab media access simply because we do not like much of what they report. We need to work with them specifically if we want more accuracy and balance. We cannot just censor them, deny them access, or fail to respect them because, ultimately, they talk to Arab peoples in their own language and are the most likely to be believed. Not to engage them or work with them is to miss tactical and strategic opportunities.

Handbills. Another important tool in our efforts to communicate IO themes to the Iraqi public was handbills. Generally, we Westerners dismiss handbills as a trivial medium because we associate them with pizza advertising, close-out sales, and other such activities. In Iraq, hand-distributed material in the form of flyers and leaflets is an effective way to distribute IO messages.

To take the initiative away from the insurgents, we developed two different types of handbills: one to address situations we faced routinely (figure 5), another for mission-specific operations or incidents (figure 6). Standard handbills spread news about such events as improvised explosive device (IED) incidents, house raids, and road closings (usually to clear an IED). Because we wanted to ensure that we had a way to take our IO message straight to the local population as soon as an opportunity presented itself, every mounted patrol carried standard flyers in their vehicles at all times. Thus, when Soldiers encountered a situation, they could react quickly.

We also relied on handbills tailored to specific incidents that had occurred or operations we were conducting. For example, we might draft a handbill addressing an insurgent incident that had killed or injured Iraqis citizens in a local neighborhood. Being able to rapidly produce and disseminate a



Figure 5. House raid handbill.

handbill that exposed the callous and indiscriminate nature of insurgent or terrorist activities while a local community was reeling from the attack was powerful and effective.

When developing handbills, we followed two important guidelines: Ensure that messages were accurately translated, and ensure that the handbills were distributed in a timely manner. Much careful, deliberate thought went into the scripting of our messages. We made sure our best interpreters translated the material, and we vetted each translation through multiple interpreters to ensure accuracy.

It is an unfortunate characteristic of war that tragedy invites the greatest interest in political or social messages. As a result, the best time to distribute a leaflet, as exploitative as it seems, was after an IED or some other sensational insurgent attack had resulted in injury or death. A population grieving over lost family members was emotionally susceptible to messages vilifying and condemning the insurgents. Consequently, we would move rapidly to an incident site and start distributing preprinted leaflets to discredit the insurgents for causing indiscriminant collateral damage. We also requested help in finding the perpetrators of the attack. Such leaflets brought home immediately the message that the insurgents and terrorists were responsible for these events and that the best way to get justice was to tell us or the Iraqi security forces who the insurgents were and where they could be found. This technique, which helped drive a wedge between the insurgents and the locals, often resulted in actionable intelligence. Quick distribution of leaflets helped influence our population before the insurgents could spin the incident against us.

We also drafted handbills that informed the Iraqis about local or national infrastructure progress (figure 7). We highlighted successes, such as the increased production of electricity in the country and improvements in the amount of oil produced and exported.





Anti-Iraqi forces are operating in your neighborhood.



25 casualties on 18 January:

13 Iraqis killed—including an 8 year old boy!!

12 severely wounded—11 Iraqis and 1 Coalition Soldier

Only you can help stop this violence. Report all IEDs and suspicious activity to Iraqi or Coalition Security Forces.

Figure 6. Handbill addressing specific incident.

This project is proudly presented to you by your local Iraqi government. Built by Iraqis for Iraqis— Another example of progress in Iraq.



This project is being built for Iraqis by Iraqis. This project was selected and is supported by your Iraqi government who is helping to move Iraq towards progress and prosperity.



Figure 7. Iraqi success handbill.

We specifically designed these leaflets to convince the population that progress was occurring.

Measures of IO Effectiveness

As with all operations, gauging IO effectiveness is important; however, the process of measuring IO success is not a precise science. That noted, we did discover certain simple techniques to identify indicators that we found useful for measuring effectiveness.

Iraqi PAOs. Iraqi PAOs were indispensable to our success with the Iraqi and Arab press. They were instrumental in soliciting Arab media correspondents to attend our bi-weekly brigade news huddles and in gauging what was being published or broadcast that directly affected our area of operations.

We hired two Iraqi interpreters and dedicated them to 24-hour monitoring of Arab satellite news. That's all they did: They watched satellite news television in our headquarters and noted every story that was aired about operations in Iraq.

Through their efforts we were able to determine that our information operations were having the intended effect because of an increase in the number of accurate, positive stories published or aired in local papers and on satellite TV.

Updates and analysis from this monitoring process became a key part of the daily battle update brief. The PAO briefed us on newspaper articles or Arab TV stories related to our operations. For example, a story might have appeared on Al Jazeera about some particular issue or event in the brigade AO that might have been incorrectly reported. We would respond by developing an IO action to counter the story. This type of monitoring told us about the type of information being directed at the local population, which in turn allowed us to take action to counter or exploit the information.

Lack of adverse publicity. A similar key indicator that our IO efforts were succeeding was a lack of adverse publicity. While we were in Baghdad we raided eight mosques, but received no adverse publicity other than from a few disgruntled imams. To our knowledge, these raids were not reported by either the Arab or the international press. Nor did these raids prove to be problematic in feedback from the various target audiences we were trying to influence. We attributed this success to the meticulous IO planning we did for every sensitive site we raided. Ultimately, we developed a brigade SOP that detailed the IO activities we were required to do before, during, and after such raids.

Measures of Effectiveness

- **Number of accurate/positive stories published/aired.**
- **Lack of negative press.**
- **Number of walk-in or non-informant tips.**
- **Wave factor.**
- **Increase/decrease of anti-U.S./Coalition graffiti.**
- **Tenor of mosque sermons.**
- **Willingness of Iraqis to work with our forces.**

Increase in intelligence tips. Another indicator of success was the increased number of intelligence tips we received. We determined that there was a correlation between the number of tips we received from unpaid walk-in informants and the local population's growing belief that they should distance themselves from the insurgents and align themselves with Coalition reform efforts. By comparing week after week how often local citizens approached our Soldiers and told them where IEDs were implanted or where they were being made, we had a pretty good idea that our efforts to separate the insurgents from the population were working.

The wave factor and graffiti. An informal but important indicator was what we called the wave factor. If you drive through a neighborhood and everyone is waving, that is good news. If you drive through a neighborhood and only the children are waving, that is a good but not great indicator. If you drive through a neighborhood and no one is waving, then you have some serious image problems. A similar informal indicator was the increase or decrease of anti-Coalition graffiti.

Monitoring mosque sermons. A more sophisticated indicator came from reports of what had been said at mosque sermons. Monitoring imam rhetoric proved to be an important technique because messages delivered during sermons indicated whether or not imams were toning down their anti-Coalition rhetoric. If they were, we could claim success

for our program of religious leader engagements. Feedback on what was said inside the mosque steered us to those imams we specifically needed to engage. For example, I would be briefed that a certain imam was still advocating violence against Coalition forces or that he was simply communicating false information. We would then tailor our IO efforts to engage that particular imam or other local neighborhood leaders so that he might modify his behavior and rhetoric.

The Way Ahead

In Iraq's COIN environment, information operations are important tools for achieving success. I believe the program we developed, with its focus on engendering tolerance for our presence and willingness to cooperate (rather than winning hearts and minds), and its basis in consistent, reliable actions supported by targeted communications to specific audiences, paid dividends.

Repetition of message, accuracy of information, and speed of delivery were key to executing our plan. Ultimately, those of us tasked with counter-insurgency must always keep in mind that we are really competing with the insurgents for influence with the indigenous population. In Iraq, that means convincing the population that they should tolerate our short-term presence so that economic, political, social, and security reforms can take root and ultimately give them a better country and a better life. To achieve this goal, we must dominate the IO environment. To dominate the IO environment, we need to ensure that information operations receive the same level of emphasis and involvement that our commanders have traditionally allocated to conventional maneuver operations. Until our Army matures in its development of doctrine and approach to training for insurgencies, commanders at all levels will need to play a prominent role in developing, implementing, and directing IO within their areas of operation.

One of the many strengths our Army enjoys is that it is an adaptive, learning organization. Significant changes are already taking place as we begin to learn from the lessons of fighting an insurgency. Our Combat Training Centers are implementing changes to their training models to better integrate IO into rotation scenarios. Their challenge will be to give rotating forces an irregular warfare experience that acknowledges and rewards good IO planning and execution by our Soldiers. The addition of IO, PA, and CA officers, PSYOP NCOs, and PAOs to maneuver brigades is encouraging, and the offering of COIN electives at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) indicates real progress. However, there is still more to be done before our Soldiers and our Army can comfortably employ IO as a key instrument for waging war against an irregular enemy. Some of the following suggestions are already being considered and will soon be implemented; others I hope will spark some debate as to their merits:

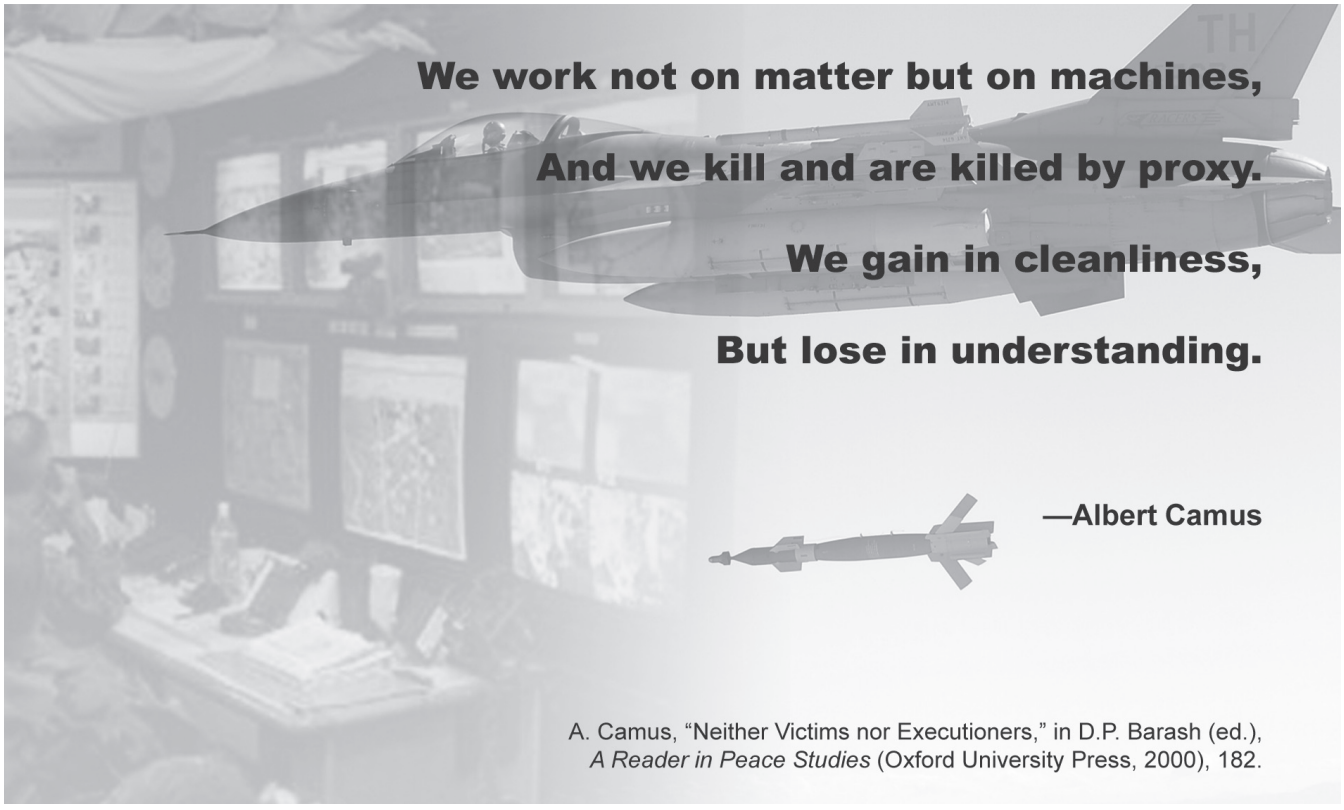
- Do more than add a COIN elective to the CGSC curriculum. Immediately require COIN instruction at all levels in our institutional training base.
- Integrate cultural awareness training as a standard component in our institutional training base curriculum.

Essential IO Observations

1. **To be effective, tailor themes and messages to specific audiences.**
2. **You have no influence over the press if you do not talk to them.**
3. **There is a direct correlation between your credibility and your ability to demonstrably improve the quality of life, physical security, and stability in a society.**
4. **A major IO goal at tactical and operational levels is getting the citizens in your AO to have trust and confidence in you.**
5. **The commander's vision and intent are essential, but when you direct subordinates to perform outside their comfort zones, your personal involvement is especially important to ensure that your concept is executed according to plan.**
6. **An IO campaign has a greater likelihood of success if messages are simple, few, and repeated often.**
7. **Reporters must earn their access.**

- Increase the quality and quantity of media training provided to Soldiers and leaders.
- Consider compensating culture experts commensurate with their expertise. Why is it that we see fit to give pilots flight pay but do not offer foreign area officers cultural pay? If we want to build a bench of specialists in key languages such as Arabic, Farsi, and Mandarin Chinese, we should consider a financial incentive program to attract and retain people who possess these critical skills.
- Reassess policies and regulations that inhibit our tactical units' ability to compete in an IO environment. The global communications network facilitates the near-instantaneous transmission of information to local and international audiences, and it is inexpensive and easy to access. Our Soldiers must be permitted to beat the insurgents to the IO punch.

In closing, the model of information operations I have advocated here is simply one way to conduct IO at brigade level and below. This model is not intended to be the only way. The unique aspects of each operational environment, our national goals in wartime, the culture of the indigenous population, and many other factors will ultimately dictate each commander's concept of information operations. The important thing is to develop a plan and to execute it aggressively. Failing to do so will give the insurgent a perhaps insurmountable advantage. ***MR***



"Twenty-Eight Articles": Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency

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"28 Articles" originally came to *Military Review* as a submission for the Combined Arms Center Commanding General's Special Topics Writing Competition ("Countering Insurgency"). Pressed to publish the piece immediately because it could help Soldiers in the field, LTC Kilcullen graciously agreed and pulled his essay from the writing contest. It would certainly have been a strong contender for a prize.

Your company has just been warned about possible deployment for counterinsurgency operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. You have read David Galula, T.E. Lawrence, and Robert Thompson. You have studied FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, and now understand the history, philosophy, and theory of counterinsurgency.[1] You have watched *Black Hawk Down* and *The Battle of Algiers*, and you know this will be the most difficult challenge of your life.[2]

But what does all that theory mean, at the company level? How do the principles translate into action at night, with the GPS (global positioning system) down, the media criticizing you, the locals complaining in a language you don't understand, and an unseen enemy killing your people by ones and twos? How does counterinsurgency actually happen?

There are no universal answers, and insurgents are among the most adaptive opponents you will ever face. Countering them will demand every ounce of your intellect. But be comforted: You are not the first to feel this way. There are tactical fundamentals you can apply to link the theory with the techniques and procedures you already know.

What is Counterinsurgency?

If you have not studied counterinsurgency theory, here it is in a nutshell: Counterinsurgency is a competition with the insurgent for the right to win the hearts, minds, and acquiescence of the population. You are being sent in because the insurgents, at their strongest, can defeat anything with less strength than you. But you have more combat power than you can or should use in most situations. Injudicious use of firepower creates blood feuds, homeless people, and societal disruption that fuel and perpetuate the insurgency. The most beneficial actions are often local politics, civic action, and beat-cop behaviors. For your side to win, the people don't have to like you but they must respect you, accept that your actions benefit them, and trust your integrity and ability to deliver on promises, particularly regarding their security. In this battlefield, popular perceptions and rumor are more influential than the facts and more powerful than a hundred tanks.

Within this context, what follows are observations from collective experience, the distilled essence of what those who went before you learned. They are expressed as commandments, for clarity, but are really more like folklore. Apply them judiciously and skeptically.

Preparation

Time is short during predeployment, but you will never have more time to think than you have now. Now is your chance to prepare yourself and your command.

1. Know your turf. Know the people, the topography, economy, history, religion, and culture. Know every village, road, field, population group, tribal leader, and ancient grievance. Your task is to become the world expert on your district. If you don't know precisely where you will be operating, study the general area. Read the map like a book: Study it every night before sleep and redraw it from memory every morning until you understand its patterns intuitively. Develop a mental model of your area, a framework in which to fit every new piece of knowledge you acquire. Study handover notes from predecessors; better still, get in touch with the unit in theater and pick their leaders' brains. In an ideal world, intelligence officers and area experts would brief you; however, this rarely happens, and even if it does, there is no substitute for personal mastery. Understand the broader area of influence, which can be a wide area, particularly when insurgents draw on global grievances. Share out aspects of the operational area among platoon leaders and noncommissioned officers; have each individual develop a personal specialization and brief the others. Neglect this knowledge, and it will kill you.

2. Diagnose the problem. Once you know your area and its people, you can begin to diagnose the problem. Who are the insurgents? What drives them? What makes local leaders tick? Counterinsurgency is fundamentally a competition between each side to mobilize the population in support of its agenda. So you must understand what motivates the people and how to mobilize them. You need to know why and how the insurgents are getting followers. This means you need to know your real enemy, not a cardboard cut-out. The enemy is adaptive, resourceful, and probably grew up in the region where you will be operating. The locals have known him since he was a boy; how long have they known you? Your worst opponent is not the psychopathic terrorist of Hollywood; it is the charismatic follow-me warrior who would make your best platoon leader. His followers are not misled or naïve; much of his success may be due to bad government policies or security forces that alienate the population. Work

this problem collectively with your platoon and squad leaders. Discuss ideas, explore the problem, understand what you are facing, and seek a consensus. If this sounds unmilitary, get over it. Once you are in theater, situations will arise too quickly for orders or even commander's intent. Corporals and privates will have to make snap judgments with strategic impact. The only way to help them is to give them a shared understanding, then trust them to think for themselves on the day.

3. Organize for intelligence. In counterinsurgency, killing the enemy is easy. Finding him is often nearly impossible. Intelligence and operations are complementary. Your operations will be intelligence-driven, but intelligence will come mostly from your own operations, not as a product prepared and served up by higher headquarters. So you must organize for intelligence. You will need a company S2 and an intelligence section (including analysts). You might need platoon S2s and S3s, and you will need a reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) element. You will not have enough linguists—you never do—but carefully consider where best to use them. Linguists are a battle-winning asset, but like any other scarce resource, you must have a prioritized "bump plan" in case you lose them. Often during predeployment the best use of linguists is to train your command in basic language. You will probably not get augmentation for all this, but you must still do it. Put the smartest soldiers in the S2 section and the R&S squad. You will have one less rifle squad, but the intelligence section will pay for itself in lives and effort saved.

4. Organize for interagency operations. Almost everything in counterinsurgency is interagency. And everything important, from policing to intelligence to civil-military operations to trash collection, will involve your company working with civilian actors and local indigenous partners you cannot control, but whose success is essential for yours. Train the company in interagency operations: Get a briefing from the U.S. Department of State, aid agencies, and the local police or fire brigade. Train point-men in each squad to deal with the interagency people. Realize that civilians find rifles, helmets, and body armor intimidating. Learn how not to scare them. Ask others who come from that country or culture about your ideas. See it through the eyes of a civilian who knows nothing about the military. How would you react if foreigners came to your neighborhood and conducted the operations you planned? What if somebody came to your mother's house and did that? Most importantly, know that your operations will create a temporary breathing space, but long-term development and stabilization by civilian agencies will ultimately win the war.

5. Travel light and harden your combat service support (CSS). You will be weighed down with body armor, rations, extra ammunition, communications gear, and a thousand other things. The enemy will carry a rifle or rocket-propelled grenade launcher, a shemagh (head scarf), and a water bottle if he is lucky. Unless you ruthlessly lighten your load and enforce a culture of speed and mobility, the insurgents will consistently out-run and outmaneuver you. But in lightening your load, make sure you can always reach back to call for firepower or heavy support if needed. Also, remember to harden your CSS. The enemy will attack your weakest points. Most attacks on Coalition forces in Iraq in 2004 and 2005, outside preplanned combat actions like the two battles of Falluja or Operation Iron Horse, were against CSS installations and convoys. You do the math. Ensure your CSS assets are hardened, have communications, and are trained in combat operations. They may do more fighting than your rifle squads.

6. Find a political/cultural adviser. In a force optimized for counterinsurgency, you might receive a political-cultural adviser at company level, a diplomat or military foreign area officer able to speak the language and navigate the intricacies of local politics. Back on planet Earth, the corps and division commander will get a political advisor; you will not, so you must improvise. Find a POLAD (political-cultural adviser) from among your people—perhaps an officer, perhaps not (see article 8). Someone with people skills and a feel for the environment will do better than a political-science graduate. Don't try to be your own cultural adviser: You must be fully aware of the political and cultural dimension, but this is a different task. Also, don't give one of your intelligence people this role. They can help, but their task is to understand the environment. The POLAD's job is to help shape it.

7. Train the squad leaders—then trust them. Counterinsurgency is a squad and platoon leader's war, and often a private soldier's war. Battles are won or lost in moments: Whoever can bring combat power to bear in seconds, on a street corner, will win. The commander on the spot controls the fight. You must train the squad leaders to act intelligently and independently without orders. If your squad leaders are competent, you can get away with average company or platoon staffs. The reverse is not the case. Training should focus on basic skills: marksmanship, patrolling, security on the move and at the halt, and basic drills. When in doubt, spend less time on company and platoon training, and more time on squads. Ruthlessly replace leaders who do not make the grade. But once people are trained and you have a shared operational diagnosis, you must trust them. We talk about this, but few company or platoon leaders really trust their people. In counterinsurgency, you have no choice.

8. Rank is nothing; talent is everything. Not everyone is good at counterinsurgency. Many people don't understand the concept, and some can't execute it. It is difficult, and in a conventional force only a few people will master it. Anyone can learn the basics, but a few naturals do exist. Learn how to spot these people, and put them into positions where they can make a difference. Rank matters far less than talent—a few good men led by a smart junior noncommissioned officer can succeed in counterinsurgency, where hundreds of well-armed soldiers under a mediocre senior officer will fail.

9. Have a game plan. The final preparation task is to develop a game plan, a mental picture of how you see the operation developing. You will be tempted to try and do this too early. But wait, as your knowledge improves, you will get a better idea of what needs to be done and a fuller understanding of your own limitations. Like any plan, this plan will change once you hit the ground, and it may need to be scrapped if there is

a major shift in the environment. But you still need a plan, and the process of planning will give you a simple, robust idea of what to achieve, even if the methods change. This is sometimes called "operational design." One approach is to identify basic stages in your operation, for example "establish dominance, build local networks, marginalize the enemy." Make sure you can easily transition between phases, forward and backward, in case of setbacks. Just as the insurgent can adapt his activity to yours, so you must have a simple enough plan to survive setbacks without collapsing. This plan is the solution that matches the shared diagnosis you developed earlier. It must be simple, and known to everyone.

The Golden Hour

You have deployed, completed reception and staging, and (if you are lucky) attended the in-country counterinsurgency school. Now it is time to enter your sector and start your tour. This is the golden hour. Mistakes made now will haunt you for the rest of your tour, while early successes will set the tone for victory. You will look back on your early actions and cringe at your clumsiness. So be it. But you must act.

10. Be there. The most fundamental rule of counterinsurgency is to be there. You can almost never outrun the enemy. If you are not present when an incident happens, there is usually little you can do about it. So your first order of business is to establish presence. If you can't do this throughout your sector, then do it wherever you can. This demands a residential approach: living in your sector, in close proximity to the population rather than raiding into the area from remote, secure bases. Movement on foot, sleeping in local villages, night patrolling—all these seem more dangerous than they are. They establish links with the locals, who see you as real people they can trust and do business with, not as aliens who descend from an armored box. Driving around in an armored convoy, day-tripping like a tourist in hell, degrades situational awareness, makes you a target, and is ultimately more dangerous.

11. Avoid knee-jerk responses to first impressions. Don't act rashly; get the facts first. The violence you see may be part of the insurgent strategy; it may be various interest groups fighting it out with each other or settling personal vendettas. Normality in Kandahar is not the same as in Seattle—you need time to learn what normality looks like. The insurgent commander wants to goad you into lashing out at the population or making a mistake. Unless you happen to be on the spot when an incident occurs, you will have only second-hand reports and may misunderstand the local context or interpretation. This fragmentation and "disaggregation" of the battlefield, particularly in urban areas, means that first impressions are often highly misleading. Of course, you can't avoid making judgments. But if possible, check them with an older hand or a trusted local. If you can, keep one or two officers from your predecessor unit for the first part of the tour. Try to avoid a rush to judgment.

12. Prepare for handover from day one. Believe it or not, you will not resolve the insurgency on your watch. Your tour will end, and your successors will need your corporate knowledge. Start handover folders, in every platoon and specialist squad, from day one. Ideally, you would have inherited these from your predecessors, but if not you must start them. The folders should include lessons learned, details about the population, village and patrol reports, updated maps, and photographs—anything that will help newcomers master the environment. Computerized databases are fine, but keep good back-ups and ensure you have hard copy of key artifacts and documents. This is boring and tedious, but essential. Over time, you will create a corporate memory that keeps your people alive.

13. Build trusted networks. Once you have settled into your sector, your key task is to build trusted networks. This is the true meaning of the phrase hearts and minds, which comprises two separate components. Hearts means persuading people their best interests are served by your success; minds means convincing them that you can protect them, and that resisting you is pointless. Note that neither concept has anything to do with whether people like you. Calculated self-interest, not emotion, is what counts. Over time, if you successfully build networks of trust, these will grow like roots into the population, displacing the enemy's networks, bringing him out into the open to fight you, and letting you seize the initiative. These networks include local allies, community leaders, local security forces, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other friendly or neutral nonstate actors in your area, and the media. Conduct village and neighborhood surveys to identify needs in the community, then follow through to meet them. Build common interests and mobilize popular support. This is your true main effort; everything else is secondary. Actions that help build trusted networks serve your cause. Actions—even killing high-profile targets that undermine trust or disrupt your networks—help the enemy.

14. Start easy. If you were trained in maneuver warfare you know about surfaces and gaps. This applies to counterinsurgency as much as any other form of maneuver. Don't try to crack the hardest nut first—don't go straight for the main insurgent stronghold, try to provoke a decisive showdown, or focus efforts on villages that support the insurgents. Instead, start from secure areas and work gradually outwards. Do this by extending your influence through the locals' own networks. Go with, not against, the grain of local society. First win the confidence of a few villages and see who they trade, intermarry, or do business with. Now win these people over. Soon enough the showdown with the insurgents will come. But now you have local allies, a mobilized population, and a trusted network at your back. Do it the other way around and no one will mourn your failure.

15. Seek early victories. In this early phase, your aim is to stamp your dominance in your sector. Do this by seeking an early victory. This will probably not translate into a combat victory over the enemy. Looking for such a victory can be overly aggressive and create collateral damage—especially since you really do not yet understand your sector. Also, such a combat victory depends on the enemy being stupid enough to present you with a clear-cut target, which is a rare windfall in counterinsurgency. Instead, you may achieve a victory by resolving long-standing issues your predecessors have failed to address, or by co-opting a key local leader who has resisted cooperation with our forces. Like any other form of armed

propaganda, achieving even a small victory early in the tour sets the tone for what comes later and helps seize the initiative, which you have probably lost due to the inevitable hiatus entailed by the handover-takeover with your predecessor.

16. Practice deterrent patrolling. Establish patrolling methods that deter the enemy from attacking you. Often our patrolling approach seems designed to provoke, then defeat, enemy attacks. This is counterproductive; it leads to a raiding, day-tripping mindset or, worse, a bunker mentality. Instead, practice deterrent patrolling. There are many methods for this, including multiple patrolling in which you flood an area with numerous small patrols working together. Each is too small to be a worthwhile target, and the insurgents never know where all the patrols are—making an attack on any one patrol extremely risky. Other methods include so-called blue-green patrolling, where you mount daylight, overt humanitarian patrols, which go covert at night and hunt specific targets. Again, the aim is to keep the enemy off balance, and the population reassured through constant and unpredictable activity which, over time, deters attacks and creates a more permissive environment. A reasonable rule of thumb is that one- to two-thirds of your force should be on patrol at any time, day or night.

17. Be prepared for setbacks. Setbacks are normal in counterinsurgency, as in every other form of war. You will make mistakes, lose people, or occasionally kill or detain the wrong person. You may fail in building or expanding networks. If this happens, don't lose heart, simply drop back to the previous phase of your game plan and recover your balance. It is normal in company counterinsurgency operations for some platoons to be doing well while others do badly. This is not necessarily evidence of failure. Give local commanders the freedom to adjust their posture to local conditions. This creates elasticity that helps you survive setbacks.

18. Remember the global audience. One of the biggest differences between the counterinsurgencies our fathers fought and those we face today is the omnipresence of globalized media. Most houses in Iraq have one or more satellite dishes. Web bloggers; print, radio, and television reporters; and others are monitoring and reporting your every move. When the insurgents ambush your patrols or set off a car bomb, they do so not to destroy one more track, but because they want graphic images of a burning vehicle and dead bodies for the evening news. Beware of the scripted enemy who plays to a global audience and seeks to defeat you in the court of global public opinion. You counter this by training people to always bear in mind the global audience, to assume that everything they say or do will be publicized, and to befriend the media. Get the press on-side—help them get their story, and trade information with them. Good relationships with nonembedded media, especially indigenous media, dramatically increase your situational awareness and help get your message across to the global and local audience.

19. Engage the women, beware of the children. Most insurgent fighters are men. But in traditional societies, women are hugely influential in forming the social networks that insurgents use for support. Co-opting neutral or friendly women, through targeted social and economic programs, builds networks of enlightened self-interest that eventually undermine the insurgents. You need your own female counterinsurgents, including interagency people, to do this effectively. Win the women, and you own the family unit. Own the family, and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population. Conversely, though, stop your people from fraternizing with the local children. Your troops are homesick; they want to drop their guard with the kids, but children are sharp-eyed, lacking in empathy, and willing to commit atrocities their elders would shrink from. The insurgents are watching: They will notice a growing friendship between one of your people and a local child, and either harm the child as punishment, or use them against you. Similarly, stop people throwing candies or presents to children. It attracts them to our vehicles, creates crowds the enemy can exploit, and leads to children being run over. Harden your heart and keep the children at arm's length.

20. Take stock regularly. You probably already know that a body count tells you little, because you usually can't know how many insurgents there were to start with, how many moved into the area, how many transferred from supporter to combatant status, or how many new fighters the conflict has created. But you still need to develop metrics early in the tour and refine them as the operation progresses. They should cover a range of social, informational, military, and economic issues. Use metrics intelligently to form an overall impression of progress—not in a mechanistic traffic-light fashion. Typical metrics include percentage of engagements initiated by our forces versus those initiated by insurgents; longevity of friendly local leaders in positions of authority; number and quality of tip-offs on insurgent activity that originate spontaneously from the population; and economic activity at markets and shops. These mean virtually nothing as a snapshot; it is trends over time that help you track progress in your sector.

Groundhog Day

Now you are in "steady state." You are established in your sector, and people are settling into that "groundhog day" mentality that hits every unit at some stage during every tour. It will probably take you at least the first third of your tour to become effective in your new environment, if not longer. Then in the last period you will struggle against the short-timer mentality. So this middle part of the tour is the most productive—but keeping the flame alive, and bringing the local population along with you, takes immense leadership.

21. Exploit a "single narrative." Since counterinsurgency is a competition to mobilize popular support, it pays to know how people are mobilized. In most societies there are opinion makers—local leaders, pillars of the community, religious figures, media personalities, and others who set trends and influence public perceptions. This influence, including the pernicious influence of the insurgents, often takes the form of a "single narrative": a simple, unifying, easily expressed story or explanation that organizes people's experience and provides a framework for understanding events. Nationalist and ethnic historical myths, or sectarian creeds, provide such a narrative. The Iraqi insurgents have one, as do Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. To undercut

their influence you must exploit an alternative narrative, or better yet, tap into an existing narrative that excludes the insurgents. This narrative is often worked out for you by higher headquarters—but only you have the detailed knowledge to tailor the narrative to local conditions and generate leverage from it. For example, you might use a nationalist narrative to marginalize foreign fighters in your area or a narrative of national redemption to undermine former regime elements that have been terrorizing the population. At the company level, you do this in baby steps by getting to know local opinion-makers, winning their trust, learning what motivates them, and building on this to find a single narrative that emphasizes the inevitability and rightness of your ultimate success. This is art, not science.

22. Local forces should mirror the enemy, not the Americans. By this stage, you will be working closely with local forces, training or supporting them and building indigenous capability. The natural tendency is to build forces in the U.S. image, with the aim of eventually handing our role over to them. This is a mistake. Instead, local indigenous forces need to mirror the enemy's capabilities and seek to supplant the insurgent's role. This does not mean they should be irregular in the sense of being brutal or outside proper control. Rather, they should move, equip, and organize like the insurgents, but have access to your support and be under the firm control of their parent societies. Combined with a mobilized population and trusted networks, this allows local forces to hard-wire the enemy out of the environment, under top-cover from you. At the company level, this means that raising, training, and employing local indigenous auxiliary forces (police and military) are valid tasks. This requires high-level clearance, of course, but if support is given, you should establish a company training cell. Platoons should aim to train one local squad, then use that squad as a nucleus for a partner platoon. Company headquarters should train an indigenous leadership team. This mirrors the growth process of other trusted networks and tends to emerge naturally as you win local allies who want to take up arms in their own defense.

23. Practice armed civil affairs. Counterinsurgency is armed social work, an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at. This makes civil affairs a central counterinsurgency activity, not an afterthought. It is how you restructure the environment to displace the enemy from it. In your company sector, civil affairs must focus on meeting basic needs first, then progress up Maslow's hierarchy as each successive need is met. You need intimate cooperation with interagency partners here—national, international, and local. You will not be able to control these partners—many NGOs, for example, do not want to be too closely associated with you because they need to preserve their perceived neutrality. Instead, you need to work on a shared diagnosis of the problem, building a consensus that helps you self-synchronize. Your role is to provide protection, identify needs, facilitate civil affairs, and use improvements in social conditions as leverage to build networks and mobilize the population. Thus, there is no such thing as impartial humanitarian assistance or civil affairs in counterinsurgency. Every time you help someone, you hurt someone else—not least the insurgents—so civil and humanitarian assistance personnel will be targeted. Protecting them is a matter not only of close-in defense, but also of creating a permissive operating environment by co-opting the beneficiaries of aid (local communities and leaders) to help you help them.

24. Small is beautiful. Another natural tendency is to go for large-scale, mass programs. In particular, we have a tendency to template ideas that succeed in one area and transplant them into another, and we tend to take small programs that work and try to replicate them on a larger scale. Again, this is usually a mistake: Often programs succeed because of specific local conditions of which we are unaware, or because their very smallness kept them below the enemy's radar and helped them flourish unmolested. At the company level, programs that succeed in one district often also succeed in another (because the overall company sector is small), but small-scale projects rarely proceed smoothly into large programs. Keep programs small; this makes them cheap, sustainable, low-key, and (importantly) recoverable if they fail. You can add new programs—also small, cheap and tailored to local conditions—as the situation allows.

25. Fight the enemy's strategy, not his forces. At this stage, if things are proceeding well, the insurgents will go over to the offensive. Yes, the offensive, because you have created a situation so dangerous to the insurgents (by threatening to displace them from the environment) that they have to attack you and the population to get back into the game. Thus it is normal, even in the most successful operations, to have spikes of offensive insurgent activity late in the campaign. This does not necessarily mean you have done something wrong (though it may, it depends on whether you have successfully mobilized the population). At this point the tendency is to go for the jugular and seek to destroy the enemy's forces in open battle. This is rarely the best choice at company level, because provoking major combat usually plays into the enemy's hands by undermining the population's confidence. Instead, attack the enemy's strategy. If he is seeking to recapture the allegiance of a segment of the local population, then co-opt them against him. If he is trying to provoke a sectarian conflict, go over to peace-enforcement mode. The permutations are endless, but the principle is the same: Fight the enemy's strategy, not his forces.

26. Build your own solution—only attack the enemy when he gets in the way. Try not to be distracted or forced into a series of reactive moves by a desire to kill or capture the insurgents. Your aim should be to implement your own solution, the game plan you developed early in the campaign and then refined through interaction with local partners. Your approach must be environment-centric (based on dominating the whole district and implementing a solution to its systemic problems) rather than enemy-centric. This means that particularly late in the campaign you may need to learn to negotiate with the enemy. Members of the population that supports you also know the enemy's leaders. They may have grown up together in the small district that is now your company sector, and valid negotiating partners

sometimes emerge as the campaign progresses. Again, you need close interagency relationships to exploit opportunities to co-opt segments of the enemy. This helps you wind down the insurgency without alienating potential local allies who have relatives or friends in the insurgent movement. At this stage, a defection is better than a surrender, a surrender is better than a capture, and a capture is better than a kill.

Getting Short

Time is short, and the tour is drawing to a close. The key problem now is keeping your people focused, maintaining the rage on all the multifarious programs, projects, and operations that you have started, and preventing your people from dropping their guard. In this final phase, the previous articles still stand, but there is an important new one.

27. Keep your extraction plan secret. The temptation to talk about home becomes almost unbearable toward the end of a tour. The locals know you are leaving, and probably have a better idea than you of the generic extraction plan. Remember, they have seen units come and go. But you must protect the specific details of the extraction plan, or the enemy will use this as an opportunity to score a high-profile hit, recapture the population's allegiance by scare tactics that convince them they will not be protected once you leave, or persuade them that your successor unit will be oppressive or incompetent. Keep the details secret within a tightly controlled compartment in your headquarters.

Four "What Ifs"

The articles above describe what should happen, but we all know that things go wrong. Here are some what ifs to consider:

● What if you get moved to a different area? You prepared for ar-Ramadi and studied Dulaim tribal structures and Sunni beliefs. Now you are going to Najaf and will be surrounded by al-Hassani tribes and Shi'a communities. But that work was not wasted. In mastering your first area, you learned techniques you can apply: how to "case" an operational area and how to decide what matters in the local societal structure. Do the same again, and this time the process is easier and faster, since you have an existing mental structure and can focus on what is different. The same applies if you get moved frequently within a battalion or brigade area.

● What if higher headquarters doesn't "get" counterinsurgency? Higher headquarters is telling you the mission is to "kill terrorists," or pushing for high-speed armored patrols and a base-camp mentality. They just don't seem to understand counterinsurgency. This is not uncommon, since company-grade officers today often have more combat experience than senior officers. In this case, just do what you can. Try not to create expectations that higher headquarters will not let you meet. Apply the adage "first do no harm." Over time, you will find ways to do what you have to do. But never lie to higher headquarters about your locations or activities—they own the indirect fires.

● What if you have no resources? You have no linguists, the aid agencies have no money for projects in your area, and you have a low priority for civil affairs. You can still get things done, but you need to focus on self-reliance: Keep things small and sustainable and ruthlessly prioritize effort. The local population are your allies in this: They know what matters to them more than you do. Be honest with them; discuss possible projects and options with community leaders; get them to choose what their priorities are. Often they will find the translators, building supplies, or expertise that you need, and will only expect your support and protection in making their projects work. And the process of negotiation and consultation will help mobilize their support and strengthen their social cohesion. If you set your sights on what is achievable, the situation can still work.

● What if the theater situation shifts under your feet? It is your worst nightmare: Everything has gone well in your sector, but the whole theater situation has changed and invalidates your efforts. Think of the first battle of Falluja, the Askariya shrine bombing, or the Sadr uprising. What do you do? Here is where having a flexible, adaptive game plan comes in. Just as the insurgents drop down to a lower posture when things go wrong, now is the time for you to drop back a stage, consolidate, regain your balance, and prepare to expand again when the situation allows. But see article 28: If you cede the initiative, you must regain it as soon as the situation allows, or you will eventually lose.

This, then, is the tribal wisdom, the folklore that those who went before you have learned. Like any folklore it needs interpretation and contains seemingly contradictory advice. Over time, as you apply unremitting intellectual effort to study your sector, you will learn to apply these ideas in your own way and will add to this store of wisdom from your own observations and experience. So only one article remains, and if you remember nothing else, remember this:

28. Whatever else you do, keep the initiative. In counterinsurgency, the initiative is everything. If the enemy is reacting to you, you control the environment. Provided you mobilize the population, you will win. If you are reacting to the enemy, even if you are killing or capturing him in large numbers, then he is controlling the environment and you will eventually lose. In counterinsurgency, the enemy initiates most attacks, targets you unexpectedly, and withdraws too fast for you to react. Do not be drawn into purely reactive operations: Focus on the population, build your own solution, further your game plan, and fight the enemy only when he gets in the way. This gains and keeps the initiative. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006).

2. *Black Hawk Down* (Los Angeles, CA: Scott Free Productions, 2002); *The Battle of Algiers* (Casbah Film and Igor Film, 1967).

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Advising Iraqis: Building the Iraqi Army

Lieutenant Colonel Carl D. Grunow, U.S. Army

IF AMERICA AGREES with President George W. Bush that failure in Iraq is not an option, then the adviser mission there will clearly be a long-term one. The new Iraqi Army (IA) will need years to become equal to the challenge posed by a persistent insurgent and terrorist threat, and U.S. support is essential to this growth. Having spent a year assigned to the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) equipping and training a new Iraqi armored brigade, I offer some recommendations to future advisers as they take on the job of working with the IA to build a professional and competent fighting force.

This article draws on my experience as the senior adviser for the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT) charged with assisting the 2d Armored Brigade, 9th Mechanized Division, based 15 miles north of Baghdad in Taji, Iraq. When my 10-man team arrived in August 2005, the brigade was just beginning to form. Equipped with the T-72 tank, the 2d Brigade was the only armored brigade in the IA. Over the next 11 months, my team, along with 4 other battalion-level teams, assisted in manning, equipping, training, and employing this growing military organization. At the end of my tour in June 2006, the 1700-man brigade had taken the lead in its area of responsibility. I share the following observations for future advisers.

First, appreciate the importance of the advisory mission and understand the enormity of the task at hand. Iraqi officers with whom I have spoken agree unanimously that a U.S. presence in Iraq is absolutely essential to prevent catastrophic collapse of the government and civil war. A vital element of this presence is the Iraqi Adviser Group (IAG), which is tasked to coach and guide the IA toward self-sufficiency. While the new Iraqi government struggles to become autonomous, there is just no competent institution other than the IA that can prevent anarchy. But the dismantling of the old IA in 2003 left little to reconstruct, so multi-national forces have been forced to reconstitute a new IA from scratch. The wisdom of the dissolution of the old army is not at issue here; it is the consequences of this decision that advisers must comprehend to appreciate the full scope of their challenge.

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PHOTO: Soldiers with the 9th Iraqi Army Division (Mechanized) parade a fleet of refurbished T-72 tanks before an audience of Iraqi and Coalition officials at Taji Military Base in November 2005. The tanks were part of a donation of equipment arranged by NATO. (U.S. Army)

Next, make an effort to understand the Iraqi soldiers; cultivate a respect for their culture. Each American adviser starts with great credibility in terms of military expertise, and the Iraqis believe that we can do anything if we put our minds to it. With a measure of humility and cultural sensitivity, each adviser can use this perception to great advantage building the new Iraqi force.

Finally, understand that the relationship among the Iraqi unit, the advisers, and the partner unit can be contentious, so as you work with your Iraqi unit, foster your relationship with the Coalition partners as well. The Coalition is charged with building the IA to stand on its own so that eventually it can be self-sustaining. But it's tough to simultaneously conduct combat operations against insurgents while providing training opportunities for the Iraqis, and the friction among all the organizations involved can inhibit the Iraqi unit's growth.

The Adviser's Challenges

By disbanding the old IA, the United States accepted responsibility for replacing an institution that was both respected and feared throughout Iraq. Saddam could count on his army to maintain control against internal dissent, as evidenced by the effective suppression of large-scale rebellions in the north and south during the 1990s. Iron discipline was the norm under Saddam. The lowliest lieutenant could expect instant obedience and extreme deference from his soldiers. Today's army is very different. Unlike Saddam's, the new army serves the cause of freedom, and officers and soldiers alike are a bit confused about what this means.

Recruiting, retaining and accountability. One of the most critical tasks for the army is recruiting and retaining soldiers. Soldiers are under no effective contract, and they always have the option to leave the service. As of this writing, the only power holding them is the promise of a paycheck (not always delivered) and a sense of duty. Good soldiers leave after receiving terrorist threats against their families. Less dutiful soldiers fail to show up for training if they think it will be too hard. In areas where the duty is difficult and deadly, unit AWOL rates approach 40 percent. The old IA executed deserters unhesitatingly; the new army watches powerlessly as soldiers walk away from their posts, knowing full well that the army has no real means to punish them.

I believe that many of the officers join because they have a great sense of duty and want to save their country from chaos. They have assumed roles in the new IA at great personal risk. In my brigade alone, the litany of personal tragedy grew with depressing regularity. The commander's brother was kidnapped and killed. The deputy commander's cousins, hired to protect his family, were found murdered and stacked up on his doorstep with a note saying he was next. Two of four battalion commanders had to move their families because of death threats. A deputy battalion commander's son was kidnapped and has not been found. Staff officers, soldiers, and interpreters spoke of murdered relatives or told harrowing personal stories of close calls with terrorists.

Iraqi soldiers and officers are making a daily choice between continuing to invest in the new government and opting out to focus on making the best of possible anarchy. Without steadfast American support, these officers and soldiers will likely give up and consider the entire effort a lost cause. Until the government and its security forces become more competent, this will be a risk.

Personnel accountability is another issue, but not so much for the Iraqis as for the Americans. The Iraqis are horrendous at keeping track of their soldiers. There are no routine accountability formations, and units typically have to wait until payday to get a semi-accurate picture of who is assigned to the unit. Because Iraqi status reports are almost always wrong, American advisers have taken to counting soldiers at checkpoints to get a sense of where combat power is distributed.

IA motivation. In addition, Iraqi commanders are reluctant to deploy a robust percentage of their combat power outside the wire. In one instance, Coalition partners and advisers to 2d Brigade observed with alarm that a 550-man infantry battalion could only put about 150 soldiers in the battlespace at any given time. Initially, American advisers tried to increase deployed strength by securing copies of the daily status report and questioning why so few soldiers were on mission. We sat down with the Iraqi commanders and highlighted the dismal statistics in an effort to embarrass them into doing better. We attempted to get the Iraqis to enforce a Ministry of Defense (MOD) policy that allowed no more than 25 percent of the unit to be on

leave. We developed PowerPoint® slides that depicted the number of combat platoons on security missions and asked about the status of uncommitted platoons. Using another metric to illustrate how the numbers just did not add up, advisers counted combat vehicles on mission. This sustained effort led to no noticeable improvement. The Iraqis believed they were meeting mission. They did not perceive their allocation of manpower to be a problem.



U.S. Army

Iraqi soldiers, with help from Coalition advisers, spent three days offloading 77 T-72 tanks, which will equip the 2d Brigade.

It was not until 2d Brigade was poised to take the lead in its area of operations (AO) that advisers witnessed a new approach to making the maximum use of available combat power. When they started planning their first independent operation, one of the Iraqi battalion commanders and the brigade staff worked together to devise a plan that allocated a significant amount of combat power to the mission. While some of this power was reallocated from current operations, a fair percentage was new combat power finally getting into the fight. Clearly when the Iraqi commander believed in the mission, he would find the forces to make it happen.

Still fighting the last war. Another challenge is that the IA's tactics are outmoded. They are still fighting their last war, the high-intensity Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, a war with clear battle lines fought with mass military formations, and one in which civilians on the battlefield were a nuisance, not the center of gravity.

Future advisers would be wise to study this war, an 8-year conflagration with a total casualty count of over 1.5 million. Large-scale attacks and huge battles were the rule. Iranian human-wave assaults presented Iraqi soldiers with a target-rich environment. I heard many stories of battlefields covered with bodies following huge expenditures of ammunition. The T-72 tank was considered extremely effective, but required infantry to keep Iranian soldiers from leaping onto them to deliver grenades. Iraqi officers claim the battles against the Americans of 1991 and 2003 were aberrations, whose outcomes they attributed to U.S. air power and huge technological overmatch. They continue to take great pride in their accomplishments in "defeating Iranian aggression."

Accordingly, at the tactical level, officers and soldiers from the old army are inclined to try to solve current, low-intensity tactical problems using the techniques of the 1980s. I frequently heard the refrain that if the Americans would only "turn them loose," the Iraqis would defeat the insurgency in short order. But Iraqi commanders are reluctant to put tanks in an urban environment because the close quarters give excellent opportunities for insurgents armed with rocket propelled grenades. They refuse to split up three-tank platoons because it has been ingrained in them to never subdivide below this level.

Iraqi soldiers tend to react under fire as though they are in a large-scale attack. They must learn fire discipline and careful target selection in a battlefield filled with noncombatants. Unfortunately, the Iraqi "death blossom" is a common tactic witnessed by nearly every U.S. Soldier who has spent any time outside the wire. Any enemy attack on the IA, whether mortar, sniper, or an improvised explosive device, provokes the average Iraqi soldier to empty his 30 round magazine and fire whatever belt of ammunition happens to be in his machine-gun. Ninety percent of the time, there is no target, and the soldiers always agree that this is extremely dangerous, in addition to being a grievous waste of ammunition. But they continue to do it.

A similar phenomenon occurs when Iraqis react to the death of a comrade on the battlefield. The reaction is very dramatic. I once observed overwrought Iraqi soldiers start to rampage through a civilian community, an event that could have been tragic if an adviser had not stepped in to stop it. At another time, an enemy sniper attack triggered a reaction that had Iraqis "returning fire" nearly 90

minutes after the enemy had delivered one deadly shot. This "burst reaction" may be attributed to Iraqis experiencing denial, anger, and grief all at the same time. Still, although they react strongly to the loss of a friend or loved one, grim repetition seems to allow them to move on rather quickly.

At the operational level, the Iraqis do not fully grasp the importance of multiple lines of operation, to include governance, infrastructure, and the economy. Their tool of choice is the blunt instrument of force directed liberally at all threats, real and perceived. The IA disdains working with civilians—the 60-division Saddam-era army had no need to ask for cooperation. Many Iraqis assured me that the local sheik is always responsible for whatever happens in the area under his control. Under Saddam, if any trouble occurred, the sheik and his entire family would be sent to jail with no questions asked. And jail in Iraq was an unpleasant place. Iraqi leaders understand our reverence for the rule of law in theory, but not in practice. For example, they have difficulty understanding why we treat detainees so well and why so many are released back into society. Under Saddam, the army did not have to worry about winning hearts and minds. Force and fear worked well to ensure domestic submission.

This is not a good model for the current low-intensity counterinsurgency (COIN) operation, and it complicates the mission of helping the Iraqis defeat insurgents. The new IA must learn to fight using strategies and tactics far different than those used in the past and largely alien to the new army. Officers below the grade of lieutenant colonel are good at following orders but less comfortable at initiating and planning the small-unit operations required in COIN. Overall, the new generation of soldiers and officers is slowly learning the difference between serving their country and serving a dictator, but it is clear that the process of adopting more effective tactics, techniques, and procedures is clearly going to take some time.

Infrastructure. Some aspects of building a new army can be overcome relatively quickly. The MOD will soon make routine a system to recruit, train, and distribute new soldiers. The National Maintenance Contract will open up the flow of spare parts from eager foreign suppliers. Soldier pay should soon become a reason that soldiers stay in the Army instead of a constant source of frustration that has driven many out.

Other advances will take more time. The nascent system of schools and training centers should evolve into a coordinated network that ensures military competence and professionalism. Regional support centers will need time to establish an effective Iraqi logistics system. Personnel management agencies will improve to reduce distractions and allow commanders to make the most of their available manpower. In the meantime, advisers and U.S. support provide critical credibility while these systems become viable.

Field Marshal Viscount Slim, on serving with foreign troops in World War II:

Accustomed as I was to Indian battalions in the field with usually only seven or eight Europeans, it [having a large number of European soldiers in native units] struck me as an unnecessarily generous supply. I never changed that view and later experience confirmed it. This I know is rank heresy to many very experienced 'coasters.' I was constantly told that, far from being too many, with the rapidly expanded African forces, more British officers and N.C.O.s were needed. But these large British establishments in African units had great drawbacks. The only way to fill them was to draft officers and N.C.O.s willy-nilly to them, and this did not always give the right kind. The European who serves with native troops should be, not only much above average in efficiency and character, as he must accept greater responsibility, but he should serve with them because he wants to, because he likes them.

—William Slim, Viscount, *Defeat into Victory*, MacMillan Publisher Limited: London, 1986. p. 166.

Know the Soldiers, Know the Culture

We must be careful when making broad generalizations about working with Iraqis. The 2d Brigade commander once held up his hand with fingers extended to make the point that, like the varying lengths of his fingers, people come with different strengths and weaknesses: Each of us is unique. Nevertheless, it helps for advisers to be aware that they aren't working in Kansas, or Georgia, or Texas. In other words, it is good to know the soldiers and the culture.

Relationships. Iraqis value relationships more than results. They will interrupt a conversation, no matter how important, to pleasantly greet someone who has entered a meeting room late or unannounced. Their reputation for not wanting to recognize misconduct or failure is well earned. (Advisers have found that photographic evidence is essential to achieve a constructive after-action review.)

Ingenuity. Economic sanctions and austerity have made the Iraqis outstanding improvisers. We witnessed an Iraqi sergeant working to improve the appearance of his new brigade headquarters. Lacking a paint brush, he was applying red paint to decorative fence posts with his bare hands. In a later upgrade, the commander had his men use purple metal headboards from surplus bed parts to line the sidewalk, creating an appealing approach to his building. Because beds seemed to be in excess across post, his example spurred many copycats.

Iraqis also display great ingenuity with maintenance operations. A maintenance adviser for one of the tank battalions told me with pride how his unit mechanics were doing "direct support level work with less-than-organizational-level tools," which is like removing a tank engine using a hoist and an off-the-shelf tool kit from Wal-Mart. When we conducted a routine check of a traffic control point, an IA company commander demonstrated how his men had changed an engine head gasket on site. This expertise and can-do spirit extends to finer work as well. One mechanic fixed a complex traversing and elevating unit using only pliers and a coat hanger. In certain endeavors, the Iraqis definitely illustrate the cliché, "If there's a will, there's a way."

Fatalism. Iraqis tend to be fatalistic, surrendering their future to the will of Allah. This explains how they can continue to function despite daily car bombings, atrocities, and murders that have touched nearly every family. When my Iraqi friends returned from leave, I always asked them about their "vacation." (It is one of the phrases I have memorized in Arabic.) About 30 percent of the time, they had some bad news to relate: a kidnapped cousin, a death threat, or a bombing near their home. After we commiserated about the event, the Iraqi typically ended by saying "Allah kareem" ("God is generous"). This was not really stoicism, because it was sometimes accompanied by tears. It did, however, show that Iraqis feel far less in control of events than the average American does.

For Americans, the most frustrating aspect of this fatalism is that it translates into a lack of diligence and detailed planning. Iraqis eschew operational calendars and typically forecast little beyond the next 48 to 72 hours. One example of this lack of regard for planning occurred prior to the handing over of operations to the 2d Brigade. The American commander's battle rhythm included representation at local government meetings each week. When the Iraqis took charge of this schedule, they continually re-tasked responsibility for attendance, selected officers at random to attend and take notes, and generally failed to make the most of this opportunity to engage local leaders. The morning operations and intelligence update, a staple at every American tactical operation center (TOC) and an opportunity to synchronize operations, usually drew only token Iraqi attendance.

To their credit, the Iraqis almost always made mission, but it was typically not to the standard that Americans expect. When fellow advisers complained about how the Iraqis would fritter away opportunities by failing to plan, I encouraged them to persevere. If repeated often enough, at least some of our advice eventually had an effect. But to reduce frustration, I would also tell them, "Remember, we're in Iraq!"

Reacting versus planning. Failing to plan does not necessarily mean laziness. It just means that Iraqis prefer to "react to contact" and make things happen when they have to. Soon after the Samarra mosque bombing on 22 February 2006, the government of Iraq called on the new armored brigade to send a battalion task force into Baghdad to assist in controlling sectarian violence that threatened to devolve into civil war. A warning order came to the unit leaders around noon on a Sunday, and the official order was issued at about 1800. American

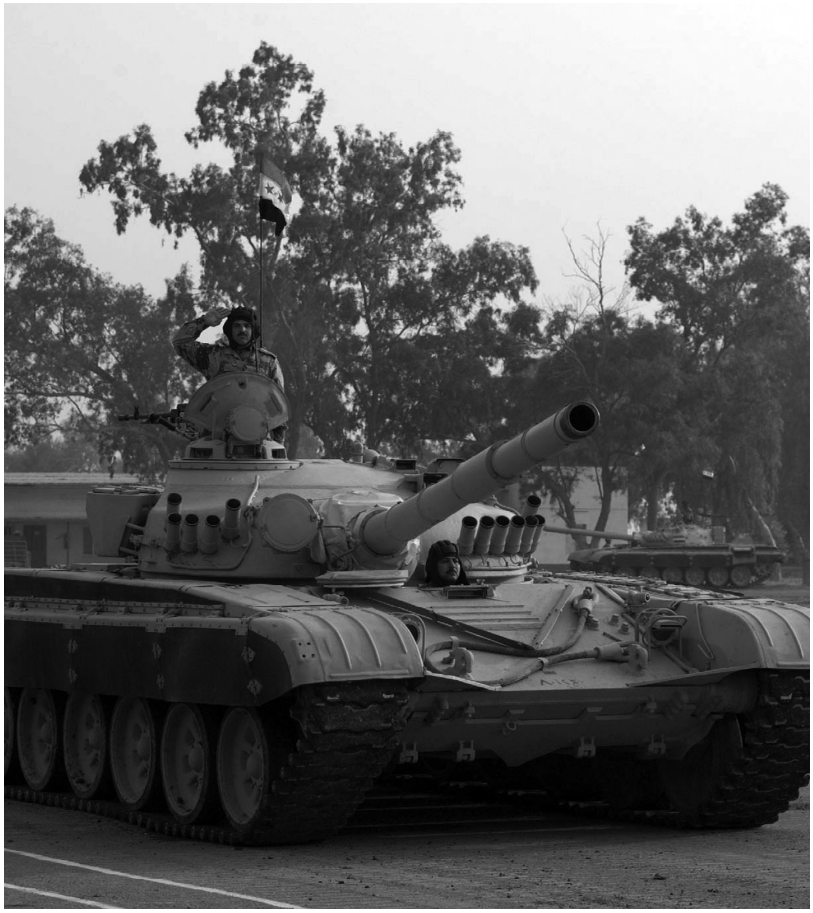
planners were busy requesting a 24-hour delay to facilitate detailed planning, but the Iraqis were assembling a task force for movement. As the advisers scrambled to prepare teams to accompany them, the Iraqi commanders were issuing orders and checking load plans. At about 0200 Monday morning, the first company left the motor pool on its way to the link-up point. Between 0530 and 0845, 3 companies totaling 11 BMPs (Russian armored vehicles) and 19 tanks had rolled into separate operating bases to report to 3 different brigades of the Iraqi 6th division. I accompanied one of the tank companies. Upon arrival, I asked where the soldiers could bed down for a couple of hours to get some sleep. The Iraqi commander replied that the tankers would be going directly into the city; a short time to refuel and conduct maintenance was all that could be afforded. By 1130 that morning, all elements of the armored task force were in positions around the city of Baghdad, providing a powerful symbol of the growing strength of the IA. Over the next 12 days, Iraqis watched with pride as their tanks and BMPs were a daily fixture on the evening news.

Bottom line. Advisers are most effective when they can approach Iraqis with a measure of humility, appreciating Iraqi strengths while acknowledging their weaknesses. Iraqis will return the level of respect that we accord them.

Getting the Relationships Right

Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are here to help them, not win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is. It might take longer, and it might not be as good as you think, but if it is theirs it will be better.

—T.E. Lawrence, "Twenty-Seven Articles,"
Arab Bulletin, 20 August 1917



DoD

2d Brigade soldiers on parade in refurbished T-72 tanks and BMP armored personnel carriers in a ceremony at Taji Military Base 15 miles north of Baghdad, 17 November 2005.

This quotation, displayed at biweekly meetings of senior leaders and advisers to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in the Multi-National Division, Baghdad (MND-B) AO, offers today's advisers a great example to emulate. Clearly, the job of creating long-term order and prosperity in Iraq is in the hands of the Iraqis. Any casual observer of American politics can understand that. Moreover, we know that Iraqi leaders do their best work when they feel ownership of a course of action.

Problematic command relationships. The command relationships among the IAG advisers, the Iraqi unit, and the Coalition partner unit are problematic. The partner unit is normally a U.S. brigade which has responsibility for an AO within one of the multi-national commands. The IAG advises Iraqi units that operate in the partner unit's battlespace. But neither



DoD

Iraqi soldiers march by the reviewing stand at Taji Military Base in a ceremony celebrating the largest NATO-driven equipment donation to date (17 November 2005).

the IAG nor the Iraqi unit have a formal command relationship with the partner unit. Iraqi units have their own chain of command, and are not part of the Coalition.

One of the most frustrating points of friction I observed was caused by mistaken beliefs about the latter. Many U.S. commanders thought that the Iraqi force was part of the Coalition and OIF was another exercise in Coalition warfare. Numerous examples demonstrate how this misunderstanding created confusion and discord: An Iraqi platoon leader refusing to participate in a combined patrol because he had not received an order from his battalion commander; Iraqi patrols leaving their assigned area to respond to an MOD order to escort a convoy from Baghdad to Taji; an Iraqi brigade commander ordering a squad to remain in an ambush position, effectively masking a U.S. unit that had already occupied a position nearby; and Iraqi soldiers refusing to follow American orders to search a mosque until the order was cleared by an Iraqi division commander. In all of these examples, the U.S. commander had operational control of Iraqi units, but the Iraqi chain of command was leaning forward to take charge before it was designated for official command and control functions. While the American commander's first impulse was to be furious with the Iraqis, from the perspective of building new units, there was clearly good news in this evidence of a strengthening Iraqi chain of command.

Although the Coalition units and IA units do not share chains of command, U.S. platoon leaders in the partner units are required to conduct combined (Iraqi and U.S.) operations in order to improve the IA unit's combat readiness. The intent is that the experienced, well-trained U.S. units will train Iraqis in troop-leading procedures, the orders process, and mission execution for an operation, but all too often the combined operation consists of a "drive-by" pick-up of an Iraqi squad while the U.S. unit is on the way to the objective. This puts an Iraqi face in the crowd, but does little to develop a capable ISF.

Strategy and tactics at odds. For some time now, building the new ISF has been the strategic main effort in Iraq. Pentagon pronouncements emphasize placing Iraqis in the lead. Nearly every mission statement I saw in theater referred to "developing capable ISF" as an essential task. At the tactical level, however, brigade and battalion commanders must necessarily concentrate their time, talent, and resources on fighting insurgents. This was clearly the case in my experience during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) III and IV. The MND-B AO, for one, is still too dangerous for tactical commanders to focus on training the IA at the expense of security, which leaves the heavy lifting of building the new ISF to Iraqi commanders and their advisers. This arrangement can work only if the U.S. force provides enough stability to allow the Iraqis to train and practice tactics, techniques and procedures inside and outside the wire.

Culture trumping mission. Another problem plaguing the strategy is that it's unnatural for U.S. Soldiers to step back and allow their Iraqi partners to take the lead when the Soldiers think they can do it more efficiently and quickly. From private to colonel, the American Soldier is task-oriented, and even the most experienced advisers forget that our real charge is to train the Iraqis so that they can do the job. I once saw an adviser developing a PowerPoint® "storyboard" depicting a significant

…all too often the combined operation consists of a "drive-by" pick-up of an Iraqi squad while the U.S. unit is on the way to the objective.

action that had occurred with an IA unit. I asked him if he was working with his Iraqi counterpart to put it together. He replied that it would "take four times as long to do it that way." This same thinking prevails in combined operations centers, where American battle captains have a tendency to tell their Iraqi counterparts what to do, rather than allowing them to work through the planning and decision making process.

This is the wrong approach. Eventually Iraqi officers will have to make their own judgment calls and handle complex situations without U.S. support. We must improve their planning skills and strengthen their chain of command at every opportunity. Iraqi leaders should chair meetings with local leaders and the units should handle tactical situations to the limits of their capability. We must constantly find ways to put the IA in front while making sure they are prepared to succeed.

Disparity of capability. The great disparity in capability between U.S. and IA units also works against the IA training effort. It takes a 2,000-man Iraqi brigade to take over an AO formerly controlled by a 600-strong U.S. battalion, and even then there is a drop in capability. There are many reasons for this delta:

- The U.S. work ethic is second to none—especially when Soldiers are deployed far from home and can focus 100 percent on getting the job done. Arab culture, on the other hand, is much less focused on the clock; it takes the long view that everything will happen in due time, "in shah-allah" ("God willing").
- The IA is not rotating units into the AO; rotation off the line consists of a liberal leave schedule that reduces the force by 20 to 30 percent at any given time.
- The American military is probably the most thoroughly trained force in the world, but Iraqi soldiers make do with 3 to 5 weeks of basic training before entering the battlespace. Most IA units rely on experienced former soldiers to make up for immature training programs. This new IA must fight as it forms and grows. The Iraqi brigade I advised went from initial soldier reception to independent operations with Coalition support in a mere 10 months.
- American staffs are huge, and a host of technological tools facilitate situational awareness. The battle captain in a brigade combat team (BCT) runs a TOC shift of 15 officers and soldiers while his Iraqi counterpart typically has 2 radio operators and a cell phone to call the commander. Iraqi officers are amazed when they enter a U.S. brigade command post; they are awed by the buzz of activity and big-screen displays. The contrast between the well-funded, professional U.S. Army and the fledging Iraqi volunteer force is huge. An adviser who does not keep this in mind is likely to unfairly denigrate his Iraqi counterpart and do poorly in coaching him. A U.S. commander who ignores this disparity is likely to paralyze the Iraqi TOC by demanding the same level of information from them that he expects from his own TOC.

...American battle captains have a tendency to tell their Iraqi counterparts what to do, rather than allowing them to work through the planning and decision making process.

In spite of these disparities, in less than one year the 2d Armored Brigade received and distributed all combat equipment, soldier uniforms, and even barracks furniture while simultaneously conducting individual and small-unit training. The brigade did this even though officer fill remained at 50 percent or less during the first 5 months and present-for-duty status suffered from the aforementioned leave policy. Moreover, the brigade now takes the lead on operations within its AO, suffering casualties and fighting the enemy alongside its American partners. Coalition partners and advisers share in this accomplishment because they have allowed the IA to perform while taking pains to shield them from failure. They will have to do so for some time to ensure continued progress.

Distractions of combat. Some friction between advisers and U.S. tactical commanders is inevitable. Advisers know firsthand that preparing a brand-new army in Iraq requires patience, flexible expectations, and compromise, but U.S. tactical commanders are busy fighting insurgents; they have little time to meet with their Iraqi brothers-in-arms, to debate tactics, or to concern themselves with the

IA's administrative problems. It doesn't help that, at times, adviser teams require augmentation from the U.S. unit of 10 to 25 Soldiers per battalion to accomplish tactical missions. Some commanders see this requirement as a wasteful drain on their resources. Then there is the burdensome requirement to train Iraqi units during combat operations. This effort involves pesky translation issues and tiresome distractions; it is easier to conduct a U.S.-only mission than to go through the pain of turning a combat mission into an Iraqi training event. While the U.S. Army's reputation for being task-oriented is well earned and one of our greatest strengths, it becomes an impediment when the essential task is to cede mission accomplishment to the Iraqis.

Signs of change. The differing emphases between OIF III (which ended January 2006) and OIF IV demonstrated that American commanders were definitely improving in their ability to support Iraqis in the lead. In November 2005, an OIF III brigade commander staunchly defended his formal authority over Iraqi formations by refusing an IA division commander's request to allow a company team to participate in a ceremony marking a donation of NATO armored vehicles. During preparation for the December election, this same colonel emphasized that "if we want our Iraqi units to play in our battlespace, they better be ready." From the operational standpoint this stance made sense; the colonel clearly wanted either reliable troops or none at all. But from the strategic standpoint of developing a capable ISF, he missed the mark. The opportunity to get IA soldiers into the fight was worth every bit of lost military efficiency.

During OIF IV, after the sea-change directing that Iraqis be put in the lead, U.S. commanders deferred to the "Iraqi solution" from MOD down to the company level. As the 2d Brigade took over its AO in May 2006, the U.S. commander respected the Iraqi commander's prerogatives. Although misunderstandings continued to occur, the overall direction was very positive, thus reinforcing the Iraqi chain of command.

It would be naive to think that the problems between advisers and partner units have been solved. Some friction will inevitably persist. But both groups must find a way to put the Iraqis in the lead; otherwise, the Iraqi dependence on U.S. forces will continue. Good relations between advisers and the partner unit are essential to mitigate adviser-commander problems. Advisers must be nearly as proactive in educating their U.S. partners as they are in working with their Iraqi counterparts, but the partner unit must be willing to participate. During my year in Iraq, I worked with two American brigade commanders. The first preferred not to deal with advisers, and I was unsuccessful in establishing any semblance of a constructive relationship with him. The second commander was far more focused on making advisers and Iraqis part of his team. I was invited to participate in morning net calls designed to improve situational awareness and address outstanding issues. In addition, periodic meetings between the American commander and his Iraqi counterpart were extremely productive.

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Final Observations

Moderate Iraqis are taking great risks to build their country and defend it against those who choose anarchy, extremism, or a Saddam-style dictatorship. When I asked an Iraqi deputy brigade commander if he was optimistic about the future, he responded that security was the first imperative and the most difficult condition to achieve. Once the Iraqi Government provides security, he said, then everything to follow will be easy. He argued that the Iraqi people do not expect much from their government because the vast majority had received little during 35 years under Saddam.

As American military forces begin to pull back, Iraqi forces will become more central to establishing a safe and secure Iraq. U.S. advisers are critical partners in this mission. They provide expertise and, more important, reassurance that the forces for democracy and moderation have a powerful ally at their side. Advisers who approach this important mission with a constructive attitude and a willingness to put Iraqis in the lead will make important and satisfying contributions to this effort. I personally

consider my year in Iraq as the most significant of my 22 years in the Army.

Despite low approval ratings and doubters back home, President Bush might just be correct about establishing a free and democratic Iraq in the center of the strategic Middle East. My Iraqi friends yearn for a day when their children can enjoy peace and prosperity in a country that has no excuse for being poor. The current generation understands that they are paying the price now so that future generations can enjoy what has so far been denied.

The land of the two rivers, brimming with untapped oil resources, can surely become a shining example that elevates the region above its history of perpetual conflict. Of course, the future holds more senseless killings and strategic setbacks. The enemy is determined and will continue to go to any length to frustrate freedom. But the process of gaining control while battling the insurgency must continue even as the entire world debates the wisdom of the effort. This mission is a significant challenge for the most powerful military in the world; it will exceed the capability of this new IA for some time to come. But no great undertaking has ever come easy. Current and potential partners participating in OIF should keep this in mind as they continue the important work suggested by the mission's name. ***MR***

GOING HOME

I'm wearing my Class A uniform, waiting on flight number 4505.
The plane will pick me up in New York and deposit me in Philadelphia, where
I will meet an old Army friend; together we'll travel to a special ceremony.

My polyester uniform does not breathe well; on a long trip
I begin to offend those around me.
The tie chokes me: like a man noosed for execution.
My luggage strap tears at my ribbons, scattering them on the dirty floor.
I am choking.

As I make my way to Gate 28, a vet from The Greatest Generation walks up to me.
He and his wife would like to buy me lunch.
I thank the man for serving our country and add that it is I who should buy him lunch,
Then remember: I am waiting for Dave to come home from Iraq.
The old vet nods understandingly, we look into each other's eyes, shake hands, and
I disappear to be alone.

While I sit in the empty gate (I am early) CNN reports that a suicide bomb went off in Tal-Afar.
Tal-Afar is near Mosul, where Dave was stationed.
I think, "These are the times to say 'I'm sorry' to those who matter most."
I wait for Dave in silence.
My only companions are a tired stewardess and CNN—broadcasting to no one.

A woman in a two-piece suit comes up to me.
Reflexively I reply: "Yes, Ma'am"
She informs me that Dave is waiting for me in the cargo area.

The gate slowly fills; the gazes multiply.
I can't stop it.
A flood I have sought to suppress washes down my face.
Stares crowd closer…I can barely see them, yet I feel them.
They suffocate me.

A man in a suit waiting to board "First Class" casually reads
the sports section of a newspaper,
Tossing aside the front page aside: "Suicide Bomber Kills Four in Mosul."
I don't need to read the story because I know the picture too well.
I also know that the press probably mailed in the story from the comfort of a hotel suite,
ignoring the details.

I want to tell this man that while he lounges in "First Class" my friend Dave lies in cargo.
What will I say to his wife Cindy when I meet her?
Words and thoughts swirl around my head, but I can't locate anything.
All I feel is grief, and Cindy does not need me to cry on her shoulder.
There are no Army manuals to instruct me on what to do. I am at a loss.
I am the escort officer who is taking my fallen comrade home for the last time.

—For Dave: Rest Easy, Brother
MAJ Zoltan Krompecher
October 1st, 2005

Countering Evolved Insurgent Networks

Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, USMC, Retired

THE FIRST STEP in meeting the challenge facing us in Iraq today or in similar war zones tomorrow is to understand that insurgency and counterinsurgency are very different tasks. The use of Special Forces against insurgents in Vietnam to "out-guerrilla the guerrillas" provided exactly the wrong solution to the problem. It assumed that the insurgent and the counterinsurgent can use the same approach to achieve their quite different goals.

To define insurgency, I use Bard O'Neill from *Insurgency and Terrorism.* He states: "Insurgency may be defined as a struggle between a nonruling group and the ruling authorities in which the nonruling group consciously uses *political resources* (e.g., organizational expertise, propaganda, and demonstrations) and *violence* to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of one or more aspects of politics."[1]

Counterinsurgency, as defined by Ian Beckett, "is far from being a purely military problem . . . co-ordination of both the civil and military effort must occur at all levels and embrace the provision of intelligence . . . ."[2]

On the surface, these definitions suggest that insurgency and counterinsurgency are similar because each requires political and military action. However, when one thinks it through, the challenge is very different for the government. The government must accomplish something. It must govern effectively. In contrast, the insurgent only has to propose an idea for a better future while ensuring the government cannot govern effectively.

In Iraq, the resistance does not even project a better future. It simply has the nihilistic goal of ensuring the government cannot function. This negative goal is much easier to achieve than governing. For instance, it is easier and more direct to use military power than to apply political, economic, and social techniques. The insurgent can use violence to delegitimize a government (because that government cannot fulfill the basic social contract to protect the people). However, simple application of violence by the government cannot restore that legitimacy. David Galula, in his classic *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice,* expresses the difference between insurgency and counterinsurgency very clearly: "Revolutionary warfare . . . represents an exceptional case not only because as we suspect, it has its special rules, different from those of the conventional war, but also because most of the rules applicable to one side do not work for the other. In a fight between a fly and a lion, the fly cannot deliver a knockout blow and the lion cannot fly. It is the same war for both camps in terms of space and time, yet there are two distinct warfares [sic]—the revolutionary's, and shall we say, the counterrevolutionary's."[3]

Enduring Traits of Insurgency

Mao Tse-Tung wrote his famous *On Guerilla War* [Yu Chi Chan] in

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1937. Despite the passage of time, many of his basic observations about insurgency remain valid. First and foremost, insurgency is a political, not a military, struggle. It is not amenable to a purely military solution without resorting to a level of brutality unacceptable to the Western world. Even the particularly brutal violence Russia has inflicted upon Chechnya—killing almost 25 percent of the total population and destroying its cities—has not resulted in victory.

The second factor has to do with the political will of the counterinsurgent's own population. If that population turns sour when faced with the long time-frame and mounting costs of counterinsurgency, the insurgent will win. This has been particularly true whenever the United States has become involved in counterinsurgency operations. Insurgents have learned over the last 30 years that they do not have to defeat the United States militarily to drive us out of an insurgency; they only have to destroy our political will. Today's insurgents in both Afghanistan and Iraq understand this and have made the political will of the U.S. population a primary target of their efforts.

A third unchanging aspect of insurgency involves duration. Insurgencies are measured in decades, not months or years. The Chinese Communists fought for 27 years. The Vietnamese fought the U.S. for more than a decade. The Palestinians have been resisting Israel since at least 1968. Even when the counterinsurgent has won, it has taken a long time. The Malaya Emergency and the El Salvadoran insurgency each lasted 12 years.

Finally, despite America's love of high technology, technology does not provide a major advantage in counterinsurgency. In fact, in the past the side with the simplest technology often won. What has been decisive in most counterinsurgencies were the human attributes of leadership, cultural understanding, and political judgment.

In short, the key factors of insurgency that have not changed are its political nature, its protracted timelines, and its intensely human (versus technological) nature.

Emerging Traits of Insurgency

While these hallmarks of insurgency have remained constant, the nature of insurgency has evolved in other areas. Like all forms of war, insurgency changes in consonance with the political, economic, social, and technical conditions of the society it springs from. Insurgencies are no longer the special province of single-party organizations like Mao's and Ho Chi Minh's. Today, insurgent organizations are comprised of loose coalitions of the willing, human networks that range from local to global. This reflects the social organizations of the societies they come from and the reality that today's most successful organizations are networks rather than hierarchies.

> ***Insurgency may be defined as a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources… and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of one or more aspects of politics.***
>
> —Bard O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism*

In addition to being composed of coalitions, insurgencies also operate across the spectrum from local to transnational organizations. Because these networks span the globe, external actors such as the Arabs who fought alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Afghans who fought in Bosnia, and the European Muslims who are showing up in Iraq, are now a regular part of insurgencies.

In a coalition insurgency, the goals of the different elements may vary, too. In Afghanistan today, some of the insurgents simply wish to rule their own valleys; others seek to rule a nation. Al-Qaeda is fighting for a transnational caliphate. In Iraq, many of the Sunni insurgents seek a secular government dominated by Sunnis. Other Sunnis—the Salafists—want a strict Islamic society ruled by Sharia. Among the Shi'a, Muqtada Al-Sadr operated as an insurgent, then shifted to the political arena (while maintaining a powerful militia and a geographic base in the slums of Sadr City). Although temporarily

out of the insurgent business, his forces remain a factor in any armed conflict. Other Shi'a militias are also prepared to enter the military equation if their current political efforts do not achieve their goals. Finally, criminal elements in both Afghanistan and Iraq participate in the unrest primarily for profit.

At times, even their hatred of the outsider is not strong enough to keep these various coalition groups from fighting among themselves. Such factionalism was a continuing problem for anti-Soviet insurgents in Afghanistan in the 1980's, and savvy Soviet commanders exploited it at times. We see major signs of the same symptom in Iraq today.

This complex mixture of players and motives is now the pattern for insurgencies. If insurgents succeed in driving the Coalition out of Afghanistan and Iraq, their own highly diverse coalitions of the willing will not be able to form a government; their mutually incompatible beliefs will lead to continued fighting until one faction dominates. This is what happened in Afghanistan when the insurgents drove the Soviets out. Similar disunity appeared in Chechnya after the Russians withdrew in 1996, and infighting only ceased when the Russians returned to install their own government. Early signs of a similar power struggle are present in the newly evacuated Gaza Strip.

The fact that recent insurgencies have been coalitions is a critical component in understanding them. For too long, American leaders stated that the insurgency in Iraq could not be genuine because it had no unifying cause or leader; therefore, it could not be a threat. The insurgents in Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Palestine have never had a unified leadership or belief other than that the outside power had to go. Yet these insurgents have driven out the Soviet Union and continue to contest the United States, Russia, and Israel. The lack of unity in current insurgencies only makes them more difficult to defeat. It is a characteristic that we have to accept and understand.

Showing the adaptability characteristic of successful organizations, many insurgencies are now transdimensional as well as transnational. As Western efforts have reduced the number of insurgent safe havens, insurgents have aggressively moved into cyberspace. There, the high capacity of broadband has greatly increased the Internet's utility for insurgents. Expanding from simple communications and propaganda, insurgents and their terrorist counterparts have moved to online recruitment, vetting of recruits, theological indoctrination, training, and logistical arrangements. Insurgents never have to meet an individual recruit until they feel comfortable; then they can use the Internet as a meeting site that they control. The wide availability of password-protected chat rooms allows insurgents to hold daily meetings with very little chance of discovery. Not only do Western intelligence agencies have to find the insurgents' chat room among the millions out there and crack the password, but they also must do so with a person who can speak the insurgents' language and who is convincing enough to keep the other chat participants from simply logging off. And, of course, insurgents can also move out of the larger chat room into private chat, which makes the infiltration problem even harder.

NEW INSURGENCY TRAITS

- **Emergence of networked coalitions of the willing**
- **Evolution into transdimensional organizations**
- **Ability to fund themselves**
- **Wide variety of motivations behind different coalition elements**

Another major change in insurgencies is that they are becoming self-supporting. Modern insurgents do conventional fundraising, but they also run charity organizations, businesses, and criminal enterprises. In the past, most insurgencies depended on one or two major sponsors, which the United States could subject to diplomatic or economic pressure. Now, the insurgents' more varied money-raising schemes, combined with the ability to move funds outside official banking channels, make it increasingly difficult to attack insurgent finances.

Enduring Characteristics of Counterinsurgency

Just as insurgencies have enduring characteristics, so do counterinsurgencies. The fundamental

weapon in counterinsurgency remains good governance. While the insurgent must simply continue to exist and conduct occasional attacks, the government must learn to govern effectively. The fact that there is an insurgency indicates the government has failed to govern. In short, the counterinsurgent is starting out in a deep hole.

The first governing step the counterinsurgent must take is to establish security for the people. Without effective, continuous security it does not matter if the people are sympathetic to the government—they must cooperate with the insurgent or be killed. Providing security is not enough, however. The government must also give the people hope for a better future—for their children if not for themselves. Furthermore, this better future must accord with what the people want, not what the counterinsurgent wants. The strategic hamlets campaign in Vietnam and the ideological emphasis on freedom in Iraq are examples of futures the counterinsurgent thought were best, but that didn't resonate with the population. In Vietnam, the peasants were intensely tied to their land; in Islamic culture, justice has a higher value than freedom.

The view of the future must address the "poverty of dignity" that Thomas L. Friedman has so clearly identified as a driving motivator for terrorists.[4] The people must have hope not just for a better life as they see it, but also for the feeling of dignity that comes from having some say in their own futures.

There has been a great deal of discussion recently about whether the war in Iraq has progressed from terrorism to an insurgency and then to a civil war. While this is very important from the insurgent's point of view, it does not determine the first steps a counterinsurgent must take to win. As always, the first step is to provide security for the people. If the people stop supporting the government out of fear of insurgents, terrorists, or other violent groups, the government can only begin winning back its credibility by providing effective security. How that security is provided can vary depending on the threat, but the basic requirement is nonnegotiable. Thus, the fundamental concepts of counterinsurgency remain constant: provide security for the people and genuine hope for the future.

Counterinsurgency…is far from being a purely military problem…co-ordination of both the civil and military effort must occur at all levels and embrace the provision of intelligence…

—Ian Beckett

Emerging Characteristics of Counterinsurgency

The counterinsurgent must also come to grips with the emerging characteristics of insurgency. To deal with the networked, transnational character of insurgents, the counterinsurgent must develop a truly international approach to the security issues he faces. In addition, he must counter not just a single ideology, but all the ideologies of the various groups involved in the insurgency. This is daunting because attacking the ideology of one group might reinforce that of another. Successful ideological combat also requires the counterinsurgent to have deep cultural and historical knowledge of the people in the conflict. Success in this kind of fight will be difficult to achieve, but it can be attained if the government attacks the insurgents' coalition by exacerbating individual group differences.

Finally, the government must find a way to handle the numerous external actors who will come to join the insurgency. The true believers among them can only be killed or captured; the rest must be turned from insurgents to citizens. If possible, the counterinsurgent should keep foreign fighters from returning to their homes to spread the conflict there. Obviously, this will require a great deal of international cooperation. However, the nations involved should be anxious to cooperate to prevent these violent, potentially rebellious fighters from returning home.

Visualizing the Insurgency

With the mixture of enduring and emerging characteristics in insurgencies, the question arises as to how best to analyze the modern form. A clear understanding of the insurgency is obviously essential to the counterinsurgent. Unfortunately, recent history shows that conventional powers initially tend to

NEW COUNTERINSURGENCY TRAITS

- **Develop an international approach**
- **Counter multiple ideologies**
- **Know the culture and its history**
- **Handle the outsiders**

misunderstand insurgencies much more often than they understand them. In Malaya, it took almost 3 years before the British developed a consistent approach to the communist insurrection there. As John Nagl has noted, "Only about 1950 was the political nature of the war really grasped."[5] In Vietnam, it took until 1968 before General Creighton Abrams and Ambassador Robert Komer provided an effective plan to deal with the Viet Cong in the south. In Iraq, it took us almost 2 years to decide that we were dealing with an insurgency, and we are still arguing about its composition and goals.

To fight an insurgency effectively, we must first understand it. Given the complexity inherent in modern insurgency, the best visualization tool is a network map. The counterinsurgent must map the human networks involved on both sides because—

- A map of the human connections reflects how insurgencies really operate. A network map will reveal the scale and depth of interactions between different people and nodes and show the actual impact of our actions against those connections.
- A network map plotted over time can show how changes in the environment affect nodes and links in the network. Again, such knowledge is essential for understanding how our actions are hitting the insurgency.
- Models of human networks account for charisma, human will, and insights in ways a simple organizational chart cannot.
- Networks actively seek to grow. By studying network maps, we can see where growth occurs and what it implies for the insurgent and the government. By studying which areas of the insurgent network are growing fastest, we can identify the most effective members of the insurgency and their most effective tactics, and act accordingly.
- Networks interact with other networks in complex ways that cannot be portrayed on an organizational chart.
- Network maps show connections from a local to a global scale and reveal when insurgents use modern technology to make the "long-distance" relationships more important and closer than local ones.
- Networks portray the transdimensional and transnational nature of insurgencies in ways no other model can. Networks can also reveal insurgent connections to the host-nation government, the civilian community, and any other players present in the struggle.
- Finally, if we begin to understand the underlying networks of insurgencies, we can analyze them using an emerging set of tools. In *Linked: The Science of Networks,* Albert-Laszlo Barabasi points to these new tools: "A string of recent breathtaking discoveries has forced us to acknowledge that amazingly simple and far reaching laws govern the structure and evolution of all the complex networks that surround us."[6]

We should also use network modeling when we consider our own organizations. Unlike the hierarchical layout we habitually use when portraying ourselves, a network schematic will allow us to see much more clearly how our personnel policies affect our own operations. When we chart an organization hierarchically, it appears that our personnel rotation policies have minimal effect on our organizations. One individual leaves, and another qualified individual immediately fills that line on the organization chart; there is no visual indication of the impact on our organization. If, however, we plotted our own organizations as networks, we could see the massive damage our personnel rotation policies cause. When a person arrives in country and takes a job, for some time he probably knows only the person he is working for and a few people in his office. In a network, he will show up as a small node with few connections. As time passes, he makes new connections and finds old friends in other jobs throughout the theater. On a network map, we will see him growing from a tiny node to a major hub. Over the course of time, we will see his connections to other military organizations, to

U.S. and allied government agencies, host-nation agencies, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and so forth. Just as clearly, when he rotates we will see that large hub instantaneously replaced by a small node with few connections. We will be even more alarmed to see the massive impact the simultaneous departure of numerous hubs has on the functionality of our network.

To assist us in building our network maps, we can use any of a number of sophisticated anti-gang software programs that allow us to track individuals and visualize their contacts. Essentially sophisticated versions of the old personalities-organizations-incidents databases, these programs allow us to tie together the intelligence reports we get to build a visual picture of the connections revealed. For instance, we pick up a suspect near a bombing site, check him against the database, and find that although he has not been arrested before, he is closely related to a man we know to be involved in a political party. We can then look at other members of the family and party to see if there are other connections to the incident, to the person we arrested, or to the organization possibly involved.

Good software will allow for instant visualization of these relationships in a color-coded network we can project on a wall, print out, or transmit to other analysts. Good software almost instantly accomplishes the hundreds of hours of scut work that used to be required to tie isolated, apparently unrelated reports together. It allows us to look for third- and even fourth-level connections in a network and, thus, to build a much more useful network map. In particular, we will be able to see the gaps where we know there ought to be connections.

Ten years ago, software of this analytical quality was available and being used to track gang activity in the United States. I am uncertain of the status of current DOD human intelligence software, but I doubt it reaches down to the critical company and platoon levels of the counterinsurgency fight. We have to take aggressive action to get better software and make it work. If cities can give this kind of information to policemen on the streets, we owe it to our companies and platoons.

By mapping the human connections in insurgent networks and then applying cultural knowledge and network theory to the networks, we can understand them more clearly. We can also apply the commonsense observation that most networks grow from pre-existing social networks. In fact, such an approach has already been used. Marc Sageman has done a detailed study of Al-Qaeda and its affiliated organizations, mapped the operational connections, and then compared them to pre-existing social connections.[7] His work points the way to much more effective analysis of insurgent and terrorist organizations.

Sageman's studies have revealed the key nodes and links in each of Al-Qaeda's parts and how changes in the operating environment over time have affected those parts. Sageman has also identified both the real and virtual links between individuals and Al-Qaeda's constituent organizations. Most important, however, the studies give us a starting point from which to examine any network: the preexisting social connections of a society. Rather than starting from scratch, we can analyze the limited intelligence we do obtain within the social and cultural context of the insurgency. In short, Sageman's approach allows us to paint a picture of the enemy network that we can analyze.

...most networks grow from pre-existing social networks.

Security not Defensive

For the counterinsurgent, the central element in any strategy must be the people. The counterinsurgent has to provide effective government in order to win the loyalty of the people. This is easy to say, but helping another country establish good governance is one of the most challenging tasks possible. The conflict in Iraq highlights how difficult it is to help establish a government in a fractious society. Beyond the discussion of whether or not there is a civil war in Iraq, we can't even agree on whether a strategy that focuses on the people is inherently offensive or defensive. Obviously, if our approach is perceived to be a defensive one, most strategists will be reluctant to adopt it, simply because defense rarely wins wars.

In fact, in counterinsurgencies, providing security for the people is an inherently offensive action.

No one questions that during conventional wars, attacks that seize enemy territory to deny the enemy resources, a tax base, and a recruiting base are considered offensive actions. But for some reason, when we conduct population control operations in counterinsurgency, they are considered defensive even though these operations have the same effect: They deny the insurgent the things he needs to operate.

A population control operation is the most offensive action one can take in a counterinsurgency. Just like in conventional war, once you have seized a portion of the enemy's territory, you cannot then evacuate it and give it back to him. If you do so, you simply restore all the resources to his control while eroding the morale of the government, the people, and your own forces.

In a counterinsurgency, big-unit sweeps and raids are inherently defensive operations. We are reacting to an enemy initiative that has given him control of a portion of the country. We move through, perhaps capture or kill some insurgents, and then move back to our defensive positions. In essence, we are ceding the key terrain—the population and its resources—to the insurgent. We might have inflicted a temporary tactical setback on our enemy, but at a much greater cost to our operational and strategic goals. The fact that we sweep and do not hold exposes the government's weakness to the people. It also exposes them to violence and does little to improve their long-term security or prospects for a better life.

Clearly, population control operations are the truly offensive operations in a counterinsurgency. Just as clearly, host-government and U.S. forces will rarely have sufficient troops to conduct such operations nationwide at the start of the counterinsurgent effort. Thus, we need to prioritize areas that will receive the resources to provide full-time, permanent security; population control, and reconstruction. The clear, hold, and build strategy is the correct one. However, it must recognize the limitations of government forces and, for a period, cede control of some elements of the population to the insurgent to provide real protection for the rest of the population. This is essentially the "white, grey, and black" approach used by the British in Malaya.[8] As Sir Robert Thompson has noted, "Because a government's resources, notably in trained manpower, are limited, the [counterinsurgent] plan must also lay down priorities both in the measures to be taken and in the areas to be dealt with first. If the insurgency is countrywide, it is impossible to tackle it offensively in every area. It must be accepted that in certain areas only a holding operation can be conducted."[9]

Further, by focusing our forces to create real security in some areas rather than the illusion of security across the country, we can commence rebuilding. The resulting combination of security and prosperity will contrast sharply with conditions in insurgent-controlled areas. When we have sufficient forces to move into those areas, the people might be more receptive to the government's presence.

Command and Control

There is an old saying in military planning: Get the command and control relationships right, and everything else will take care of itself. It is a common-sense acknowledgement that people provide solutions only if they are well-led in a functional organization. Thus the first and often most difficult step in counterinsurgency is to integrate friendly-force command and execution. Note that I say "integrate" and not "unify." Given the transnational, transdimensional nature of today's insurgencies, it will be impossible to develop true unity of command for all the organizations needed to fight an insurgency. Instead, we must strive for unity of effort by integrating the efforts of all concerned.

While the U.S. military does not like committees, a committee structure might be most effective for command in a counterinsurgency. There should be an executive committee for every major political subdivision, from city to province to national levels. Each committee must include all key personnel involved in the counterinsurgency effort—political leaders (prime minister, governors, and so on), police, intelligence officers, economic developers

…the first and often most difficult step in counterinsurgency is to integrate friendly-force command and execution.

(to include NGOs), public services ministers, and the military. The political leaders must be in charge and have full authority to hire, fire, and evaluate other members of the committee. Committee members must not be controlled or evaluated by their parent agencies at the next higher level; otherwise, the committee will fail to achieve unity of effort. This step will require a massive cultural change to the normal stovepipes that handle all personnel and promotion issues for the government. One of the biggest hindrances to change is that many think the current hierarchical organization is effective. They think of themselves as "cylinders of excellence" rather than the balky, inefficient, and ineffective stovepipes they really are.

…one of the biggest challenges …is developing leaders to head the in-country and regional teams…

Above the national-level committee, which can be established fairly quickly under our current organization, we need a regional command arrangement. Given the transnational nature of modern insurgency, a single country team simply cannot deal with all the regional and international issues required in effective counterinsurgency. Thus we will have to develop a genuine regional team. The current DOD and Department of State organizations do not lend themselves well to such a structure and will require extensive realignment. This realignment must be accomplished.

Once the national and regional committees are established, Washington must give mission-type orders, allocate sufficient resources, and then let in-country and regional personnel run the campaign. Obviously, one of the biggest challenges in this arrangement is developing leaders to head the in-country and regional teams, particularly deployable U.S. civil leaders and host-nation leaders. An even bigger challenge will be convincing U.S. national-level bureaucracies to stay out of day-to-day operations.

Once established, the committees can use the network map of the insurgency and its environment to develop a plan for victory. The network map provides important information about the nature of the interaction between the key hubs and smaller nodes of the insurgency. While the hubs and nodes are the most visible aspects of any network, it is the nature of the activity between them that is important. We must understand that well to understand how the network actually functions. This is difficult to do, and what makes it even more challenging is that one cannot understand the network except in its cultural context. Therefore, we must find and employ people with near-native language fluency and cultural knowledge to build and interpret our map.

Speed versus Accuracy

For counterinsurgencies, Colonel John Boyd's observation-orientation-decision-action (OODA) loop remains valid, but its focus changes.[10] In conventional war, and especially in the aerial combat that led Boyd to develop his concept, speed was crucial to completing the OODA loop—it got you inside your opponent's OODA loop. We have to use a different approach in counterinsurgency. Stressing speed above all else in the decision cycle simply does not make sense in a war that can last a decade or more.

In counterinsurgency, we still want to move speedily, but the focus must be more on accuracy (developed in the observation-orientation segment of the loop). The government must understand what it is seeing before it decides what to do. To date, network-centric concepts have focused on shortening the sensor-to-shooter step (Boyd's decision-action segment). Now, we must focus on improving the quality of the observe-orient segment. Even more important, the OODA loop expands to track not just our enemy's reaction, but how the entire environment is reacting—the people, the host-nation government, our allies, our forces, even our own population.

Attacking the Network

Because effective offensive operations in a counterinsurgency are based on protecting the people, direct action against insurgent fighters is secondary; nevertheless, such action remains a necessary part of the overall campaign plan. Once we understand the insurgent network or major segments of it, we can attack elements of it. We should only attack, however, if our attacks support our efforts to provide security for the people. If

there is a strong likelihood of collateral damage, we should not attack because collateral damage, by definition, lessens the people's security. In addition, the fundamental rules for attacking a network are different from those used when attacking a more conventional enemy. First, in counterinsurgency it is better to exploit a known node than attack it. Second, if you have to attack, the best attack is a soft one designed to introduce distrust into the network. Third, if you must make a hard attack, conduct simultaneous attacks on related links, or else the attack will have little effect. Finally, after the attack, increase surveillance to see how the insurgency tries to communicate around or repair the damage. As they are reaching out to establish new contacts, the new nodes will be most visible.

Information Campaign

An integral part of counterinsurgency is an effective information campaign. It must have multiple targets (the host-country population, U.S. population, international community, insurgents and their supporters); it must be integrated into all aspects of the overall campaign; and it can only be effective if it is based on the truth—spin will eventually be discovered, and the government will be hard-pressed to recover its credibility.

Furthermore, our actions speak so loudly that they drown out our words. When we claim we stand for justice, but then hold no senior personnel responsible for torture, we invalidate our message and alienate our audience. Fortunately, positive actions work, too. The tsunami and earthquake relief efforts in 2004 and 2005 had a huge effect on our target audiences. Consequently, our information campaign must be based on getting information about our good actions out. Conversely, our actions must live up to our rhetoric.

To study a highly effective information campaign, I recommend looking at the one conducted by the Palestinians during Intifada I. A detailed examination of how and why it was so successful can be found in *Intifada*, by Schiff and Ya'ari.[11]

Summary

Today's counterinsurgency warfare involves a competition between human networks—ours and theirs. To understand their networks, we must understand the networks' preexisting links and the cultural and historical context of the society. We also have to understand not just the insurgent's network, but those of the host-nation government, its people, our coalition partners, NGOs, and, of course, our own.

Counterinsurgency is completely different from insurgency. Rather than focusing on fighting, strategy must focus on establishing good governance by strengthening key friendly nodes while weakening the enemy's. In Iraq, we must get the mass of the population on our side. Good governance is founded on providing effective security for the people and giving them hope for their future; it is not based on killing insurgents and terrorists. To provide that security, we must be able to visualize the fight between and within the human networks involved. Only then can we develop and execute a plan to defeat the insurgents. ***MR***

NOTES

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2. Ian F. W. Beckett, ed., *Armed Force and Modern Counter-Insurgency: Armies and Guerrilla Warfare 1900-1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 8.

3. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966), xi.

4. Thomas L. Friedman, "A Poverty of Dignity and a Wealth of Rage," *New York Times*, 15 July 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/15/opinion/15friedman.html?ex=1279080000&en=881732206e2082d5&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss>, accessed 7 July 2006.

5. John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 71.

6. Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, *Linked: The New Science of Networks* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2002). See also Lewis Sorley, *A Better War* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 2003).

7. Mark Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

8. Used by the British in Malaya, the white-grey-black scheme is a corollary of the clear-hold-build strategy now in use in Iraq. White areas were those declared completely cleared of insurgents and ready for reconstruction and democratic initiatives. Grey areas were in dispute, with counterinsurgents and insurgents vying actively for the upper hand. Black areas were insurgent-controlled and mostly left alone pending the reallocation of government resources from other areas. See Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Vietnam and Malaya* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), Chapter 10.

9. Thompson, 55.

10. COL John Boyd articulated the OODA loop concept in a lengthy slide presentation. For a discussion of the OODA loop and other Boyd theories, see "Boyd and Military Strategy," <www.d-n-i.net/second_level/boyd_military.htm>, accessed 10 July 2006.

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1st Place
COIN Writing Competition

Producing Victory: Rethinking Conventional Forces in COIN Operations

Lieutenant Colonel Douglas A. Ollivant, U.S. Army,
and First Lieutenant Eric D. Chewning, U.S. Army Reserve

Sunrise over Baghdad finds a maneuver battalion executing several missions. Two platoons are on patrol, one sweeping a main supply route for improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the other escorting "Team Trash"—a dump truck and bucket loader—through a poor Shi'a neighborhood. A third platoon is still at the brigade detention facility in-processing several insurgents captured the previous night, while a fourth escorts the battalion medical platoon for a medical outreach in one of the battalion's assigned neighborhoods. Meanwhile, the battalion commander and a company commander prepare to attend a neighborhood council meeting; the executive officer updates the agenda for the weekly fusion-cell meeting; and the operations officer meets with the district police chief and an Iraqi Army representative to discuss security for an upcoming holiday. Shift change is taking place for both the American platoons and the Iraqi Security Forces guarding the U.S. forward operating base (FOB), and the American military liaison officer—an assistant operations officer—accompanies a squad-sized Iraqi patrol to clear the FOB's perimeter. The headquarters company commander and the battalion logistician are negotiating a local contract for a crane to help reposition barrier materials in the neighborhood to respond to an emerging threat. The battalion intelligence officer (S2) reads the previous night's patrol reports before meeting his Iraqi counterpart for tea at the FOB's civil-military operations center (CMOC). Later in the day, the civil affairs team leader and a company executive officer will join the assistant S2 and a local sheik at the CMOC to discuss the merits of a proposed reconstruction project. Finally, yet another platoon prepares to conduct a precision raid against an insurgent cell after dark, based on intelligence gathered from a walk-in informant and confirmed by a local cleric's security chief. So begins another day in Baghdad.

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BACKGROUND PHOTO: "Baghdad Sunrise", courtesy of CPT Danjel Bout, U.S. Army.

OUR THESIS IS SIMPLE: The combined arms maneuver battalion, partnering with indigenous security forces and living among the population it secures, should be the basic tactical unit of counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare. Only such a battalion—a blending of infantry, armor, engineers, and other branches, each retrained and employed as needed—can integrate all arms into full-spectrum operations at the tactical level.[1]

Smaller conventional forces might develop excellent community relations, but they lack the robust staff and sufficient mass to fully exploit local relationships. Conversely, while brigades and divisions boast expanded analysis

and control capabilities, they cannot develop the street-level rapport so critical for an effective COIN campaign. Unconventional forces are likewise no panacea because the expansion of Special Operations Command assets or the creation of stability and reconstruction or system-administration forces will not result in sustainable COIN strategies.[2] Recent experience in Iraq affirms previously forgotten lessons: "Winning the Peace" requires simultaneous execution along the full spectrum of kinetic and non-kinetic operations.[3] While political developments in Iraq and the United States might have moved past the point at which our suggested COIN solution would be optimal, we argue that the maneuver battalion should be the centerpiece of the Army's future COIN campaigns. This paper examines why the maneuver battalion is the premier organization around which to build COIN doctrine, and it identifies current obstacles and future improvements to such a battalion-centric strategy.

Back to the Future

Upon returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), we began to search older works on COIN, hoping to find hints of a larger framework in which to ground our observations. The work we both (independently) found indispensable was *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, a 1964 book by David Galula. Based on his first-hand knowledge of insurgencies in China, Greece, Southeast Asia, and Algeria, Galula derives numerous lessons, several of which reflected our own experiences.



U.S. Army

Children in Najaf display stickers with the MNCI-New Iraqi government slogan "Progress, Iraq, Prosperity".

Galula's Lessons for COIN Operations

1. **Successful COIN operations require assistance from the community.**
2. **A static unit with responsibility for a specific area of responsibility is preferable to a mobile unit moving from area to area.**
3. **No one approach can defeat an insurgency.**
4. **The principle of unity of command is even more important in COIN than it is in conventional warfare.**
5. **Effective COIN requires a grid of embedded units.**

The first lesson is that successful COIN operations require assistance from the community. To earn such support, the counterinsurgent must sell the host-nation population on an idea. As Galula writes, "[O]n the eve of embarking on a major effort, the counterinsurgent faces what is probably the most difficult problem of the war: He has to arm himself with a competing cause."[4]

To realize the cause—in Iraq's case, liberal democracy and free-market capitalism—the counterinsurgent must develop the institutions responsible for its materialization. While the counterinsurgent must create, the insurgent need only destroy. Galula argues, "[T]he insurgent has really no cause at all; he is exploiting the counterinsurgent's weakness and mistakes."[5]

Herein lies a vexing problem: The Army fights and wins America's battles through land dominance, not by establishing civic, security, and economic institutions in failed states. Such nation-building requires the strategic and operational application of national power (a subject well beyond the scope of this paper), but at the tactical level, COIN and nation-building tasks are the same: Both call for grassroots support and require Soldiers to win popular approval by solving practical problems: turning on electricity, keeping the streets safe,



U.S. Army

Residents of Najaf celebrate the ending of the Madhi Militia uprising in Najaf, August 2004.

getting fathers and mothers to work and sons and daughters to school.[6]

Galula's second lesson is that a static unit with responsibility for a specific area of responsibility (AOR) is preferable to a mobile unit moving from area to area. While military planners like to task-organize and shift boundaries, these behaviors are antithetical to effective COIN. As Galula writes, "The static units are obviously those that know best the local situation, the population, the local problems; if a mistake is made, they are the ones who will bear the consequences. It follows that when a mobile unit is sent to operate temporarily in an area, it must come under the territorial command, even if the military commander of the area is the junior officer. In the same way as the U.S. ambassador is the boss of every U.S. organization operating in the country to which he is accredited, the territorial military commander must be the boss of all military forces operating in his area."[7]

Galula's third lesson is that no one approach can defeat an insurgency. To surrender any single line of operation, be it military, security, political, information, or economic, is to concede the overall fight: "[T]he expected result—final defeat of the insurgents—is not an addition but a multiplication of these various operations; they all are essential and if one is nil, the product will be zero."[8] Collectively, these operations impact each demographic in the AOR differently. Some groups require significant kinetic coercion, while others benefit from less. It is the counterinsurgent, living among the population and working with local security forces and opinion-makers, who must integrate the operations to achieve the desired effect.

The fourth lesson is that the principle of unity of command is even more important in COIN than it is in conventional warfare. To haphazardly approach an insurgency guarantees defeat. One single headquarters must, within an area, synchronize security, physical and institutional reconstruction, and the information environment. Again, quoting Galula, "[M]ore than any other kind of warfare, counterinsurgency must respect the principle of a single direction. A single boss must direct the operations from beginning until the end."[9]

Finally, we saw in Galula's work our own hard-learned experience that effective COIN requires a grid of embedded units, which we believe should be maneuver battalions. These battalions must be interlocked, must coordinate with each other—often across the boundaries of their parent brigades and divisions—and must see themselves as the ultimate authority in their respective AORs. The grid must encompass the entire nation to prevent the development of insurgent safe areas and to give the counterinsurgent a 10:1 or 20:1 ratio over the insurgent in every locality.[10]

Again we found ourselves relearning what Galula had discerned 40 years earlier: "The area will be divided into sectors and sub-sectors, each with its own static unit. The subdivision should be carried out down to the level of the basic unit of counterinsurgency warfare: the largest unit whose leader is in direct and continuous contact with the population. This is the most important unit in counterinsurgency operations, the level where most of the practical problems arise, and in each case where the war is won or lost."[11]

With our own experiences reinforced by this COIN classic, we began to examine just what it was about the maneuver battalion that had made it, in our observation, the key headquarters for a successful COIN campaign.

Maneuver Battalion Primacy

The current manifestation of COIN warfighting is a chimera of military, intelligence, and government agencies. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, maneuver units, Special Operations Forces, civil affairs specialists, psychological operations detachments, international development agencies, and intelligence and advisory elements all operate simultaneously along the same lines of operation without synchronizing effects among parallel units or commands. In violation of a basic COIN principle, this independence leaves no one person or unit completely responsible for COIN operations in a given community. At the local level, only the maneuver battalion can execute across the full spectrum of COIN tasks, harmonizing disparate units toward a common effect and capturing synergies that larger commands are unable to duplicate.

Combat and security operations. The maneuver battalion alone is capable of providing sustained security operations within a given community. Active security patrolling provides presence that deters or reduces violence by increasing the possible costs to criminals and insurgents.

The kinetic COIN fight mostly plays out at the squad and platoon levels. But COIN does not guarantee low intensity. As combat operations in Najaf and Fallujah in 2004 (inter alia) showed, counterinsurgent forces need to be able to transition to high-intensity conflict.[12] This show of force is the fundamental key in the information operation that sets the baseline for the maneuver battalion's success. By being the provider of security or, conversely, the implementer of targeted violence, and by being able to surge or reduce presence in various neighborhoods or around various structures, the



U.S. Army

With local national police and army units, a 1-5 CAV Bradley secures a traffic control point near the Imam Kadhum Mosque, March 2004.



U.S. Army

Soldiers of 1-5 CAV prepare to clear the Najaf Cemetery of Madhi Militia and weapons caches, August 2004.

maneuver commander begins with a certain core of political power in his AOR that no other force can duplicate.[13]

As Galula suggests, "[U]nits must be deployed where the population actually lives and not on positions deemed to possess a military value."[14] For the local people to feel secure and provide intelligence, they must have 24-hour access to the counterinsurgent force. Units with control over an AOR should live in that neighborhood; indeed, every part of an insurgent-plagued country needs to fall under a battalion's control. Having a fortress mentality simply isolates the counterinsurgent from the fight.

Ideally, the maneuver battalion operates from a self-sustaining battalion-sized patrol base co-located with a local security-force headquarters. Such forward basing creates several positive outcomes. First, the counterinsurgent force projects power through its proximity to the community. Integration with the community creates obvious benefits for intelligence collection, information operations, reconstruction, and community outreach. Second, spreading units out creates fewer troop concentrations, thereby reducing the "Mega-FOB" rocket or mortar magnet. Third, several smaller, integrated battalion-sized bases reduce the outside-force footprint and enhance community relations. And lastly, a maneuver battalion joined to a local police station or an indigenous army post not only visually and physically reinforces the counterinsurgent's intent to assist the local government, but also aids his ability to shape new security organs and coordinate actions.

Training local forces. Traditionally, the training of indigenous security forces is a Special Forces mission. But when the operational scale jumps from providing support to a host country to rebuilding a host nation's entire military, the conventional Army must get involved. Our security commitment to Iraq, for example, requires the creation of 10 light infantry divisions of some 160,000 Soldiers. Only the "big Army" has the resources to accomplish such an undertaking. As a result, maneuver battalions are tasked to conduct training. Involving more than just putting an Iraqi face on task-force missions, the animation of new security institutions is critical to the Iraqi Government's success and a U.S. exit strategy.

As seen in Iraq and Vietnam, new local security forces fight better when accompanied by their U.S. counterparts.[15] Knowing they have the resources and experience of the U.S. Army right behind them, in a battalion they share space with, instills better morale, confidence, and discipline in newly organized forces. It also allows U.S. maneuver leaders to be better mentors and to identify local leaders willing to get the job done. Ultimately, local security forces make real and irreplaceable contributions.[16] Indigenous troops act as de facto covert information collectors and subject-matter experts on local culture. They also are able to undertake sensitive site exploitation, like mosque raids, and act as a bridge between the counterinsurgent force and the community even as they set the conditions for an eventual exit strategy.

Economy and reconstruction. The United Nations Office of Project Services and International Labor Organization recommends the implementation of a local economic development (LED) approach for economic stimulation in conflict areas. This bottom-up method is preferred to centralized, top-down strategies because "the best



U.S. Army

Looking out for the small businessman, a 1-5 CAV patrol checks in on a local propane distributor.

knowledge regarding local problems, local needs, local resources, local development potential, as well as local motivation for promoting change, exists on the local level [and] it is of fundamental importance that the local community sees its place in the future."[17]

Also stressing the importance of local economic actors, a World Bank report notes that "support for micro and small businesses is an appropriate early step in a post-conflict situation because these businesses are resilient and nimble, adapting quickly to new circumstances."[18]

The maneuver battalion plays a central role in LED strategy during COIN operations. Optimally, not only does the battalion have its own reconstruction monies, but it also facilitates international development agency access to small businesses, trade unions, local governments, and entrepreneurs. The counterinsurgent, the community, and aid agencies all benefit from local coordination of the economic, political, and security dimensions of reconstruction.

Even with the support of Army combat engineers and outside construction firms, reconstruction work must still leverage the support of local contractors. Through daily interaction with the population, the battalion is able to gauge the real impact of ongoing reconstruction and better allocate resources. If the campaign has yet to reach this level of sophistication, the battalion remains the only element able to provide sustained security for reconstruction projects. Such development should focus on employing military-age males, enfranchising repressed minorities, stimulating the local economy, and co-opting local leaders. All of these are critical parts of a successful COIN strategy.

Fostering political institutions. For Galula, "the counterinsurgent reaches a position of strength when his power is embodied in a political organization issuing from, and firmly supported by, the population."[19] Political decapitation, as the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom and OIF proved, is a relatively simple matter for a superpower such as the United States. But a regime is far more than just a few high-ranking officials; rather, a regime consists of all who benefit from the current political arrangement. Even those not in formal offices profit from the distribution of political power and must therefore be considered, at least peripherally, as

part of the regime. Additionally, any consideration of the regime must account for the existing "modes and orders"—family ties, religious commitments, financial interests, and the like—that will set the stage for the installation or reshaping of the new government.

The ultimate goal of COIN warfare is to "build (or rebuild) a political machine from the population upward."[20] Initially, the counterinsurgent must empower, through elections or appointment, local provisional leaders.[21] The battalion provides security, trains local security forces, and drives economic development, so a certain measure of paternalism is unavoidable. Nonetheless, the legitimacy of local leaders rests on their ability to solve their constituents' problems. The counterinsurgent is a political operative, offering responsibility and resources to those leaders who prove capable, allowing them to build a base of popular support. As the work proceeds, tested leaders will emerge in each locality. These proven leaders become the nucleus of national and regional parties. The formation of national-level parties can only progress after their development at the local level.[22] As representatives of the emerging government, the local leaders, with the critical assistance of the maneuver battalion and indigenous security forces, must exert hegemony over hostile tribes, militias, religious movements, and the remnants of the preexisting regime in order to pave the way for a new political order.



U.S. Army

A 1-5 CAV soldier serving as a liaison/mentor to the battalion's attached Iraqi Army company joins them on the firing line, October 2004.

Tactical Synergies

The scale and scope of the maneuver battalion can generate tactical synergies that no other unit can duplicate during COIN operations.[23] Underlying this observation are two key points. First, as an organization's modified table of organization and equipment expands, it can undertake a wider range of missions over a larger battlespace, but this increase in size makes it harder for decisionmakers to understand the population intimately, and it makes the organization less adaptive. Generally, the larger a military echelon, the less often (if ever) its commander is in direct contact with the average man on the street. While recent transformation empowers the brigade as the Army's primary unit of action, COIN operations require an even greater powering down of assets. As Galula recommends, the basic unit of COIN warfare is the largest unit whose leader is in direct and continuous contact with the population.[24] This basic unit is the maneuver battalion. Brigades, divisions, and other higher headquarters must establish objectives, coordinate actions, apportion terrain, and allocate national resources among subordinate units. These higher commands are responsible for establishing the channels and means that allow locally embedded maneuver battalions to engage in decisive, practical problem-solving.

The other point is that COIN operations require leaders to be pentathletes. Staffs and troop commanders must be able to juggle the simultaneous outcomes of small-unit actions, humanitarian assistance missions, and intelligence collection. Successful COIN campaigns are the product of multiple lines of operations. As such, synergies develop when a unit is able to execute along several of these lines. These synergies benefit both the counterinsurgent force and the community.

For the counterinsurgent, a Soldier who trains local security forces will understand the culture better, which should aid him when he conducts combat patrols. A commander who attends city council meetings to promote reconstruction projects shapes the battlefield for security operations. For the community, the local counterinsurgent force respon-

sible for combat operations is also the unit able to compensate for property damage and provide information about detained individuals. The unit responsible for coordinating with the local security forces also manages their recruiting and training. Conducting security operations, promoting economic development, training indigenous security forces, and fostering political institutions work together collectively to deny the insurgent access to the population.

The counterinsurgent force must be large enough to conduct an array of focused activities simultaneously, thereby capturing the synergies from their collective employment. At the same time, however, it must be small enough and flexible enough to bond with the local population and adapt to changing circumstances. The maneuver battalion meets both these criteria.

Other Implications

A battalion-focused COIN strategy offers many benefits, but perhaps the two greatest have to do with civil-military operations (CMO) and intelligence collection.

CMO. Civil-military operations are green-tab issues. Reconstruction, economic development, and community relations are not phases in war planning; they are principles of COIN. As such, the commander responsible for the security of a specific area must also be able to determine reconstruction priorities and control assets responsible for their implementation. An increased Army-level emphasis on CMO does not necessarily mean (and, in our opinion, should not mean) more civil affairs Soldiers or the creation of special reconstruction and security forces. Instead, we must acknowledge that money is the power behind CMO. Many vital non-kinetic actions—reconstruction, community outreach, information operations, and intelligence collection—are not possible without putting targeted cash into the local economy.

Higher headquarters must resource maneuver commanders with dedicated reconstruction budgets and operational funds.[25] A process through which requests are sent up for laborious and uncertain review inhibits the commander by not allowing him to quickly or confidently commit resources to a fight.[26] Reconstruction funds are combat power. It would be foolish for a commander to enter a conventional fight not knowing how many tanks or infantrymen he could commit, and it is just as unwise to send him into a negotiation with a local leader not knowing what money he has been budgeted to allocate within his AOR. The successful maneuver commander uses civic reconstruction or initial construction to contour his area of operations. He can use money to reinforce his presence in the area or to mitigate risk in areas where he is practicing economy of force in terms of security patrols. The commander employs projects to co-opt community leaders or to create new opinion-makers by funneling money through them.

Civil affairs units assist maneuver commanders by working with civil authorities and civilian populations in the commander's AOR to lessen the impact of military operations. In certain small-scale or domestic operations, civil affairs Soldiers should retain their independence. But the objective of COIN operations is for the maneuver commander to shape the conditions under which a civilian population lives. As a result, civil affairs Soldiers should be attached to the maneuver commander, acting more as staff proponents and subject-matter experts than as primary actors.

In this environment, separate reporting channels and rating schemes that dilute and confuse the chain of command are also counterproductive. As the institutional Army gradually recognizes the importance of full-spectrum operations, maneuver commanders will realize the need to integrate kinetic and non-kinetic targeting. Community relations are the main effort of the entire counterinsurgent force, not just a specialized unit.

Tactical intelligence collection. Other than the tactical Raven unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) and a scout platoon, the maneuver battalion does not own dedicated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets. Experience from Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrates that human intelligence (HUMINT) is by far the most valuable intelligence source for commanders engaged in COIN warfare.[27] While the Military Intelligence School has belatedly tried to implement an "every Soldier a collector" mindset, internal policies stand in the way of effective HUMINT collection. For example, suppose a local national comes to a checkpoint and tells Soldiers that his neighbor conducts attacks against U.S. forces. None of the Soldiers in the battalion,

the S2 included, are allowed to task the informant to provide additional information that would make the target actionable (for example, a ten-digit grid and/or a guide to a house, a means to positively identify the target, and sufficient legal evidence to detain the target if captured). To ask the informant to return with this information would cross a legal line and subject the well-intentioned troopers to possible action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The Soldiers must instead defer to a tactical HUMINT team (THT) to run the source. THTs, however, seldom operate under battalion control (unlike Marine human exploitation teams), leaving maneuver commanders in the undesirable position of outsourcing their most valuable collection platform.

Tactical HUMINT collection would benefit from a closer relationship between THTs and maneuver units. THTs are in short supply and on their own can be ineffective, because the information they gather loses value unless it is acted on quickly by the maneuver unit owning the ground. Additionally, because the maneuver commander maintains order and controls funding in his AOR, significant personalities will want to speak to him. The THT can be useful for interrogating detainees, but it is folly to believe that a prominent sheik, imam, or businessman would want to speak with a sergeant E-5. Indigenous populations understand our rank structure and have definite ideas about who their social peers are. Any potential source with truly significant influence will likely want to be handled by someone who can provide incentives, both tangible and intangible. To prevent information fratricide and to leverage local leaders' spheres of influence, the maneuver commander should be the one who manages all the key relationships in the battalion AOR. This again reflects Galula's call for a "single direction."

Acknowledging that source operations require specialized training, these missions should be managed by the battalion S2 and executed by one of the battalion's intelligence officers or by a THT under the S2's direct control. Such an arrangement would also facilitate field interrogations and on-site document exploitation. The interrogators would benefit from participating in the targeting process from the onset. Understanding the battalion's reasons for targeting a suspect and how the suspect fits into the S2's view of the enemy situation would assist the interrogator in gleaning actionable information.

In a HUMINT-rich environment, battalions need an organic collection capability. Most information requirements will never be satisfied by driving a tactical vehicle past a suspect's house or by flying a UAV overhead. Such overt collection often warns the target and may compromise a promising lead. Recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan bears out what Galula saw in previous COIN campaigns. Everyone, not just the specialists, must participate in HUMINT collection. Therefore, the bureaucracy surrounding intelligence collection must be constructed with moderation and restraint.[28]

Final Thoughts

Our Army must plan for the COIN fight. Not only are we currently engaged in such a battle on strategic terrain, but our difficulties have surely not gone unnoticed by potential adversaries. We must expect this kind of fight again.

We have argued that the combined arms maneuver battalion should be the basic unit in COIN operations. Not only do we believe in the battalion's inherent abilities to conduct tactical full-spectrum operations, but we believe that other alternatives are impractical or carry a significant downside. The creation of pure nation-building, stability and reconstruction units, or system-administration forces, would divert Department of Defense dollars to forces that could not fight when (not if) we are again called on to engage in mid- to high-intensity conflict. Beyond this inefficiency, it is difficult to see these forces ever coming into existence. For all the talk of joint interagency task forces, it would be a monumental victory were we even able to embed representatives from the Departments of State, Commerce, and Justice in each divisional headquarters. Were we serious about truly implementing such interagency task forces in 2015, we would have seen platoons of diplomatic, economic, and legal trainees entering the system last year. We did not—and therefore the Department of Defense must plan to have its personnel continue to be the primary implementers of all aspects of reconstruction for the foreseeable future.

This responsibility will require a quantum shift in mindset for Army leaders. While Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster may have overstated the problem

in a recent critique of U.S. Phase IV operations in *Military Review*, the problems regarding organizational culture that he brings to light certainly ring true to these authors.[29] The stateside and garrison Army, in particular, has been especially reluctant to transform, because transformation implies that many of the systems and modes of proceeding that the Army used to redefine itself as it recovered from the "hollow Army" of the 1970s may have outlived their usefulness. It will be difficult to abandon mental models, systems, and institutions that have become central to the Army's self-conception.

And in a final caveat, proposing the maneuver battalion as the decisive headquarters is handicapped by a stubborn fact. Due to the Army's generational cohort system, much of the current senior leadership of these battalions—commanders, executive officers, and operations officers—have never before served at the tactical level in a counterinsurgency. It will require an exceptional level of flexibility—and even humility—for these leaders to rely on, and perhaps defer to, their more expert company-grade officers, many of whom have had two or three tours in Southwest Asia. However, if these leaders embrace Lieutenant General David Petraeus's key observation that "a leader's most important task is to set the right tone" and embrace the themes of COIN even if they do not fully understand them, then their lower-level leaders can drive the fight.[30]

These ifs notwithstanding, we maintain that the battalion ought to be the primary unit in COIN. While we cannot transform our hierarchical Army into a fully networked organization overnight, powering down to the lowest practical level will enable the most adaptive commanders to implement a Galula-like solution. The war in Iraq may now have moved beyond this possible solution; with the ceding of battlespace control to Iraqi Security Forces, U.S. units will be required to take a subtler, more indirect approach. But when we fight the next counterinsurgency—by engaging along all lines of operations through a nationwide grid of locally embedded maneuver battalions—we can bring American strengths into play against the insurgents and demonstrate that we have learned and recovered from our stumbling start in Iraq. ***MR***

NOTES

1. The current heavy combined arms battalion includes two mechanized infantry companies, two armor companies, a company of combat engineers, and a forward support company. Depending on the tactical environment these forces trade M2A3s (Bradley) and M1A2s (Abrams tank) for M1114s (up-armored HMMWVs). Experience has shown that other types of battalions (engineer, artillery, air defense artillery) can serve quite admirably in lieu of combat arms battalions, and our use of "combined arms battalion" should in no way be viewed as a slight to their performance. However, terrain permitting, we believe that optimally this maneuver force should be equipped with at least a company-size element of armored vehicles, with the M2A3 Bradley being the currently optimal solution. See also, Major (now Lieutenant) General Peter W. Chiarelli, Major Patrick R. Michaelis, and Major Geoffrey A. Norman, "Armor in Urban Terrain: The Critical Enabler," *Armor,* March-April 2005, 7-12.

2. For a discussion of stability and reconstruction forces, see *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations,* ed. Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 2004). For a discussion of "system administration" forces, see Thomas P.M. Barnett, *Blueprint for Action*: *A Future Worth Creating* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2005), especially xix.

3. See also LTG (then MG) Peter Chiarelli and Major Patrick Michaelis, "Winning the Peace: The Requirements for Full-Spectrum Operations," *Military Review* (July-August 2005).

4. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, reprinted 2005), 101.

5. Ibid., 101.

6. Ibid., 95.

7. Ibid., 93.

8. Ibid., 87.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., 32.

11. Ibid., 110-111.

12. The authors were members of 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, during its participation in the Battle of Najaf Cemetery in August 2004 and the Second Battle of Fallujah in November 2004.

13. See also Ralph Peters, "A Grave New World," *Armed Forces Journal* (April 2005): 34. Peters touches upon several ideas also articulated here. He argues for the importance of presence but also the need to reform military intelligence to emphasize tactical human intelligence for maneuver commanders. Peters also contends that money is a vital component of non-kinetic combat power.

14. Galula, 111.

15. See also John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 156-158.

16. See also Robert M. Cassidy, "Back to the Street Without Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and other Small Wars," *Parameters* 34 (Summer 2004): 73-83. Cassidy points to the success of the Marine Corps' Combined Action Program and argues that this strategy led to greatly improved tactical intelligence collection by greatly enhancing security for the local population.

17. United Nations Office of Project Services and International Labor Organization, *Economic Rights and Opportunities-Rehabilitation and Social Sustainability*, UNOPS/ILO, 19 October 2000, <http://www-ilo-mirror.cornell.edu/public/english/employment/led/publ/unops.htm>.

18. The World Bank, Middle East Department, Report No. 27602, *Interim Strategy Note of the World Bank Group for Iraq*, 14 January 2004, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTIRAQ/Overview/20193777/Iraq %20Interim%20Strategy.pdf>, access restricted.

19. Galula, 79.

20. Ibid., 136.

21. Ibid., 127-133. Here Galula outlines the establishment of local political institutions and their relationship to the counterinsurgent.

22. Ibid., 133. Galula contends that national parties can only emerge after they have been vetted locally by the counterinsurgent.

23. Counterinsurgent operations, like commercial manufacturing, derive efficiencies from their respective economies of scale and scope. In economic terms, economies of scale refer to a firm's efficiencies associated with increasing or decreasing the quantity of production, whereas economies of scope are synergies associated with increasing or decreasing the types of products produced. In counterinsurgent operations, economies of scale apply to the echelon of command responsible for controlling daily operations, while economies of scope refer to efficiencies associated with increasing or decreasing the number of lines of operations that unit executes.

24. Galula, 110-111.

25. See also Max Boot, "The Struggle to Transform the Military," *Foreign Affairs* (March-April 2005): 113. Boot speaks to the limitations of the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) used in Iraq and the need to reduce the considerable bureaucracy associated with the use of money at the tactical level.

26. Galula, 131.

27. See also Jeremiah Pray, "Kinetic Targeting in Iraq at the Battalion Task Force Level: From Target to Detainee," *Infantry* (July-August 2005): 30-33.

28. Galula, 119-120.

29. Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November-December 2005): 2-15.

30. Lieutenant General David A. Petraeus, "Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq," *Military Review* (January-February 2006): 9.

2nd Place
COIN Writing Competition

Unit Immersion in Mosul: Establishing Stability in Transition

Major Paul T. Stanton, U.S. Army



PHOTO: CPT Paul Stanton, Commander of B Company, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry Regiment, 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, briefs Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, COL Joseph Anderson, Commander of 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, and MG David H. Petraeus, Commander of the 101st Airborne Division, during a patrol in the center of Mosul, Iraq, 21 July 2003. (DOD)

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AS CONVENTIONAL U.S. FORCES transition from full combat to stability operations, they will likely assume responsibility for areas that have suffered significant war-related damage. In the wake of combat operations, the local people may be demoralized by their nation's defeat, by the apparent lack of economic opportunity, and by shortages of critical needs such as electricity, water, and fuel.[1] The establishment of any governmental authority supported by our military may also contribute to the disillusionment. Such situations are ripe for the development of an insurgency and must be quickly and decisively defused. Experience has proven that immersing tactical units in their assigned areas of responsibility offers the best chance for achieving stability.

The growth of an insurgency relies heavily on unstable conditions. A few disgruntled community leaders can spark interest and offer financial backing to fuel insurgent recruitment efforts. Insurgent cadre will actively garner support for any effort contrary to that of the fledgling government while attributing desperate conditions to the "occupation" of the foreign military. When faced with such situations, U.S. forces must immediately begin counter-operations that simultaneously provide an accurate picture of the situation to the people, demonstrate the potential effectiveness of the government, and publicly defeat the insurgent element with direct action. U.S. forces must "arrest [an insurgency's] growth before it is able to gain initial traction" by installing and maintaining a constant, authoritative presence within neighborhoods to provide basic security.[2] Defeated forces cannot initially provide this authority; thus, a strong initial U.S. presence is necessary.

The potential for success in these operations is significantly enhanced by immersing tactical units in their operating environments as they transition to assume responsibility. The daily interaction and relationships between Soldiers and host-nation civilians form the foundation of a stability operation. Working together and developing relationships at the grassroots level bolster opportunities for success by demonstrating the potential for improvement through deeds and by humanizing Soldiers in the eyes of the local population. Living within the assigned area of operations (AO), among the people for whom U.S. forces are providing stability, promotes the development of these critical habitual relationships.

During a recent interview with the *Washington Post*, Colonel Chris Short, commandant of the forward-deployed Counterinsurgency Academy in Iraq, emphasized the need to break the "big-base mentality" and mix with the population. He said that "classic counterinsurgency theory holds that troops should live out among the people as much as possible, to develop a sense of how the society works and to gather intelligence."[3] Such immersion increases

the opportunities for Soldiers and civilians to interact in a positive manner while simultaneously helping Soldiers develop a very detailed knowledge of their operational environment. Immersion provides units a greater flexibility to effect each tenet of stability operations, whether gathering and disseminating information, influencing host-nation political development, or neutralizing threat activity.

The remainder of this paper will illustrate the positive impact of company-level immersion during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Analysis and examples are drawn from my own experiences while commanding Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry (B/1-502) of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) during the transition to stability operations in Mosul.

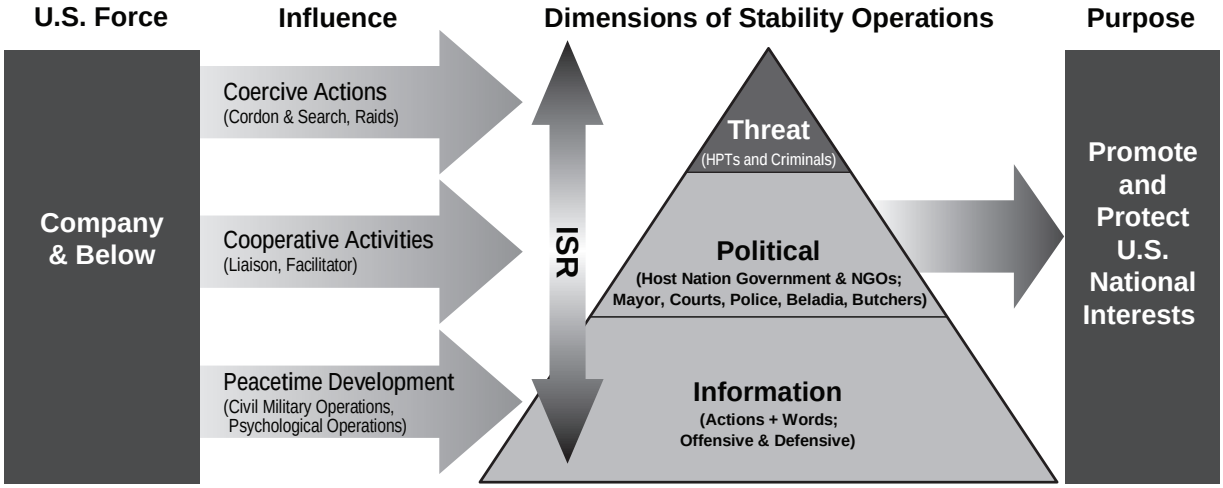
Bravo Company arrived in Mosul in April 2003 after the city had seen some limited fighting, but significant looting. Most public buildings were gutted down to their foundations; no government agencies were functioning; there was no running water or electricity; and fuel was in critically short supply. Over the next 10 months, the company lived in and operated from three separate locations within the heart of the city to stabilize and secure the city's center, an area that included city hall, the courthouse, the central bank, several police stations (to include the citywide headquarters), the bus station, the train station, the commercial epicenter with the central open air market, and thousands of residences ranging from the wealthiest to the poorest in the city.

Theoretical Framework

As defined in FM 3-07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations,* there are three critical dimensions in stability operations: information, political, and threat. A successful stability operation involves winning the information battle with the host population, helping rebuild and restructure the host political agencies, and defeating the threat element.[4] Figure 1 depicts how small-unit activities can influence these dimensions.[5]

Information (at the base of the triangle) serves as the foundation for mission success since it is impossible to affect the other dimensions without gathering substantial, credible information. The proper dissemination of information also serves to increase host-population support by keeping people abreast of activities that will positively affect them as individuals. Offensive information operations promote legitimacy, eliminate confusion, and reduce bias and ignorance through persuasion and education of the indigenous population.[6] Such influence helps to combat local perceptions of the U.S. military as an occupation force and deters nationals from accepting without question any anti-American messages presented by an insurgency.

Only after gathering sufficient information regarding their areas of operation can leaders make informed decisions about the restructuring of political agencies. Almost immediately, however, they must begin rebuilding the host nation's infrastructure. This must be done to increase economic



Legend: HPT, high pay-off target; ISR, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; NGOs, nongovernmental organizations.

Figure 1. Stability Operations.

activity, to restore order, and to give the local population hope. While these efforts should be initiated quickly, units must be cautious in offering support so that they do not alienate portions of the local population. Insufficient knowledge of an individual's history or lack of a full understanding of ethnic considerations in the region can result in a deleterious perception of favoritism. Units must constantly gather information and monitor political activities to ensure reconstruction efforts proceed in a positive direction for all of the people. Exercising tactical patience to collect information that identifies the right person to place in a critical position can save significant time and energy in the long run.

Information is also the foundation for direct action against enemy elements. Direct action requires a source to inform units of insurgent activities and locations. Moreover, units must be able to react quickly to capitalize on time-sensitive information. The threat element is flexible, necessitating friendly forces that can act almost instantaneously upon receipt of credible intelligence.

Units must simultaneously address all three of these dimensions of stability operations—win the information battle, rebuild the political apparatus, and defeat the threat—to provide a secure environment, legitimize political agencies, and defeat an insurgency. Overlooking any one of these may jeopardize the mission. It is the synergistic effect of the daily activities addressing each dimension that provides the best opportunities for success. Units need the authority and the ability to act quickly and constantly with regard to any and all of the dimensions. Immersing units into their AOs immediately upon transition empowers them to affect stability operations in the most significant manner.

Information Operations

Gathering information is a multifaceted problem with no simple solution. Experience has shown, however, that decentralizing command and immersing units in their own areas helps to quickly develop an accurate picture of the situation. With a permanent, dispersed footprint in the AO, we can use multiple patrols that can act simultaneously to provide a constant intelligence-gathering presence over a wide area. As doctrine accurately points out, "timely and accurate intelligence depends on aggressive and continuous reconnaissance and surveillance."[7] This patrol presence naturally results in substantial information that helps leaders make sound decisions.

As Soldiers become familiar with back alleys, streets with restricted mobility, and unlit roads, moving through the area becomes second nature.

Learning the terrain. One facet of the information battle comes from knowledge of the environment, specifically, the proper use of terrain, which is a combat multiplier. Generally speaking, the element that knows the terrain the best has a distinct advantage during a fight. The situation in a stability operation is no different.

If units are afforded the opportunity to live in their AOs during stability operations, they can learn the terrain as well as, if not better than, the enemy. Since the operational area is their own backyard, every patrol increases the Soldiers' awareness and understanding of the environment. This familiarity increases their own maneuver capabilities while reducing the threat's advantage of operating on their own turf. As Soldiers become familiar with back alleys, streets with restricted mobility, and unlit roads, moving through the area becomes second nature. They soon find that they don't need maps or satellite imagery.

More importantly, Soldiers will develop knowledge more detailed than they can derive from a map. B/1-502 was responsible for securing a portion of Mosul's inner-city marketplace where the satellite imagery suggested that there were multiple vehicle-sized corridors. What the imagery did not show, however, was that every day between 0900 and 1600 hours the area was so congested with vendors and shoppers that even dismounted movement was nearly impossible. Since the marketplace was within view of our rooftop surveillance points and was a focal point of our patrols, we quickly learned that there were two to three dismounted routes that supported rapid movement through the market, and that vehicular movement wasn't even an option

until late in the evening. We learned to budget 15 minutes for a vehicle convoy to move a quarter of a mile during peak periods.

In addition to improving mission execution, knowledge of the terrain enhances leader planning. When conducting counterinsurgency missions in support of stability operations, leaders are often forced to develop orders with little or no planning time. The immersed commander's ability to grab his subordinates and speak off of common checkpoints and landmarks without looking at the map while still clearly communicating the mission creates opportunities to act decisively on time-sensitive information. Soldiers learn the names of coffee shops, hotels, streets, and other details that minimize the requirement for terrain analysis and map orientation.

In one particular instance, we received a mission to apprehend a suspected insurgent who had allegedly been operating out of one of the local coffee shops. A brigade informant had provided intelligence consisting only of local names: "Subhi Affer was organizing activities from the Al Dur coffee shop and staying at the Fordus Hotel on Nebashid Street." When I relayed the information to my subordinates, one platoon leader instantly said, "They probably mean the Al Durra coffee shop and the Fordhaus Hotel on Nebasheed Street. The coffee shop is the one with the mural of a boy on it and the hotel is on the 2d floor of a building halfway between checkpoints 2 and 3." Without a recon and without satellite images, the Soldiers were capable of translating cryptic messages from informants into meaningful information. Moreover, they knew the area so well that we could instantly plan a mission and respond to time-sensitive information because we weren't trying to decipher 10-digit grid locations and guess which building was the one of interest from a satellite image—we knew it. We knew it as well as the informant who had originated the intelligence because the information didn't refer to just our AO, but also to our neighborhood.

Knowing the people. Detailed knowledge of the AO certainly facilitated operations, but successful direct action against the enemy also depended on information about specific people and locations. The best source of this information was the people who lived in the area and overheard conversations in the coffee shops. Insurgents concealed their activities in the presence of American forces so that U.S. Soldiers rarely saw any suspect behavior firsthand; the locals, however, were privy to what was really going on in the neighborhood.

From the outset, we needed to tap into this source, but the locals would not openly risk their lives to pass information to American forces. Many were skeptical of our true intentions in the area to begin with. Since they had been raised to hate Americans, it took only one disgruntled individual to persuade an entire coffee shop of listeners that Americans were in Iraq as an occupation force to steal oil and corrupt Muslim beliefs. Citing the previous "liberation" of Baghdad in 1917 by the British, the insurgents had a historical perspective to demonstrate how "liberators" enjoyed the benefits of Iraqi oil reserves.[8] Additionally, insurgent cadre could easily point out the absence of critical services like electricity to demonstrate the Americans' supposed inability to restore order.

We had to understand this context and approach the local people accordingly; we needed to understand the history and background of the area to relate to the people. The average citizen didn't care about the Coalition's strategic advances in developing the country; the amount of oil flowing through the pipeline in Baji didn't interest the average Iraqi citizen. Whether or not there was propane available for cooking dinner or electricity for powering fans were the true concerns.

We soon recognized that we had to address their concerns if we were going to persuade the locals that we were in Iraq to help. They needed to see action, not hear rhetoric. If we wanted to earn their trust and eventually persuade them to offer us information, then we had to legitimize our presence by focusing our activities on real solutions to their immediate requirements.

We also had to win the street-level information battle with the insurgency during the transition period. The longer we delayed in producing tangible evidence of our intent to help, the more we risked losing the local population to the insurgents. In his book *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War*, Anthony Shadid conveys the opinions of many Iraqis during the transition period. Most citizens were guarded but open-minded about U.S. intentions; however, they all wanted to see tangible evidence of our claim to

help.[9] While the insurgency sent its cadre into the streets to pay average citizens to fight us, we had to convince the same people to support the Coalition-backed reconstruction efforts instead. This couldn't be done with rhetoric or from atop a vehicle. It required activity in the marketplace, on the street corner, and in the local coffee shops with a persistent, tangible message delivered through habitual relationships and via small-scale direct action targeting local concerns. It also had to be initiated immediately upon transition to prevent the insurgent message from taking root.



U.S. Army

While on patrol in Mosul, 24 April 2003, a squad from B/1-502 walks with a large group of excited local children yelling "George Bush."

Soldiers walking the streets and talking to the people were the ones who knew what the individual Iraqi wanted and needed. As British Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster has noted, "Routine foot patrolling [is] a key means of interacting and thus gathering HUMINT [human intelligence] . . . ."[10] Soldiers could not gather this information while mounted on a vehicle; they had to get off and walk. They had to shake hands, drink chi, and eat rice with their fingers when invited to "have a lunch" if they expected the people to open up to them.

Soldiers also had to understand Iraqi customs and history and be able to speak a few words of Arabic to earn the people's respect. Colonel H.R. McMaster, commander of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, understood this and trained his unit accordingly prior to deployment. He ensured each squad-sized unit had someone who knew elementary Arabic, and he had his officers read about and study the region.[11] Basic steps like these help the force to demonstrate "strength and resolve without being perceived as threatening."[12]

In Mosul, developing habitual relationships was critical to earning trust. In fact, relationship-building was the decisive point of the stability operation. If the same Soldier stopped and talked to the same gas station attendant on a routine basis, the two developed a relationship. The Soldier came to understand the daily rituals of the Iraqi civilians through experience; he knew what a day in their life was like and he learned what problems they faced. The Iraqi civilians, in turn, got to know the Soldier as a human instead of as an imposing, rifle-wielding warrior in body armor. The Iraqis learned that the Soldier had a wife and two kids at home and other details that were seemingly insignificant in terms of mission success, but critical in humanizing the Soldier. Such exchanges helped us take a monumental step toward winning the hearts and minds of the local population—the locals no longer viewed us as occupiers, but rather as individuals.

One of our platoon leaders built such a relationship with two local propane salesmen, whom we nicknamed the "Smash Brothers" based on their uncharacteristically large physical stature. The two routinely invited the platoon leader to have chi and they often stopped by the platoon command post (CP) simply to visit.

As propane salesmen, the Smash Brothers were very concerned with black market sales of the coveted resource. At the time, propane was in short supply and was one of the largest concerns among local people since they required it for cooking. We were also concerned with black market activity since we were attempting to regulate sales to avoid price gouging and to ensure equal distribution through all of the neighborhoods.

During one of their routine visits, the Smash Brothers informed the platoon leader of multiple locations where people were conducting illegal

propane sales at four times the regulated price. The result was that propane was only available in the wealthier neighborhoods, and less fortunate citizens were forced to do without. Not coincidentally, insurgent recruiting efforts were focused on the destitute neighborhoods without propane. Disgruntled people who could not get propane were the ones who would accept quick cash for emplacing an improvised explosive device (IED). The Smash Brothers' intelligence resulted in the arrest of several black marketers and the confiscation of hundreds of bottles of propane, and it enabled us to properly regulate sales. It also helped to inhibit insurgent recruitment of bombers.

Gathering information like this wasn't possible without maintaining a consistent presence in the area. Simply patrolling was very different from having Soldiers patrol their areas to develop contacts. Because they lived in the neighborhoods they were responsible for, Soldiers were much better able to develop these contacts. Proximity thus provided a high degree of flexibility and gave small-unit leaders opportunities to exercise initiative. Additionally, locals saw our permanent presence as a deterrent to criminal activity.[13] Immersing units from the very beginning of stability operations helped to develop relationships before the locals could be negatively influenced by insurgent cadre.

...locals saw our permanent presence as a deterrent to criminal activity.

Centers of influence. We quickly realized the tremendous potential of local relationships and sought ways to expand and capitalize on our contacts. One initiative involved a company-wide plan for building what we termed centers of influence. We wanted to build a network of contacts throughout our AO that we could rely on, whether it be for intelligence regarding insurgent activity or just to be in tune with the community's opinion of our efforts. Each leader from squad to company level was responsible for developing at least one new center of influence each week. The centers were tailored to a level of responsibility such that squad leaders focused on coffee shop owners and street vendors; platoon leaders approached more influential people like bank managers and police station chiefs; and I, as the commander, contacted even more prominent individuals like the regional police chief and the head of the city's municipal works. Echelons of responsibility were important because the Iraqi people wanted to deal exclusively with the most senior Soldier they knew.

Our immediate goals were to learn what the people's problems and concerns were and then work with the people to develop joint solutions. We knew that we needed to act overtly, but we also needed to know where to focus our efforts. I often challenged subordinates to make themselves "more useful to the Iraqis alive than dead" to motivate them to find and fix problems plaguing those Iraqis who had yet to decide between supporting U.S. forces or the insurgency. The long-term goal was to develop trust so that we could move the whole city in a positive direction by sharing information and working toward mutually beneficial goals. In practice, we addressed the entire gamut of local concerns, from simple tasks like fixing potholes to complicated projects like designing a garbage-collection system and rebuilding a police station.

B/1-502's experience with "Butchers' Row" highlights the potential impact of developing centers of influence. When we were assigned the city center in Mosul, it was a cluttered mess of sidewalk vendors and shops that served thousands of pedestrian shoppers hourly. In the absence of authority, the vendors disregarded any sanitation standards in order to save time and money. This was especially true in Butchers' Row, a series of 22 brick-and-mortar shops selling every imaginable portion of a cow or goat.

Butchers capitalized on the lack of authority to bypass traditional regulations that mandated buying meat exclusively from the slaughterhouse. In the traditional scheme, a farmer would take the live animal to the slaughterhouse where it would be slaughtered, packaged, and stamped prior to being loaded on a special vehicle for transport to butcher shops throughout town. The butchers paid a fee for the process. In the absence of supervision, the butchers saved the fee by buying the animals directly from the farmers and slaughtering them in the street in front of their stores. Each morning the

streets were red with blood as the butchers busily slaughtered and skinned the animals.

To compound matters, the butchers did not want to pay disposal fees for cleaning up the animal carcasses, so they simply swept the remains into a centralized pile in front of Butchers' Row. The smell alone could turn your stomach from 100 meters, never mind the danger of disease. I had spoken multiple times with members of the city's trash department (the beladia) and with members of the local medical community who had expressed concern about the unsanitary conditions. Through my translator I began speaking with the butchers to find out why the situation had deteriorated and to develop a solution.

I explained that the situation was entirely unacceptable, but told the butchers I wanted them, along with the veterinary specialists, the beladia, the slaughterhouse, the local police, and the transport drivers, to develop their own solution. I told them I would help mediate the process and would assist the police and veterinary office with enforcing the rules that they jointly established, but that the solution had to be theirs, not mine—if I dictated the solution, it might not hold for the long term. Over the next 2 weeks, we held 4 joint meetings to which we invited the senior butcher from all of the butcher markets across the city. We developed a three-page document with rules explaining the entire process, from the farmers delivering animals to the slaughterhouse to the beladia cleaning up the butchers' scraps at the end of a day. All of the participating members signed the document with the understanding that enforcement would begin after a 1-week grace period.



U.S. Army

A butcher in the Gazlani Market in Mosul proudly displays his certificate of compliance with sanitation rules.



U.S. Army

An Iraqi veterinarian accompanies the author as he visits vendors on "Butchers' Row" at the city center in Mosul. The veterinarian is explaining the rules established to improve sanitation and implement standard procedures for handling meat.

From that point on, I always made it a point to stop by and talk with the butchers along Butchers' Row, the veterinary officials, the police, and the beladia employees. From simple conversations about the weather to more detailed discussions of progress in the marketplace, we spoke daily. We all quickly began to see the benefits of the program we had jointly developed, and we were satisfied that we were fixing a real problem that affected each of us. Through our efforts, we developed mutual trust.

At this point I began to see the second-order effects of our hard work. While the streets were considerably cleaner, the greater benefit was that the local nationals now trusted me. During one of my patrols, a butcher slipped me a note along with a pat on the back. He communicated through my translator, Muhammad, not to look at the note until I was in a safe place. After the patrol, I had Muhammad translate the message, which indicated that one of the other butcher's sons was dealing weapons to suspected insurgents. After about a week's worth of investigative work, we were convinced that the tip was accurate and we arrested the individual. We would never have known about the activity without the information. I am convinced that our success

was a direct result of the trusting relationship I had developed through close personal interaction.

Street-smart intelligence. By regularly patrolling their area, our Soldiers learned about the people who live and work in the neighborhood. Not only did this help them develop a rapport with the locals, but it also made them cognizant of anomalous and potentially dangerous activity. In the marketplace, we became accustomed to seeing the same people at the same location every day. Even though vendor stands in the market weren't regulated, the same vendors occupied the same locations daily. We learned their faces and we came to expect to see the daily routine. If that routine was in some way different, we became suspicious. On one particular patrol, a sergeant noticed from across the street that the regular watermelon salesman had been replaced by a younger man. Curious, the sergeant crossed the street to ask why the regular man had relinquished his spot on the corner. As the patrol approached, the new vendor abandoned his stand and fled quickly into the densely packed area we referred to as the "Deep Market." The sergeant examined the stand closely and found three grenades hidden under the watermelons.

Soldiers cannot develop this level of awareness until they are intimately familiar with their environment; in other words, they can't identify subtle indicators until they know what "normal" looks like. Once they do, however, small changes to their area become noticeable.

Because the insurgents severely punish those who assist our Soldiers, law-abiding citizens may be scared to tell us about enemy activity. They can, however, provide information indirectly through small changes in their routines. On one particular mission, our company cordoned off a section of the market that had been covertly selling weapons and ammunition. With typical Iraqi curiosity, a large crowd developed along the edge of our cordon to watch. About an hour into the mission, an NCO noticed that several civilians he knew from the crowd had left the scene. Suspicious of the change, he ordered his men to take cover while he figured out why the locals had left. Within a minute of his issuing the order, a grenade landed and detonated in the vicinity of his platoon. This NCOs' experience in the marketplace had taught him that most Iraqis would never leave the scene while there was activity; their natural curiosity was too strong. The fact that many people he personally knew had departed the area served as an indicator that something was not right. His ability to detect such subtle behavior undoubtedly saved his platoon members from injury or death.

Rebuilding

When Soldiers move into a city that has been recently devastated by war and looting, they face an overwhelming number of problems that need to be fixed. In such a situation, a commander's ability to focus efforts on the most critical problems first can greatly enhance the people's perception of the reconstruction effort. Obviously, unit immersion in the AO can help to identify the most pressing problems, but it also can inject a sense of empathy and urgency into the reconstruction process. Soldiers immersed in the same environment suffer from the same shortcomings as the people they are helping: Lack of electricity, absence of drinking water, raw sewage flowing in the streets, and traffic congestion caused by fuel lines all directly affect the Soldiers' lives too. They are therefore more motivated to correct the problems, and do so in a prioritized fashion that promotes "citizen-driven, bottom-up economic activity."[14]

While we never consciously want our Soldiers to suffer, being able to relate to the local people helps tremendously in earning their respect. Just as leaders lead by example within our Army, they need to lead by example in their neighborhoods during the move to stability. Many Iraqis logically questioned why a superpower could not provide generators to restore their electricity. What perception would it foster if we lived in an isolated base camp equipped with running water and powered by generators while we left the civilians to suffer in isolation? Shadid's interviews suggest that this very behavior fueled hatred of Americans among many Iraqis.[15]

In Mosul, we lived among the people so we could focus on real problems. Unit leaders sought out government leaders who were responsible for maintaining the city's infrastructure, and together they assessed the problems. Leaders didn't have to try to understand the problems from an outside perspective; immersion gave them insight and, at the same time, legitimized their efforts. Leaders

helped lead and focus the efforts of government employees with the support of the neighborhood residents. Upon determining an appropriate course of action, the leaders provided resources to support the implementation of the host nation's solutions.

The people of Al Mansour, a middle class neighborhood in our AO, lived without running water for long stretches of time. Our company CP was serviced by the same pipeline and we received water only intermittently. First Platoon was responsible for patrolling Al Mansour and its Soldiers became acutely aware of the water situation as everyone complained to them during their patrols. Ostensibly, it seemed that the solution was tied to a large water tower that sat atop a hill in the center of Al Mansour, so this was where we focused our efforts initially. We sought out the head of the city's water department and took him to the tower for an assessment. He explained in laymen's terms how he would rectify the situation by fixing the pump at the base of the water tower. Having personally attended his briefing, I felt confident that we could restore water flow quickly.



U.S. Army

During a foot patrol, the author pauses to assure an Iraqi civilian that running water will be restored to the Al Mansour neighborhood.

First Platoon continued patrolling through the area, and its platoon leader told the people what we were doing to fix their problem. They all seemed pleased that we were trying to help. Problems arose, however, when we saw no developments over the next week. The patrols targeted the water tower specifically to check on progress and provide oversight, but they never saw any workers. The people in the neighborhood questioned our efforts and seemed to doubt whether we were really going to help them. The situation was tenuous because saying you will do something and not following through can have a severely detrimental impact on your relationship with the people. As FM 3-07 notes: "Psychologically, the populace must be assured continuously and effectively that conditions are becoming better to counter insurgent propaganda."[16]

After a week without any action on the tower, I returned to the water department to speak with one of the engineers. I was armed with many details provided by First Platoon's routine patrols of the area. An engineer explained that the man I had spoken with didn't know what he was talking about and that the water tower had not been operational in 20 years—water arrived in Al Mansour via a pipeline. The real problem was that Al Mansour was at the end of the pipeline and that people in other neighborhoods were adjusting valves illegally to divert water for themselves. By the time the water arrived at Al Mansour, the water pressure was played out.

As a result of our discovery, we recommended to brigade headquarters that we remove the head of the water department and replace him with a man who the Iraqi engineers felt would be the best choice. The new head developed a city-wide plan for controlling the pipeline by placing locked cages over the valves and monitoring them routinely. We offered support by adding the valve locations to our patrol routes, and within a week Al Mansour had running water for 6 hours each day. Through direct oversight, frequent patrols, and constant conversations with our Iraqi neighbors, we developed a temporary solution that directly improved the lives of many Iraqi civilians. Our ability to affect the situation only came through the habitual relationship First Platoon had developed with the water workers and the people

of Al Mansour. Walking across the street from the platoon CP to the neighborhood was central to this relationship. We gave the Iraqi engineers a sense of urgency, provided oversight of how Coalition funds were being used, and helped to put the right person at the helm of the government agency.

Defeating the Enemy

It is necessary to rebuild the host nation's infrastructure in order to restore stability, but establishing a secure environment is essential if reconstruction is to progress. U.S. forces should provide a "safe and secure environment at the local level and continuously [build] on the incremental success."[17] Immersed units can enhance safety and security by maintaining a dispersed footprint from which they conduct multiple patrols. These patrols can provide a constant deterrent and can rapidly converge on a critical location in the AO.

Blinding the insurgency. Insurgents maintain constant surveillance on Soldiers' activities. In the absence of countermeasures, they can easily determine when Soldiers are on patrol and when they are not. They can then adjust their activities accordingly to conceal any illicit behavior and appear innocent when Soldiers are present. We can defeat this surveillance if we establish a constant presence that gives the enemy no opportunity for activity. Continuous patrolling along varied routes at varied times, combined with a permanent command post providing constant surveillance in the neighborhood, can deter enemy activity.

Maintaining a CP eliminates the overhead associated with movement to and from the AO. Because the company handles mission coordination, platoons can conduct more patrols with greater flexibility. With no need to coordinate boundary crossing or external support, a patrol leader simply has to walk out the door with his unit and a radio. Small-unit leaders maintain personal initiative. They can still adjust patrols based on the situation, as they must be able to do to seize otherwise fleeting opportunities. By contrast, operating from a large forward operating base (FOB) makes us overly reliant on vehicles and allows the enemy to monitor our activity. Regardless of how much we vary our routes and routines, all our missions will be canalized to the limited number of roads leading to and from the FOB. The enemy only has to have a single operator with a cell phone at each exit to monitor our activity. In this environment, the enemy can always determine when Soldiers are coming; he will have ample time to hide his activity, and we will never be able to catch him.

Of equal importance, the enemy can affect our planning and thought processes by keeping us off balance. If we are forced to use a limited number of roads into and out of our AOs, the enemy can target these with IEDs, the deadliest and most effective weapon in their arsenal. We play into their hands by exposing ourselves to this weapon, which has accounted for 55 percent of U.S. military deaths in Iraq.[18] If insurgents know when we come and go and along which routes, it is only a matter of time before they hit us successfully. Reducing our reliance on vehicles will give the enemy fewer opportunities to attack us. When units live in their AOs, logistics distribution is the only mission that requires mounted activity, and even this mission can be controlled to minimize the threat of IEDs.

Massing combat power. Unit immersion also enables leaders to mass combat power at the decisive point in a mission. Units dispersed at multiple locations throughout an AO can maneuver quickly to support each other because a unit in contact doesn't have to wait for help from a squad dispatched from a single headquarters 15 blocks away. "Dispersed" is really a misleading term: the fact of the matter is that all of the company's combat power is forward-deployed. Although it takes coordination and practice, subordinate units can converge on a single location very rapidly from various locations.

The 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment's recent experiences in Tal Afar support this claim. One of the Regiment's battalion commanders has explained how the Regiment operated from 29 distinct checkpoints dispersed through the city, a deployment that

It is necessary to rebuild the host nation's infrastructure in order to restore stability, but establishing a secure environment is essential if reconstruction is to progress.

gave them "great agility to attack from two or three patrol bases instead of predictably rolling out of the front gate of [their] base."[19] This ability is critical because intelligence about insurgent activity is time-sensitive. There may not be time to muster units, load vehicles, and move to the designated location. If Soldiers are on patrol or in their dispersed CPs, they can move dismounted along separate avenues of approach to mass combat power without being detected by the enemy.

During one mission, B/1-502 cordoned off a section in the crowded Mosul market to search for weapons. We infiltrated the entire company from three separate CP locations along eight different dismounted and one mounted avenues of approach to arrive simultaneously and maintain the element of surprise. Knowing how crowded each route would be, knowing travel times along separate routes, and knowing which routes supported movement without arousing suspicion were critically important planning factors. We successfully moved 100 Soldiers into a confined area without tipping our hand. The significance of the mission lay not in the relatively small amount of weapons confiscated, but in the surprised faces of the locals who looked up to find themselves surrounded. They quickly understood what our forces were capable of and what it meant to the potential for conducting illegal activity in the area.

Counterinsurgent leaders also need the ability to respond immediately to threat activity. If Soldiers live in the AO, they do not have to be called on the radio to alert them to the situation; most will have heard or seen an incident firsthand and will already be prepared to move as orders are disseminated. Moreover, Soldiers become aware of much more activity. Incidents that cannot be heard or seen from an FOB, and would thus go unnoticed, will be within earshot of a CP or visible from rooftop surveillance posts. Soldiers can react right away to restore order and perhaps catch those responsible. Consider the perception of the local populace if no one responded to an illegal act and contrast that with a rapid, overt response by Soldiers with whom the people are already familiar. Proximity enables units to aggressively influence threat activity.

Defeating the enemy constitutes only part of mission success. Units must address all tenets of stability operations simultaneously as they transition from combat operations, because that is the best time to win the hearts and minds of the local populace and to assert governmental control. To prevent a protracted war against a firmly embedded threat element, we must keep the insurgency from developing by maintaining constant presence and authority in transition. We must be in the back alleys and coffee shops where an insurgency breeds. We must provide the authority that discourages looting and other crimes that demoralize an otherwise neutral population, that builds resentment against our forces, and that increases the disgruntlement that fuels an insurgency. Immersing tactical units into their AOs is the best way for Soldiers to learn the AO, build relationships with the people, identify priorities for making overt improvements, and take the fight to any threat element that exposes itself. Immersion, in short, is the most effective means to address all dimensions of a stability operation. ***MR***

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5. Figure developed by CPT Luster Hobbs, January 2005.

6. FM 3-07, 2-19.

7. FM 3-07, 2-3.

8. See Anthony Shadid, *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005). Iraqis made these claims in multiple interviews Shadid conducted in March 2003.

9. Ibid., chapters 3 and 4.

10. BG Nigel Aylwin-Foster, "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* 85, 6 (November-December 2005): 6.

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NETWORKS: Terra Incognita and the Case for Ethnographic Intelligence

Lieutenant Colonel Fred Renzi, U.S. Army

Author's note: What I have chosen to call "ethnographic intelligence" might be more accurately described as "ethnographic information," since much of the content involved in analyzing a hostile network will be open-source. I have chosen to retain "intelligence," however, to indicate the military utility of the content involved.

When it came to Vietnam, we found ourselves setting policy for a region that was terra incognita.

—Robert McNamara, *In Retrospect*[1]

THE PROLIFERATION of empowered networks makes "ethnographic intelligence" (EI) more important to the United States than ever before.[2] Among networks, Al-Qaeda is of course the most infamous, but there are several other examples from the recent past and present, such as blood-diamond and drug cartels, that lead to the conclusion that such networks will be a challenge in the foreseeable future. Given the access these networks have to expanded modern communications and transportation and, potentially, to weapons of mass destruction, they are likely to be more formidable than any adversaries we have ever faced.

Regrettably, the traditional structure of the U.S. military intelligence community and the kind of intelligence it produces aren't helping us counter this threat. As recent debate, especially in the services, attests, there is an increased demand for cultural intelligence. Retired Army Major General Robert Scales has highlighted the need for what he calls cultural awareness in Iraq: "I asked a returning commander from the 3rd Infantry Division how well situational awareness (read aerial and ground intelligence technology) worked during the march to Baghdad. 'I knew where every enemy tank was dug in on the outskirts of Tallil,' he replied. 'Only problem was, my soldiers had to fight fanatics charging on foot or in pickups and firing AK-47s and [rocket propelled grenades]. I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness. Great technical intelligence…wrong enemy.'"[3]

I propose that we go beyond even General Scales's plea for cultural awareness and look instead at amassing EI, the type of intelligence that is key to setting policy for *terra incognita*. The *terra* in this case is the human terrain, about which too often too little is known by those who wield the instruments of national power. The United States needs EI to combat networks and conduct global counterinsurgency. This paper will therefore define EI, discuss some cases that illustrate the requirement for it, and propose a means to acquire and process it.

EI Defined

According to Dr. Anna Simons of the United States Naval Postgraduate School, "What we mean by EI is information about indigenous forms of association, local means of organization, and traditional methods of mobilization.

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What we mean by EI is information about indigenous forms of association, local means of organization, and traditional methods of mobilization.

Clans, tribes, secret societies, the *hawala* system, religious brotherhoods, all represent indigenous or latent forms of social organization available to our adversaries throughout the non-Western, and increasingly the Western, world. These create networks that are invisible to us unless we are specifically looking for them; they come in forms with which we are not culturally familiar; and they are impossible to 'see' or monitor, let alone map, without consistent attention and the right training."[4]

Because EI is the only way to truly know a society, it is the best tool to divine the intentions of a society's members. The "indigenous forms of association and local means of organization" are hardly alien concepts to us. Our own culture has developed what we call "social network analysis" to map these associations and forms of organization.[5] These unwritten rules and invisible (to us) connections between people form key elements of the kind of information that, according to General Scales, combat commanders are now demanding. Because these rules and connections form the "traditional methods of mobilization" used either to drum up support for or opposition to U.S. goals, they demand constant attention from the U.S. Government and Armed Forces.[6] Simply put, EI constitutes the descriptions of a society that allow us to make sense of personal interactions, to trace the connections between people, to determine what is important to people, and to anticipate how they could react to certain events. With the United States no longer facing a relatively simple, monolithic enemy, our national interests are found in a confusing cauldron of different locales and societies. Each of these has its own "latent forms of social organization" that create networks we cannot see or map, and to which we may very well fall victim, unless we aggressively pursue EI.[7]

The Threat: Three Case Studies

American national interests are affected by many societies about which we may know very little. In the early 1960s, few Americans recognized the importance of the *terra incognita* of Vietnamese society.[8] In the 1990s, America either failed to develop, or failed to employ EI on Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan, or Iraq.[9] Today, we have little insight into which cultures or networks may soon become threats to our national interests. For this reason, America must seek to understand and develop EI on a global scale, *before* it is surprised by another unknown or dimly understood society or network. As a first step toward becoming more EI-smart, we might look at three illustrative cases: the blood-diamond cartel, drug trafficking syndicates, and Al-Qaeda.

The blood-diamond cartel. West Africa's blood-diamond cartel is a good example of the seemingly random mixture of networks, private armies, governments of questionable legitimacy, and social environments in conflict that plague the world today. At the core of the cartel are guerrillas in Sierra Leone who have used terror tactics to control access to diamond mines. They were assisted by the former government of Charles Taylor in Liberia, which helped launder the diamonds in Europe for money. Some of that money then went to international arms dealers who smuggled weapons to the guerrillas, and some went to finance international terrorists like Al-Qaeda. War, as the U.S. military has traditionally preferred to consider it—the clash of state armies and navies—has given way to a mix of crime, money, and terror executed by dark networks in league with each other and with reprehensible governments to secure profits and export terrorism. According to H. Brinton Milward and Jorg Raab, "Covert networks have come together with warlords controlling access to resources to create commodity wars. These wars are fought over control of diamonds, petroleum concessions, coca leaves, and poppies that yield narcotics, not for any real ideological or political reason."[10]

While entities like the blood-diamond cartel have heretofore not been deemed threatening to vital U.S. interests, and thus have not justified the attention of significant American assets or numbers of troops, such a presumption is overdue for reconsideration. The United States cannot afford—nor should it be inclined to act—as the world's policeman,



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Liberian President Charles Taylor talks to reporters in Monrovia, 8 April 2003. Taylor called on opposition politicians and the international community to investigate claims that he has billions of dollars in a Swiss bank, saying he will resign as president if any such account is found.

but these unholy alliances now demand scrutiny. This is where EI enters the picture. When crime, brutality, poor governance, and terrorist financing come together, they are so enmeshed in the local social environment that only a detailed understanding of ethnographic factors can provide the basis for further identification of who and what truly threaten U.S. national interests. An understanding of the societies in which these networks roost is the indispensable bedrock upon which any further analysis rests.

Traditional military intelligence, in examining opposing formations and weapons systems, does not even speak in the same terms as those found in the blood-diamond "conflict." In Milward and Raab's words: "In the period after Taylor became president, the Republic of Liberia became a nexus for many dark networks. There are linkages between various dark networks; some are more central than others are and some only loosely linked with the others."[11] Borrowed from social network analysis, terms like "network," "nexus," and "centrality" are useful concepts that allow analysts to better identify threats to American security.[12]

It is only through extensive, on-the-ground observation that latent forms of social organization and mobilization can be made apparent. When those indigenous forms of social organization are exploited by people like Charles Taylor, or become linked to external nodes such as other networks, then EI feeds and blurs into the police-style social network analysis needed to identify and counter threats to U.S. interests. In this way, EI takes the incognita out of the human terra so that the United States can craft effective, realistic policy actions.

Drug trafficking syndicates. Drug syndicates or cartels are another networked threat that will not disappear in the foreseeable future and that cannot be depicted effectively by order-of-battle-style intelligence. Phil Williams has clearly articulated the ethnic qualities that make drug trafficking a particularly opaque threat: "[M]any networks have two characteristics that make them hard to penetrate: ethnicity and language. Moreover, many of the networks use languages or dialects unfamiliar to law enforcement personnel in the host countries. Consequently, electronic surveillance efforts directed against, for example, Chinese or Nigerian drug-trafficking networks do not exist in a vacuum, but instead operate in and from ethnic communities that provide concealment and protections as well as an important source of new recruits. Some networks, such as Chinese drug-trafficking groups, are based largely on ethnicity. They are global in scope and operate according to the principle of *guanxi* (notions of reciprocal obligation), which can span generations and continents and provides a basis for trust and cooperation. Such networks are especially difficult for law enforcement to infiltrate. In short, drug-trafficking networks have a significant capacity to protect their information and to defend themselves against law enforcement initiatives."[13]

By themselves, drug gangs might not represent a clear and present danger to America, but they warrant

study for two reasons. First, they are increasingly moving beyond mere profit-making ventures into alliances with other types of networks, such as the gun-runner and terrorist networks active in West Africa, that do pose a significant threat to the United States. Second, drug-trafficking networks provide a relevant example of how subversive groups can exploit ethnic social bonds and indigenous forms of mobilization about which we Westerners remain ignorant. Phil Williams' illustrative invocation of *guanxi,* which won't appear in any traditional military intelligence summary, is instructive here.

A concept of mutual obligation that can endure from generation to generation and across great distances, *guanxi* can be a powerful tool in the hands of a network with evil intent. Drug trafficking can be harmful enough to a society, but when it is lashed together with the trafficking of weapons, money, and perhaps even materials of mass destruction, such racketeering does become a clear and present danger to America. A nexus of dark networks, peddling destruction in various forms, and facilitating international terrorism, becomes inordinately threatening when powered by traditional social practices such as *guanxi* that are invisible to states that don't do their ethnographic homework. Williams appropriately notes that these practices, or means of "indigenous mobilization," work precisely because they are embedded in an ethnic population. This is true whether the population in question inhabits an ethnic enclave in a culturally dissimilar host nation or occupies its home region. In fact, under the latter conditions, local forms of organization and means of association can become more powerful than any written law, and therefore that much more efficacious for the network using them. They can be extraordinarily effective at creating local networks. However, he who has done his ethnographic analysis stands a decent chance of neutralizing the hostile actions of a dark network or perhaps even turning the activities of the network to advantage.

Al-Qaeda. A third case that illustrates the need for EI is Al-Qaeda. In 2004, Marc Sageman wrote *Understanding Terror Networks* to clarify what he saw as a widespread misperception in the West about who joins these networks and why they join. Sageman concentrates on Al-Qaeda's sub-network constituents, mapping the individual networks and partially filling in their foci, such as certain mosques.[14] Sageman obtained his information by accessing documents via friendly means, but he freely admits that his examination is limited.

Sageman's main agenda is to refute the myth that terrorists such as those in Al-Qaeda are irrational psychopaths created by brainwashing impoverished Muslim youths. He contends that the majority of terrorists are educated, generally middle-class, mature adults. They are usually married, and they come from caring families with strong values. They are also believers wholly committed to the greater cause of global Salafist jihad.

According to Sageman, these people belong to four general groups in the Al-Qaeda network: the Central Staff, the Southeast Asians, the Maghreb Arabs, and the Core Arabs. The Central Staff is comprised mainly of Osama bin Laden's older compatriots, men who heard the call to jihad against the Soviet infidels in Afghanistan and who continue the fight today. The Southeast Asians are mostly disciples of two particular religious schools. The Maghreb Arabs are first- or second-generation Arabs in France. Socially isolated, the Maghrebs have sought community ties in local mosques. The Core Arabs grew up in communal societies in Islamic lands, but became isolated and lonely as they moved away to schools or jobs.

With the exception of some Maghreb Arabs, many of Al-Qaeda's recruits have a good education and strong job skills; they have no criminal background. Sageman writes at some length about the feeling of isolation that led many of the expatriate Al-Qaeda members to seek out cliques of their own kind, and about the gradual strengthening of their religious beliefs prior to joining the jihad as a source of identity and community. He emphasizes that people join in small cliques, and that the motivation is primarily fellowship, and only later, worship. The cliques are not recruited as much as they seek out membership in Al-Qaeda. In the search for fellowship, some men happened upon one of the relatively few radical mosques or became embedded in a clique that happened to have an acquaintance in the jihadist network. Sageman debunks the theory that Al-Qaeda has recruiters in every mosque, yet he does point out the existence of a few people who know how to contact the larger group and will provide directions, travel money, and

introductions to clandestine training camps. In sum, Sageman argues convincingly that our stereotypes of Al-Qaeda are dangerously misleading.

Sageman's analysis of the Al-Qaeda network has been widely quoted, yet he himself underscores the lack of available first-hand information and makes it plain that he used open-source documents, with some limited personal exposure; in other words, he wrote the book without much access to EI.[15] Let us imagine what Sageman's sharp intellect would have found if he had had access to a full, well-organized range of EI from each of the four subgroups' regions. What might a dedicated core of EI specialists have discovered about the recruitment pattern? As an illustration, Sageman uncovered a key ethnographic point in the bond between student and teacher in Southeast Asia.[16] The active exploration of this key example of "indigenous forms of association" might have led to the two radical Southeast Asian schools much sooner. Perhaps armed with such knowledge, the governments in question could have taken more steps against the network years ago.

Acquiring and Processing EI

To acquire ethnographic knowledge, there is no substitute for being on the scene. For the U.S. military, the structural solution to EI could be relatively easy. Some form of U.S. Military Group, or the military annex to the embassy, could become the vehicle to collect EI. While the defense attaché system is charged with overtly collecting military information and assessing the military situation in particular countries, there currently is no comprehensive effort to collect and process EI. The security assistance officers attached to U.S. country teams often obtain a fine appreciation of the cultural aspects of their host nation, but they are not charged with the responsibility to collect EI and may not always have a smooth relationship with the defense attaché (if one is even assigned).[17]

There is a relatively low-cost way to set up a system to collect EI. The United States could develop a corps of personnel dedicated to the task and base them out of a more robust military annex to our embassies. There are two key points to developing such a corps: it must be devoted exclusively to the task without distraction, and its personnel must be allowed to spend extended time in country and then be rewarded for doing so.[18] Their work could be considered a form of strategic reconnaissance, and in reconnaissance matters there is simply no substitute for being physically present on the ground. Since the ethnographic ground in question is actually a population and not necessarily terrain, a constant and near-total immersion in the local population would be the means to turn McNamara's terra incognita into a known set of "indigenous forms of association, local means of organization, and traditional methods of mobilization."

The United States could develop a corps of personnel dedicated to [EI] and base them out of a more robust military annex to our embassies.

While the most streamlined EI organization would probably combine the functions of the defense attaché and security assistance officer, such a move is not absolutely necessary.[19] The most important structural aspect is that the EI developed in country should be analyzed at the embassy, forwarded to the staff of the geographic combatant commander, and shared laterally with other relevant embassies. This kind of information sharing would make for better contingency plans, and it would create a hybrid network to counter the dark networks that profit from blood diamonds, drugs, and terror.

A small number of Americans, usually military foreign area officers (FAOs), are already in tune with this type of work, and some have achieved a high level of excellence. There are not many of them, though, and they are not organized into a truly comprehensive system focused on the ethnographic aspects of networks. A sterling example of the capacity that the United States could build can be found in an officer named "David." On a mission with a platoon of Army Rangers in western Iraq to find out how foreign fighters were infiltrating the country, David traveled in mufti. At one village, he "met a woman with facial tattoos that marked her as her husband's property. As they chatted, the pale-skinned, sandy-haired North Carolina native

imitated her dry, throaty way of speaking. 'You are Bedu, too,' she exclaimed with delight." From her and the other Bedouins, David finds out that the foreign fighters are using local smuggling routes "to move people, guns, and money. Many of the paths were marked with small piles of bleached rocks that were identical to those David had seen a year earlier while serving in Yemen."[20]

David gained access and operational information by using ethnographic knowledge. The deeper that personnel like David dig into local society, the better their ability to assess which groups threaten the United States and which should be left alone. If America could build a healthy corps of people like David, based out of each U.S. embassy in the world, then our nation could identify those networks that, in Simons's formulation, are "invisible to us unless we are specifically looking for them; [and that] come in forms with which we are not culturally familiar."

Sadly, there aren't nearly enough Davids in the military. The Army has about 1,000 FAOs, but most of them are in Europe. A mere 145 are focused on the Middle East, and even that number can be deceptive because a FAO's duties include many things that aren't related to EI, such as protocol for visits and administrative duties.[21] Certainly, one solution to the growing threats from networks would be to produce more Davids and reward them for extensive time on the ground exclusively focused on the development of EI.

The benefits to be derived from such a corps would be tremendous. Consider, for example, the impact good EI could have had on the war plan for Iraq. There has been much discussion of late about how American forces did not really understand the Iraq's tribal networks, a failure that contributed to the difficulties we are currently facing. With the "consistent attention and the right training" Simons has prescribed, knowledge like this could have been built into contingency plans and then updated in the regular two-year plan review cycle to insure currency. Ethnographic understanding could have allowed U.S. forces in Iraq to use tribal networks to advantage from the outset; they would not have had to figure things out for themselves, as Lieutenant Colonel Tim Ryan did: "The key is a truce brokered by the National League of Sheiks and Tribal Leaders and U.S. Army Lt. Col. Tim Ryan, the 1st Cavalry Division officer responsible for Abu Ghraib—a Sunni Triangle town west of Baghdad and a hotbed of the insurgency. Under the agreement, Ryan now meets regularly with tribal leaders and provides them with lists of residents suspected of taking part in attacks. The sheiks and their subordinate local clan leaders then promise to keep their kinsmen in line. 'They [the sheiks] do have a lot of influence. To ignore that is to ignore 6,000 years of the way business has been done here.'"[22]

EI that might lead to beneficial relations with local power figures, along the lines of the one between Ryan and the sheiks, could be developed from each U.S. embassy around the clock in peacetime to inform contingency plans and enable activity against the dark networks that seek to harm America. In some places, such as pre-war Iraq or in outright killing fields similar to a blood-diamond zone, Washington will judge the presence of an embassy to be too dangerous, but in the absence of an on-site embassy, personnel can be invested in the surrounding embassies to glean as much EI as possible through borders that are often porous.

The Broken Windows Theory of criminologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling suggests that we might reap another benefit from establishing an American ethnographic counter-network in surrounding, linked embassies.[23] The essence of the theory is that if a building has a broken window that remains unfixed, then people will assume that no one is in charge or cares; as a result, they will do whatever they wish to the place—the broken window will invite vandalism, graffiti, and so on. Once these acts of disorder commence, crime becomes contagious, like a fashion trend or virus. A more robust military annex to an embassy and a low-key, constant interest in overt ethnographic matters would show that the United States cares and is indeed watching. Perhaps this constant attention

Ethnographic understanding could have allowed U.S. forces in Iraq to use tribal networks to advantage from the outset…

would serve to subtly constrict the amount of safe-haven space available for dark networks. The overt information gathered by military ethnographers could complement the covert work done by the CIA (and vice versa).

U.S. citizens, at least intuitively, have always recognized the presence of networks in society, from family ties to economic relationships, indeed, to the very structure of daily life. The law enforcement community has long since recognized and acted against domestic criminal and extremist variants of these networks. However, the U.S. Government and military have had a difficult time coming to grips with networks like Al-Qaeda. It took the shock of the September 11th attacks to galvanize national attention on terrorist networks, and the ensuing years of struggle to grasp that terror networks can be more than ideologically motivated, and that they can flourish in the nexus of crime, drugs, weapons trafficking, money laundering, and a host of other lethal activities.

Terrorism can take many guises, and it blends very well into the cauldron of dark phenomena like blood diamonds, drug trafficking networks, and Al-Qaeda. The United States desperately needs a counter-network to fight the dark networks now surfacing across the globe. Ethnographic intelligence can empower the daily fight against dark networks, and it can help formulate contingency plans that are based on a truly accurate portrayal of the most essential terrain—the human mind. United States policymakers must not commit us ever again to terra incognita. The Nation must invest in specialized people who can pay "constant attention" to "indigenous forms of association and mobilization," so that we can see and map the human terrain. ***MR***

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INTELLIGENT DESIGN:

COIN Operations and Intelligence Collection and Analysis

This article was originally published in Special Warfare*, May–June 2006. It was written and reviewed by a team of officers in Class 2006-01 of the Command and General Staff Officer Course at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Contributors include Majors Laura Geldhof, Maureen Green, Remi Hajjar, Chris Litwhiler, Christine Locke, James Myers, David Perrine, Cameron Weathers and Dan Zeytoonian; Lieutenant Commander David Smith and Christine Watson. Zeytoonian is the primary author.*

ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES for the current generation of American military professionals is relearning the principles of counterinsurgency (COIN). This includes intelligence professionals who must not only tailor the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (IPB) process to the requirements of COIN, but also learn the intricacies of foreign cultures and peoples. Analysts have to shift their focus from military capabilities to social networks, culture, and people. The level of understanding required to conduct COIN operations at the tactical and operational levels presents challenges.

At the beginning of a COIN campaign, before patterns in the enemy's method of operating have emerged, the intelligence analyst is more dependent on military art than science. In such a situation, to generate actionable intelligence, friendly forces must frequently begin by executing an action.[1] In that type of operation, the role of intelligence shifts from one that supports maneuver to a more central role.

Perhaps the biggest intelligence challenges presented by COIN arise from the difficulties friendly forces face in identifying insurgents and in understanding complex cultural environments. Examples can be seen in the chart on the following page. Before discussing COIN, we must review IPB against more conventional threats to appreciate the changes in collection, analysis, and support to targeting.

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Traditional Threats

For more than 40 years, the United States prepared for a conventional war against the Soviet Union and its allies. The cold war affected every facet of Army operations, from weapons procurement, to the development of tactics, to training at the combat training centers.

Cold war planning also affected the various parts of the intelligence cycle: direct, collect, process and disseminate. In developing the IPB process, the intelligence community utilized doctrinal templates that became the basis for the development of enemy Courses of Action (COA). The availability of Soviet doctrine, combined with their rigid adherence to it and the minimal amounts of initiative they afforded junior leaders, made the doctrinal templates a useful and accurate tool. Over time, IPB became a scientific process.

CONVENTIONAL MILITARY OPERATIONS vs COUNTERINSURGENCY (COIN)		
	Conventional Ops	**COIN**
IPB-Battlespace	Physical terrain	Human factors—demographics, culture, tribes, clans, class, ethnicity, key individuals/groups/ families
IPB-Effects	Politics not primarily considered	Politics are central and integral for every action
	Linear	Asymmetric (computer, media-IO, population)
	Effects of physical terrain and weather	Effects of infrastructure, government services, jobs and media
IPB-Threat	Order of battle	Networks (cellular structure)
	Doctrinal templates	Enemy TTPs
	Military focus (uniformed combatants, identifiable threat with large signature)	Irregular-warfare threat requires distinguishing between insurgents, active/tacit supporters and general population
IPB-COA	Event templates (movement times/doctrine)	Pattern, link analysis, social networking (objectives/goals)
	Centralized C2	Decentralized cellular operations
TARGETING	Equipment focus	Focus on insurgent (enemy/social networking) and population (environment)
	Critical capabilities determined through order of battle	Critical capabilities determined through pattern, incident and network analysis
	Targeting boards-FSCOORD run, emphasis on kinetic fires	Targeting boards-effects cell run, emphasis on nonkinetic
COLLECTION	Collectors scheduled by blocks of time for D3A [decide, detect, deliver and assess (BDA)]	High demand for the "unblinking eye" for D2TDA [decide, detect, track, deliver, assess (1st to 3d-order effects)]
	Collectors employed at a stand-off range	Collectors much closer to the area (personal contact)
	Heavy use of overhead (SIGINT/IMINT)	HUMINT-intensive
	Military communications	Personal communication systems (mobile phones, pagers, Internet)
	Ops executed with intel	Ops conducted to create intel
	Organic, TENCAP, coalition assets	Organic, TENCAP, coalition interagency/ international/national leverage
	EPW searches, captured enemy equipment (military exploitation)	Detainee searches, sensitive site exploitation, forensics (similar to criminal investigation)

Legend: BDA, battle damage assessment; C2, command and control; COA, course of action; EPW, enemy prisoner or war; FSCOORD, fire support coordinator; HUMINT, human intelligence; IO, information operations; IPB, intelligence preparation of the battlefield (battlespace); SIGINT/IMINT, signals intelligence/imagery intelligence; TENCAP, tactical exploitation of national capabilities; TTP, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

►Collection

Collection of intelligence against enemy targets focused on the threat's large networks, including command, control and communications; air defense; and sustainment. Intelligence assets at all levels utilized a balance of the various intel disciplines—human intelligence (HUMINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), imagery intelligence (IMINT), and measurement and signatures intelligence (MASINT)—to find the enemy for targeting. Tactical and operational Military Intelligence (MI) units used their organic systems as well as Tactical



DoD

In COIN, the preponderance of HUMINT comes from the units who have the most familiarity and contact with the population. Those who have daily contact notice changing conditions in their areas before anybody else. In this photo, members of a civil affairs team work with Iraqi water treatment facility workers to assess the damage to a water treatment facility.

Exploitation of National Capabilities (TENCAP) feeds to find concentrations of Soviet forces.

►Analysis

Define the battlefield environment and describe the battlefield effects. In this part of IPB, the intelligence section focused on the effects of weather and the physical terrain on friendly and enemy operations. It focused on the military aspects of terrain, mobility and the impact of terrain on the range of the weapons systems.

Evaluate the threat and determine threat courses of action. Determining the effects of weather and terrain allowed an intelligence section to predict an enemy force's scheme of maneuver in a situational template. Further adjustments were made by taking into account range fans, doctrinal rates of movement, and the space and time between echelons. Units that trained in exercises against this threat believed that the IPB process did a good job of depicting its operations. The reality, however, is that we may never know, because we never faced the Soviet Army in battle.

►Targeting

Tactical targeting in conventional operations had a kinetic focus. Friendly forces targeted high-payoff targets that would weaken the enemy at a decisive point. These target sets traditionally included reconnaissance units, armor, engineer equipment, long-range artillery, rockets, and attack-aviation assets. At the operational level, the targeting effort focused on key enablers such as petroleum storage facilities, supply warehouses, and ammunition supply points. Additionally, using Information Operations (IO) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP), friendly forces tried to demoralize enemy forces and dissuade them from fighting and to influence other forces. During a conventional fight, intelligence supported most parts of the targeting process: decide, detect, deliver, and assess.

Intelligence Support to COIN

Supporting COIN operations with intelligence requires the analyst to know the indigenous people in a way not required by conventional operations. This human-intelligence dimension involves examining the role that culture, demographics, political

support, religion, and ethnicity play. It also necessitates learning about patterns of social networking. The intelligence cycle begins with directing requirements to different intelligence assets and then conducting collection operations.

►Collection

In the COIN environment, identifying the enemy is a significant obstacle and an important part of the collection process. Potential adversaries have the advantage of blending in with the population. Identifying insurgents must occur in order to separate the insurgents from their bases of support through population control.

The focus of collection efforts in COIN differs greatly from that of conventional combat operations. Because human factors are extremely important, standoff collection assets have less value. In COIN, useful intelligence is most often obtained through personal contact with the population. This puts a disproportionate level of importance on HUMINT and requires a different understanding of it. In conventional operations, HUMINT is the domain of interrogators and counterintelligence agents; that has changed.

In COIN, the preponderance of HUMINT comes from the units who have the most familiarity and contact with the population. Special Forces teams, Civil Affairs (CA) personnel, the unit chaplain, the commander, engineers, the squad automatic weapon gunner, and everybody else who has daily contact with the population notice changing conditions in their areas before anybody else. Some of the changes might match indicators and warnings from the intelligence section that precede an insurgent action. Input from first-contact units gives the commander the ability to see first, understand first, and act first. The increase in situational awareness helps friendly forces gain and maintain the initiative, which is critical in COIN.[2]

While COIN demands that we break our reliance on technical collection and put renewed emphasis on HUMINT, the other intelligence disciplines—SIGINT, IMINT, and MASINT—still have value. Friendly forces can take advantage of national collection assets using organic TENCAP systems to confirm or deny HUMINT reporting. As Colonel Rick Allenbaugh notes, "[In a COIN targeting cycle], the key is [still] cross-cueing and synchronization."[3] Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) also gains a measure of importance that it does not have against a conventional threat. The intelligence analyst has much to gain from what people say on the radio and write in newspapers. Just gauging the number of pro- and anti-government newspapers printed in a certain area is telling.

The sources of intelligence and the collection assets that an intelligence professional has access to in a COIN environment are much different from those of a conventional combat operation. In a conventional operation, the intelligence section accesses organic assets with limited or no access to interagency, international, or national sources of information, especially at lower echelons. In COIN, intelligence operations strive to fuse intelligence from nonorganic collection sources into a seamless picture of the insurgency networks and to provide corroborating intelligence for targeting.

As noted by retired Major General James Marks, maneuver commanders are also conducting operations to gain intelligence: "Commanders at all levels must develop intelligence to develop their missions. Higher headquarters often will not and cannot provide sufficient clarity of task or purpose to drive operations at the lower levels."[4] As a result, intelligence operations are now considered operational missions. For example, operational elements may plan to increase patrols and establish roadblocks surrounding a neighborhood suspected of harboring Al-Qaeda senior leadership. Door-to-door checks through residences may trigger movement of a target that might be detected by unmanned aerial vehicles or by cordon-and-search forces when the target attempts to escape the area. Another example of the relational changes is the integration of intelligence professionals into information operations and the nonkinetic targeting processes.

Operators are now trained for and accustomed to collecting forensic evidence during search operations.

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During site exploitation, residences suspected of providing safe havens to insurgents are now treated much like crime scenes. Operators search for and collect items that may provide leads for future operations. As Allenbaugh notes, "Forensics are new and not fully accepted or understood."[5] Building a forensic case has two major benefits: It allows Host-Nation (HN) security forces to build legal cases against insurgents and their supporters; and it provides information that interrogators can use to confront suspects and gain more intelligence on their network and operational plans.

The COIN environment requires joint, interagency, international and HN collaboration for collection operations and target development. National intelligence support teams, when deployed to an operational command, provide access to national-level collection assets from Other Government Agencies (OGAs). Joint Interagency Task Forces (JIATFs), composed of military and government intelligence analysts and collectors, offer another way of accessing national intelligence and analysis.[6] Military analysts fuse that intelligence with organic collection to gain the best possible understanding of the insurgent network, high-value targets and the populace.

Centralized and synchronized intelligence collection between all elements deployed in a theater is important for providing a more complete picture of terrorist networking through more thorough intelligence fusion. In current operations, a target tracked by the JIATF in Afghanistan or Pakistan may carry operational plans between the Al-Qaeda senior leadership and other operatives, and later turn up in another command's sector in Iraq. This makes mutual support between commands a necessity. The insurgent network is linked; we should be, too.

Mutual support between the various units, agencies, and countries often meets parochial and cultural roadblocks. Intelligence professionals must work cooperatively but forcefully to cut through bureaucratic red tape and to keep everybody focused on the end state: actionable intelligence. The synergy of intelligence collaboration is too valuable to sacrifice to petty concerns.



DoD

Winning over the population denies the insurgents their base of support. The people have to believe that the government can fulfill their needs ad personal interests. In the above photo, a 7th Special Forces Group medic provides medical care to a villager from a remote area in Afghanistan as part of the medical civic assistance care program organized by Combined Joint Special Operation Task Force.

►Analysis

Define the battlefield environment and describe the battlefield effects. One of the requirements in the first IPB step is to establish an Area of Interest (AI).[7] Although U.S. forces face adversaries who conduct transnational operations and aspire to lead a global insurgency, the AI, as a practical matter, cannot be the entire world. Intelligence analysts work to incorporate local nodes that the insurgents use to connect with other parts of their network into the AI. Doing this creates an AI that encompasses a manageable area for analysis. These AIs may include avenues of approach that cross an international boundary and lines of communication, including known or likely courier routes, SIGINT networks and local Internet service providers.

Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen, in his article "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency," offers some valuable advice about studying the terrain: "Know the people, the topography, economy, history, religion and culture. Know every village, road, field, population group, tribal leader and ancient grievance. Your task is to become the world expert on your district."[8]



DoD

COIN forces must obtain sufficient cultural intelligence to gain rapport, trust, and credibility as an ally of the HN.

Depending on the operational environment, a myriad of other demographic considerations may also become relevant in COIN. These considerations include social class structure, race, ethnicity, tribe, political party, gender, age, physical ability, nationality, language, religion, professional or occupational status, and employment levels. Additionally, key personnel and groups have become the new key terrain. These may comprise religious clerics, financially powerful families, influential members of the opposition, or anyone with influence over a large or important constituency. Insurgents may target, agitate, or subvert any of these groups to further their aims.

Key terrain also encompasses the neutral pockets of the population, the "fence sitters" who represent the operational center of gravity.[9] Intelligence sections should graphically depict the geographic areas of these various groups in population status overlays and continuously develop the relationship of social networks using link diagrams. Population analysis enables military forces to identify key formal and informal leaders as well as groups of people who require intelligence and operational focus. This socio-cultural analysis bolsters the power of full-spectrum military operations by providing a starting point for winning "hearts and minds."

An evaluation of the battlefield's effects begins with an analysis of the environment and its effect on friendly and enemy operations. The analyst also considers political topography and the factors that relate to it. These may include infrastructure and enemy capabilities that previously were not evaluated. In the COIN environment, one must consider the importance of infrastructure and not merely its location and effect. Opening an office of a government ministry in a certain neighborhood could have second- and third-order effects that the commander must weigh when he considers COAs.

Owing to technology and the asymmetrical nature of the threat, the battlespace now heavily favors the use of information operations. Using cyberspace and the media, the insurgents seek to influence their target audience, expand their numbers, and exploit their acts. Outlets that allow the insurgents to spread their message must be incorporated into the analysis of the environment. COIN forces should pay attention to Internet pages, in particular, as they provide an effective means of reaching a large audience from an electronic sanctuary.

Evaluate the threat and determine threat courses

of action. The requirements of steps 3 and 4 of IPB, as outlined in U.S. Army Field Manual 34-130, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield*, show that the process is adaptable to COIN, although COIN presents additional challenges. Step 3 consists of converting patterns of operations to graphics, describing, in words, the threat's tactics and options, identifying high-value targets (HVTs), and defining the threat capabilities.[10]

COIN forces must exercise operational patience and allow enough time for insurgent patterns of operation to emerge. Interrogations of detained insurgents and the exploitation of captured manuals, equipment, and information will also help to confirm suspected patterns of operation and tactics, techniques and procedures.

In assessing threat capabilities, the intelligence section will try to link personnel with events using an activities matrix. A series of incidents, along with information from captured personnel and equipment, may help reveal key personnel within the network. Examples may include bomb makers, financiers, and arms dealers. Their relative power within the network is high because multiple operational teams rely on the support that they provide.[11] Individual teams or cells, on the other hand, have less connection to the network. This makes finding them a more formidable task. The section has a number of analytical tools, such as the association matrix for mapping the network and finding its key nodes (who may become HVTs).

One of the greatest challenges in COIN is to identify those pockets of the population that indirectly or secretly provide support to the insurgency. Winning over the population denies the insurgents their base of support. To do this, U.S. forces must obtain sufficient cultural intelligence to gain rapport, trust and credibility as an ally of the HN. Cultural missteps impair our relationship with the HN and the people. The people have to believe that the government can fulfill their needs and personal interests. "We never do a good job of cultural intelligence: of understanding what makes people tick, what their structure is, where authority lies, what is different about their values, and their way of doing business."[12]

►Targeting

Owing to the demands of the "three block war,"[13] in which U.S. forces could find themselves providing humanitarian assistance, conducting peace operations and fighting a mid-intensity battle simultaneously, targeting has become more complex. It also demands much more from the intelligence community. With the full-spectrum operations required by COIN, U.S. forces do two types of targeting:

- Lethal—targeting of key leaders and nodes ("kill/capture," raid)
- Nonlethal—gaining support from the population ("hearts and minds")

The obvious difference in the two comes in the "deliver" phase. One type of targeting uses combat operations (maneuver and firepower) to destroy, while the other uses nonlethal fires (IO and PSYOP) and CA to persuade. The "detect" phase, however, is also different. The first target is threat-based, but the second considers the neutral population as the target audience. The first type requires the tracking of certain key leaders, while the second type requires an understanding of the environment and the people. The first poses technical challenges; the latter is conceptually difficult.

In order to maintain contact with key leaders or other HVTs, the targeting process in COIN more closely follows "decide, detect, track, deliver, and assess," instead of the cold war "decide, detect, deliver, and assess." The change places greater demands on intelligence assets to provide an "unblinking eye" or continuous surveillance of either fixed or moving targets. We know that lethal targeting does not itself provide a solution in COIN.[14]

We have to target the people's support, which is the center of gravity for both the HN government and the insurgents. Understanding how factors like culture, religion, and tribal structure cause different behaviors and perceptions is difficult; it requires education and experience. Intelligence sections should seek out a HN military counterpart (English-speaking or not), other government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, immigrants within the ranks, or others who have area expertise.[15]

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Having contributed to the "detect" phase of targeting, the intelligence analyst is still not finished—the "assess" phase is critical in COIN. Instead of merely doing a battle-damage assessment, the analyst must anticipate the reaction of key groups and second- and third-order effects. A UAV camera will not pick up the most important effects. Intelligence analysts must be the commander's experts on culture and be able to predict the consequences of servicing targets.

A critical aspect of targeting the insurgents and the population is that both groups form part of a larger social network. Killing or capturing a key leader could generate ripple effects throughout that network and outside it. Targeting certain groups through nonkinetic means will also affect members of other groups that because of fear, insult, or jealousy, develop a connection to the event.[16] Using link analysis, the analyst should try to anticipate these unintended consequences so the commander can more accurately assess his operational risk. With proper intelligence support, targeting allows us to assist the HN government to secure popular support, which, once accomplished, is decisive.

Conclusion

Almost overnight, it seems, MI analysts have gone from templating Soviet motorized rifle divisions to assessing the capabilities of clans, tribes, gangs, and militias. The practice of intelligence has evolved from a military science in conventional operations to a military art in COIN. With that change came the challenge of learning about different peoples and their environments.

In COIN, the environment is as important as the enemy, because the neutral majority, the center of gravity, resides there. COIN requires an appreciation of cultures, religions, tribes, classes, ethnicities, and languages, so that the people will view U.S. forces and their own government positively and work against the insurgents. Knowledge of the population, social networks, and the insurgency helps us to highlight the importance of human factors in fighting an insurgency. Consequently, most intelligence in COIN is collected by HUMINT, including information from Soldier debriefings and reporting. The other intelligence disciplines work in support to confirm or deny HUMINT reporting.

To target the population effectively, intelligence professionals use all-source intelligence gained from HN, joint service, interagency, and multinational partners. Tearing down the walls between these groups and fusing intelligence enables effective targeting. Targeting the enemy and the population through lethal and nonlethal means results in a weakened insurgency that has been denied its base of support. Intelligence and operations, working closely together and with the HN, bring about this end state. ***MR***

NOTES

1. David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* (May-June 2006): 104. Kilcullen notes, "Intelligence will come mostly from your own operations, not as a product prepared and served up by higher headquarters." A number of active-duty general officers in intelligence and Special Forces concur with that assessment.

2. These may range from newly hung posters of a particular leader of coalition concern or population movements into or away from the town.

3. E-mail to the authors, 9 April 2006. Cross-cueing refers to tasking more than one collector to confirm or deny information coming from another.

4. E-mail to the authors, 20 April 2006.

5. E-mail to the authors, 19 April 2006.

6. The JIATFs in Afghanistan and Iraq work together through working groups, targeting meetings, and operations and intelligence planning. JIATF responsibilities include collection, targeting, and development of actionable intelligence.

7. "Area of interest—The geographical area from which information and intelligence are required to permit planning or successful conduct of the commander's operation. The AI is usually larger than the command's AO and battle space; it includes any threat forces or characteristics of the battlefield environment that will significantly influence accomplishment of the mission." FM 34-130, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), G-4.

8. Kilcullen, 103.

9. For a discussion on this in the context of Operation Iraqi Freedom, see Peter W. Chiarelli and Patrick R. Michaelis, "The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations," *Military Review* (July-August 2005): 3.

10. Intelligence sections use patterns of operation, or tactics, techniques and procedures, in lieu of threat doctrine. Once portrayed graphically, the product becomes a doctrinal template. See FM 34-130, 2-1–2-2.

11. In social-network theory, such a node would score a high Eigenvector centrality, a number that measures the node's importance within the network.

12. Retired GEN Anthony Zinni, U.S. Marine Corps (USMC), quoted in Robert F. Baumann and Lawrence A. Yates, *My Clan Against the World: US and Coalition Forces in Somalia* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 49.

13. This term was coined by retired GEN Charles Krulak, USMC, to describe a construct of post-cold war conflicts that demanded full-spectrum operations simultaneously. "In one moment in time, our service members will be feeding and clothing displaced refugees—providing humanitarian assistance. In the next moment, they will be holding two warring tribes apart—conducting peacekeeping operations. Finally, they will be fighting a highly lethal mid-intensity battle. All on the same day, all within three city blocks. It will be what we call the three block war." Charles C. Krulak, "The Three Block War: Fighting In Urban Areas," presented at the National Press Club, Washington, D.C., 10 October 1997, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 15 December 1997, 139.

14. As the early 20th-century author and theorist General Sir Charles Gwynn notes, the use of military force must be kept to an absolute minimum because "the military object is to re-establish the control of civil power and secure its acceptance without an aftermath of bitterness." Sir Charles W. Gwynn, *Imperial Policing* (London: MacMillan and Company, 1934), 13.

New York Times columnist Tom Friedman observed the practice and consequence of making lethal targeting the primary focus at the operational level: "Have you noticed how often Israel kills a Hamas activist and the victim is described by Israelis as a 'senior Hamas official' or a 'key operative'?... By now Israel should have killed off the entire Hamas leadership twice … [The result is] something I call Palestinian math: Israel kills one Hamas operative and three others volunteer to take his place, in which case what Israel is doing is actually self-destructive," *New York Times*, 15 June 2003.

15. If limited area knowledge exists at home station, analysts should make maximum use of written periodicals and products, area-studies departments at universities, immigrant groups and Peace Corps volunteers.

16. Examples of this could include a supportive tribe's anger at numerous government projects and funds for building infrastructure going to a competing tribe that does not support the coalition.

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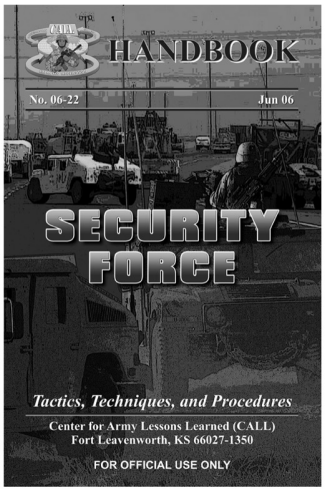
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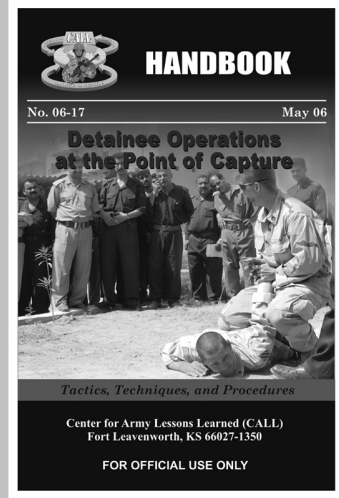
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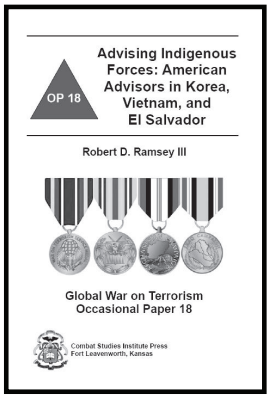


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Galula on Adapting ROE to an Insurgency

"Reflexes and decisions that would be considered appropriate for the soldier in conventional warfare and for the civil servant in normal times are not necessarily the right ones in counterinsurgency situations. A soldier fired upon in conventional war who does not fire back with every available weapon would be guilty of dereliction of duty; the reverse would be the case in counterinsurgency warfare, where the rule is to apply the minimum of fire. 'No politics' is an ingrained reaction for the conventional soldier, whose job is solely to defeat the enemy; yet in counterinsurgency warfare, the soldier's job is to help win the support of the population, and in so doing, he has to engage in practical politics. A system of military awards and promotion, such as that in conventional warfare, which would encourage soldiers to kill or capture the largest number of enemies, and thus induce him to increase the scope and the frequency of his military operations, may well be disastrous in counterinsurgency warfare."

—David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2006), 66.

PHOTO: An Iraqi man, left, argues with a U.S. Soldier who ordered spectators to move back at the scene of a bomb attack in front of the Jordanian embassy in the suburbs of Baghdad, 7 August 2003. A truck bomb exploded outside the embassy compound, killing at least nine people and strewing gutted cars, body parts, and a severed head across the street outside. (REUTERS/Suhaib Salem OP/CRB)

Galula on Ideology and Propaganda

"It has been asserted that a counterinsurgent confronted by a dynamic insurgent ideology is bound to meet defeat, that no amount of tactics and technique can compensate for his ideological handicap. This is not necessarily so because the population's attitude in the middle stage of the war is dictated not so much by the relative popularity and merits of the opponents as by the primitive concern for safety. Which side gives the best protection, which one threatens the most, which one is likely to win, these are the criteria governing the population's stand. So much the better, of course, if popularity and effectiveness are combined.…



…The counterinsurgent is tied to his responsibilities and to his past, and for him, facts speak louder than words. He is judged on what he does, not on what he says. If he lies, cheats, exaggerates, and does not prove, he may achieve some temporary successes, but at the price of being discredited for good. And he cannot cheat much unless his political structures are monolithic, for the legitimate opposition in his own camp would soon disclose his every psychological maneuver. For him, propaganda can be no more than a secondary weapon, valuable only if intended to inform and not to fool. A counterinsurgent can seldom cover bad or nonexistent policy with propaganda."

—David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2006), 8-9.

PHOTO: U.S. Army COL Thomas Vail, right, commanding officer, 506th Regimental Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division; an Iraqi police officer; and the commanding officer of the 6th Iraqi Army Division discuss where to position security personnel during the commemoration of the death of the 7th Shiite Imam, which drew more than one million pilgrims to the Kadhimiyah Shrine in Baghdad, Iraq, 20 August 2006. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Keith W. DeVinney)